THE
COLLECTED
WORKS
OF
MAHATMA
GANDHI

C
(PREFACES)

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THE COLLECTED WORKS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

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VOLUME HUNDRED
(VOLUME OF PREFACES)



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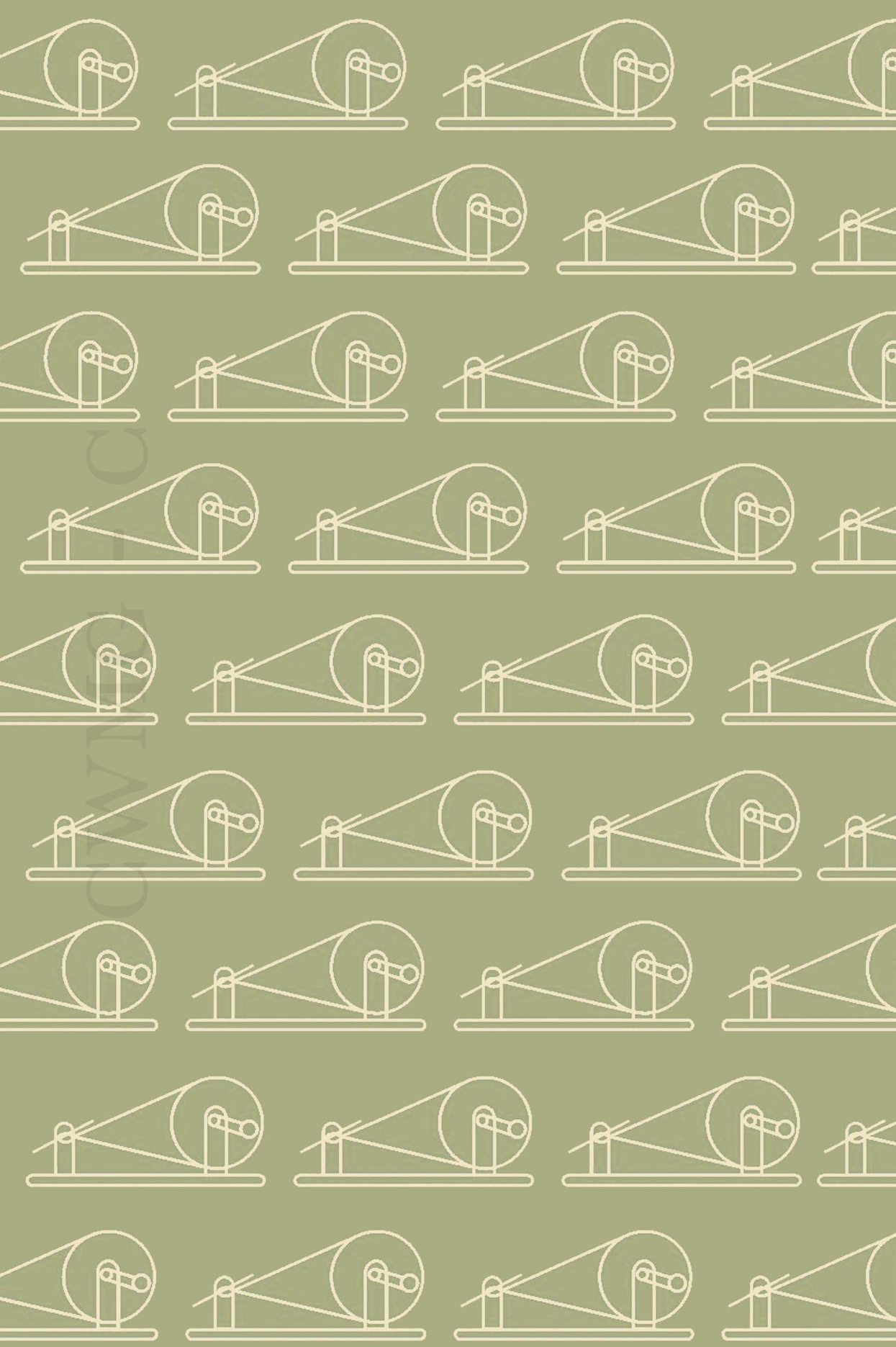
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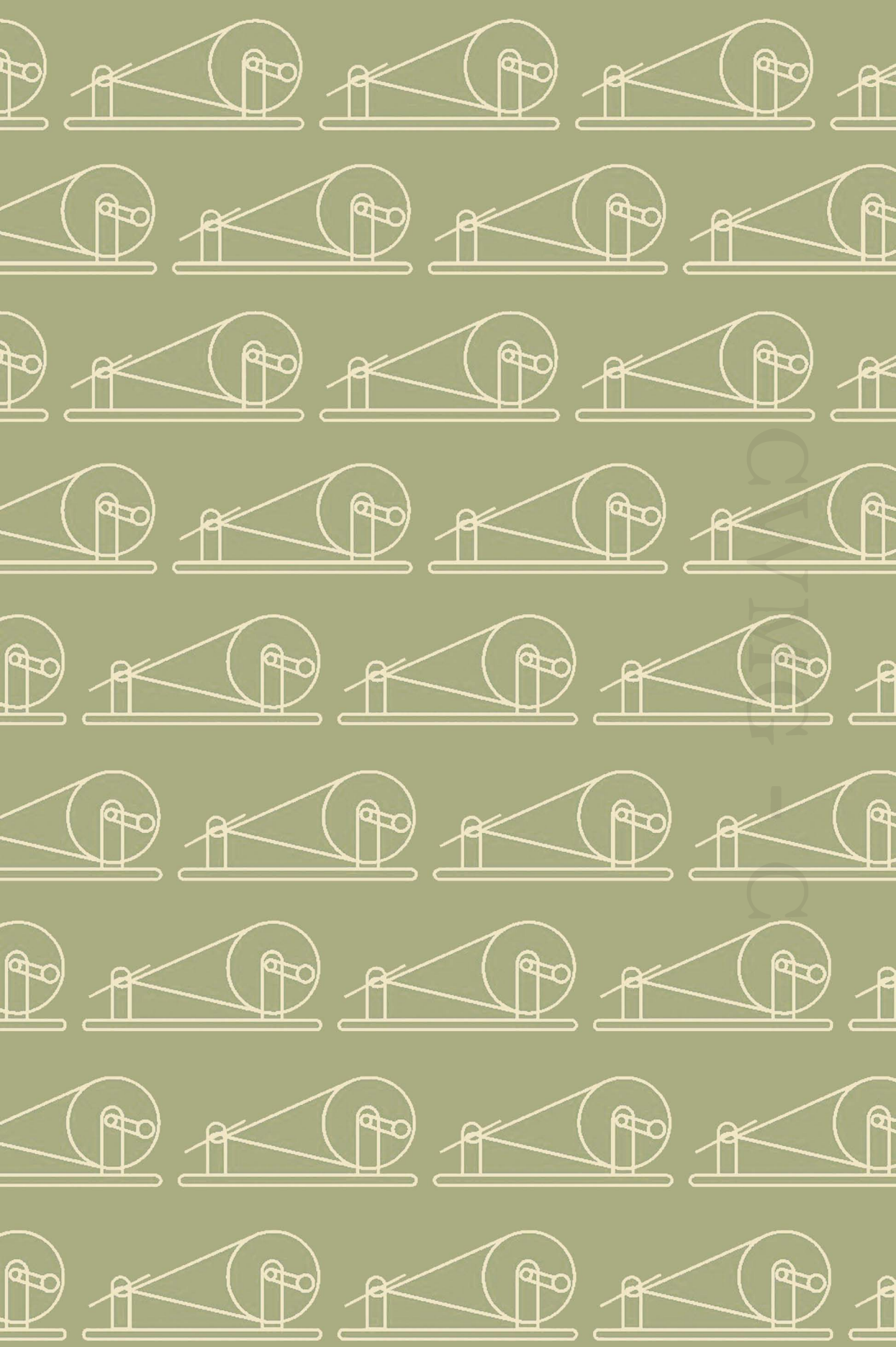
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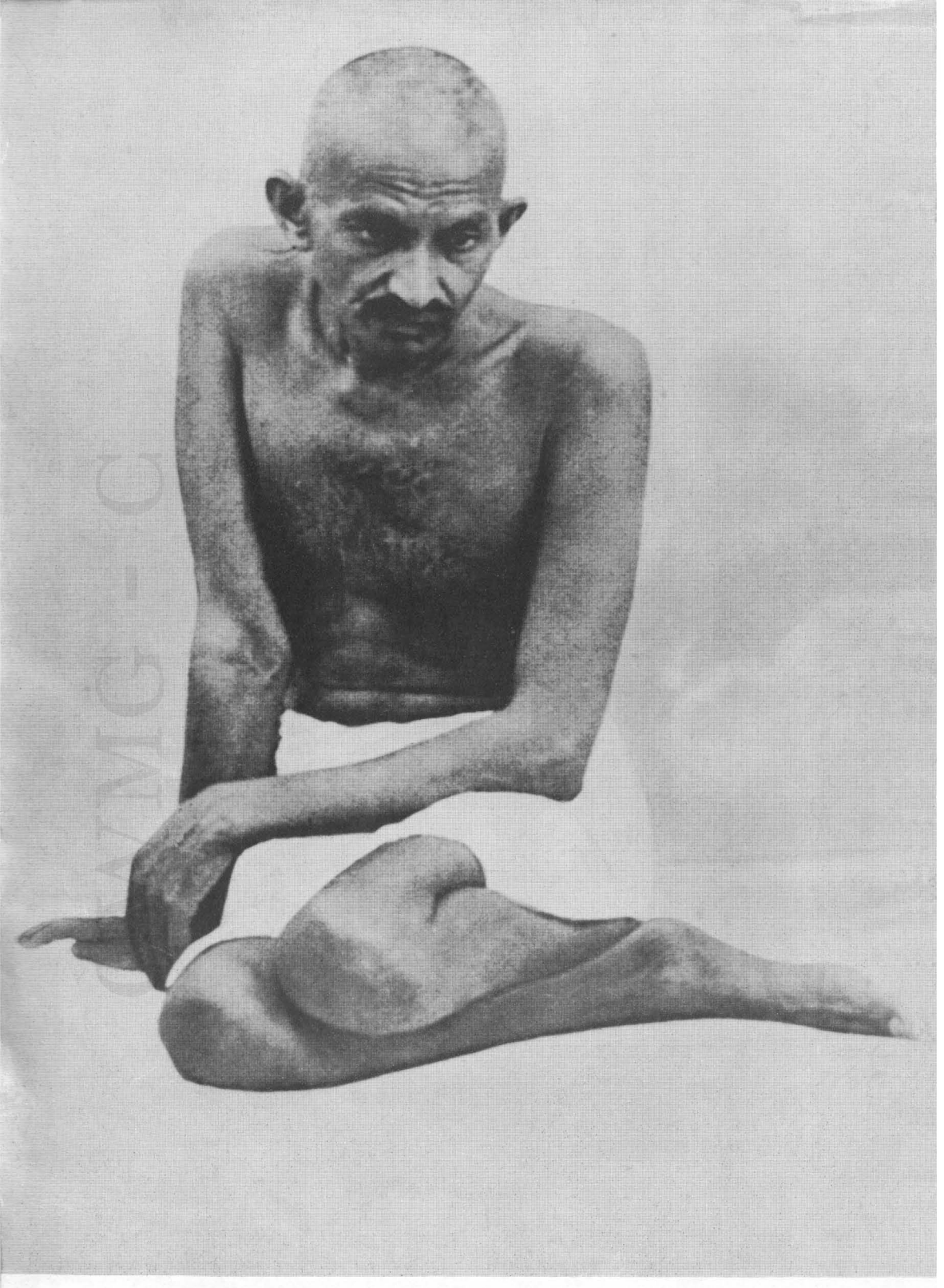
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GANDHIJI IN A CONTEMPLATIVE MOOD, SABARMATI, 1931

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HOMAGE

Mahatma Gandhi did not set out to evolve a philosophy of life or formulate a system of beliefs or ideals. He had probably neither the inclination nor the time to do so. He had, however, firm faith in truth and ahimsa, and the practical application of these to problems which confronted him may be said to constitute his teachings and philosophy.

There was hardly any political, social, religious, agrarian, labour, industrial or other problem which did not come under his purview and with which he did not deal in his own way within the framework of the principles which he held to be basic and fundamental. There was hardly any aspect of life in India which he did not influence and fashion according to his own pattern, beginning with the small details of individual life regarding food, dress, daily occupation, right up to big social problems which had for centuries become a part of life—not only unbreakable but also sacrosanct—like the caste system and untouchability.

His views appeared to be startlingly fresh, unhampered by tradition or prevalent custom. So also, his methods of dealing with problems, big and small, were no less novel and apparently unconvincing, but ultimately successful. Evidently, by his very nature he could never be dogmatic. He could never shut himself out from new light born of experience resulting from new experiments. For the same reason, again, he was no stickler for superficial consistency. In fact, his opponents, and sometimes even his followers, saw apparent contradiction in some of Gandhiji's actions. He was so open to conviction and had such an extraordinary amount of moral courage that once he was convinced that any particular action of which he was the author was defective, he never hesitated to correct himself and declare publicly that he was in the wrong. We often find him subjecting his own decisions and actions to an objective and impartial criticism. Little wonder, therefore, that many of his actions sometimes appeared to mystify his admirers and to confound his critics.

For a proper appreciation of such a man it is essential to take a comprehensive and collective view of his teachings and the events of his life. Any sketchy or piecemeal study of his life's story might prove misleading, doing as little justice to this great man as to the reader. This is the primary reason why a compilation of Gandhiji's writings on such a vast scale had to be under-

taken. This series, which, I am told, will consist of over fifty volumes, has its *raison d'etre* in this very trait of Mahatma Gandhi.

By undertaking to bring out this series, the Information and Broadcasting Ministry of the Government of India has provided the most essential basis for a study of Mahatma Gandhi, his teachings, his beliefs and his philosophy of life. It will be for students and thinkers to do what Mahatma Gandhi never attempted. With all the material thus made available, they will be able to formulate, as it were, in the form of a thesis his philosophy of life, his teachings, his ideas and programmes, and his views on the innumerable problems which arise in life, in a logical and philosophical manner and classified under different heads and categories. In his scheme of things, there was room for matters big and small, for problems of world-wide importance and of limited personal import. Though nearly all his life he had to grapple with large political issues, a very substantial part of his writings relates to social, religious, educational, economic and linguistic problems.

He was a very regular correspondent. There was hardly a letter calling for a considered reply which he did not answer himself. Letters from individuals, dealing with their personal and private problems, constituted a considerable portion of his correspondence and his replies are valuable as guidance to others with similar problems. For a great period of his life, he did not take the assistance of any stenographer or typist, and used to write whatever he required in his own hand, and even when such assistance became unavoidable, he continued writing a great deal in his own hand. There were occasions when he became physically unable to write with the fingers of his right hand and, at a late stage in his life, he learnt the art of writing with his left hand. He did the same thing with spinning. Private correspondence, which absorbed much of his writing in this way, constituted an important and significant part of his teachings, as applied to particular problems of the ordinary man in his everyday life.

If ever there was a man who took a total view of life and who devoted himself to the service of mankind, it was certainly Gandhiji. If his pattern of thinking was sustained by faith and the lofty ideals of service, his actions and actual teachings were always influenced by considerations at once moral and eminently practical. Throughout his career as a public leader extending over nearly sixty long years, he never allowed exigencies to shape his views. In other words, he never allowed himself to use wrong means to attain the right ends. His punctiliousness in the choice

of means was so great, that even the achievement of the end was subordinated to the nature of the means used, because he believed that the right end could not be achieved by wrong means and what could be achieved by the use of wrong means would be only a distortion of the right end.

The undoubted and abiding worth of this collection of his writings and speeches is apparent. Here are the words of the Master covering some six decades of a superbly human and intensely active public life—words that shaped and nurtured a unique movement and led it to success; words that inspired countless individuals and showed them the light; words that explored and showed a new way of life; words that emphasized cultural values which are spiritual and eternal, transcending time and space and belonging to all humanity and all ages. It is well, therefore, that it is sought to preserve them.

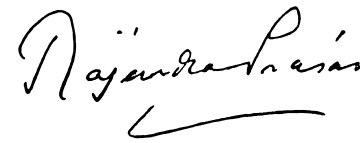
His method constituted a soul-stirring assertion of man's abiding trust in man, of the belief that the sense of morality is inherent in the spiritual equipment of human beings. The freedom of his concept cannot be attained through mere legislation and decrees, nor can it be had through mere scientific and technological advance. A society, to be really free, has to be organized for freedom and that organization has to be started with the individual himself. To the extent that the Indian national life remains inspired by and patterned after his ideas, it will continue to be a source of inspiration. To the extent free India works his ideas and attains progressively higher integration, she will succeed in extending the frontiers of culture and blazing a new trail.

Many of his ideas, however, have yet to be fully imbibed. While it is agreed that the liberating role of any social order must be judged by the degree of actual freedom it allows to its members, there is not adequate appreciation of the fact that a centralized organization, industrial, social or political, implies a corresponding curtailment of freedom of the individual. The golden mean remains to be discovered and adopted. His economics is often confounded with austerity, if not scarcity. His discipline is confused with rigid morality, destitute of colour and beauty. With his few and limited needs, he lived a full and rich life, and in his own living, he demonstrated the truth of his beliefs, which in the background of eroded faith appeared too noble to be true. It is in this light that we have to understand the vows and observances of the inmates of his ashram, which used to be repeated morning and evening at prayer time, and comprised non-violence, truth, non-stealing, *brahmacharya* or chastity,

non-possession, bread-labour, control of the palate, fearlessness, tolerance, i.e., equal respect for all religions, removal of untouchability and swadeshi in the performance of one's duties.

Let me close this with the assurance that no one who takes a dip into Gandhiji's stream of life as represented in this series will emerge disappointed, for there lies in it buried a hidden treasure out of which everyone can carry as much as he likes, according to his own capacity and faith.

RASHTRAPATI BHAVAN,
NEW DELHI,
January 16, 1958



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FOREWORD

In another month's time ten years will have passed since Gandhiji's life came to an end. He was of a ripe age, but he was still full of vitality and his capacity for work was prodigious. The end came suddenly by the hand of an assassin. India was shocked and the world grieved, and to those of us who were more intimately connected with him the shock and sorrow were hard to bear. And yet, perhaps, it was a fitting close to a magnificent career and in his death, as in his life, he served the cause to which he had devoted himself. None of us would have liked to see him gradually fade in body and mind with increasing years. And so he died, as he had lived, a bright star of hope and achievement, the Father of the Nation which had been shaped and trained by him for half a century.

To those who had the high privilege of being associated with him in some of his innumerable activities, he will ever remain the embodiment of youthful energy. We shall not think of him as an old man, but rather as one who represented with the vitality of Spring the birth of a new India. To a younger generation who did not come in personal contact with him, he is a tradition, and numerous stories are woven round his name and activities. He was great in his life, he is greater since he passed away.

I am glad that the Government of India are bringing out a complete edition of his writings and speeches. It is most necessary that a full and authentic record of what he has written and said should be prepared. Because of his innumerable activities and voluminous writings, the preparation of this record is itself a colossal undertaking and may take many years to complete. But this is a duty we owe to ourselves and to future generations.

In a collection like this there is bound to be a mixture of what might be called the important and the unimportant or the casual. Yet, sometimes it is the casual word that throws more light on a person's thinking than a more studied writing or utterance. In any event, who are we to pick and choose? Let him speak for himself. To him life was an integrated whole, a closely-woven garment of many colours. A word to a child, a touch of healing to a sufferer, was as important as a resolution of challenge to the British Empire.

In all reverence of spirit, let us undertake this task, so that succeeding generations may have some glimpses of this beloved

leader of ours who illumined our generation with his light and not only brought national freedom to us but also gave us an insight into the deeper qualities which have ennobled man. In ages to come, people will wonder that such a man once trod on our Indian soil and poured out his love and service to our people, and indeed to humanity.

I write this in Darjeeling with the mighty Kinchinjunga looking down upon us. This morning I had a glimpse of Everest. It seemed to me that there was about Gandhiji something of the calm strength and the timelessness of Everest and Kinchinjunga.

DARJEELING,
December 27, 1957

Jawaharlal Nehru

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PRIME MINISTER
INDIA

FOREWORD

Mahatma Gandhi once wrote, as a warning to those disciples who placed more store by his word than his spirit: "My writings should be cremated with my body. What I have done will endure, not what I have said or written." But he was one of those who spoke as he thought and acted as he spoke, one of those few in whom no shadow fell between word and deed. His words were deeds, and they built a movement and a nation and changed the lives of countless individuals.

That is why the Government of India decided to collect and publish everything that Mahatma Gandhi wrote, and every authentic account of what he had said. I am glad that with this ninetieth volume the Collected Works series comes to a culmination.

When Gandhiji was assassinated, Jawaharlal Nehru remarked: "We will not see him again as we have seen him for these many years. We will not run to him for advice and seek solace from him." But this set of books will enable us to seek guidance and solace from a man who showed how to locate and nurture the strength within. Through his experiments with the power within himself he became a Mahatma.

Gandhiji warned us against the danger of making a sect out of his thought. In reading him we should be guided by what he said about his writings:

> My aim is not to be consistent with my previous statements on a given question, but to be consistent with truth as it may present itself to me at a given moment. The result has been that I have grown from truth to truth. . . . My words and deeds are dictated by prevailing conditions. There has been a gradual evolution in my environment and I react to it as a Satyagrahi.

The volumes of the Collected Works provide a record of the evolution of one of the greatest men of history; they also provide source material on the making of our nation.

Gandhiji was a great persuader. He took interest in people's problems and tried to bring them around to his point of view. Many sought his advice on personal matters. So he spoke and wrote incessantly on a variety of subjects: not only eternal values like truth and non-violence but practical matters like keeping homes and streets clean.

I wish to place on record my appreciation and that of the Government of India of the dedication and competence of Professor K. Swaminathan and his team of editors, research scholars and staff who have laboured over the last twenty-five years to complete this monumental work.

CAMP: GOA,
November 26, 1983

Indira Gandhi

(Indira Gandhi)

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PRIME MINISTER
INDIA

FOREWORD

With the conclusion of the monumental project *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi,* we have arrived at what seemed a distant goal when the work was undertaken in 1956. Thirty-eight years in the making, the volumes, a hundred in number, including the present one, echo the Mahatma's thoughts clearly revealing Gandhiji's abiding faith in the spirit of man and through it the eternal values of human existence.

By a happy coincidence, this great work of putting together a vast mass of written and spoken words by Gandhiji and raising the present edifice of a hundred volumes is being completed in the year which marks 125th birth anniversary of Gandhiji.

These volumes constitute the written and spoken words of Gandhiji reflecting, in volume after volume, the mood and temper of the times and illuminating every aspect of modern India's political, social and spiritual history and aspirations. He was the master who could spiritualise the day-to-day experiences of the external world and at the same time turn his spiritual experiences into a science. As Gandhiji himself once said, "I do not think that I had any such contemporary who had made fasting and prayer a science and had been a beneficiary of it like me." India, which at the present juncture is debating various approaches to development can draw positive inspiration from Gandhiji's words and deeds which lead us to a harmonious whole between materialism and spiritualism, development and environment. There are times when one feels Gandhiji's views are more relevant than ever before.

In his Foreword to the first volume of the series, Pandit Jawaharlal

Nehru wrote : "There was about Gandhiji something of the timelessness of Everest and Kinchinjunga." We are fortunate and proud that through this monumental work, the Gandhian spirit will endure and continue to inspire generations of men and women both in India and abroad.

Gandhiji often expressed his wish of living up to the age of 125 and his desire should be honoured, not through the unveiling of his photographs and statues, but in a way "which would benefit the country socially, spiritually, economically or politically". And what better manner in which to honour his memory than to let the rich legacy of his words enrich our lives.

New Delhi
August 20, 1994



(P. V. Narasimha Rao)

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GENERAL PREFACE

The Government of India have undertaken this project of publishing the Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi not merely from a sense of requiting a nation's debt to the architect of its freedom, but from the conviction that all the writings, speeches and letters of the Mahatma need to be collected and recorded in one place for the benefit of posterity.

This series proposes to bring together all that Gandhiji said and wrote, day after day, year after year. His mission extended over half a century and influenced many other countries besides our own. Few great men have given their attention to a greater variety of life's problems. Those who knew him in the body as he trod this earth, striving every moment to practise what he believed, owe it to those who cannot have the privilege of learning by his presence and example, that they should hand over to the coming generations the rich heritage of his teachings in its purity and, as far as possible, in its entirety.

Gandhiji's writings, speeches and letters cover the period 1884-1948, and almost sixty years of very active public life. They are to be found scattered in various parts of the world, more especially in the three countries, India, England and South Africa.

The writings and speeches lie not only in the few books he wrote or were published during his life-time, but also in dusty files, Government records and Blue-books, and in stacks of old newspapers and journals in English, Gujarati and Hindi. His letters are with innumerable individuals, high and low, rich and poor, of every race and creed, all over the world. It is necessary to collect all such material before it perishes or is lost.

Several collections or, more correctly, compilations of his writings and speeches no doubt already exist. They have been published, notably by the Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad, under a Trust established by Gandhiji himself. Valuable as these publications are, most of them are limited to the Indian period of Gandhiji's work, and primarily to what was published in his own journals like *Navajivan*, *Young India* and the *Harijan* group of weeklies. Besides, they are arranged for the most part topic-wise, so that, sometimes, only extracts from a writing or speech relevant to a particular topic are given and other portions omitted.

So far as letters are concerned, the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi has done a great service by collecting and photostatting as many

of them as it could secure, but they have not yet been published. The letters collected by the Nidhi run by now into thousands. But many more letters still remain to be obtained and published.

Thus, no attempt has so far been made to collect all Gandhiji's writings, speeches and letters, to whichever period of his life they belonged and from wherever they were found, and to publish them whole and entire in chronological order. The task was beyond the resources of private individuals or institutions. Consequently, the Government of India have undertaken it.

Gandhiji's output in the way of writings, speeches and letters, even in the early South African years, was phenomenally large. The material pertaining to this period covers twelve volumes. The entire series, at a fair estimate, may run into more than 70 volumes.

Besides, his utterances were not confined to one language. He wrote and spoke in three languages: Gujarati, Hindi and English. The Editors' task, therefore, is not only one of collection, but also of accurate translation from Gujarati and Hindi into English, and from Gujarati and English into Hindi, the two languages in which the series will be published. Further, the work is complicated by the fact that the material for the early period of his life, spent in South Africa, lies outside India, in the Colonial Office Records in London and in South Africa itself. Access to sources in South Africa is comparatively difficult. In addition to the communications he addressed to officials, Gandhiji wrote copiously in *Indian Opinion*. Unlike his later articles in *Young India*, *Navajivan* and *Harijan*, *Indian Opinion* articles were unsigned. In the task of identifying and authenticating the writings of Gandhiji, the Editors have received valuable help from Shri H. S. L. Polak and Shri Chhaganlal Gandhi, both of whom had been closely associated not only with *Indian Opinion* but also with Gandhiji's other activities in South Africa.

In the nature of the work itself no claim of completeness or finality can be made for this collection. Later research may lead to the discovery of documents not now obtainable. It would have been inadvisable to wait indefinitely to achieve perfection. The task of improving on this work must be left to the future. For the present, however, every effort is being made to collect and verify all material that can be had, and to publish it with brief notes to aid the reader in understanding the text. If material is secured too late to go into a volume, it is proposed to publish it separately.

The arrangement of the material, as already observed, will be chronological, all items of a particular date, whether article, speech or letter, being placed together. The main reason for preferring this arrangement to publishing the different categories of material in separate series is that such separation would be artificial. Gandhiji often dealt with the same subject, now in a writing, now in a speech and now in a letter—all in the course of a few days. He saw life as a whole and not in compartments. His views suffered little change because of the form he chose for expression—writing, speech or letter. If all these are in the same volume side by side, strictly in chronological order, the reader would get a fuller picture of how Gandhiji functioned and how he dealt with issues as they came up. The volumes would then reveal the richness of Gandhiji's mind which, while dealing with matters of great public importance, concerned itself no less with intimate personal problems of individuals. The placing of personal letters amidst material dealing with public issues would mirror his personality much more faithfully and completely than if the letters were published in a series by themselves.

The aim of the series being to reproduce Gandhiji's actual words, as far as possible, reports of his speeches, interviews and conversations which did not seem to be authentic have been omitted, as also reports in indirect form of his statements. In the case of speeches, however, reports in indirect narration are included when their authenticity is beyond doubt, or when they are not covered by a report in direct narration, or when they give additional information not otherwise available. Documents or letters written by Gandhiji as a lawyer, purely in the course of his profession, and documents which are of a totally routine nature and of no biographical relevance have likewise been omitted.

This project was started in February 1956. It owes its origin to Shri P. M. Lad, then Secretary to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, who helped to lay the basis of the work before his untimely death in March 1957.

The control and direction of the series is vested in an Advisory Board, the original members of which were: Shri Morarji R. Desai (Chairman), Kakasaheb Kalelkar, Shri Devdas Gandhi, Shri Pyarelal Nayar, Shri Maganbhai P. Desai, Shri G. Ramachandran, Shri Shriman Narain, Shri Jivanji D. Desai and Shri P. M. Lad.

Shri Devdas Gandhi and Shri P. M. Lad died in 1957. Shri R. R. Diwakar joined the Board in 1958. Shri Jivanji D. Desai was succeeded by Shri Thakorebhai Desai in 1966. The

following are the members of the Advisory Board as reconstituted in 1967: Shri Morarji R. Desai (Chairman), Kakasaheb Kalelkar, Shri R. R. Diwakar, Shri Pyarelal Nayar, Shri Maganbhai P. Desai, Shri Ramdhari Sinha "Dinkar", Shri Shantilal H. Shah, the Director, Publications Division, and the Chief Editor.

The work of organizing the collection of material and the editing of the volumes was entrusted to Dr. Bharatan Kumarappa who was appointed Chief Editor. On his demise in 1957, the Advisory Board invited Shri Jairamdas Doulatram to be Chief Editor. He resigned in October 1959, and Professor K. Swaminathan took over as Chief Editor in February 1960.

The Chief Editor is assisted by two Deputy Chief Editors: Shri U. R. Rao for English and Shri Bhawani Prasad Mishra for Hindi. The Editors and Translators are: Shri K. N. Vaswani, Shri Govind Vyas, Shri C. N. Patel, Shri A. L. Tewari, Shri G. D. Gadre, Shri P. R. Kaikini, Shri A. A. Shiromany and Smt. Lakshmi Tripathi.

They are assisted by a team of Assistant Editors, Research and Reference Assistants and Sub-editors.

The following served as Editors and Translators during the various periods: Shri R. K. Prabhu (Editor Speeches, 1956-58), Shri M. K. Desai (Editor Gujarati, 1956-60), Shri S. C. Dixit (Editor Hindi, 1956-64), Shri P. G. Deshpande (Editor Letters, 1956-66), Shri Ratilal Mehta (Editor Gujarati, 1957-58), Shri Madho Prasad (Editor Speeches, 1959-64), Shri Shrinath Singh (Translator Hindi, 1959-63), Shri C. L. Narasimhan (Examiner Proofs, 1960-65), Shri Ram Singh (Translator Hindi, 1960-67) and Shri N. K. Desai (Translator Gujarati, 1962-67).

[January 1969]

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ADVISORY BOARD

The Advisory Board for the Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi consists of the following:

1.	Morarji Desai	Chairman
2.	Ramlal Parikh	Member
3.	R. R. Diwakar	Member
4.	Jitendra Desai	Member
5.	Joint Secretary (In charge of Publications Division Ministry of Information and Broadcasting)	Member
6.	Director Publications Division	Member
7.	K. Swaminathan Chief Editor Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi	Secretary Ex officio

In the earlier years, the following persons had been members of the Advisory Board: Kaka Saheb Kalelkar, Devdas Gandhi, Pyarelal, Maganbhai P. Desai, Ramdhari Sinha "Dinkar", G. Ramachandran, Shantilal H. Shah, Jivanji Desai, Thakorebhai Desai, P. M. Lad, I.C.S., and Shriman Narayan.

[April 1984]

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EDITORIAL STAFF

At present, the editorial staff consists of:

CHIEF EDITOR

K. Swaminathan

DEPUTY CHIEF EDITORS

A. A. Shiromany
J. P. Uniyal

DEPUTY DIRECTOR

L. S. Rengarajan

ASSISTANT EDITORS

M. Koteswara Rao
G. T. Munshi
(Mrs) Satyawati Bhargava
V. G. Mathur
(Mrs) Lalitha Zackariah
(Mrs) Nirmala Subramanian
(Mrs) Rama Misra
(Mrs) Anjani Bhushan
(Mrs) Usha Kiran Goel
(Miss) Sneh Rai

CONSULTANT

C. N. Patel

The project started in 1956 with Dr. Bharatan Kumarappa as its first Chief Editor. On his demise in 1957, Mr. Jairamdas Doulatram was appointed Chief Editor. He resigned in October, 1959 and Professor K. Swaminathan took over as Chief Editor in February, 1960.

In the recent past, the following had worked as Deputy Chief Editors and/or Editors: U. R. Rao, Bhawani Prasad Mishra, Anandilal Tiwari, C. N. Patel, K. N. Vaswani, G. D. Gadre, (Mrs) Lakshmi Tripathi, R. N. Tivary, S. K. Sundar and A. N. Singh.

Earlier, the following had served as Editors or Translators for various periods: R. K. Prabhu, M. K. Desai, S. C. Dixit, Ratilal Mehta, N. K. Desai, P. G. Deshpande, Madho Prasad, Ram Singh, P. R. Kaikini, Govind Vyas and C. L. Narasimhan.

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Assistant Editors who had worked in the past include: Shrinath Singh, Parashuram Mehrotra, Hasmukh Shah, Jaipal Nangia, Dr. V. B. Gangal, O. P. Sharma, Sangam Lal, S. Srivastava, C. S. Mohile, (Mrs) Urmila Kataria, (Miss) Rasik Shah, (Miss) M. B. Laher, V. G. Nesarikar, (Mrs) Bharati Narasimhan, A. Padmanabhan, (Mrs) Shyama Malhotra, M. V. Rajwadi, B. K. Ahluwalia, D. K. Rai, Hari Shankar Sharma, R. P. Dhasmana, Rama Nath Shastri, (Mrs) Rajani Aucharmal, P. J. Menon and (Mrs) V. Kanakadurgamba.

The above staff have been assisted by a large and competent team of Research Assistants, Reference Assistants and Sub-Editors at various stages in the work of collection, research, translation, editing and production.

[April 1984]

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

We have, at last, reached the shore. A journey of over three decades was not always comfortable, simple or straight, for, collecting, researching, editing and publishing all Gandhiji's writings, speeches and letters, representing his sixty years (1884-1948) of a very active public life was no easy task. The material was scattered in various parts of the world but mainly in India, England and South Africa.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru said on the occasion of launching the Project which came to be known as *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*: "It is most necessary that a full and authentic record of what he has written and said should be prepared. Because of his innumerable activities and voluminous writings, the preparation of this record is itself a colossal undertaking and may take many years to complete. But this is a duty we owe to ourselves and to the future."

It is thus with a great sense of satisfaction that we have now been able to achieve this objective.

In what is perhaps the biggest multi-volume project in the world, 97 volumes contain the writings, speeches and letters of Mahatma Gandhi. There are two volumes comprising subject and name indices. This is besides the Index of Titles and Subject Index given in each volume. The present Volume of Prefaces has been prepared for those who would like to have a running commentary on Gandhiji's life, times, activities and thought. Despite our massive effort, however, we cannot claim to have assembled in these volumes everything that Gandhiji uttered and wrote. We know, for instance, that we could not get the entire correspondence between him and Kallenbach or all that Gandhiji wrote to Mrs. Millie Graham Polak. We could get only five litters of Gandhiji written to Mazharul Haque. These too, we could get only through their reproduction in a Hindi book. According to the editor of the book *Ashiyana ki Awaz,* Smt. Haque could preserve only these and they were in such a bad shape that even making their photo-copies was not possible. They find place in Volume XCVII (Supplementary - Seven). Thus, although with this volume our great series is being concluded, we are still on the lookout for fresh material, and in case we are able to collect enough material for a book, we may publish these at some future date.

In conclusion, I would like to place on record my appreciation of the dedicated services of the present team of the editorial staff working under

the Chief Editorship of Shri R. P. Dhasmana. We for ourselves had set a target of completing the hundred-volume project to coincide with the beginning of the celebrations of the 125th birth anniversary of Gandhiji. At the time, we had five volumes in hand, and had it not been for their dedication, the Project would have taken two years or more.

While presenting the great work to our readers and scholars, we hope that in spite of its many shortcomings they will consider the volumes useful and worth our effort.

O. P. Kejariwal
Director
PUBLICATIONS DIVISION

[August 1994]

CWMG - C

ADVISORY BOARD

The Advisory Board for the Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi consists of the following :

1.	Morarji Desai	*Chairman*
2.	Ramlal Parikh	*Member*
3.	Jitendra Desai	*Member*
4.	Joint Secretary (In charge of Publications Division Ministry of Information and Broadcasting)	*Member*
5.	Director Publications Division	*Member*
6.	Chief Editor The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi	*Secretary* Ex officio

In the earlier years the following persons had been members of the Advisory Board : Kaka Saheb Kalelkar, Devdas Gandhi, Pyarelal, Maganbhai P. Desai, Ramdhari Sinha "Dinkar", G. Ramachandran, Shantilal H. Shah, Jivanji Desai, Thakorebhai Desai, P. M. Lad, Shriman Narayan and R. R. Diwakar.

The last meeting of the Advisory Board was held on the 27th of December 1978. In February 1980 the Chairman informed the Chief Editor that since the work of CWMG was nearing completion and there is no policy matter for consideration of and submission to the Advisory Board, it was not necessary to convene any meeting of the Advisory Board.

[August 1994]

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EDITORIAL STAFF

At present, the editorial staff consists of :

CHIEF EDITOR

R. P. Dhasmana

EDITOR

M. K. Rao (Retired recently)

ASSISTANT EDITORS

V. G. Mathur
(Mrs.) Rama Mishra
(Mrs.) Lalitha Zackariah
(Mrs.) Usha Kiran Goel
(Mrs.) Anjani Bhushan
(Km.) Sneh Rai
(Mrs.) Vibha Joshi
(Mrs.) Sarita M. Dalal

SUB-EDITORS

Illesh R. Shah
Kulshrestha Kamal
(Km.) Lalita Khurana

Earlier the following persons headed the project of CWMG as Chief Editors : Dr. Bharatan Kumarappa, Jairamdas Doulatram and Prof. K. Swaminathan.

U. R. Rao, Bhawani Prasad Mishra, Anandilal Tiwari, C. N. Patel, A. A. Shiromany and J. P. Uniyal had been the Deputy Chief Editors.

The following served as Editors/Translators : R. K. Prabhu, M. K. Desai, S. C. Dixit, Ratilal Mehta, P. G. Deshpande, Madho Prasad, Ram Singh, N. K. Desai, P. R. Kaikini, Govind Vyas, C. L. Narasimhan, K. N. Vaswani, G. D. Gadre, (Mrs.) Lakshmi Tripathi, R. N. Tivary, S. K. Sundar and A. N. Singh.

Assistant Editors who had worked in the past include : Shrinath Singh, Parashuram Mehrotra, Hasmukh Shah, Jaipal Nangia, Dr. V. B. Gangal,

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O. P. Sharma, Sangam Lal, S. Srivastava, C. S. Mohile, (Mrs.) Urmila Kataria, (Miss) Rasik Shah, (Miss) M. B. Laher, V. G. Nesarikar, (Mrs) Bharati Narasimhan, A. Padmanabhan, (Mrs) Shyama Malhotra, M. V. Rajwadi, B. K. Ahluwalia, D. K. Rai, Hari Shankar Sharma, Rama Nath Shastri, (Mrs) Rajani Aucharmal, P. J. Menon, (Mrs) V. Kanakadurgamba, (Mrs) Chandrika Vyas, (Mrs) Satyawati Bhargava and (Mrs) Nirmala Subramanian.

The above staff had been assisted by a large and competent team of Research Assistants, Reference Assistants and Sub-Editors at various stages in the work of collection, research, translation, editing and production.

[August 1994]

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FOREWORD

The main series of The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi comprises ninety volumes running to well over 43,000 pages of text. Five supplementary volumes, incorporating material that came in too late for inclusion in the right place in the right volume, are under preparation. This by no means exhausts Gandhiji's writings. There must still be numerous letters, notes and memoranda lying untraced in various collections, official and private. Many other items may never see the light of day, the addressees being dead and their heirs being unknown.

Thus some small corners of the huge mass of utterances that make up the Gandhian corpus remain unexplored. However, the mountain as a whole is now lit up and open for minute inspection. And here the difficulty arises from the sheer expanse and the tangled nature of the terrain. It is not easy for one to find one's way unaided and discover what one is looking for. How to pick the needed needles hidden somewhere in these ninety haystacks? It is to aid the earnest seeker in this predicament that this Index has been devised and compiled.

The aim is to enable the student to locate all the significant references to a topic and to help him to view them in their mutual relation and in their bearing on a dominant theme. The frequency and impact of such statements provide a measure of Gandhi's preoccupation with any theme and illustrate his method of thinking and acting in concrete situations. Mere mentions of any fact or subject so numerous that the listing of them would help no reader are left unnoticed.

The selected references are grouped together under general heads and classified in appropriate ways. Thus, under the main entry AHIMSA, one sub-entry reads: "and killing of harmful animals", followed by a list of volumes and pages. To guide the reader to more specific information, a cross-reference draws attention to sub-entries under DOGS and SNAKES.

At page IX of this volume, a Table is given showing the time-span covered by each volume. Where the topic is concerned with a political or social movement, the Table will help the student to place the pronouncement quickly in its historical context and to trace the changes in Gandhiji's attitudes to systems and institutions in response to changing situations. Gandhiji was not merely the

unquestioned leader of great political and social movements; he was the bearer of a message transcending history and circumstance. His main mission was to introduce a moral and spiritual dimension into individual and social thinking and behaviour. For the understanding of this universal and eternal message, the Table provides little help. But it does serve a purpose by showing how Gandhiji's "inconsistencies" appear only among statements made *ad hoc et ad hominem*.

If the Index is not technically perfect, it is because the material itself is amorphous, lacks contours and is not amenable to precise treatment. In this improvisation we have tried our best to encourage and help the student to understand Gandhiji's message and his humane and effective method of dealing with persons and situations. If this succeeds in inducing the general reader and the serious scholar to study Gandhiji's words and ways in greater depth and detail, we shall feel amply rewarded.

This is an Index of Subjects. It is proposed to follow it up with an Index of Persons. The present Index includes references to books, but in listing the names of persons mentioned as historical or literary figures, we have had to be selective though not (we hope) arbitrary.

Altogether the Index has over 4,000 entries, further sub-divided into about 9,000 sub-entries.

The Index has been thoughtfully designed and laboriously built up brick by brick, by a special unit comprising Shri J. P. Uniyal, Deputy Chief Editor, and Shrimati Anjani Bhushan and Kumari Sneh Rai, Asst. Editors. Much help was also rendered by Shri L. S. Rengarajan, Deputy Director. The sustained care and devotion they brought to bear on this complicated task are reflected in the clarity and helpfulness which the intelligent user will find in the entries and sub-entries and in their arrangement.

K. SWAMINATHAN

[April 1988]

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FOREWORD

This volume of Index of Persons is a sequel to the already published Index of Subjects. The volume seeks to bring together names of persons running through over 43,000 pages of text in the corpus of ninety volumes of *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*. Scanning individual indexes of ninety volumes for references to people is no mean task. The explicit purpose, therefore, of this tome is to furnish in one consolidated guided source, information on people addressed or mentioned by Gandhiji.

Some names of historical personalities and literary figures of the past which have been included in the Index of Subjects do not find mention here. For example, names of characters in *Ramayana* like Sita and Rama and of literary figures like Shakespeare and Kalidasa, do not figure in the Index of Persons. Also, entries from the five supplementary volumes could not be incorporated as they were not ready at the time this Index was being compiled. Names occurring in footnotes and addresses in letters have been ignored for the sake of brevity.

Though every attempt has been made to identify the names correctly and group entries accordingly, at times information as to the exact identity of a person was not available. In such cases, the names, though similar, have been indexed separately. For example, there are references to ten 'Kamalas' who could not be identified. They all figure separately in this Index, exceptions having been made only in cases where evidence indicated otherwise.

In arranging the names in alphabetical order, the surname has been followed in general. However, in some cases where the same surname in an Indian language is spelt differently in English, like Dutt, Datta or Dutta, only one spelling has been retained. A list of variant spellings of names figuring in the volumes and the spellings preferred, is given at page VII for the readers' convenience.

In cases where surnames are not used at all, the last part of the name has been taken into account for alphabetical arrangement, e. g., Rajendra Prasad has been placed under 'Prasad'. In cases where this has not been possible or where it would have led to confusion, the full name has been given such as 'Jayaprakash Narayan'. In the case of South Indian names, the last name has

usually been treated as surname but it has not been possible to follow this rule in all cases. Again, in the case of Muslim names, either part of the name has been placed first, cross-references to other variations having been given where considered necessary.

Though names have been given in alphabetical order according to the actual name of a person, sometimes the more widely known form of the name has been preferred. For example, Gandhiji's Secretary Pyarelal's name figures as 'Pyarelal' and not as 'Nayyar, Pyarelal' though a cross reference has been given under 'Nayyar'. Similarly, 'Madeleine Slade' has been indexed as 'Mirabehn' which was her popular Indian name and a cross-reference has been given under 'Slade, Madeleine'.

In cases where the identity of a person could not be established for lack of sufficient evidence, the fact has been indicated within brackets. Biographical information with some entries has been provided in order to assist the reader in distinguishing and identifying people having similar names.

At page XII of this volume, a Table is given showing the time span covered by each of the ninety volumes. The Table will help the reader in placing the reference quickly in its historical context and determining the period of time when a person was in contact with Gandhiji.

This index has been compiled by a special unit comprising Shri J. P. Uniyal, Deputy Chief Editor, Shrimati Anjani Bhushan and Kumari Sneh Rai, Assistant Editors, with occasional assistance in the early stages of the work, by Shrimati Usha Kiran Goel, Assistant Editor.

It is hoped that punctilious care and effort of years which have gone into this compilation will benefit users of this comprehensive index, through easy and accurate directions, in locating references to persons in the CWMG volumes.

A. A. SHIROMANY

[December 1992]

TIME SPANS COVERED BY THE VOLUMES

Volume No.	*Period Covered*
I	1884 to June 4, 1896
II	August 14, 1896 to December 17, 1897
III	February 28, 1898 to October 1, 1903
IV	October 8, 1903 to June 30, 1905
V	July 1, 1905 to October 20, 1906
VI	October 20, 1906 to May 30, 1907
VII	June 1, 1907 to December 31, 1907
VIII	January 3, 1908 to August 30, 1908
IX	September 1, 1908 to November 12, 1909
X	November 18, 1909 to March 31, 1911
XI	April 1, 1911 to March 29, 1913
XII	April 1, 1913 to December 23, 1914
XIII	January 9, 1915 to October 4, 1917
XIV	October 9, 1917 to July 31, 1918
XV	August 1, 1918 to On or after July 30, 1919
XVI	Before August 2, 1919 to January 31, 1920
XVII	February 1, 1920 to Before July, 1920
XVIII	July 1920 to November 17, 1920
XIX	November 19, 1920 to April 13, 1921
XX	April 15, 1921 to August 19, 1921
XXI	August 21, 1921 to On or after December 14, 1921
XXII	December 15, 1921 to March 2, 1922
XXIII	March 4, 1922 to May 7, 1924
XXIV	May 8, 1924 to August 15, 1924
XXV	August 16, 1924 to January 15, 1925
XXVI	January 16, 1925 to April 30, 1925
XXVII	May 1, 1925 to July 31, 1925
XXVIII	Before August 1, 1925 to November 22, 1925
XXIX	November 22, 1925 to February 10, 1926
XXX	February 11, 1926 to June 14, 1926
XXXI	June 15, 1926 to November 4, 1926
XXXII	November 5, 1926 to January 20, 1927
XXXIII	January 21, 1927 to June 15, 1927
XXXIV	June 15, 1927 to September 15, 1927
XXXV	September 16, 1927 to January 31, 1928
XXXVI	February 1, 1928 to June 30, 1928
XXXVII	July 1, 1928 to October 31, 1928

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XXXVIII	November 1, 1928 to February 3, 1929
XXXIX	February 3, 1929 to February 14, 1929
XL	On or after February 15, 1929 to May 31, 1929
XLI	June 2, 1929 to October 15, 1929
XLII	October 16, 1929 to February 28, 1930
XLIII	March 2, 1930 to June 30, 1930
XLIV	July 1, 1930 to December 15, 1930
XLV	December 13/16, 1930 to April 15, 1931
XLVI	April 16, 1931 to June 17, 1931
XLVII	June 18, 1931 to September 11, 1931
XLVIII	September 12, 1931 to January 3, 1932
XLIX	January 4, 1932 to May 30, 1932
L	June 1, 1932 to August 31, 1932
LI	September 1, 1932 to November 11, 1932
LII	November 16, 1932 to January 10, 1933
LIII	January 11, 1933 to March 5, 1933
LIV	March 6, 1933 to April 22, 1933
LV	April 23, 1933 to September 15, 1933
LVI	September 16, 1933 to January 15, 1934
LVII	January 16, 1934 to May 17, 1934
LVIII	May 18, 1934 to September 15, 1934
LIX	September 16, 1934 to December 15, 1934
LX	December 16, 1934 to April 21, 1935
LXI	April 25, 1935 to September 30, 1935
LXII	October 1, 1935 to May 31, 1936
LXIII	June 1, 1936 to November 2, 1936
LXIV	November 3, 1936 to March 14, 1937
LXV	March 15, 1937 to July 31, 1937
LXVI	August 1, 1937 to March 31, 1938
LXVII	April 1, 1938 to October 14, 1938
LXVIII	October 15, 1938 to February 28, 1939
LXIX	March 1, 1939 to July 15, 1939
LXX	July 16, 1939 to November 30, 1939
LXXI	December 1, 1939 to April 15, 1940
LXXII	April 16, 1940 to September 11, 1940
LXXIII	September 12, 1940 to April 15, 1941
LXXIV	April 16, 1941 to October 10, 1941
LXXV	October 11, 1941 to March 31, 1942
LXXVI	April 1, 1942 to December 17, 1942
LXXVII	December 17, 1942 to July 31, 1944
LXXVIII	August 1, 1944 to December 31, 1944
LXXIX	January 1, 1945 to April 24, 1945
LXXX	April 25, 1945 to July 16, 1945

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LXXXI	July 17, 1945 to October 31, 1945
LXXXII	November 1, 1945 to January 19, 1946
LXXXIII	January 20, 1946 to April 13, 1946
LXXXIV	April 14, 1946 to July 15, 1946
LXXXV	July 16, 1946 to October 20, 1946
LXXXVI	October 21, 1946 to February 20, 1947
LXXXVII	February 21, 1947 to May 24, 1947
LXXXVIII	May 25, 1947 to July 31, 1947
LXXXIX	August 1, 1947 to November 10, 1947
XC	November 11, 1947 to January 30, 1948

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TIME SPANS COVERED BY SUPPLEMENTARY VOLUMES OF THE CWMG SERIES:

VOLUME NO.	PERIOD COVERED
SUPPLEMENTARY I – XCI – 091:	1894 – JANUARY 14, 1929
SUPPLEMENTARY II – XCII – 092:	JANUARY 13, 1929 – DECEMBER 21, 1934
SUPPLEMENTARY III – XCIII – 093	JANUARY 16, 1935 – JULY 15, 1941
SUPPLEMENTARY IV – XCIV – 094:	JULY 18, 1941 – APRIL, 1947
SUPPLEMENTARY V – XCV – 095:	JUNE 29, 1900 – After DECEMBER 25, 1947 and WITHOUT DATES
SUPPLEMENTARY VI – XCVI – 096:	JULY 3, 1905 – DECEMBER 3, 1944 and WITHOUT DATES
SUPPLEMENTARY VII – XCVII – 097:	NOVEMBER 25, 1903 – APRIL 22, 1947 and WITHOUT DATES

Remark : The details of editions used for reproduction for individual volumes can be seen in a table given at the end of this volume (C-100).

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NOTE TO THE READER

The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi (English series) is a monumental document of Gandhiji's words as he spoke and wrote, day after day, year after year, beginning with the year 1884 till his assassination on January 30, 1948. In this series his writings, scattered all over the world, have been collected and constructed with stringent academic discipline and with an ethical sense of loyalty.

The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi (English series) (CWMG-original-KS-Eng-edition, called so after Prof. K. Swaminathan, the chief architect of the original series, who had led uniquely qualified team of editors) had taken about 38 years in the making (1956-1994). They are a series of one hundred volumes, intricately connected across the series, as an integrated whole. The CWMG-original-KS-Eng-edition volumes were published by the Publications Division, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, Government of India in the years 1956 to 1994. The exercise was directed by the CWMG Advisory Board of the Gandhi veterans closely connected with him. Some details in this respect can be viewed in volumes I, XC, XCVIII, XCIX, C, and the standard edition table.

The Electronic Master Copy as reproduced from the scanned images of the CWMG-original-KS-Eng-edition (Volumes I to C – 1 to 100) (1956-1994) is in the form of refined (finished) electronic images, matched with the original-KS-edition, word by word, verified with the original source-documents where necessary. This will now form the basis for all future printing, as impressions of the images thereof.

The Electronic Master Copy of the CWMG-original-KS-Eng-edition retains the original architecture – volume structure, font structure, line structure, page structure – including its visual look – fully and loyally. The Master Copy of the CWMG-original-KS-Eng-edition retains the original editorial edifice and content entirely and loyally.

The reproduction from the CWMG-original-KS-edition for volumes from I to XCIII-Supplementary III, and for volumes XCVIII-Index of Subjects and XCIX-Index of Persons has been done from the respective editions as printed at the Navajivan Press (Mudranalaya), Ahmedabad, India. The reproduction from the CWMG-original-KS-edition for volumes from XCIV-Supplementary IV to XCVII- Supplementary VII has been done from the respective editions as printed at different Printers from Delhi, India. The details of editions used for reproduction for individual volumes can be seen in a table given at the end of this volume (C-100).

The original manually prepared indexes – appearing at the end of each volume, and in the two volumes, of Subjects and of Persons – as appearing in the CWMG-original-KS-Eng-edition – give varied, numerous and logical profiles of Gandhiji's life and thought, action and engagements. Also, the Prefaces, as written for respective volumes when published, take us on an epic journey through his life and the nation in the making. Together, these navigators guide us far and wide and into the depths where computer technology may not lead us.

In the Volume C (100), texts of the individual Prefaces, as written for each volume as and when they were published, have been picked and stringed together to avoid any error of reproduction. Also, the Forewords that appear in volumes I (001), XC (090), XCVIII (098), XCIX (099) and C (100) (1994-Ed.) have been repeated here to give an overview and a perspective of the effort that took place in the years 1956 to 1994.

The task of preparing the Electronic Master Copy of the CWMG-original-KS-Eng-1956-1994-edition has been accomplished by the Gujarat Vidyapith (university founded by Mahatma Gandhi in 1920 as part of non-co-operation movement and for holistic education to help win swaraj), Ahmedabad, India, through a specially set up CWMG Cell in its premises.

Execution of the task involved an intensely focused, organic, and stringently supervised effort over a period of more than five years. A lot of research, customization, and innovation have gone into the process. The research and trials had started in the years 2006-07; the real work had started in the years 2009-10.

The preparation of the Archival Electronic Master Copy of the CWMG-original-KS-Eng-1956-1994-edition was accomplished in the year 2015. The same is in the following forms for every page of the full series of hundred volumes: (a) Cluster of *archival-source-images* and the *corresponding black-&-white images*; (b) *Finished-digital-image-PDF*s with *searchable text* as hidden layer in the backend; (c) *Finished-digital image-PDF*s as print-ready static, non-editable images organized in suitable folders for jacket cluster, including photographs, maps, etc. and the text from cover-to-cover, so as to facilitate all-time printing as an ongoing process; (d) The above data suitably reduced for web-display; (e) The entire record including the work record for all-time archivation.

The above work was first presented to the Government of India in March 2015. The BETA version of the Electronic Master Copy of the *digital-searchable image-PDF*s for the full series of hundred volumes was dedicated to the people of the world on September 8, 2015, in two forms: i. DVD SET / PEN-DRIVE; ii. Downloadable form – in volume-wise manner – on the Gandhi Heritage Portal hosted by the Sabarmati Ashram Preservation and Memorial Trust (SAPMT). A full, unbroken set of the hundred volumes of the CWMG-original-KS-Eng-edition-1956-1994 has been reprinted by the Publications Division, GoI, New Delhi from the Electronic Master Copy thus prepared at the CWMG Cell – set up at the Gujarat Vidyapith, and has been rededicated to the people of the world in June 2017.

The Gujarat Vidyapith, Ahmedabad, through the CWMG Cell specially set up at its premises, has performed the specific task of preparing such archival electronic record on behalf of the Publication Division, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, Government of India, New Delhi, with the permission of the Navajivan Trust, Ahmedabad.

[2019]

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Remark : The details of editions used for reproduction for individual volumes can be seen in a table given at the end of this volume (C-100).

ILLUSTRATIONS

GANDHIJI IN A CONTEMPLATIVE MOOD, SABARMATI, 1931 *frontispiece*

THE LAST JOURNEY *facing* p. 592

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PREFACE TO THIS VOLUME

The earliest period of Gandhiji's life which this volume covers was for the Editors the most difficult. Gandhiji was abroad for the later and more active part of it, and the material, in the original, was to be found chiefly in England, where he was a student, and in South Africa, where he went initially as a lawyer.

Fortunately for us, Gandhiji had preserved and brought back to India some of the material relating to this period. This consists of stray carbon copies of his correspondence, handwritten drafts of letters and memorials, typewritten or printed copies of petitions and pamphlets issued by him, newspaper clippings from South African papers and a few South African Blue-books in which were published some of his letters, petitions and statements.

Gandhiji did not, however, preserve all his writings. Referring to a document which he prepared on the fundamental doctrines of Hinduism, he remarks in his *Satyagraha in South Africa* (1950, p. 242): "I have thrown away or burnt many such things in my life. I destroyed such papers as I felt it was not necessary to preserve or as the scope of my activities was extended. I am not sorry for this, as to have preserved all of them would have been burdensome and expensive. I should have been compelled to keep cabinets and boxes, which would have been an eyesore to one who has taken the vow of poverty."

Research Assistants have been collecting for us material from the official and other records available in London and in South Africa. This has supplemented the material Gandhiji had brought with him from South Africa.

In the South African material are several petitions and memorials submitted by Gandhiji on behalf of the Indian community. They are signed not by him but by representative leaders of the community or by office-bearers of, say, the Natal Indian Congress or the Transvaal British Indian Association. That he drafted them seems clear from his own statement in his letter dated September 25, 1895 (published in this volume, p. 258) where he says, "The responsibility for drafting . . . the several memorials rests entirely on my shoulders." There is proof of this in regard to the petition to Lord Ripon in July 1894 which is signed by others and not by him, but about which he writes in *The Story of My Experiments with Truth* (Pt. II, Ch. XVII): "I took

considerable pains over drawing up this petition. I read all the literature available on the subject.''

Although Gandhiji lived in Natal for a few years from 1894, some petitions from the South African Republic or the Transvaal, as it came to be called later, have also been included in this volume. The reason for ascribing these petitions to Gandhiji is that he spent his first year in South Africa, i.e., a part of 1893 and of 1894, in Pretoria, the capital of the Transvaal, and came in close touch with the Indians there and their problems. He writes in his autobiography (Pt. II, Ch. XII): ''. . . there was now in Pretoria no Indian I did not know, or whose condition I was not acquainted with.'' He also says that he formed an association there, ''to make representations to the authorities concerned in respect of the hardships of the Indian settlers, and offered to place at its disposal as much of my time and service as was possible''. Though he worked in Natal thereafter, it is quite likely that the Transvaal Indians approached him to draft their petitions for them. Wherever he was, whether in Natal or the Transvaal, he was intensely interested in the Indian question in all South Africa, and he wrote constantly on the problems of Indians also in other parts of South Africa, like the Orange Free State and the Cape Colony, and even of Indians in Rhodesia, though he did not live in these places.

It must, however, be stated that not all petitions submitted by Indians were drafted by Gandhiji; some had been submitted even prior to Gandhiji's arrival in South Africa. These petitions were evidently drafted for them professionally by European lawyers. All the same, it is quite possible that once Gandhiji appeared on the scene and started taking deep interest in their problems, Indians, as a rule, got their petitions drafted by him. This is also the view of Shri Chhaganlal Gandhi and of Shri Polak, both of whom worked with Gandhiji from about 1904 and remained with him for the rest of his stay in South Africa.

Two other documents also have been included here, though they do not bear his signature. These are the Constitution and the First Report of the Natal Indian Congress. Gandhiji founded the Natal Indian Congress and was its first Secretary. A draft of the Constitution in Gandhiji's own hand has been found.

From available evidence, the first petition which Gandhiji drafted was in June 1894. Thereafter, he seems tirelessly to have framed petitions one after another in rapid succession. At this stage in his public work, he employed, for righting wrongs, the method of publishing facts and appealing to reason and con-

science through argument. It was after trying this method for over 12 years in South Africa that he came to the conclusion that, when vested interests refused to yield to argument, satyagraha or direct action of some kind was necessary.

Readers should remember that, during the period covered by this volume, Gandhiji was only in his twenties. The writings and speeches show remarkable self-restraint and moderation, strict conformity to truth and a desire to do full justice to the view-point of the opponent—characteristics which remained with him through life.

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HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN INDIAN PROBLEM

When Gandhiji came to South Africa in 1893, the country consisted of four Colonies—Natal, the Cape, the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. These Colonies were ruled by the descendants of Europeans who had discovered South Africa by sheer accident on their way to fabled India. They settled in it and developed it first as a convenient half-way house to the East, and later as their home.

The white people who were dominant in the country in 1893 were the Dutch or Boers and the British—the Dutch in the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, and the British in Natal and the Cape. The Dutch had enjoyed almost undisputed rule in the country for about 200 years before the British arrived on the scene and captured the Cape from them in 1806 and Natal in 1843. Most of the Dutch thereupon moved inland and took possession of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. The British, however, were settled also in Dutch territories and the Dutch in British territories.

There was constant friction between these two peoples, both seeking ascendancy in the country till, finally, it came to a head in the Boer War (1899-1902), as a result of which the whole of South Africa became a part of the British Empire. The British professed that they fought the War primarily to secure for British and Indian settlers in Dutch territories their legitimate rights.

At the time of Gandhiji's arrival in South Africa, the four Colonies were independent of one another and followed policies of their own. The British Government in London, at this time, maintained its agents in these Colonies to protect the interests of its subjects, and controlled the policies of their Governments to some extent. But later, when, in 1910, these Colonies came together to form the Union Government of South Africa under the British flag and acquired full self-government, the Imperial Government followed a policy of non-interference in regard to them as well as to the Government of South Africa as a whole, on the ground that South Africa was now a Dominion, and, therefore, a self-governing member of the British Commonwealth, free to order its affairs according to its own wishes. The grievan-

ces of its Asiatic subjects became then a matter for the Governor-General-in-Council of the Union of South Africa, and the capacity of the British Government to influence South African policies in this regard became nil. But this was not so during most of the time that Gandhiji was in South Africa.

In developing agriculture and exploiting the mineral resources of the country, the whites of these Colonies needed labour. They did not find the Africans steady and dependable as labourers, for they were content to live on what they obtained from their land, and most of them were not eager to work for wages. The British Colonies, therefore, arranged with the British rulers of India to have Indian labour exported to South Africa under an indenture or contract. The first batch of such labourers entered South Africa in 1860. When the period of contract was over, these labourers could return to India, or remain in South Africa and renew their contract for a further period of five years, or settle as free citizens on land allotted to them by the Government equivalent in value to the cost of their return passage.

These labourers were generally from among the poorest in India, untrained in hygienic habits and backward in several respects. Very soon in their wake came Indian traders to cater to their needs. This was the origin of the Indian population in South Africa.

It was expressly laid down by the Government of India, in 1869, before renewal of contract for further emigration of such labour, that the labourers should enjoy equality of status after the period of indenture, and that they should live under the ordinary law of the land and not be subject to legislative or administrative discrimination. This was agreed to by the Natal Government which had asked for such labourers, and further confirmed in 1875 by the British Government in London. Besides, the British Queen had, in her Proclamation of 1858, guaranteed the same rights to "the natives of our Indian territories" as "to all our other subjects".

The Dutch, however, were all along averse to Indians remaining in South Africa. They desired Asiatic labour (including Chinese) to be brought in for a stipulated period and repatriated immediately thereafter. They wanted their Colonies to be exclusively white, with the Africans confined to areas allotted to them.

This was also the desire of the local British, who, like other European businessmen in South Africa, found Indians formidable rivals both in agriculture and in trade. The Indian cultivator introduced new fruits and vegetables and produced them cheaply

and in abundance, thus bringing down the prices of the white farmer. The Indian trader lived cheaply, spent little on equipment or staff, and, could easily undersell the British and the Dutch. The whites, therefore, feared that they would be swamped by the Indians, if the Indians were allowed to enter the country freely and establish themselves on land, or trade as they pleased.

Accordingly, numerous restrictions came to be placed on Indians. The earliest of these was Law 3 of 1885 in the Transvaal, a Dutch Republic. It declared that Asiatics could not obtain the rights of Dutch citizenship. It required that, "for sanitary purposes", Indians should reside in Locations specially set apart for them, that they should not own fixed property except in such Locations and that such of them as entered for purposes of trade should be registered for a fee, and should obtain a licence.

This, however, was a flagrant contradiction of Article 14 of the London Convention of 1884, between Her Majesty and the Transvaal Dutch Republic, which declared that all persons "other than Natives" would have full liberty to enter, travel, reside, hold property, and carry on business in any part of the Republic of the Transvaal, and that they would not be subject to any taxes other than those imposed on Dutch citizens. The British High Commissioner in the Transvaal was there to look after the interests of British subjects resident in the Colony. But owing to pressure of agitation on the part of the whites of the Transvaal, whether Dutch or British, who spoke of "the threatened invasion of Asiatics" into the Colony, he advised the Home Government not to oppose the law, and the British Government in London thereupon announced its decision not to raise any objections to this anti-Indian legislation.

This reversal of policy towards the Indians in South Africa by the Imperial Government, in spite of its earlier pronouncements that Indians would have equal rights with other British subjects, opened the flood-gates to discriminatory enactments against Indians not only in the Dutch Transvaal but even in British Natal, and this at a time when the Imperial Government had full authority to protect its subjects in both Dutch and British territory.

All over South Africa there was racial discrimination practised against Indians—in trains, buses, schools and hotels, and they were not allowed to move from one Colony to another without a permit. In Natal, a British Colony, where Indians were in the largest number, a Bill was about to be passed in 1894 to disenfranchise Indians, thus lowering their status and preventing them from exercising political rights.

Gandhiji had come to South Africa in May 1893 on a professional visit as a lawyer. As he was about to leave South Africa in 1894, after the completion of his legal work, he noticed in the papers a reference to this Bill. On his pointing out to his compatriots, most of whom were uneducated, the implications of this Bill for them, they induced him to stay and help them. The work of seeking redress from this and other grievances of the Indians in South Africa kept him in that country for over 21 years, i.e., till 1914.

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PREFACE

The present volume relates to an important stage in Gandhiji's life. Signs of the coming conflict between him and the Government of South Africa become visible as early as 1896 and are reflected in the documents now being placed before the readers. The volume also records, in considerable detail, the circumstances of the first occasion when he risked his life in a public cause.

Gandhiji returned to his native land in 1896. He was then 26 years old. He had been commissioned to educate the public and the authorities in India in regard to the treatment the Indians were receiving in South Africa. He visited the principal centres of political life in India, met the leaders of the people, and addressed largely-attended public meetings. He also published some pamphlets on the question.

The contents of one of these pamphlets, popularly known as the Green Pamphlet (pp. 2-36), were misreported in the South African papers. A Press representative in India had wired to London a brief summary of the pamphlet and of the observations on it of *The Pioneer* and *The Times of India*. From Reuter's office in London, a three-line cable, a summary of this summary, reached South Africa and set there big events in motion. The misleading report of what Gandhiji had said in India enraged the white citizens of Durban. As the year approached its end and while the steamer bringing him to South Africa awaited permission to enter the harbour, the bitter agitation against Gandhiji reached its climax. When he landed in Durban, on the afternoon of January 13, 1897, he was almost lynched by a section of the crowd which had earlier gathered at the harbour. His life was saved only by the tact and courage of the Superintendent of Police and his wife.

The volume opens with the brief but historic document "Credentials", which empowered Gandhiji to speak on behalf of his countrymen in South Africa. This was appended by him to the Green Pamphlet which contained a graphic picture of the treatment received by the Indians in South Africa, where "the feelings of hatred crystallized into legislation", and, in some places, "a respectable Indian was made an impossibility". The Green Pamphlet was an authoritative document. It brought out the racial and imperial issues involved in the situation. Gandhiji had taken great care to be accurate in the presentation of the Indian case. Referring to his description of the treatment

received by the Indians in Natal, he says, "Every word of every statement to be made immediately can be established beyond the shadow of a doubt." In India, at this period of her political history, the Green Pamphlet constituted, probably, the most widely distributed material for propaganda on any public question. The great demand for it from the people, gathered at the Madras meeting and elsewhere, could not be met, and a hurried reprint of it was issued by Gandhiji on the eve of his departure from India.

The Green Pamphlet was followed by an independent and entirely factual "Note" (pp. 36-50) on the grievances of the British Indians in South Africa, accompanied by copies of memorials and petitions which had been submitted to various authorities. This note contains a lucid account of the position of Indians in each State of South Africa. It furnishes the reader with the background of the educative work which Gandhiji carried on during his five months' stay in India. For the student of the future, it paints vividly the insufferable condition of Indians in the British Colonies. It was against the state of things described in this note that Gandhiji led, for nearly twenty years, a sustained uphill struggle in the course of which he wrought the great weapon of satyagraha.

Gandhiji conducted his movement of educating public opinion in India both through the printed word and by personal appearance on the platform. He started by addressing a public meeting in Bombay presided over by Pherozeshah Mehta and attended by the leading men of the city. The available portion of his speech on this occasion when he, a young man in his twenties, directly addressed his own people and the leaders of the nation for the first time in India, outlined the problems which were facing the South African Indians (pp. 50-60). He explained how the tide of opposition from the European colonists and the local Governments had been rising against them, and how their political degradation and economic ruin were to be the result of the anti-Asiatic laws enacted by the South African legislatures. The Indians were, he warned, "hemmed in from all sides" and he appealed to the people of India and the Indian and Imperial Governments for the protection of their interests.

After Bombay, Gandhiji moved on to Madras to bring to the knowledge of the people of South India the humiliating treatment meted out to Indians. The Tamil-speaking region of the South contributed the largest share of Indian immigrants to Natal. The citizens of Madras were thus vitally concerned with what

was happening there. This was evidenced by the representative and responsive audience which filled Pachaiyappa's Hall to hear Gandhiji. Shortly before Gandhiji reached Madras, the Natal Agent-General issued a statement in reply to what Gandhiji had been reported to have said in the Green Pamphlet. The occasion of the Madras meeting was, therefore, utilized by him to refute the statement of the Agent-General. He substantiated his own assertions by a wealth of evidence which made the Madras speech (pp. 69-91) the most powerful utterance of Gandhiji during his visit to India.

An item of unusual nature—a detailed statement of expenses incurred by Gandhiji while touring the country in connection with his mission (pp. 104-15)—not only throws light on his movements and activities in India but, incidentally, supplies interesting economic data—the level of prices and wages at the end of the nineteenth century. Its chief value, however, lies in illustrating Gandhiji's anxiety to keep a proper record of all expenditure from public funds; it includes even such small amounts as half an anna. This trait of character, noticeable at that early age, marked his handling of public funds throughout his life.

The hostile situation which faced Gandhiji when his ship reached Durban, the incident of lynching, and his decision that no steps should be taken against those who assaulted him led to a series of communications to the Press, the Government of Natal, and the British Committee of the Indian National Congress in London. These communications—interviews, cablegrams and letters—introduce the reader to the document which forms the most important item in this volume, the weighty memorial of March 15, 1897, submitted to Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, the then Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, under the signatures of thirty-two leading Indians resident in South Africa (pp. 140-229). It paints, with an abundance of detail, the events which led to the anti-Indian movement in Natal and ended with the organization of a hostile mass demonstration by the white citizens of Durban. Some had proposed to form themselves into a human wall, "three or four deep and, with linked hands and arms, offer a complete bar" to the landing of Gandhiji and other Indians. The memorial describes the assault on Gandhiji while on his way home, when he was "kicked, whipped, stale fish and missiles were thrown at him, which hurt his eye and cut his ear and his hat (turban) was taken off his head". It supplies ample material, from the local Press, regarding the temper of the excited demonstrators, the attitude of leading officials representing the Government,

and the firm stand taken by the more responsible though less numerical section of British opinion, against the wave of racial intolerance and injustice. The memorial ends with a strong plea for a basic reconsideration of Government policy towards the Indians in Natal, a fresh pronouncement with regard to the status of Indians in the British Empire, and the withdrawal of the anti-Indian legislation proposed by the Natal Government.

Gandhiji's faith in British justice had not yet been impaired by what Indians had to suffer in South Africa. He, therefore, used the occasion of the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria for expressing the sentiment of loyalty and devotion which Indians entertained for her. The address to the Queen-Empress, inscribed on a silver shield and bearing twenty-one signatures including Gandhiji's, and other connected papers illustrate his attitude towards the British Empire in those early days.

The news of the great Indian famine of 1896-97 and the organization of a Relief Fund led Gandhiji to divert his activities temporarily and respond to this humanitarian call. He plunged into the work of collection with characteristic earnestness. The appeals addressed by him to the British citizens of Natal and the Transvaal and to the clergymen of Durban, as also the circular issued to the Indian community all over South Africa, are among the other documents.

The organizers of the hostile demonstration against Gandhiji at the Durban harbour had been promised that anti-Indian legislation, restrictive of the rights of Indians to enter, trade and settle in Natal, would be undertaken by the Government. The Quarantine Bill, the Trade Licences Bill, and the Immigration Bill were the triple fruit of this promise. The new legislation imperilled every right of Indians as citizens of the British Empire. Gandhiji carried on an energetic campaign against the Bills. As the reader approaches the end of the volume, he will find the several petitions submitted to the Natal Legislature and the Imperial Government and the personal and general letters addressed by Gandhiji to Dadabhai Naoroji, William Wedderburn and other public leaders in England and India regarding this legislation.

This revised edition of the volume is substantially the same as the 1959 edition except that the size has been enlarged to royal octavo. Item 1 of the first edition now appears as items 1, 2 and 13. A letter (item 6) which had not been available when the first edition went to print is now included.

PREFACE

The years 1898-1903 which Gandhiji spent in South Africa, except for a year (1901-1902) when he was in India, were a period of intense activity in the cause of Indians in South Africa. They were significant both in his personal and public life. He felt a growing urge at this time to simplify the manner of his life and to do some concrete act of service to his fellow-men. He served in the Durban Indian Hospital as a lay assistant, giving an hour or two daily to this work which brought him into close touch with indentured Indians. He also developed a special interest in the nursing and care of children.

The year 1898 saw Gandhiji devoting greater efforts to building up the membership and the funds of the Natal Indian Congress. When the Boer War broke out in 1899, he organized an Indian Ambulance Corps and placed its services at the disposal of the Natal Government. He was then proud of his British citizenship and anxious to disprove the charge, frequently levelled against the Indians in South Africa, that they were mere self-seekers and money-grubbers. The services which he and the rest of the Corps rendered during the six weeks at the front, often inside the line of fire, won warm praise from all quarters. Later, in a speech in Calcutta, Gandhiji recalled the rich experience gained by him at the front. Comparing its perfect order and holy stillness to those of a Trappist monastery, he said: "Tommy was then altogether lovable.... Like Arjun, they went to the battlefield, because it was their duty. And how many proud, rude, savage spirits has it not broken into gentle creatures of God?" (pp.264-5)

In October 1901, Gandhiji considered that his work in South Africa had come to an end and decided to leave for India. His countrymen there expressed their admiration and affection for him by presenting him with addresses and costly gifts. These latter, however, Gandhiji deposited in a bank, constituting a trust for the utilization of the funds for public work in South Africa. It was with some difficulty, and only after giving a promise to return if his services were required, that Gandhiji was able to leave for India.

Back home, Gandhiji attended the Calcutta session of the Indian National Congress and moved the resolution on South Africa. He addressed public meetings about the condition of

Indians in South Africa and met many prominent Indian leaders. He became specially attached to Gokhale, with whom he stayed for a month in Calcutta.

Returning to Rajkot, he tried to set up legal practice, but met with initial difficulties. His concern over South African developments expressed itself in frequent communications to the Press in India. He maintained close and continuous contact with his co-workers in South Africa, who were asked to keep him posted with developments in the South African situation. When there was a threat of the plague in Rajkot, he worked as the Secretary of the Volunteer Plague Committee. Shortly afterwards, he proceeded to Bombay with the intention of setting up legal practice.

In November 1902, his countrymen in South Africa urged him to return, as the visit of Joseph Chamberlain, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, demanded his presence. Talking of the uncertainties of his life at this time, Gandhiji expressed his faith in God as Truth as the one thing certain in this world, adding: "One would be blessed if one could catch a glimpse of that Certainty and hitch one's waggon to it. The quest for that Truth is the *summum bonum* of life" (Vol. XXXIX, p. 203). His return to South Africa was for him a part of that quest.

Arriving in Durban in late December, he found that the old Boer laws against Indians in the Transvaal were being enforced by the newly created Asiatic Department with even greater rigour. He led a deputation to Chamberlain and represented to him the legal disabilities of Indians in South Africa. The dismal prospects for Indians in South Africa led him to postpone his return home to India. He settled down in Johannesburg, and enrolling himself in the Transvaal Supreme Court, resumed active work on various fronts for the redress of the grievances of Indians. In a letter to Gokhale, he spoke of the growing tempo of the movement there: "The struggle is far more intense than I expected."

His personal life during this period was marked by a new phase of introspection. While in his earlier sojourn in South Africa it was the Christian influence, now it was the Theosophical influence that stimulated his religious quest and led him again to a serious study of Hindu religious literature. He memorized the *Gita*, which had become for him an "infallible guide of conduct", "a dictionary of daily reference", (Vol. XXXIX, p. 211). His appreciation of *aparigraha* made him cancel the only insurance policy he ever took out in life, an act of rare faith. His resolve that thenceforth his savings would only be utilized for public work brought about a serious misunderstanding between him and his elder

brother, Lakshmidas, which was cleared only a short while before the latter's death.

The movement of South African Indians gained new strength when, inspired by Gandhiji, *Indian Opinion* commenced publication in Durban in June 1903. The Indian community found in it an organ for "voicing its feelings and specially devoted to its cause" (pp. 376-7).

It is both interesting and necessary to understand Gandhiji's responsibility for *Indian Opinion*, though the paper never carried his name as Editor. This is what he has himself said about the weekly in the *Autobiography*:

> I had to bear the brunt of the work, having for most of the time to be practically in charge of the journal. Not that Sjt. Mansukhlal [Nazar] could not carry it on. He . . . would never venture to write on intricate South African problems so long as I was there. He had the greatest confidence in my discernment, and therefore threw on me the responsibility of attending to the editorial columns. . . . though I was not avowedly the editor of *Indian Opinion*, I was virtually responsible for its conduct (Vol. XXXIX, p. 228).

Then Gandhiji gives us an assessment of the significance of *Indian Opinion*:

> So long as it was under my control, the changes in the journal were indicative of changes in my life. *Indian Opinion* in those days, like *Young India* and *Navajivan* today, was a mirror of part of my life. Week after week I poured out my soul in its columns, and expounded the principles and practice of satyagraha as I understood it. During ten years, that is, until 1914, excepting the intervals of my enforced rest in prison, there was hardly an issue of *Indian Opinion* without an article from me. I cannot recall a word in those articles set down without thought or deliberation, or a word of conscious exaggeration, or anything merely to please. Indeed, the journal became for me a training in self-restraint and, for friends, a medium through which to keep in touch with my thoughts. . . . In the very first month of *Indian Opinion*, I realized that the sole aim of journalism should be service (Vol. XXXIX, pp. 228-9).

The problems of Indians in South Africa and the manner in which Gandhiji tackled them during this period followed the pattern of the preceding years. Fresh anti-Indian laws or reactionary amendments to existing ones, based on racial discrimination, continued to be passed or enforced, and they had to be opposed. These laws affected traders' licences, immigration, Locations and Bazaars, indentured labour, permits and franchise. On

all these matters, which touched the economic and social life of the Indian population in South Africa, Gandhiji followed his then usual practice of making representations to such authorities as the Town Councils, the Permit Office, the Immigration Department, the Asiatic Department, the local Legislatures, the Governor, the High Commissioner and the Colonial Office. On larger issues of policy that fell within the scope of the Imperial Government, he addressed petitions or led a deputation to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. On occasion, when he desired the intervention of the Indian Government, he carried matters to the Viceroy.

The second front on which Gandhiji continued to wage a struggle for the redress of Indian grievances was the local Press to which he addressed letters and gave interviews. While speaking at meetings or putting across his ideas through *Indian Opinion*, he exhorted his countrymen to turn the searchlight inwards, to reform and improve themselves, and so strengthen their case for justice and fair play. To friends and the friendly Press in India and England, he sent frequent reports, dispatches and statements on developments in the situation in South Africa. This was the general nature of Gandhiji's public work.

When the Dealers' Licenses Act of 1897 was passed, Gandhiji, towards the end of 1898, presented to Chamberlain a well-documented memorial bringing out its adverse effects on Indian trade. He personally appeared in two outstanding cases of refusal of licence— those of Somnath Maharaj and Dada Osman—but failed in both.

Apart from frequent representations to the authorities, Gandhiji wrote numerous articles in the columns of *Indian Opinion*, criticizing the licensing policy in the South African Colonies. He commented on Chamberlain's unwillingness "to protest against the Colonial policy in South Africa, even when it has been a clear departure from British traditions". The abuse of the Dealers' Licenses Act, in the six years following its enactment and particularly after the British annexation of the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony, led him to see "probably only the beginning of another struggle for existence on the part of the British Indian in Natal" (p. 528).

Immigration was another major problem which the Indians faced. Some comparatively lesser restrictions like the embarkation passes and visitors' fees levied on Indians, Gandhiji was able to get cancelled or modified on representation. But serious restrictions were often imposed on Indian immigrants through amendment of the existing immigration laws. The immigration laws of the Cape

Colony were comparatively liberal and Gandhiji was prepared to accept similar legislation in Natal.

The segregation policy of the Transvaal Government which took the form of a determined attempt to confine Indians to Locations and Bazaars presented another grave problem to the Indians. The judgment of the Transvaal Supreme Court, ruling that the Government had power under Law 3 of 1885 to compel Indians to live and trade in Locations, was a matter which greatly exercised Gandhiji and formed the subject of a series of representations addressed to the authorities, to British friends and to *India* in England and also to the Viceroy and the Indian National Congress. These representations, in addition to those to Chamberlain and the British Agent at Johannesburg, find a place in this volume. A petition by Europeans (pp. 357-8) instances how Gandhiji mobilized sober European opposition to the Locations Notice.

When the Mayor of Durban called for the tightening up of the Natal legislation against Indian traders on the lines of the Transvaal Locations law and the Bazaar Notice, Gandhiji condemned the move as "a premature effort to introduce into Natal the repugnant old laws temporarily revived in the Transvaal" (p. 384). Gandhiji adversely commented on a similar measure in the Cape Colony, but, at the same time, appealed to Indians in the Colony to avoid overcrowding and insanitation (p. 445).

The mass of indentured Indian labourers continued to suffer from various handicaps and restrictions. Gandhiji declared that there should be no immigration of indentured labourers against the wishes of the Europeans, but that no scheme of indenture with a compulsory repatriation clause should be accepted (pp. 475-6). Again, when the mining magnates of the Transvaal proposed to import 200,000 Chinese labourers, Gandhiji opposed the move on humanitarian grounds and demanded that the white race in South Africa should not permit the degeneration of the Chinese under inhuman conditions such as their segregation to Compounds (pp. 546-9).

Restrictions on franchise were a constant factor of the Indian situation in South Africa. When the Transvaal Government sought an amendment of the Draft Ordinance for Elective Municipal Councils to disqualify Indians as voters, Gandhiji petitioned the Legislative Council (pp. 399-400), protesting against this discrimination on the basis of colour.

Apart from these major issues which confronted Indians in South Africa, Gandhiji dealt with many secondary matters like the poll-tax on the children of indentured Indians, the prohibition on Indian

rickshaw-haulers, police excesses on the Indian traders in Heidelberg, and white mob fury against Indian traders in Umtali.

The outstanding characteristic of Gandhiji's utterances and writings during this period, whether public or private, was his continuing faith in the British Constitution, his appreciation of the privileges of British citizenship and his trust in the Empire as a family of nations. The congratulations he sent to the Queen on her birthday every year, the condolence meetings he organized on her passing away, the repeated references in his letters and petitions to the personal liberty and equal citizenship rights of British subjects, the frequent invocations of the Queen's Proclamation of 1858, the offer and participation in the Indian Ambulance Corps in the Boer War—all these were inspired by the Empire sentiment. "What was wanted in South Africa was not a white man's country", he said in his farewell speech in October 1901, "not a white brotherhood, but an Imperial brotherhood" (p. 245).

It was only towards the latter half of 1903 that events led him to doubt British *bona fides*. But the change of technique from patient petitioning to passive resistance was yet to come.

The Volume provides a graphic account, in Gandhiji's own words, of the conditions obtaining in South Africa at the turn of century which were one day to lead to satyagraha.

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PREFACE

During the period covered by this Volume, October 1903-June 1905, Gandhiji lived in Johannesburg, dividing his time and attention between professional and public work. He commanded a large and lucrative practice. A "Letter Book" contains a thousand letters, mostly to clients, all written in a little over three months. As evidence of his simple living, it is interesting to recall that he covered the six miles between his home and office on a bicycle and later on foot.

Indian Opinion, the weekly started in June 1903 at Durban, was kept going by generous advances from Gandhiji, who finally took it over entirely in October 1904. Not only did the journal consume a great deal of his time and energy, but it continued to be a constant drain on his resources. In a letter to Gokhale (January 13, 1905), he says that his office was being run in the interests of the journal and he had already become responsible to the extent of £3,500.

The two outstanding events of 1904 were the outbreak of plague in Johannesburg and the founding of the Phœnix Settlement. Gandhiji's contemporary references to these events reproduced in this Volume provide a valuable background and sometimes an interesting contrast to his more detached treatment of them in the *Autobiography*. When in March pneumonic plague broke out in the Indian Location at Johannesburg, Gandhiji took energetic and prompt measures for the care of the sick and for arresting the spread of the disease. How far-sighted and effective his action was, the Reverend J. J. Doke, his first biographer, brings out in his comparison of Gandhiji to the "poor wise man who by his wisdom delivered the city". (ECCLES. IX, 15.) Writing years later, Gandhiji permits himself a mild display of satisfaction at the thought of his daring at the time and of his influence on the people whom he served. (*Vide Autobiography*, PART IV, CHAPTERS XV, XVI, XVII.) But it is a different aspect of the story which is presented in the series of articles appearing at the time in *Indian Opinion*, and in his interviews and letters to the Press. The stress here is on the great work of the Indian community. Every effort is made to prove beyond doubt that the neglect of the Town Council was the main cause of the outbreak. By dwelling long and persistently on this painful theme, Gandhiji pleads that he is serving a trinity of interests, *viz.*, "truth, public weal and my countrymen".

His interest in vegetarianism and his letters to the Press regarding the plague attracted to him Henry S. L. Polak, then a sub-editor on the *Critic*. The kindred spirits were soon good friends. Albert West, another good friend, had earlier given up his own printing business and joined *Indian Opinion*. He found its financial position much weaker than Gandhiji had imagined. But he assured Gandhiji : "I remain on, whether there

is profit or not''. In order to examine and, if possible, rectify the situation, Gandhiji set out forthwith from Johannesburg, where he was living and practising, for Durban, where *Indian Opinion* was being printed and published. Polak, who had come to the station to see him off, gave Gandhiji a copy of Ruskin's *Unto This Last* for reading on the railway journey which took 24 hours in those days. The magic spell of this book brought about in Gandhiji's life ''an instantaneous and practical transformation''. He later translated the work into Gujarati, changing the title to *Sarvodaya*, (the welfare of all), an inspired formulation of the goal of the good life.

For Gandhiji, a seeker of Truth through action, the worth of an idea could be proved only by putting it into practice. The teachings of Ruskin not only reflected Gandhiji's own deepest convictions but in their exaltation of labour, of work with one's hands, they seemed to provide a ready answer to the immediate problem of putting *Indian Opinion* on its feet. A week or two earlier, Gandhiji had visited his cousins and nephews at Tongaat, where they had a beautiful garden behind their store. (Prabhudas Gandhi : *My Childhood with Gandhiji*, p. 35.) The idea then occurred to him that an orchard could be a pleasanter and a no less reliable source of income than a shop. The concrete result of this reading and reflection was the Phœnix Settlement, about 14 miles from Durban, on a plot 100 acres in extent, the cost — £1,000 — being met by Gandhiji. To avoid dependence on machines, the weekly was reduced to foolscap size. The issue of December 24, 1904 carries an article entitled ''Ourselves'', repeated in that of December 31, which makes no mention of Gandhiji's own initiative or share in the venture, but handsomely acknowledges the help of the Natal Indian Congress and the British Indian Association and of ''the devoted workers who have accepted a novel and revolutionary project''. In this manifesto Gandhiji re-states the objects of *Indian Opinion* as follows : to bring the European and Indian subjects of King Edward closer together; to educate public opinion; to remove causes for misunderstanding; to put before the Indians their own blemishes; and to show them the path of duty while they insist on securing their rights.

The disabilities suffered by the British Indians in South Africa continued to be heavy and numerous; they varied slightly from Colony to Colony and also from time to time. Among these were restrictions on immigration and on trading; on travelling in trains and cabs, on walking on foot-paths; on residence and trade outside Locations and the right to own immovable property. The irksome and corrupt doings of the Asiatic Department, the capricious decisions of Licensing Officers and Town Councils under the Dealers' Licenses Act; the inflammatory activities of Vigilants Associations and White Leagues: these were all menacing manifestations of trade jealousy and racial arrogance. The bad laws of the Boers were administered with more efficiency and thoroughness by the new British regime. In the articles ''Stock-taking'' in January 1904 and ''Yearly Balance-sheet'' in December 1904,

Gandhiji gives a fair picture of the clouds that hung over the Indians and of the tenuous silver lining that his indestructible faith in human goodness saw in them. Almost welcoming adversity for its power to chasten, Gandhiji concludes : "Ours is to work away in behalf of what we consider to be right and just and leave the result to Him without Whose permission or knowledge not a blade of grass moves".

By this time Gandhiji's attitude to the problem of indentured Indian labour had hardened. He welcomed the Government of India's refusal to permit further emigration without the amelioration of the conditions of those who had already settled in the Transvaal. In protesting against the importation of indentured Asiatic labour and against the attempt to reduce "free" Asiatics to sub-human serfdom, Gandhiji was moved, not by abstract theory, but by instinctive sympathy and profound concern for the welfare of future generations. It was this love of humanity (European as well as Chinese) — and not political or economic theory — which inspired his criticism of Mr. Skinner's report on Chinese labour for the mines, and which also evoked his appreciation of Mr. Creswell's action in resigning his post as manager of a gold mining company because he could and would employ well-paid white labour, while the owners, caring only for profits, insisted on his employing cheap imported labour. ("Mr. Creswell's Bomb-shell", 26-11-1903). But it was only occasionally that he mentioned the grievances of Africans or coloured peoples. Already, the young leader's action had come to be governed by the spirit of *swadeshi*, and was limited by the degree of responsibility he could accept for the conduct of his fellow-workers.

He is ever ready for a compromise which would meet in full measure the natural wishes and legitimate interests of the Europeans. He sees to it, and welcomes the fact, that, in regard to immigration and traders' licences, the British Indian Association puts forward the most reasonable and conciliatory proposals. In order to prevent any possibility of Indians "invading" the country, an Immigration Restriction Act on the Cape model is suggested; to prevent Indians "usurping" European trade, municipal control over the licences is accepted, subject to an appeal to the Supreme Court. ("Letter to *The Star*", 3-9-1904). He advises the Indian store-keepers of Ladysmith to conform to the directions of the Town Clerk and close their shops early, so as to disarm opposition from European rivals. When the Indian traders, after a long and strenuous struggle, win the test case of Habib Motan, he pleads with them not to take full advantage of their legally declared freedom to trade wherever they liked, but to use the fruits of victory "moderately and with prudent restraint". He has warm praise for British justice : "In British Dominions, no matter how high prejudices may run, there is always a haven of safety in the highest Courts of Justice". ("A Well-deserved Victory", 14-5-1904). Appealing to the Potchefstroom Vigilants to desist from violence and incitement, he says : "The history of British rule is the history of constitutional evolution. Under the British flag, respect for the law has become a part of the

nature of the people.'' (''The Potchefstroom Vigilants and British Indians'', 24-12-1904.)

In Gandhiji's writings at this time, particularly in his communications to Dadabhai Naoroji, one notices a constant appeal to the British conscience to stand by past promises and assurances. But one observes a stiffening of attitude, as when he says with reference to the Transvaal: ''Either the resident population should be well treated, or it should be driven out of the country. The latter operation, though drastic, would be far more merciful...'' (8-10-1904.) A few months later he sees a life-and-death struggle ahead of British Indians for the enjoyment of their legal right to live and trade wherever they liked, and their ''moral claim, certainly, to be placed on an equality with the Europeans, so far as the rights of trade, ownership of property and locomotion are concerned''. (28-6-1905.)

Never for one moment would he allow his vision to be blurred by prejudice, anger or pettiness. He recognised what merit there was in individuals as in nations. He found something to praise in controversial figures like Sir John Robinson, Dr. Jameson and ex-President Kruger. In the last, he finds a great and godly man who has left behind him a lesson of ''single-minded, though at times misguided, patriotism''. (''The Late Mr. Kruger'', 23-7-1904).

No detail was too small for him. The Happy Warrior, battling against injustice, does not neglect ''the mild concerns of ordinary life''. In letters to Chhaganlal Gandhi (April 17 and April 19, 1905), he asks anxious questions about the job-work in the press and the far-too-long complimentary list; and he gives elaborate instructions how to handle flour and *ghee* to make a good cake.

From the very beginning and through all the vicissitudes of political success and failure, Gandhiji used *Indian Opinion* for ''establishing an intimate and clean bond between the editor and the readers''. His writing was well directed and purposeful. A comparison of his Gujarati articles, so painstakingly informative and human, with his more abstract English articles on the same or related topics, brings out the influence of the reader on the writer. His articles on ''Sacrifice'' and ''The Value of Stray Moments'' show, like his lectures on religion, that no amount of professional or public activity could long keep out of his mind the eternal verities that formed the ground of his being.

PREFACE

The period covered by this Volume, July 1905 - October 1906, was marked by significant changes in Gandhiji's personal life as well as in the life of the Indian community in South Africa. His Phœnix establishment was now a home for his colleagues including some of his European associates like Mr. West, though, because of his commitment to the service of the Transvaal Indians and the need to find resources for *Indian Opinion*, he continued to stay and practise at Johannesburg. Here, his family life had become more settled; the large household included his colleagues and assistants. After dinner, he and the other members took part in religious study or philosophical discussion. His legal practice prospered despite the strict code of professional ethics he had accepted for himself. The emphasis on simplicity, even austerity, and on manual labour increased. He walked the distance of six miles between home and office, both ways. His experiments in dietetics continued. In a letter (May 27, 1906) to Lakshmidas, his elder brother, he declared : "I do not claim anything as mine. All that I have is being utilized for public purposes . . . I have no desire for worldly enjoyments of any type whatever."

Another development was his growing conviction of the need for *brahmacharya* in a public worker. He had not then recognized its value for self-realization. But during the difficult marches that had to be performed with the Stretcher-bearer Corps at the time of the Zulu Rebellion, he has recorded, "the idea flashed upon me that, if I want to devote myself to the service of the community in this manner, I must relinquish the desire for children and wealth, lead the life of a *vanaprastha*, of one retired from household affairs". (*Autobiography*, Part. III, Chap. vii.) Being convinced that he "could not live both after the flesh and the spirit", he took in his 37th year a vow of *brahmacharya* for life. Finally, it was at the Mass Meeting of September 11, 1906 that he discovered the beauty and power of a pledge taken, with God as witness, to suffer all the penalties of non-submission to a bad law, and then the principle which later came to be called *satyagraha* took birth.

Indian Opinion had in his hands become an instrument of increasing influence. Through the Gujarati columns especially, he tried to educate the Indians in South Africa in self-discipline, sanitation and good citizenship, and to prepare them for *satyagraha*. And he sought to inspire his readers by recounting the lives of great men and women like Tolstoy, Lincoln, Mazzini, Elizabeth Fry, Florence Nightingale, Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar and T. Madhav Rao. Practical difficulties forced him to discontinue the Hindi and Tamil sections of the weekly. His letters to Chhaganlal Gandhi contain detailed instructions concerning the contents, quality and lay-out of the journal. It continued to face financial difficulties and Gandhiji had to appeal for wider support from the community.

On the problems of the Indian community in the Transvaal, he made strong representations time and again through the British Indian Association. For example, he criticized the requirement of European references for Indian refugees returning to the Transvaal and the cramping restrictions on travel by Indians in tram-cars and trains. When the Constitution Committee was set up in March 1906, the Association forcefully presented before it the Indian viewpoint. The problem of permits had become so acute that the Association decided to file test cases. But the climax was reached when the Government decided to enact a measure to compel the Indians to register for the third time despite their voluntary re-registration on an assurance from Lord Milner. From the day the Draft Asiatic Ordinance was gazetted, the tempo of events in South Africa mounted. The British Indian Association protested against the Ordinance on August 25, 1906. On September 8, Gandhiji condemned the Ordinance as "a crime against humanity" and a means devised by the Transvaal Government for compelling Indians to leave the Transvaal. Gandhiji explained the unwholesome implications of the "Black Act" at a private meeting and asked people not to re-register. The Mass Meeting of September 11 was a landmark. In commending the famous Fourth Resolution, Gandhiji called on the community to refuse to submit to the Ordinance and to accept jail-going in consequence. The mind of the community was profoundly exercised, and it was decided to send a deputation to England to put the Indian case before the Imperial Government.

Indians in Natal too had their problems. Refusal to renew their trading licences had become persistent and common, and Gandhiji interpreted the situation as a clear contest between Indians and the whites. In Dada Osman's case, an appeal was preferred to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. The Durban Town Council resolved not to issue fresh licences to Indian traders and hawkers. Earlier, Gandhiji had proposed that the Natal Indian Congress set up a Committee for enquiring into licence matters. Other troubles had also accumulated. A £1 tax was imposed on Indians above 16 years of age. Prohibitive fees were levied for passes and certificates. The deputation to England thus appeared to be an inescapable necessity and the Natal Indian Congress decided to send Gandhiji. But, when the Zulu Rebellion broke out in February 1906, Gandhiji set aside all Indian grievances and not only suggested Indians volunteering their services as ambulance workers, but also made an actual offer to the Natal Government, which it accepted towards the end of May. The deputation was thus put off and Gandhiji, together with 19 associates, worked as a stretcher-bearer for nearly six weeks.

In the weeks following his return from the front in July 1906, Gandhiji was faced with the deepening crisis caused by official determination to go ahead with the proposal for compulsory re-registration. Lord Selborne's refusal to accept the Indian case on the Asiatic Ordinance and Lord Elgin's view that the deputation would serve no useful purpose

only strengthened the Indian community's resolve to send Gandhiji and Ally to England. At a final meeting, Gandhiji agreed to go, but only after securing individual pledges from leading Indians that they would not submit to re-registration. He considered the community to be on trial and, even on the voyage to England, his mind was full of the idea of resistance, and one of his despatches to *Indian Opinion* laid down the do's and dont's of the struggle.

On the broader issues facing South Africa, Gandhiji seldom failed to make his attitude clear. Thus, he condemned without reserve the harsh treatment meted out to Chinese workers in the mines. When the Coloured people presented petitions demanding franchise under the new constitution for the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony, Gandhiji expressed full sympathy with the movement.

During this period, Gandhiji addressed several communications to the leading newspapers of the Transvaal and Natal. In June 1906, at the invitation of *The Natal Mercury*, he succinctly summed up outstanding Indian grievances and the case for their redress. In a letter to *The Rand Daily Mail*, he demanded full civil liberty for Indians. When an Indian woman, Punia, was prosecuted because she did not hold a separate permit, he launched a vigorous campaign in the Press and succeeded not only in exposing the hollowness of the official case, but also in compelling the papers to retract a statement published by them traducing the honour of Indian women.

Gandhiji was concerned not merely with agitation against discriminatory treatment; he continued to offer his usual, constructive advice to Indians. When the Natal Government proposed a commission to investigate the scope for local manufacture of goods, he urged Indian merchants to tender evidence before it. The cause of Indian education was a matter which he ceaselessly advocated, citing the example of educational progress in Baroda and endorsing the advice of Gokhale. He supported a move for an Indian Chamber of Commerce in South Africa.

Gandhiji kept close track of events in India. The demands of the Indian situation were constantly in his mind. He advocated the abolition of the Salt Tax. When the agitation against the partition of Bengal became acute, he called for unity and supported the boycott of British goods. He hailed the progress of the *swadeshi* movement and emphasized the need for communal harmony. He commended the adoption of *Bande Mataram* as India's national anthem, and of Hindustani as a common language for achieving nationhood. He took note of the work of Indian leaders, and supported Gokhale's nomination to the Congress presidentship. He called for greater consideration towards India's aspirations in view of her being " an integral part of the Empire " and supported the demand for Home Rule in the name of justice and humanity.

Significant events in the world at large also attracted his attention. The new Russian constitution based on the elective principle, he considered a forward step. He thought the revolution of 1905, if successful, would

be hailed as "the greatest victory and the greatest event of the century". He ascribed Japan's greatness to her faithful implementation of the Mikado's edicts in regard to education and to the conduct of the armed forces.

This volume furnishes the detailed context in which Gandhiji chose the *vanaprastha* way of life and emerged as a leader of men who realized that "some new principle had come into being". This was *satyagraha*, a clear and soul-satisfying alternative to constitutional agitation.

CWMG - C

PREFACE

This volume, which contains a large proportion of letters and articles translated from the Gujarati, covers the period from October 20, 1906 to May 31, 1907. It opens with the arrival at Southampton of Gandhiji and Mr. H. O. Ally on a deputation.

Gandhiji was busy even on board ship preparing the case against the Transvaal Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance. From the day of his landing to the day he left England, he worked strenuously. It was his daily routine to leave the hotel, immediately after breakfast, on his round of visits to influential persons. Returning in the evening, he was busy dictating notes or letters till past midnight. He met Members of Parliament, ex-Governors and retired civil servants from India, publicists and social workers. He approached even those who opposed India's aspirations, appealed to their "Imperial" sentiment and succeeded in enlisting their support for the cause of the British Indians in South Africa. Here as elsewhere he pursued his usual practice of discovering and concentrating on areas of agreement instead of dwelling on differences. He drafted letters and memorials not only on behalf of the deputation, but also for the South African Indian students at Lincoln's Inn, the Chinese Ambassador, the representatives of wholesale merchants and many others.

He was able to persuade a number of persons eminent in British public life to form themselves into an "introducing deputation". His representations and the support he mustered for them seem to have carried weight, at least initially, with the two Secretaries of State, and Lord Elgin decided that he could not advise His Majesty to sanction the Transvaal Ordinance without further consideration.

During his brief stay in England, Gandhiji found time to call on old friends, like Dr. Oldfield and Mrs. Freeth, and relatives of his associates in South Africa even though he was preoccupied with the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance and Natal legislation. He arranged for the boarding and education of Ruthnam Pather and medical attention for Mr. Ally, but he had no time to have himself treated for his own nose and tooth troubles.

To consolidate the work of the Deputation and to meet future contingencies, Gandhiji had a permanent body formed in England—the South Africa British Indian Committee—with L. W. Ritch as secretary.

Hopeful of the success of the Deputation's efforts, Gandhiji and Ally left England on December 1, reaching Cape Town on December 18. During the voyage, Gandhiji received two telegrams at Madeira, informing him that the British Government had withheld sanction to the

Ordinance. His joy was to be short-lived; for, on December 6, the Transvaal was granted self-government, and the new Government re-enacted the obnoxious Ordinance. Rushed through all the stages on March 22, the law received the sanction of the Imperial Government on May 9. This was not wholly unexpected. Indeed, on reaching South Africa, Gandhiji resumed the task of reminding Indians of the realities of the situation and of their resolve—embodied in the famous Fourth Resolution of September 1906—not to submit to the humiliating Ordinance, if it was passed.

Much of what Gandhiji wrote and said during this period was about the impending struggle. He used all his intellectual and moral resources to rouse and sustain, among Indians, the spirit of resistance and readiness for any sacrifice, including gaol-going. Indicative of his mood at the time is his reference to the suffragette movement in England, which he had had occasion to observe. ("When Women Are Manly, Will Men Be Effeminate?" pp. 335-6).

It was at this time that he summarized, in the Gujarati columns of *Indian Opinion*, a few chapters from Salter's *Ethical Religion*. This taught that all moral action is voluntary and disinterested, that the moral law is immutable and above all temporal laws, and that an ethical idea is worthless so long as it is not followed by corresponding action. These chapters, like Gandhiji's references to past and contemporary examples of heroic action, served to emphasize the moral basis of the struggle which he was about to launch to uphold India's honour in South Africa. He gave the signal, by himself first taking the pledge of passive resistance, in a historic letter addressed to *Indian Opinion* ("Mr. Gandhi's Pledge", pp. 448-9).

Gandhiji made use of the Press more intensively than ever to clarify the Indian viewpoint and to refute hostile allegations. While preparing for the struggle, he was at the same time ready to negotiate peace. In a letter to *The Star* (pp. 501-2), he pleads for "a reasonable compromise" and appeals even at that late hour to the good sense of the Colonists.

Summing up his personal faith and outlook in a letter to his elder brother, Lakshmidas Gandhi, (pp. 430-5) Gandhiji declares that his family now "comprises all living beings". The ground-note of the Volume is to be heard clearly in a speech to the Durban Mahomedan Association (p. 265): "I believe God is always near me. He is never away from me. May you also act in this faith. Believe that God is near you and always follow Truth."

PREFACE

This volume covers the seven months from June to December 1907. The Transvaal Asiatic Registration Act replacing the ordinance disallowed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies was passed, as we have already seen, by the new Transvaal Parliament at a single sitting on March 21. It received Royal assent on June 8 and came into force on July 1. The Indian community's struggle against the "obnoxious law" which was launched at the mass meeting in the old Empire Theatre on September 11, 1906 was now carried on by the Passive Resistance Association, an *ad hoc* body specially set up for the purpose (*Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XVI).

Contrasting the position of the Transvaal Indians after the legislation with that before it, Gandhiji declared: "The whole of the Transvaal would... become... a wretched gaol. It does, indeed, need the intoxication of power to blind one to the wretched state of misery to which the new law reduces Asiatics" (p. 20). The regulations framed under the Act could hardly wipe out the slur cast by it on the Indians. What made the Act obnoxious was not the taking of finger-impressions but the element of compulsion and the deliberate intent to insult the community. It was "degrading to their manhood and offensive to their religion" (p. 212). Gandhiji offered voluntary registration as a compromise if the laws were repealed. The offer was not accepted and hence there was no alternative but "to submit to a higher law, namely, that which dictates to mankind an idea of self-respect and respect for declarations solemnly and sincerely made" (p. 233). To submit to this higher law, Gandhiji advised passive resistance to the "obnoxious law" of the Transvaal Government.

However, passive resistance for Gandhiji was not just a form of effective political action as it was for the British suffragettes to whom he made many admiring references in his efforts to instil self-respect and courage among the South African Indians. He invested the idea of passive resistance with an ethical and spiritual content, and, finding support for his doctrine in Thoreau's essay on "Civil Disobedience", he summarized it both in English and Gujarati. However, he found the term "passive resistance" inadequate and misleading. The Indian movement, he asserted, was "really not resistance but a policy of communal suffering" (p. 67). Defiance of the law would lead to the imposition of fines. Indians would not pay them, but would prefer imprisonment. If licences were denied, they would trade without them. Indians knew the consequences of breaking the law and were prepared

to suffer them "with quiet dignity and resignation" (p. 88). Passive resistance, as Gandhiji conceived it, was to be a means of ethical education. If man-made law had to be violated in order to vindicate the claims of truth and justice, it must be done with scrupulous adherence to truth. While defying a law that was unjust, the Indian community on its part must strive to rid itself of the many patent evils in its private and public life, and learn to live constantly in accord with the dictates of the divine law.

The emphasis that Gandhiji desired to give to the spiritual content of his movement was obscured by the term "passive resistance". He also felt that self-respect required that Indians should learn to use their own language with proficiency. *Indian Opinion* therefore offered a prize for a suitable Indian equivalent for that term. Maganlal Gandhi suggested *sadagraha*, which Gandhiji changed to *satyagraha*. It proved to be a felicitous expression, symbolizing as it did Gandhiji's life-long search for truth in its perfection.

Fully aware of the implications and importance of the struggle, Gandhiji poured forth his soul week after week in *Indian Opinion*, which thus became "a faithful mirror of the current history of the Indian community" (*Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XX). He dealt at length, especially in the Gujarati articles, with every aspect of the struggle, its causes and consequences, techniques and procedures, prospects of failure and success. He went for inspiration not only to Jesus and Thoreau and the heroic resisters of evil in the ancient Indian epics, but also to the contemporary examples of suffragettes, non-conformists, Sinn Feiners and Boers.

Picketing of Registration Offices was systematically organized; it was to be peaceful and free from all "display of ill-temper". Strong language was to be eschewed as much as physical violence. Those who would avoid the yoke of the Asiatic Act ought not to impose on their opponents the more terrible yoke of ignorant brow-beating and intimidation (p. 255). The picketing was effective; the Registration Office moved from town to town, but the boycott saw to it that it remained idle. Less than five per cent. of the community took out "the bond of slavery", though the time-limit for registration was extended again and again. The names of the blacksheep—"the piano-players", as they were called—were published in *Indian Opinion* as much to warn others as to shame the cowardly. The appeal was to self-respect rather than to fear. When a group of Indians made a surrender proposal, Gandhiji conceived and executed the idea of presenting a monster petition signed by over 4,500 Indians, showing that the mass of Indians opposed the law.

Gandhiji addressed numerous meetings of the British Indian Association, the Hamidia Islamic Society and the Chinese Association.

He spoke to groups of Europeans as well as to mass meetings of Indians held in the open air. Even at the height of the struggle, he continued the more conventional methods of agitation, addressing letters to Government and public organizations in South Africa and India as well as to prominent people in South Africa, India and England. In London, the South Africa British Indian Committee continued to be his main instrument of representation and public education. The volume carries several examples of the letters he wrote to the South African Press in a patient, painstaking and persistent effort to remove misunderstanding, refute misrepresentation and arouse sympathy for the cause. By the end of the year, he could write that an increasing number of newspapers controlled by the whites condemned the Government and wished success to the Indians (p. 445).

He saw clearly that the aims and methods of the struggle were of more than local or temporary significance; he was aware of their meaning for man everywhere. "Indians in the Transvaal will stagger humanity without shedding a drop of blood" (p. 118). Here was an acid test for British statesmanship: would the Imperial arm protect the weak Indians from the strong whites, or strengthen the hands of the tyrants to crush the weak and the helpless? (p. 88). With faith still unshaken in British institutions, he wrote: "It is because I consider myself to be a lover of the Empire for what I have learned to be its beauties that, seeing, rightly or wrongly, in the Asiatic Law Amendment Act seeds of danger to it, I have advised my countrymen at all costs to resist the Act in the most peaceful and, shall I add, Christian manner" (p. 409).

However, the Transvaal Government did not respond to these appeals. In December, on the very day on which Royal assent to the Transvaal Immigration Act was gazetted, General Smuts decided to prosecute Gandhiji and other leaders. The move was welcomed by Gandhiji as being indeed the "only method of testing the reality and universality of Asiatic feeling" (p. 468).

The trials in court in which Gandhiji now figures, mostly in defence of passive resisters, are a new phase of his professional and public life. His shrewdness as a lawyer enabled him to use open defiance of repugnant laws as a means of educating public opinion. He advised his clients to plead not guilty, so that the court could hear from their own mouths what they had to say (p. 467). The trials brought more publicity to his movement than all the petitions and deputations had done so far, and compelled the Imperial Government to take notice of what was happening to citizens of an empire which claimed to be the most civilized in the history of the world.

CWMG - C

PREFACE

This volume, which covers the first eight months of 1908, begins and ends on a note of protest. Well before the Transvaal had become self-governing and the Dutch Party came to power, Indians had with awesome unanimity declared, in their mass meeting of September 1906, that they would never consent to remain pass-bearing helots among the white Spartans. This is the volume of Gandhiji's first satyagraha, and its principal challenge for the reader is: why did the compact so earnestly arrived at between the Government and the Asiatic communities fail? The compromise aroused hopes without fulfilling them and the volume dramatically ends with a bonfire of Asiatic passes—a poignant gesture of peaceful defiance by an unenfranchised community. Indians were far from becoming Lord Ampthill's "partners in the Empire". Shocked as he was by what he called Smuts' "breach of the compromise", Gandhiji still speaks with a righteous and conciliatory voice that is not afraid to hope. Until the last he is appealing "from the new to the old Liberals", from Elgin and Morley to Ampthill, Chamberlain and Rhodes, from those who saw Liberalism as a procedure rather than a principle and were thus inhibited from altering the course of Colonial events by an illusory regard for the freedom of the self-governing colonies to others for whom Imperialism was still a mission of raising subject races to the level of their rulers. In this philosophy, Gandhiji still saw hope and a belief in the possibility of human growth and improvement. Liberalism had been fouled by a misreading of Bentham and by his "greatest good of the greatest number" which militated against racial minorities. In South Africa it had resulted only in the sanctification of popular prejudice and in mandatory democracy. Thus it fell to a believer to show not only—as Mr. Pollock touchingly observed—what true Imperialism meant (p. 150), but that Liberalism had lost its nerve.

On December 28, 1907, Gandhiji was sentenced to leave the Colony within 48 hours, as he had refused to register under the hateful Asiatic Registration Act. Like much else that happens in this volume, there was nothing fortuitous about the punishment that the Government chose for this "ring leader" of the Indians. Under the Immigrants' Restriction Act for which temporizing Royal assent had been skilfully obtained, Smuts had already armed himself with the power of deportation which no British Government in the Transvaal had ever possessed. Moreover, the Act could be used, in conjunction with the Asiatic Act, to exclude educated Indians in

whom Smuts saw the source of disaffection. Many of the apparent contradictions in Smuts' speech and action become resolved in the view that he acted consistently on the belief that satyagraha was a contrived campaign of agitation without basis in felt grievances. In the last resort, deportation of the ring leaders was the decisive solution to the Indian problem and, if the resident Indians could be made to endorse this remedy, Smuts would have been glad to "fob them off with trinkets". In fact, he declared at Richmond that he had entered into the compact only to reduce the Asiatic population in the Colony (p.505). Seen thus his intention acquires a unity. Yet the issue of educated Asiatics did not come to a head till June 22, 1908. The image of the Colonial Secretary that emerges from these pages is that of a cautious person, determined of purpose and misleadingly reticent. Cautious because he was yet new to power and unsure of an Imperial Government which had fought a war ostensibly in defence of British Indians' rights; he knew the hazards of politics in a plural society and had to pick his way gingerly among many rival claims and interests. His reticence was that of a mind made up which revealed itself only through action. And for his determination of purpose, this volume is valuable testimony.

On January 10, Gandhiji, Thambi Naidoo and Leung Quinn were sentenced to two months' imprisonment for having disobeyed the earlier order of the Court. And many vital spirits followed them there. In jail, Gandhiji was reading Carlyle and Ruskin amidst the discomforts of prison life and his political anxieties; he saw something of himself in Socrates whose life had been a long satyagraha against a society entrenched in error and prejudice. On January 21, Mr. Cartwright, the "angel of peace", who had himself gone to prison earlier for the sake of conscience, came to visit Gandhiji in jail and to discuss proposals for a compromise. Cartwright belonged to that wing of the Progressive Party which was disposed to take the responsibilities of Imperialism seriously. And he brought a draft letter which had been approved if not drafted by General Smuts.

Gandhiji's changes in the draft letter (pp. 40-2) evidence an astute and far-seeing intelligence that also made for accord. The compromise letter had been so drawn up as "not to shock the whites" and oral promises—such as the repeal of the Asiatic Registration Act — were unrecorded. He sought in the main to secure the domiciliary rights of Indians then outside the Transvaal: many of these were refugees who had left the Colony during the Boer War and persons, both within and without, holding £3 Dutch certificates as their title of residence. He also asked for the exemption of children from voluntary registration and above all insisted that voluntary registrants should be

exempt not only from the "penalties of the Act" but the Act itself. If these changes were not acceded to, Gandhiji and his co-satyagrahis were willing to continue in jail. For honour was "a state of mind that does not countenance the loss of a right" and so was satyagraha.

Gandhiji met Smuts on January 30 and again on February 3, and made sure (1) that voluntary registration would not be validated under the Asiatic Registration Act but by amendment of the Immigrants' Restriction Act instead or by other acceptable means and (2) that the Asiatic Registration Act would be repealed "during the next session" of Parliament. This private promise was publicly confirmed by Smuts in his speech of February 6 at Richmond (pp. 504-5). In fact, Gandhiji drew up a notice at Chamney's instance in the Indian and Chinese languages, promising repeal of the Act "if the Asiatic communities carried out their compact" (p. 437). This was from his sick-bed in Doke's house where he was convalescing after an assault on him.

Voluntary registration, which Indians offered as a body for the first time on September 11, 1906 and again on March 29, 1907, would secure the legitimate objectives of the Government — the identification, in particular, of all Asiatics lawfully resident in the Colony. This offer was in return for the repeal of the Asiatic Registration Act which rested on an unproven charge that the bulk of Indians in the Transvaal had entered the Colony by fraudulent means. It was thus implicatory legislation and cast a slur on the community as a whole. The Transvaal Government had held out against the Indians' offer for over a year; that it was eventually accepted shows the magnitude of the Indian achievement which the compromise represented. But Indians must not become overweening, for it was not their triumph but a victory for truth. In their finest hour, therefore, Gandhiji tirelessly enjoined humility on fellow-Indians and himself practised it in order to save General Smuts embarrassment in the eyes of his white electorate.

Writing on May 9, however, the happy healer allows himself a paean of joy, confident that the clean wound he has made will soon mend: "... almost every Asiatic ... has allowed himself to be identified afresh. Of the eight thousand odd applications made, six thousand have already been approved and passed. This is a creditable record on either side.... It now remains for the Government... to repeal the Asiatic Act, and to legalize voluntary registration in a manner acceptable.... The Colonial principle [of restricting entry of new-comers] has been accepted by the Indian community. There need, therefore, be no further cause for friction." (p. 222.) But General Smuts wanted more.

The weeks wore on, and meanwhile the compromise remained an unredeemed promise. The Indians and the Chinese had unilaterally fulfilled their undertaking but they had neither the power nor the means to make the Government do likewise. Whether or not Smuts wilfully broke a promise rightly forms the subject-matter of *Satyagraha in South Africa.* "He has wrecked," Gandhiji says, "a whole compromise to avoid the possible accession... of two thousand Asiatics...." In fact, Smuts went one better; he was prepared to let the 2,000 Asiatics outside the Colony come in if only he could get the resident Indians to barter away the rights of those whom they did not represent and collaborate with the Government in keeping out a handful of educated Asiatics. He sought not merely, as he claimed, to limit and reduce the Asiatic population of the Colony but to deprive it, as Gandhiji argued, of the leadership necessary for its "organic growth". On the other hand, Gandhiji was importunate in his entreaties with the Colonial Secretary and unremitting in his advice to his own countrymen. In either case he spoke in cadences of utter earnestness and, indeed, to some his advice must have sounded harsh, touched as it was with a self-denying ability to see the other point of view. "A Dialogue on the Compromise" (pp. 76-86) is a model of political persuasion and it was laughably absurd to have called this "humble interpreter" an instigator. It was in the implementation of the laconic compromise letter that Smuts' reservations became progressively manifest. The refugees who left the Colony before the Boer War might come in; the five hundred with Dutch certificates might stay on and the thousand without might come in too. Asiatics might even have recourse to courts of law against Chamney's decisions on the domiciliary claims of voluntary registrants. But, on the question of educated Asiatics, General Smuts was unrelenting. He would not repeal the Asiatic Registration Act unless the Indians agreed to his interpretation of the Immigrants' Restriction Act and thereby endorsed the complete exclusion, in future, of their educated countrymen from the Colony. The failure of the compromise was announced on June 22. And Asiatics were now worse off than they were before voluntary registration.

Meanwhile the spectre of the obnoxious law had been revived. On May 12, the redoubtable Mr. Chamney declared that Asiatics entering the Colony after May 9 had to register under it. Smuts confirmed on May 22 that the Act was to be retained on the Statute-book and, on July 7, Mr. Chamney warned that Asiatic traders would have to comply with the Act and affix their thumb-impressions on their licence applications. And satyagraha was resumed. A technique of jail-going was evolved by which every consenting member of the

community would embark on a state of "self-imposed suffering" so that their genuine needs could be tested and measured through such suffering. Even the "blacklegs" were asked to contribute their mite so that they could feel a healing sense of participation. Voluntary registrants, who had trading licences issued to them up to December 31, 1908, refused to produce them on demand, and were arrested. Others whose licences expired on June 30 refused to affix thumb-impressions on their applications for renewal of the licences. Essop Mia and other respectable Indians led the way by taking to unlicensed hawking as a means of courting arrest. Yet others crossed the border and refused identification while re-entering the Colony, in order to defy the law. Finally, when the good offices of European mediators had proved unavailing and the negotiations broke down, Asiatics assembled at the mass meetings of August 16 and 23 to burn their voluntary certificates and thus invalidate them. There was an impressive unanimity about this act of corporate "dis-registering" which showed conclusively that the campaign against the Asiatic Registration Act was not "manufactured".

The rhetoric and logic of satyagraha are never allowed to exceed its empirical mood. For instance the technique of jail-going was designed as much to register a protest as to show up the anomalies of the law against which satyagraha had all along been directed. For instance there was to be a law for incoming Asiatics and another for voluntary registrants. Again, the Government demanded thumb-impressions from traders after having secured fuller identification. At each stage of *satyagraha* then the emphasis was on argument rather than on agitation.

Satyagraha is at once a burnished sword "whetted with our hearts" and a refulgent light which dazzles the enemy into submission to Truth which "is superior to General Smuts . . . and me". It chastens without humbling. It is a communing state of goodness in which it is given to one to feel purified by suffering for others. The sequel to the assault admirably vivifies that state. There is a transparent sincerity, which is altogether without affectation, about Gandhiji's message from his sick-bed in which he hastens to announce his forgiveness of his assailants. After all, he had all but anticipated "my reward" (pp. 93-7). "If violence is to be used against anyone, let it be first used against me." (p. 55.) Also, satyagraha calls for a transcendence of fear which is the cause of much human depravity. The satyagrahi must in his action achieve fidelity to what is ineffably felt in the centre of his being. It becomes one's duty and right to strive for equality for there can be no love or friendship except among equals. When the higher courage of satyagraha fails or is wholly wanting, and the compelling

challenge of force or injustice has to be faced, one must prefer violence to timidity. (p. 280.) "One must be prepared to die in order to be able to live. And in order to win one's rights, one must do one's duty." (p. 302.) Truth, courage and satyagraha are thus all aspects of a total attitude. Accordingly, the Asiatic Registration Act was "contrary to my independence ... and my conscience". The gentle restraints which Gandhiji's humane morality prescribes must be understood therefore in relation to a passionately held concept of duty. Approval is thus not wholly denied to necessary military achievement. "When Japan's brave heroes forced the Russians to bite the dust of the battle-field, the sun rose in the East. And it now shines on all the nations of Asia. The people of the East will never, never again submit to insult from the insolent whites." (p. 324.) But truth soon recalls him to moderation: "East and West are no more than names.... There is no people to whom the moral life is a special mission." (p. 211.)

CWMG -

PREFACE

The period covered by this volume, September 1908-November 1909, begins with the intensification of passive resistance in the Transvaal, and ends with Gandhiji's departure from London after four months of persistent but unavailing efforts there to solve the Transvaal problem by negotiation. This alternating of struggle with conciliation was of the very essence of Gandhiji's philosophy of satyagraha as applied to the solution of political conflicts. Always at the back of his public activities, there was a definite ethical approach to life, which, along with his concept of satyagraha, we find crystallizing during this period.

The mass burning of registration certificates in the second half of August 1908 had provided a dramatic setting for the resumption of satyagraha. The Asiatic Registration Amendment Act, gazetted on September 2, sought to validate voluntary registration, but without repealing the offensive Act 2 of 1907, which, Gandhiji held, Smuts had promised to do. Gandhiji saw no alternative to revival of satyagraha for securing the repeal of the Act and the theoretical right of educated Indians to enter the Colony. Before he resumed the struggle, however, further attempts were made to seek redress through other means. On September 9, the British Indian Association submitted a representation to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. Sections of the Indian community such as the Pathans, the Punjabis and ex-soldiers did likewise. At about the same time, Gandhiji and his co-workers met Hosken and gave him their minimum terms for a settlement. But all these moves failed.

Satyagraha had entered on its second phase with Sorabji, an eminent Parsi of Durban, crossing over from Natal to the Transvaal to assert his right of entry as an educated Indian. Arrests of passive resisters were this time followed by sentences of hard labour. Gandhiji was himself imprisoned twice for crossing into the Transvaal and failing to produce his registration certificate, which, of course, he had consigned to the flames. On October 14, 1908, he was sentenced to two months, and again, on February 25, 1909, to three months, both times with hard labour. While in jail, Gandhiji said later, he was "the happiest man in the Transvaal". He preferred life in prison to life outside with its humiliating denial of elementary rights. Describing his experiences for readers of *Indian Opinion*, he referred to the many hardships he had endured in common with other Indian prisoners. For instance, diet was inadequate and inappropriate. He protested and petitioned for its reform, but he would have no exclusive treatment. "Hard labour" meant

at one time road-making; at other times, cleaning municipal waterworks, tending soldiers' graves or polishing the doors and floor of the prison. He readily accepted these. Once he was made to walk, from Johannesburg railway station to the Fort, in convict's clothes, carrying his prison kit. On another occasion, he was marched in handcuffs, felon-like, from Pretoria Gaol to court to tender evidence. He spoke of these experiences with no bitterness in his heart, but with dignity, and often, with humour. Their only effect on him had been to deepen his philosophical serenity. But news of this ill-treatment leaked out through H. S. L. Polak and created a stir in the South African Press, leading to questions in the British Parliament. The authorities explained that Gandhiji could claim no special treatment. Of course, Gandhiji did not want any discrimination in his favour. During Kasturba's serious illness in November 1908, when he should have been, and himself wished to be, by her bed-side, he refused to obtain release by paying the fine.

The mass struggle continued in all its aspects: picketing, trading and hawking without licences, refusal to produce registration certificates or to give thumb-impressions and crossing the Natal border into forbidden Transvaal. A new and significant feature was the fact of Indian women emerging from their traditional seclusion, setting up associations to support passive resistance. All this was met with an official policy of arrests; sentences involving hard labour and fine; and deportation—first across the border, and later, in collusion with the Portuguese authorities, across Delagoa Bay to India. By June 1909, the number of prison sentences had risen to 2,500. In the final phase, passive resistance assumed a novel form: several leading Indian merchants surrendered their stock-in-trade and other assets to their European creditors, rather than submit to the humiliation of producing registration certificates in order to obtain trading licences. This led to much hardship and, in some cases, even to insolvency. But the passive resisters were ready to brave all consequences in a righteous struggle.

A section of European opinion, led by Hosken's Committee, supported a liberal approach to the Indian problem. The Committee made representations at home and wrote letters in the British Press. Its efforts proved fruitless in so far as concrete results were concerned. By and by, however, there was a mild thaw in a section of the South African Press. In May 1909, when Gandhiji came out of jail, the *Pretoria News* pleaded that the Transvaal Government should find better use than persistent imprisonment with hard labour for a man like Gandhiji who was suffering for conscience' sake, and recognized that his motives were "of the highest and his methods beyond impeachment". In June 1909, a section of the Indian community which had kept aloof from passive resistance set up a Conciliation Committee. Gandhiji

looked upon its labours with tolerant scepticism, and was not surprised when Smuts turned down its demands.

Left to himself, Gandhiji would have preferred to continue satyagraha, but in consideration of the views of co-workers, he agreed in June 1909 to make one more 'experiment' in negotiation while keeping in reserve the unfailing weapon of satyagraha. Circumstances, too, appeared to favour such a move. Final shape was being given to the proposal to establish a Union of the South African Colonies. Indians in South Africa viewed this move with misgivings. Gandhiji, too, saw that Indians might be worse off under the Union and face harsher legislation unless the Imperial Government was prevailed upon to insist on some constitutional safeguards. South African statesmen were proceeding to England for discussions on the Draft Union Bill which would soon be before Parliament. The occasion, it was generally felt, offered a possible opportunity for an amicable settlement through the good offices of the Imperial Government. Gandhiji agreed that the situation justified, if it did not demand, a deputation to England. On June 13, it was decided to send two deputations, one to England and the other to India, for educating the public about the significance of the Transvaal movement and persuading the Imperial Government to intervene. The Transvaal Government, in a surprise counter-move, arrested most of the delegates-elect. Gandhiji's efforts to get them released on parole failed. Thus, only a two-man deputation—Gandhiji and Hajee Habib—left for England on June 23, and a one-man deputation—Polak—left for India on June 26.

On the outward voyage, Gandhiji had talks with South African statesmen like Sir Richard Solomon, Mr. Merriman, Mr. Schreiner and Mr. Sauer, and won from them varying degrees of sympathy for the Indian cause. He also occupied himself with drafting a "Concise Statement of the Transvaal Indian Case". Reaching London on July 10, he made it clear in interviews to the Press that the deputation would be guided by the South Africa British Indian Committee. He met its chairman, Lord Ampthill, and discussed with him the line of action in England. On his advice, Gandhiji held up publication of his "Concise Statement" and postponed the idea of public activity till the outcome of the private negotiations had become clear. Gandhiji had implicit trust in Lord Ampthill and, as his correspondence with the latter reveals, readily accepted his advice for the whole strategy of negotiation.

Once Lord Ampthill had satisfied himself that neither Gandhiji nor his satyagrahi followers had anything to do with the extremists in India, he strove hard behind the scenes to bring about a solution of the Transvaal problem, convinced that a settlement was imperative in Imperial interests and in view of mounting unrest in India. He found

Gandhiji ready to compromise on smaller issues which involved no principle. He met Generals Botha and Smuts, who were in England at the time in connection with the Draft Union Bill. Having secured from Gandhiji an undertaking that Indians would not resort to further agitation if the Black Act were repealed and the theoretical equality of Indians in respect of immigration rights recognized, he pleaded with Smuts to "take the wind out of their sails" by conceding these demands on the eve of the Union.

The prime mover in the negotiations was, of course, Gandhiji. While he acted in constant consultation with Lord Ampthill, he also met Indian leaders like Sir Muncherjee Bhownaggree and Justice Ameer Ali, influential South African and British statesmen like Sir Richard Solomon, Sir William Lee-Warner and Theodore Morison, and friends like Miss Florence Winterbottom and the Rev. F. B. Meyer.

On the official level, Gandhiji concentrated on approaches to Lord Crewe in the Colonial Office and Lord Morley in the India Office. The former was frankly pessimistic of a settlement. A Colonial Office minute of August 18, 1909, considered Indian objections to Act 2 of 1907 "either disingenuous or absurdly sentimental". There was little difficulty, however, about the repeal of the Registration Act. But Gandhiji's insistence on the recognition of the legal "right" of Indians to enter the Transvaal as citizens of the Empire, subject, of course, to administrative limitation in respect of number, was met by Smuts' obdurate refusal to concede anything more than certificates of permanent residence to a limited number of Indian immigrants. The Colonial Office, on its part, confessed itself constitutionally unable to secure from the South African statesmen any such recognition. Lord Ampthill strove in vain to persuade the Colonial Office to bring Smuts round to accept Gandhiji's amendment to the immigration law.

On November 3, it became unmistakably clear that the negotiations had failed: the Colonial Office informed Gandhiji of its inability "to hold out any hopes of obtaining recognition of theoretical equality as to immigration". On November 5, launching a campaign of public education, Gandhiji issued to the British Press the "Statement" of July 16, held back so long in deference to Lord Ampthill's wishes. He addressed meetings at the Emerson Club and Indian Union Society, explaining the nature of the Transvaal struggle and seeking public support for it. He drafted a memorandum addressed to Transvaal Passive Resisters by British sympathisers, and enrolled Indian and British volunteers to obtain signatures thereon and to collect donations. In a last letter to the Colonial Office on the subject of the Transvaal immigration law, he hoped that Lord Crewe's influence would continue to work for the removal of the taint of Colour.

On November 10, Gandhiji told *The Daily Express* that passive resistance would continue with unabated vigour. The following day he appealed to the British Press to support the Transvaal struggle. At the farewell meeting of November 12, he pleaded for a liberal understanding of the Transvaal movement from British leaders.

All this time he was revolving the concept of satyagraha in his mind. His writings, speeches and letters are full of it. The term "passive resistance", he argued in an address at Germiston, was a misnomer; the idea could be more completely and better expressed by the term "soul-force", a force "as old as the human race", and represented in its purest form by Jesus Christ, Daniel and Socrates. This soul-force did "not consist in outward ritual like temple-going.... Cultivation of truth and fearlessness is the first lesson for it" (p. 393). Suffering was implicit in it. "A satyagrahi will shine the brighter and grow the more courageous the more he is crushed" (p. 447).

The technique of satyagraha Gandhiji held to be a "sovereign remedy for most of the ills of life" (p. 363). It was "the only straightforward and simple method of fighting patent injustice, the one that will ensure the quickest redress" (p. 447). He believed that passive resistance in South Africa had not altogether failed. In June 1909, he listed its successes in regard to discriminatory legislation. Even Lord Crewe's "striving so hard" on behalf of the Transvaal Indians was due to "their voluntary submission to suffering". The sympathy which the deputation had secured in enlightened circles was reflected in the Rev. F. B. Meyer's "endorsement of a struggle of a singularly pure character and unselfish methods" (p. 540).

In spite of his many preoccupations and heavy work-schedule in London, Gandhiji kept in close touch with Polak in India. His long letters to him, dictated often in the early hours of the morning following a hard day's work, reveal a clear perception of overall policy, capacity for attending to minute detail and concern for the human element in all matters.

Gandhiji had the clearest grasp of the larger implications of the Transvaal struggle. India's tardy realization of the wider significance of the movement Gandhiji ascribed partly to lack of knowledge of soul-force. He was convinced that "the effort in the Transvaal and the corresponding activity in India must in their very nature bring India nearer her goal, and that, by means of the purest type" (p. 463). In a letter to Polak, he asks Indian leaders: "Will they not see that, in fighting the battle, we are presenting the Indian Motherland with a disciplined army of the future; an army that will be able to give a good account of itself against any amount of brute force that may be matched against it?" (p. 464). The achievement of Indian freedom through violence Gandhiji held to be both impossible and undesirable. He told

the extremists through Polak that "the freedom they want, or they think they want, is not to be obtained by killing people or doing violence" (p. 380).

The period is significant also for the contact which Gandhiji made with the Russian thinker, Count Leo Tolstoy, "the best and brightest exponent of the doctrine" of satyagraha. Writing to him of the passive resistance movement, Gandhiji observed: "In my opinion, this struggle of the Indians in the Transvaal is the greatest of modern times. . . . If it succeeds, it will be not only a triumph of religion, love and truth over irreligion, hatred and falsehood, but it is highly likely to serve as an example to the millions in India and to people in other parts of the world, who may be down-trodden. . ." (p. 529). Tolstoy wished his "dear brothers and co-workers in the Transvaal" the help of Providence and spoke of similar struggles in Russia, "of the tender against the harsh, of meekness and love against pride and violence . . ." (p. 483).

Besides Gandhiji's strategy of negotiations and his deepening rapport with fellow-satyagrahis, we also witness, in this volume, the formulation of his views on modern civilization. He touched on the subject in his letters to Manilal Gandhi and dispatches to *Indian Opinion*. But it was in his letter of October 14 to Polak that he gave categorical expression to those "definite conclusions" to which "the true spirit of passive resistance" had brought him and which were to be elaborated, soon after, in his seminal work, *Hind Swaraj*, written during the return voyage to South Africa.

PREFACE

This volume covers the period from November 13, 1909 to the end of March 1911. It opens with Gandhiji's return voyage to South Africa, after four months of weary waiting in England, and ends with his patient efforts in Cape Town to negotiate with General Smuts and Members of Parliament a modification of the recently published Immigrants' Restriction Bill. The Gandhi-Smuts correspondence of March 1911 paved the way for the Provisional Settlement which followed in May.

The contents are as various as ever. The period covered in this volume marked a decisive stage in Gandhiji's inward development and the maturing of his thought, when he sought to give precise verbal expression as well as practical shape to the ideals which would satisfy his imperative ethical urges. The theoretical effort led to his writing, on board ship during the return journey from England, the little classic, *Hind Swaraj*, and the practical effort, to the experiments in disciplined community living on Tolstoy Farm from June 1910 onwards. Like Ruskin and Thoreau earlier, Tolstoy now exerted a powerful influence in confirming Gandhiji's views and ways and significantly enough this volume opens with *Preface to Tolstoy's "Letter to a Hindoo"*. The reasoned defence of *Hind Swaraj* in the letter to Wybergh (pp. 246-50) shows how Gandhiji had struck firm roots in the *vanaprastha* stage of life where, *kama* and *artha* left behind, one has no more dilemmas and one calmly pursues "the *dharma* orientated toward *moksha*". The letters to Maganlal combine the most trivial details of routine with discussion of ethical issues of the highest moment to the author, such as *brahmacharya* (p. 296), the dignity of manual labour (p. 308) and "the yearning of the soul to see the beloved in the form of God" (p. 311). On a different plane, but no less interesting, are the letters to Gokhale and Natesan. *Colour Prejudice* (pp. 284-5) and *Who is Uncivilized?* (pp. 294-5) are of a piece with *Hind Swaraj* in their condemnation of the uglier aspects of modern civilization. *Another Breach of Faith* (pp. 298-9), *Report of Protector of Indentured Labourers* (pp. 309-10), and *Narayansamy* (pp. 337-8), are, in the nature of political comments, at once a scathing criticism of the Government and a call to action by the people. Towards the end comes a rare piece, Report of Gandhi-Smuts Interview (pp. 494-6) written down by Gandhiji himself.

When Gandhiji landed in South Africa on November 30, 1909, the situation seemed dismal. There was, on the one hand, the inevitable relaxing among the rank and file after a sustained effort of several years

and, on the other, a Government only too ready to exploit this weakness. Smuts had said, while leaving England in August 1909, that "the majority of Transvaal Indians were sick to death of the agitation". And on his return to South Africa he took to increasing repression to bend the will of the satyagrahis who still stood firm. The sentences became harsher, life in prisons was made as uncomfortable as it could be, large numbers were deported to India in conditions of utmost rigour, and the war was extended to minors and women. Gandhiji met this repression with a confidence in soul-force more serene than ever. He knew it was a unique struggle he was leading, "one of the greatest of modern times". With this pride, however, in the heroic worth of his co-workers and the greatness of the movement, there went a profound personal humility. Writing to Maganlal Gandhi about the aptness of the name *Phœnix*, he said, "I wish that my name is forgotten and only my work endures. The work will endure only if the name is forgotten" (p. 69). Again, "It is out of our ignorance that we believe we get our bread because of our efforts" (p. 82). And so came, unsolicited, Tata's cheque for Rs. 25,000 on the day Gandhiji reached Cape Town.

Relying on soul-force in a political struggle meant, in practical terms, relying on public opinion. Gandhiji sedulously set himself to cultivate it, in England, among his own community and among the very whites of South Africa against whose prejudices he had pitted himself. Before leaving England, he had organized a signature campaign, volunteers, both Indian and British, going round from house to house to canvass support for the Indian cause. Back in South Africa, he wrote letters and gave interviews to the Press and spoke from every available platform. He strove to disarm opposition from the whites by removing their groundless fears and putting the Indian demands in the right perspective. Addressing Indians, he sought to keep up their will to resist: "If you have any trace of manliness in you, you will turn satyagrahis. . . . As General Smuts has declared, satyagraha is a kind of war. . . . How can we turn away from the example that has been set by Nagappen? Cherishing his memory, we must fight on till we win. . . . Nothing is ever achieved except through suffering" (pp. 102-3). But, while encouraging the Indians to fight for their self-respect, he also urged them to set their house in order, as in the *Indian Traders* (pp. 146-7), *Are Indians Liars?* (pp. 147-8), *As One Sows One Reaps* (pp. 228-9), *Hindus and Muslims* (p. 256) and *Calcutta Riot* (pp. 387-8).

And he did not weary of protesting. If the opponent was to be converted to reason, the wrong he had done should be brought home to him with no trace of ill-will or exaggeration. Whether it was ill-treatment of Indian passive resisters in gaol or discrimination against Indian teachers and pupils in Natal schools, or the disfranchisement of

Coloured people in the South Africa Union Act, Gandhiji kept on urging and inspiring the oppressed to fight fearlessly and untiringly until the injustice was undone and the wrong remedied. And he addressed himself not only to Indians but to all Asiatics (*Colour Prejudice*, pp. 284-5) and to the Coloured people as well (pp. 165, 167).

There seemed to be no immediate prospect of a successful close to the struggle. On June 1, 1910, the Union of South Africa was born, but Sorabji was arrested for his seventh term of imprisonment. Gandhiji described the day as a day of mourning for the Indian community and used the occasion to reiterate the Indian demand in *Letter to the Press* (p. 263). Soon after this, the Government took the unusual step of challenging the right of a minor, son of Chhotabhai, a merchant of long standing, to remain in the Union after attaining the age of 16. A long battle in the law courts ensued, with the Supreme Court ruling ultimately in favour of the minor. Towards the end of September 1910, there returned by s.s. *Sultan* along with Polak a number of South African Indians who had been deported to India. They were refused permission to land "first at Durban, then at Port Elizabeth, then at the Cape and again at Durban". The severity of life on the deck resulted in the death of Narayansamy, one of the deportees, and Gandhiji was provoked to charge the Government with "legalized murder".

The Union Parliament was to be inaugurated in November. Gandhiji outlined once again the conditions for closing the struggle (*Proposed New Immigration Bill*, pp. 344-5). The Government, however, had stiffened in its attitude and, as Gandhiji told a Chinese audience, "had carried the attack to the children and now even to the women" (p. 349). Mrs. Sodha, being left without means of support after the imprisonment of her husband, entered the Transvaal with the limited purpose of joining the satyagrahis' families on Tolstoy Farm. She was arrested at the border despite earnest assurances by Gandhiji and Cachalia, Chairman of British Indian Association, that there was no intention on her part to assert the right of entry or residence, that nothing but purely humanitarian considerations had prompted the decision to bring her into the Transvaal.

With the year 1911 came the turning of the tide. *Letter to L. W. Ritch* (p. 395) shows Gandhiji after a conversation with Smuts and hopeful of a compromise. Soon followed the glad news of the announcement by the Government of India, on January 3, of its decision to prohibit emigration of indentured Indians to Natal from July 1, 1911.

On February 25 was published the Immigrants' Restriction Bill by which General Smuts proposed to settle the Indian question once for all. Gandhiji's first reaction to the Bill was somewhat hopeful but, in view of previous experience of ambiguities in Smuts' dealings, expert

opinion was sought and this revealed flaws which rendered the Bill unacceptable as it stood. Asiatics entering the Union under the education test provided in the Bill were not specifically exempted from the operation of the Transvaal Asiatics Registration Act (Act 36 of 1908) and Chapter 33 of the Orange Free State Constitution. Their freedom of movement in the Union was restricted to that extent. And, in spite of the judgment in the Chhotabhai case, the Bill did not grant the minor children of registered Asiatics, if such children were outside the Transvaal at the time of the passing of the Bill, or the wives of lawful residents, the protection of the common law. Believing that these omissions were probably not intentional, Gandhiji entered into correspondence with Smuts to have them rectified, and towards the end of March went to Cape Town for personal negotiations. Despite General Smuts' declared willingness to conciliate the Indian community, the negotiations ran a zigzag course, hope giving way to fear of breakdown again and again. Gandhiji had quite a task in carrying with him even supporters like Doke and active workers like Ritch (*Letter to L. W. Ritch*, pp. 486-7), while fighting for every inch of the ground with Smuts. The report of his interview with Smuts on March 27, which he sent to Miss Schlesin for record but not for publication (pp. 494-6), is among the most interesting items in this volume. A breakdown was avoided. In a speech at Cape Town, Gandhiji declared: "We are nearing the end, and victory will undoubtedly be ours if we work on in the spirit of satyagraha" (p. 500). The final settlement, however, came only after another active campaign in the autumn of 1913, on a much larger scale than the campaigns of 1907 and 1908.

In the midst of unceasing public activity, Gandhiji continued to develop his inner resources which gave him strength to carry the immense burden he was continually taking upon himself, and yet to retain perfect serenity of mind. He wrote to Maganlal: "Please do not carry unnecessarily on your head the burden of emancipating India. Emancipate your own self. Even that burden is very great. Apply everything to yourself. Nobility of soul consists in realizing that you are yourself India. In your emancipation is the emancipation of India. All else is make-believe" (pp. 206-7). All Gandhiji's activities were inspired by this fundamental conviction that political freedom was but the expression of moral freedom, and that the latter had to be won through a struggle not against an external but an internal enemy. The conviction had been growing over the years, a suggestion from one source fusing with and fertilizing a suggestion from another source and the innate truthfulness and humility of his soul responding to ennobling influences from every direction. These accumulating intuitions crystallized into a precise formulation and issued as *Hind Swaraj*, which occupies in the Gandhi story much the same place as Chapter IV of *St. Matthew* or *St. Luke* in the New Testament.

While in England in the summer and autumn of 1909, he witnessed the helplessness, or unwillingness, of the Imperial Government to support him in a cause which, in his view, concerned as much the future of the Empire as the self-respect of Indians. He observed also the ardent patriotism of many Indian youths with whom he came into close contact and who were ready to use violence for the attainment of Indian independence. The activities of this group had attracted fierce public attention following the assassination of Curzon Wyllie on July 2, a few days before the arrival of the deputation led by Gandhiji. Gandhiji admired the courage of these patriots, but his whole being revolted against their methods. As leader of a movement which aimed at defending Indian self-respect and combating the arrogant assumptions of white superiority and modern civilization, he could not but take a public stand on the issues forced into the open by Dhingra's action. His stay in the wilderness of the West had left him famished. The enlightened Liberal government in London could provide no constitutional safeguards for the non-white population in South Africa, which was about to be welded into a single self-governing state. If satyagraha had, or seemed to have, failed to achieve the limited objectives of the Indian community in South Africa, what chance could peaceful methods have against the British in India? This was the question which *Hind Swaraj* had to answer. The Reader in this "Dialogue on the Sea", tempting Gandhiji to give up his inmost faith in the force of the soul, stood for the many young Indians whom he had met and talked to while in London. There was no rational answer to this question in the limited context of a purely political aim, that of driving out the British, but in the larger context of national regeneration through moral strength he had an answer which he elaborated in *Hind Swaraj*. On this answer he staked his standing as a leader and in defence of it he cited the Hindu scriptures, which not only hold that "liberation is the best thing attainable by mankind", but preach "incessantly liberation as an immediate aim" (pp. 247-8).

With a profound and farsighted concern for the moral content of a political system, he challenged his critics to apply their minds to the meaning of swaraj. Surely they did not want a mere change of rule? If the Indian masses were to have a life of dignity and moral worth, it was necessary that India be morally as well as politically free. What were the marks of moral slavery? Machinery and the rise of the professional classes, lawyers, doctors and administrators, who, knowingly or unknowingly, helped to maintain British rule in India, joined hands with the British in exploiting the masses and, in imitation of their masters, introduced ways of life which pampered the body and starved the soul. Moral freedom meant freedom for the people of India to fashion their economic, social and political institutions in accordance with

their own moral instincts and their own ancient traditions, to grow and develop and correct themselves with their own moral energy rather than accommodate themselves to borrowed ideals under the hypnotic spell of their excellence. And so, inevitably, *Hind Swaraj* grew to be an attack on the gradual modernization of India in the industrial and political fields. Gandhiji had seen Western civilization at close quarters and turned away his eyes in horror from the now universally admitted evils of a competitive, industrial, non-moral society. He thought there was time yet for India to save herself from this insidious poison. If she could, political independence would be hers for the asking.

The pamphlet invited, later, the charge of medievalism and was used by some to discredit Gandhiji's leadership in the eyes of the educated classes in India. But he remained unshaken in his conviction. Even while in South Africa, he preferred to order his own life, and that of the group of workers who followed his lead, along lines of natural simplicity which he held essential for personal and communal health and well-being. Compelled by the exigencies of the struggle, he had started Tolstoy Farm where he could support the families of satyagrahis at minimum cost, and he used the opportunity to experiment in new forms of community life based on co-operation, self-help, manual labour and increasing self-discipline in personal life, especially in regard to food and sex. Tolstoy Farm set the pattern of his life henceforth. It represented a truly creative phase in his ethical growth and he cherished its memory long afterwards.

CWMG

PREFACE

This volume covers a period of two years, April, 1911 to March, 1913. It begins with the negotiations (which had been in progress since March) for a settlement promising to bring the long-drawn-out struggle to a successful issue, and ends with signs of an approaching storm, some judicial pronouncements in February and March of 1913 on the status of Indian women having called into question the validity of Indian marriages. There had been, meanwhile, Gokhale's historic visit to South Africa in the autumn of 1912 which evoked such mutual goodwill that it gave rise to the hope that all would soon be well, so that Gandhiji could think of returning to India "in six months" (p. 449).

On April 1, 1911, the Government of India officially notified that emigration of indentured labour to South Africa was to cease with effect from July 1. This was a triumph not only for Gandhiji in South Africa but for his supporters in India, notably the South African League in Madras; it indicated a new awareness on the part of the Government of India of its obligations to Indians abroad.

Gandhiji was in Cape Town during practically the whole of April, meeting Members of Parliament, canvassing support for the improvements he sought in the Union Immigrants' Restriction Bill and, in the midst of a busy schedule, keeping in overall touch with events in the Transvaal, Natal and the Cape. Ritch was in Johannesburg, in charge of the British Indian Association office there, while Polak was active in Durban; thanks to the complete understanding which prevailed between Gandhiji on the one hand and these two on the other, the delicate negotiations in progress in Cape Town were conducted with the backing of the entire Indian community in South Africa.

The Bill seemed to concede the Indians' basic demand for the removal of the racial bar from the immigration law of the Union, but it retained the racial discrimination embedded in the Orange Free State legislation. While some other issues relating to the existing rights of Indians presented no insuperable difficulty, General Smuts could not, or would not, prevail upon the Free State members to fall in line with the trends in the rest of the Union and agree to a removal, in theory, of discriminatory requirements in their state. He seemed eager to get his Bill through the Parliament before the session came to a close, for the Coronation

was approaching and he would rather have peace for the celebrations. Gandhiji urged on him an alternative solution which would help him bypass the Free Staters and also raise fewer problems with regard to the existing position in Natal and the Cape; this was to drop the Union Immigrants' Restriction Bill and to amend the Transvaal Immigrants' Restriction Act, since the satyagraha campaign had in view only the legislation in that state. But Smuts would not agree to this, fearing that the resulting position would not be acceptable to the whites. On the horns of a dilemma, Smuts placed his difficulties before Gandhiji (pp. 31-4). The Bill might have to be postponed but Smuts wanted passive resistance to cease. Gandhiji, considerate and generous as ever, appreciated Smuts' predicament and offered to suspend satyagraha in exchange for an assurance from the latter that legislation would be passed in the following session repealing the Transvaal Asiatic Registration Act, subject to the reservation of the rights of minors, that existing rights would be maintained, that passive resisters otherwise entitled to registration would be allowed to register and that educated passive resisters then in the Transvaal but not registrable under the Asiatic Act would be allowed to remain under special authority pending the forthcoming legislation. This was on April 21. The next day Smuts gave the required assurances and added that, in the legislation to be passed during the following session, there would be provisions giving equality to all immigrants. On the 27th, a meeting of the British Indian Association decided to suspend satyagraha but made this "conditional upon fulfilment of the pledges given by General Smuts" (p. 57). An exchange of letters and telegrams between April 29 and May 20 ended with the Provisional Settlement.

Very wisely, however, Tolstoy Farm, the satyagraha camp, was kept going, for there were other wrongs to be righted and the Indians had reserved the right to agitate over them. But meanwhile there was peace, and Gandhiji laid aside the concerns of political life, more or less, and turned his attention to things of higher moment for him, to the urge for an ever sterner discipline of the self, to contemplation and experiments in education.

Writing on May 8 to Dr. Pranjivan Mehta, he said: "If I can get some time during the next six or eight months, I propose to give my attention to farming or weaving. . . I see that I can make at least £200 if I forget all else and only practise. But I am resolved not to have anything to do with that. Most of my work will go to Ritch. I have given him a seat in my own office and he has already started work" (p. 67). The same letter mentions a desire to have

a building put up for a school at Phœnix. On May 4, in a letter to A. E. Chotabhai, he had declared his intention to hand over Phœnix to a Trust. While he was thus preparing for the next decisive step in his *sadhana*, he had to face a tragedy in his domestic life which was to wring him with agony for many years and which could be resolved only by a progressive renunciation of all human attachments. His eldest son, Harilal Gandhi, who had for some time joined the ranks of satyagrahis and served a term of imprisonment, decided to leave the parental home in protest against Gandhiji's seeming lack of solicitude for the worldly interests of those nearest to him. Gandhiji's burning love for their spiritual progress was beyond the young Harilal. After an argument with Gandhiji, in which Harilal was all politeness, the latter left for India "with a calm mind" (pp. 77-8). Gandhiji wanted him "to grow up in freedom" (p. 94) and "live in any way" that suited him (p. 484). But things were never the same again between father and son.

While on the Farm, Gandhiji corresponded regularly with Dr. Pranjivan Mehta, G. K. Gokhale, Maganlal, Chhaganlal, Harilal, Manilal and later with Jamnadas Gandhi. Active in the school on the Farm, he gave the pupils readings of stories from the *Mahabharata* with the zest of a discoverer. He also wrote, from time to time, to the Ministry of the Interior on the working of the Settlement, or on other matters pertaining to immigration and domicile. In *Indian Opinion*, he commented, though less frequently than in the past, on important issues affecting Indians, like the £3 tax, the attempts of municipalities to shift Indians from established Locations and the anti-Asiatic agitation carried on by the whites.

Towards the end of 1911, the term of the Provisional Settlement expired. A new Immigrants' Restriction Bill was drafted and shown to Gandhiji. When, however, it was published in the *Gazette*, Gandhiji discovered some alterations; he found that the clause requiring a declaration on oath from educated Asiatics entering the Orange Free State that they would not farm or trade in the state was retained. Following an exchange of letters, General Smuts as usual met some of the difficulties and gave assurances regarding others. On June 24, Parliament was prorogued when the Bill had passed only its second reading, and on July 19 Gandhiji was informed that the Provisional Settlement would continue, pending the passage of legislation, and that six educated Indians, to be named by Gandhiji, would be admitted during 1912 too.

On October 22, in response to pressing invitations from Gandhiji, Gokhale landed at Cape Town "with the knowledge of the Indian Government but entirely on his own initiative

. . . to investigate the whole Indian question in South Africa for himself'' (p. 335). South Africa—white as well as Coloured—welcomed him with almost royal honours, at wayside halts and at ceremonial receptions in City Halls. He met and spoke to leaders and individuals from all sections of the population, had discussions with the Union Ministers, Botha, Smuts and Fischer, and luncheon with the Governor General.

Gokhale's visit did much to focus attention in India on the South African problem, and in South Africa raised the morale of the Indians still higher, while it created, in the words of Lord Amptthill, a ''spirit of reasonableness and conciliation and goodwill'' (p. 495). Lord Gladstone's minute to the Imperial Government on the subject of his meeting with Gokhale (Appendix XXII) sums up the results of the visit.

Though the vexed question of immigration and domicile seemed to have been laid to rest, harassment and persecution of Indians continued from other directions. The Gold Law and the Townships Act were used to destroy the hitherto tacitly accepted practice of equitable ownership and use by Indians of property nominally held by friendly whites. One by one, in the townships, Klerksdorp, Krugersdorp, Roodepoort and Vrededorp, white owners of Stands were served with notices under the Gold Law to evict their Coloured tenants. Traders were refused transfers of trading licences. The Transvaal Draft Municipal Councils Ordinance gave municipalities complete control over hawkers' licences and the power to play about with Asiatic Locations. Thus a concerted attempt was made to put an end to all Indian businesses, either by securing their termination on the death or retirement of the individual trader or by displacing established businesses from their Locations and shifting them to new and inferior sites. Then again the £3 tax on ex-indentured Indians continued to be an oppressive exaction.

In the actual working, the Provisional Settlement itself was, it became clear, violated in spirit. The immigration law was administered at the ports, particularly in Natal, with increasing harshness. Women and minor children of domiciled Indians were disallowed landing; impossible proofs of relationship and of rights of entry were demanded; and the only remedy lay in obtaining Supreme Court interdicts. Justice Wessels' ruling in the Supreme Court, in the case of Bai Rasul, that an Indian could bring in ''only one wife. . . and that must be a woman who actually was a wife'' shook the entire community. Shortly after, another Mahomedan wife, Fatima Jussat, was refused entry and Smuts declined to intervene.

To cap it all, the Registrar of Asiatics turned down two out of the six names of educated Indian entrants submitted by Gandhiji for the year 1912. On this flagrant breach of the Provisional Settlement, Gandhiji wrote to Gokhale, "The ministers are certainly not carrying out their assurances" (p. 460), and warned the Government not to precipitate a resumption of satyagraha.

Finally, in early 1913, came the greatest shock of all—the judgment of the Cape Supreme Court declaring, in the case of one Bai Miriam, that marriages solemnized according to Mahomedan custom did not satisfy the immigration laws. The Natal Supreme Court, too, questioned the validity of another Mahomedan marriage. Evidently, the spirit of conciliation which seemed to have informed Smuts' interview with Gandhiji in April, 1911 (pp. 31-4) had evaporated. Gandhiji was forced to take notice of the change of attitude on the Government's part and soon he was preparing the community for a fresh struggle on a larger scale than ever.

This unexpected change from hope to disappointment and frustration could not disconcert Gandhiji. During his stay on Tolstoy Farm, he had built up a reservoir of inner strength which was to serve him superbly through all the stormy vicissitudes of his political life. The surface interests of this "retreat", we find recorded in the Diary for 1912. The real issues that engage his enthusiasm are different; his present preoccupations are the doctrine of physical work, health-giving food that also induces the right moral temperament, education through one's own language —all of which add up to a contact with concrete reality as a means of inner renewal. He is now the "principal" of a school, with no fighting to do but helping young people to grow. The punctiliously written up accounts in the Diary reveal the frugality, in Thoreau's words, the "reduced sensory environment", of the new life. Leather, bought for Kallenbach's classes where he imparts the skill of sandal-making he had learnt from a Trappist monastery; sugar, the surrogate for salt; stamps for innumerable personal letters—few of which we have; the price of milk fetched daily from Lawley station; train fares paid for visitors who came to the Farm with their problems; these are the things that figure in the statement of accounts day after day.

"Next year the Press will incur a loss"—so reads a brief but sad entry for December. Money for Tolstoy Farm, for Phœnix, for the New Education; money is a problem, which Tata's munificence and Dr. Mehta's untiring generosity could only partially

solve, because the votary of truth could no longer hold a brief for the sake of a livelihood.

In his 1911 letters to Dr. Pranjivan Mehta, Gandhiji mentions more than once his idea of returning to India. After Gokhale's visit, it haunts him with increasing urgency. On November 26, 1912, he says he assured the master that he would not return to India until he had found someone to replace him; Polak would probably be chosen for the task. On December 1, he records having worn Indian dress. He cannot resist the call of the homeland; the departing mood is already upon him.

CWMG - C

PREFACE

This volume is the last in the series dealing with Gandhiji's South African years and covers the period April 1913 to December 1914, which saw the final satyagraha struggle, the Smuts-Gandhi Settlement, leading to the enactment of the Indians' Relief Bill, and Gandhiji's departure for the motherland.

On March 14, 1913, Justice Searle of the Cape Supreme Court had ruled that Indian marriages performed in accordance with non-Christian rites or not registered before a marriage officer could not be recognized in the Union of South Africa. The effect of this decision was to reduce Hindu and Muslim wives virtually to the status of concubines, and their children to that of illegitimate issue. It profoundly hurt Indian religious sentiment.

The new Immigration Bill adversely affected existing rights and imposed fresh disabilities. Domiciliary rights of Natal Indians were disturbed; the wives and children of even educated Indians could hardly obtain entry into the Union. It was of the essence of the compromise which the Provisional Settlement of 1911 represented that Indian immigrants were not to suffer disabilities to which other races or sections of the people in the Union were not subjected. In point of fact, however, the Immigration Bill created a legal racial bar. Gandhiji interpreted it as a deliberate attempt to rid South Africa of its resident Asiatic population.

In his representations to the Ministry of the Interior, during April 1913, Gandhiji stressed that the anomalous situation created by the Searle judgment could be remedied only by modifying the Union marriage laws; that the Immigration Bill should be amended to restore existing rights; that the £3 tax should be abolished; that the racial taint in the Transvaal law should be removed and that existing laws should be administered in a liberal spirit. In case Government failed to meet these demands, the Indian community would have to resort to passive resistance. This time the campaign would be short and swift; it would embrace the whole Union and, for the first time, it would include women among the passive resisters. Indian women, who had been cloistered for ages by social tradition, were ready to take up the challenge of the Searle judgment and decided to join the struggle. By the time the Immigration Bill was read a second time, on April 26, Indian women had registered their emphatic protest and expressed their determination to offer passive resistance.

Government's reaction to all this was sharp: if Indians carried out the threat, they would compel Government to come to "plain terms". Gandhiji explained that the campaign would be an attempt to "cling to the beautiful vision" of the British Constitution, and Passive Resisters were "prepared to fight for making it a reality or die in the attempt". (p. 72)

Government appeared to relent and agreed to restore existing rights under the Cape and Natal laws and amend the Immigration Bill in some respects. But it would not budge from its position regarding Indian marriages. Gandhiji made it clear that he sought recognition only of marriages performed in India according to the Hindu and Muslim faiths. The law could be modified to bring it in line with the Transvaal marriage law which recognized European marriages. Government came out with a stipulation that Indians should produce marriage registration certificates; this, Gandhiji made it clear, was neither possible, since the practice of registration did not obtain in India, nor necessary, since Indian marriages were performed with due public solemnity. Gandhiji made much use of the friendly and sympathetic feeling of a small group of European M.P.s at Cape Town to press amendments to the Immigration Bill, but such amendments as Government accepted were inadequate. On June 2, Gandhiji declared in an interview that passive resistance was inevitable if Government failed to meet Indian demands.

The Government, on its side, appeared to view the probability of a resumption of satyagraha with serious concern. Lord Gladstone, Union Governor-General, in the course of a confidential despatch, urged the Colonial Office to represent to the Indian Government the gravity of the situation and to ask them "to use such influence as they may possess with Gandhi and others" to avoid a crisis. He was doing his best, he observed, to secure the total abolition of the £3 tax.

Government decided early in June to exempt only women from the tax. Gandhiji pointed out that the promise of repeal made to Gokhale implied no discrimination against men. The Immigration Bill was passed on June 11, and on June 13 he declared that, unless Royal assent was withheld and the assurance in terms of the Provisional Settlement of 1911 was implemented, passive resistance by men and women would commence. The British Indian Association followed, on June 16, with a formal request to the Governor-General to withhold approval of the Act. Gandhiji decided to make a last-minute bid to avert the impending crisis. He went to Pretoria, presented on June 28 the Indian case and demanded an assurance that the law would be amended

at least the following year. In an interview on July 2 with the Secretary for the Interior, he put forward the Indians' basic demands: recognition of right of entry into the Cape Province, safeguarding of domiciliary rights in Natal, doing away with the entrants' declaration in regard to land, trade, etc., in the Free State, and legalization of Indian marriages either by amendment of the law or by authorizing marriage officers to certify them. He contended that all these demands, except the last, could be met by administrative measures. (p. 125.) Gandhiji was ready to wait on General Smuts, but a strike of the Johannesburg coal-miners kept the latter continuously preoccupied.

On August 11, Gandhiji was still waiting for a remission in the industrial trouble to meet Smuts; he had to remain content, however, with the answer that his proposals of July 2 were under consideration by the Ministry of the Interior. On September 3, Gandhiji pleaded that his moderation and restraint in framing demands were intended to facilitate settlement and to show that Indians were not "pining" for a revival of the struggle. On September 10, the Ministry of the Interior declared that it could hold out no promise to alter the basis of the existing marriage law by a Parliamentary measure even the following year, and refused to withdraw pending cases.

Passive resistance, therefore, became imperative; there was no alternative. Gandhiji's words at this time express the anguish of a community driven to desperation by official intransigence: ". . . as an unrepresented and voiceless community which has been so much misunderstood in the past and which is labouring under a curious but strong race prejudice, it can only defend its honour and status by a process of sacrifice and self-suffering." (p. 186.) On September 12, the British Indian Association gave the Government notice of passive resistance.

But passive resistance this time was to take the form not merely of crossing the border into the Transvaal, but also of hawking or trading without a licence and refusing to produce one on demand. Laws without a natural or moral basis were to be openly defied. The campaign was inaugurated on September 15. A party of 12 men and four women, led by Kasturba, set out from Durban for Volksrust for courting arrest. It was a symbolic act, this pitting of a "microscopic minority . . . against a mighty Government". (p. 192.) They were arrested on September 16. Three days later Kasturba was sentenced to three months with hard labour; others to terms from one to three months. The struggle continued despite official attempts to disrupt and discredit it.

The struggle entered a new and revolutionary phase on October 17 when Indian workers in the Newcastle collieries came out on strike against the £3 tax. Gandhiji asked the strikers to deny themselves employees' rations and to court arrest or proceed to the Volksrust border. In an effort to educate the mine-owners, Gandhiji addressed their conference.

The third phase of the struggle began with the "Great March" on November 6, when he led over two thousand strikers into the Transvaal in a "striking demonstration" against the iniquitous £3 tax. Between November 7 and 11 Gandhiji was arrested thrice and released twice on bail. He was finally sentenced, at Dundee, to nine months with hard labour or £60 fine. He chose prison. He was tried again on November 14, and sentenced on other counts to three months.

Meanwhile, the strike had spread from the collieries to the railways, sugar refineries, dock and corporation works; between 7,000 and 8,000 workers were reported off work on November 8. Acts of official violence occurred, with the inevitable rousing of public opinion abroad. Lord Hardinge, the Viceroy, speaking at Madras on November 29, gave expression to his growing concern and sympathy for the Passive Resisters.

The evolution of official policy in regard to the Indian problem, during the rest of this period, can be traced in the official correspondence, particularly the Governor-General's confidential despatches to the British Colonial Office; here are found the only available reports of some of Gandhiji's interviews with high officials. Of the course of events that followed Gandhiji's incarceration, as, indeed, of the entire Indian struggle in South Africa from 1894 to 1914, an authoritative editorial (*vide* Appendix XXVIII.) in the Golden Number of *Indian Opinion*, December 1914, offers a brief, general survey. In chronicle fashion it speaks of " . . . Lord Hardinge's famous speech at Madras, in which he placed himself at the head of Indian public opinion, and his demand for a Commission of Inquiry, the energetic efforts of Lord Ampthill's Committee, the hurried intervention of the Imperial authorities, the appointment over the heads of the Indian community of a Commission whose personnel could not satisfy the Indians, the discharge of the leaders, whose advice to ignore the Commission was almost entirely accepted, the arrival of Messrs Andrews and Pearson and their wonderful work of reconciliation, the deaths of Hurbatsingh and Valliamma, the strained position relieved only by the interruption of the second European strike, when Mr. Gandhi once more undertook not to hamper the Government whilst they had their hands full with the

fresh difficulty, and, when it had been dealt with, the entirely new spirit of friendliness, trust, and co-operation that was found to have been created by the moderation of the great Indian leader and the loving influence spread around him by Mr. Andrews as he proceeded with his great Imperial mission."

In his valedictory letter to the Indian community, Gandhiji described the Settlement, embodied in the Indians' Relief Act passed on June 26, as 'the Magna Charta' of Indians' liberty in South Africa, because it marked a change in Government's policy towards them and established their right to be consulted in matters affecting them and to have their reasonable wishes respected. It was thus with the sense of a mission fulfilled that, on July 18, Gandhiji took leave of South Africa, the sub-continent which "has become to me a sacred and dear land, next only to my motherland." (p. 503.)

From August 4 to December 18, Gandhiji stayed in London; the first World War broke out during this time. Despite bouts of illness, he was active in organizing an Indian Ambulance Corps—as an expression of loyalty to the Empire in its hour of need. Here again, he had occasion to offer satyagraha on an issue which touched Indian self-respect and won his point, the right to be consulted in the disposition of the Corps.

On December 19, Gandhiji sailed for India, "the country where the greatest spiritual treasures were to be found for the comforting and uplifting of the whole world." His political outlook was revealed by his emphasis on work to strengthen the ties between India and Great Britain "by each giving of its best to the other". (p. 565.) His feelings on board the ship Gandhiji has set down in a letter to West: "I have been so often prevented from reaching India that it seems hardly real that I am sitting in a ship bound for India. And having reached that what shall I do with myself? However. 'Lead Kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom, lead Thou me on'. That thought is my solace. . . ." (p. 566.)

The personal letters in the volume reveal Gandhiji's concern, even in the midst of struggle, with thoughts of God and *moksha*. One sees the influence which the Ashram way of life had come to exercise on him and his idea of continuing that life in India. One notes, too, the deep attachment that bound him to Gokhale, his "political Guru", as evidenced, for instance, in the compact of a year's silence for study and observation, after landing on Indian soil.

Of Gandhiji's life and achievements in South Africa, the source-material for which is found in these twelve volumes, the Golden Number of *Indian Opinion* carries the following assessment:

"It is significant that, as Passive Resistance became stronger and purer, it succeeded more and more in bringing together the best representatives of the European and Indian sections of the population. With each new phase came new triumphs and new friends. . . . The struggle commenced with a protest against the universal distrust and contempt for the Indian community. The distrust and contempt have been exchanged for trust and respect. . . . The movement commenced with a demand for the repeal of the Transvaal Act 2 of 1907. The Act was repealed and its threatened extension to other parts of South Africa was completely prevented. At the beginning, racial legislation against Indians was threatened, so as to drive them from the Colony. The Settlement has removed the possibility of racial legislation against Indians throughout the Empire. The system of indentured immigration from India, that had been regarded almost as a permanent feature of South African economics, has been ended. The hated £3 tax has been repealed and its attendant misery and insult destroyed. Vested rights, that were tending everywhere to disappear, are to be maintained and protected. The bulk of Indian marriages, that had never previously received the sanction of South African law, are henceforth to be fully recognized in law. But above and beyond all this is the new spirit of conciliation that has resulted from the hardships, the sufferings, the sacrifices of the Passive Resisters. . . . The struggle has more than proved the immense superiority of right over might, of soul-force over brute-force, of love and reason over hate and passion."

Subsequent history was to show that the racial problem in South Africa was still far from a solution. But Gandhiji had there invented and perfected the weapon of satyagraha which was one day to lead to the liberation of his people and the ending of the age of Imperialism in India.

PREFACE

This volume, the first of the Indian period, covers the years 1915 and 1916 and the first nine months of 1917. It opens with Gandhiji's landing in Bombay on January 9, 1915 and closes with the end of the Champaran struggle:

Gandhiji had accepted Gokhale's advice that he should plunge into no hurried programme of action but should observe the Indian scene and study Indian conditions for a year before he expressed himself on any public issue. He felt bound by this "compact of silence" for one year and spent practically the whole of 1915 touring the country, meeting leaders and exchanging views with them. His *Diary* for the year, reproduced in this volume, gives a detailed account of his movements and of his contacts with personalities like Rabindranath Tagore and Mahatma Munshiram, the Swami Shraddhanand of later years.

Having taken the earliest opportunity to pay a visit to his family in Saurashtra, Gandhiji turned his attention to the practical problem of planning a way of life for himself and his associates which would continue the Phœnix tradition. The ideal of a rigorous moral discipline was as much a personal imperative with him as it was essential for the success of his programme for the application of moral force in solving public issues. In May 1915, an Ashram was founded at Kochrab, on the outskirts of Ahmedabad. This was intended to be a centre for training dedicated servants of the nation and the disciplines to which the inmates were to subject themselves are set out in the Draft Constitution (pp. 91-8), which lays down seriatim Gandhiji's whole programme to cover the different spheres of life, social, economic, religious and educational.

Having founded the Ashram, Gandhiji's next task was to educate the public in his ideals, in the philosophy of satyagraha and its application to the specific problems of India. He approached his task more in the manner of a journalist, in the best sense of the term, than that of a philosopher expounding a system in the abstract. He took every opportunity to mingle with the people, high and low, and put his ideas before them in the manner best suited to the occasion. The day after he landed in India, at a meeting of Gujaratis, held to honour him, he put one of his cherished ideas into action, namely, that Indians should use among

themselves one of their own languages instead of English. In almost everything he said or wrote thereafter, he dwelt on one or more of the requirements of a healthy and well-ordered public life. Among the most notable utterances in this volume are the much-discussed speech at the opening of the Benares Hindu University (pp. 210-6) and the carefully prepared discourses at Madras on Swadeshi (pp. 219-25) and at Allahabad on Economic *v.* Moral Progress (pp. 310-7).

It was, however, the problem of education which exercised him most; it is pre-eminently as an educationist that he appears in this volume. He saw that, if India was to remain herself and retain her creative vitality, the educational system would have to be radically recast so as to reduce the emphasis on book-learning and dethrone English from the central position it had usurped. His ideas on the subject are set out in some detail in his correspondence from Champaran with friends in Ahmedabad and the prospectus of the National School (pp. 332-4), but in a general way he touched upon the issue almost every time he had occasion to address students.

Gandhiji had left South Africa, but the country was very much in his mind. "Letter to J. B. Petit" (pp. 107-13) contains not only a detailed account of the Passive Resistance Fund, but also a brief resume of the satyagraha campaign in South Africa, its limitations and achievements, what had been gained in the settlement of 1914 and what still remained to be secured. His continued interest in the welfare of people there is also revealed in the letters to West, Miss Schlesin and Lazarus. Of all the problems of South Africa, the one over which he was most seriously exercised was the system of indenture, "an evil which cannot be mended but can only be ended". After the Anti-Indenture Resolution at the Lucknow Congress in December 1916, he intensified the attack on the system, demanding stoppage of emigration before May 31, 1917, in meeting after meeting in Ahmedabad, Bombay, Surat, Karachi, Calcutta. The Viceroy conceded the demand.

As regards internal politics, Gandhiji retained his faith in British statesmanship and believed that all that was needed to activate it was sufficient pressure of public opinion. If he expressed himself in no uncertain terms against terrorist methods, it was because of this faith in the British no less than on ethical grounds. He lent his support to the Congress-League scheme of reforms and helped to mobilize public opinion in its favour (pp. 528-9).

The struggle in Champaran was informed with this same faith in the sense of justice of the British. He was drawn into it more or less accidentally, and looked upon it more as a humanitarian mission than as a political campaign. All the same, he was prepared for active satyagraha if it was forced on him. He was served with an order to leave the District, but this he refused to obey. Making a statement in Court on April 18, 1917 (pp. 374-5), he defined for the first time in India the moral basis of disobedience to authority, "to submit without protest to the penalty of disobedience . . . not for want of respect for lawful authority, but in obedience of the higher law of our being—the voice of conscience". This first satyagraha on Indian soil was a complete success. In a statement to the Press on April 21, Gandhiji announced : "The proceedings are withdrawn under instructions from Government. Official assistance during the conduct of my inquiry has been promised and I feel grateful to Government . . . ." "Report on Condition of Ryots in Champaran" (pp. 385-90), in its painstakingly careful study of all the facts and scrupulously fair presentation of them, illustrates the true spirit of satyagraha; it is a document at once dignified and conciliatory, making the minimum demands but insisting on immediate action. He put the planters on their honour as Englishmen. "I have entered upon my mission in the hope that they as Englishmen born to enjoy the fullest personal liberty and freedom will not fail to rise to their status and will not begrudge the *raiyats* the same measure of liberty and freedom." (p. 390) He did not at first succeed with the planters, but he did succeed with the Government. An enquiry committee was appointed, with himself as one of the members. In the deliberations of the committee, Gandhiji had to fight every inch of the ground and do hard bargaining to secure the interests of the ryots. His conciliatory approach was rewarded and the committee's report was signed unanimously on October 3. Gandhiji had thus achieved his aim to "promote peace between the planters and the *raiyats* so as to secure to the *raiyats* the freedom and dignity that should belong to all mankind" (p. 424).

Gandhiji cultivated contacts with public figures, Tilak, Mrs. Besant, Lala Lajpatrai, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and members of the Servants of India Society in Poona, and gathered co-workers round him, Vinoba, Mashruwala, Mahadev Desai, Rajendra Prasad, Kripalani, Kalelkar, Jamnalal Bajaj, C. F. Andrews and others. This volume has its full share of private letters, to these as well as other persons, more relaxed and informal than his writings and public utterances. The letters to Miss

Esther Faering, which begin in this volume, proceed from a plane to which he turned again and again for refreshment and strength. He found and gave comfort in confiding : "My faith has saved me . . . Love must be patient and humble."

CWMG - C

PREFACE

The ten months, October 1917 to July 1918, covered by this volume are a period of intense and almost continuous activity, and show how Gandhiji applies the principle of satyagraha to meet situations which seem to have little in common among them. His relatively easy success in Champaran had awakened interest in his method, but the power and force of satyagraha had to be tested more severely and demonstrated more convincingly before Gandhiji could think of applying it to national problems. Two such experiments were conducted during the Ahmedabad mill-hands' strike of February-March and the Kheda satyagraha of March-April 1918. Gandhiji's part in the war effort illustrates the other side of satyagraha, which means not only resistance to injustice but goodwill for the enemy and readiness to co-operate with him when the occasion demands. The period was thus a crucial time when the lessons of satyagraha were learnt and taught and the ground was prepared for Gandhiji's assumption of national leadership.

The Ahmedabad mill-hands' strike was a unique episode in some ways. Labour organization was yet new to the country and the theory of class struggle which inspired the movement in Europe was practically unknown. Gandhiji had seen in South Africa and heartily disliked a labour agitation inspired by hostility to employers and the Government, and the experience had only strengthened his faith in the power of non-violence to solve all problems of human relationship. The Ahmedabad struggle offered him an opportunity to test and prove this faith and was inspired by an active desire to harmonize the interests of the employers and the workers and handle occasions of friction in a manner which would not generate bitterness. The mill-hands in Ahmedabad demanded a commensurate wage increase to make up for the special war-time allowance arbitrarily withdrawn by the mill-owners. Gandhiji was not anxious to precipitate an agitation. Appealing to the employers to bind the workers with the "silken thread of love" (p. 115), he succeeded, on February 14, in getting an arbitrator appointed to look into the problem. On the other side, he roused the workers to a sense of their rights, but took care to pledge them, at the same time, to the avoidance, of violence in any form. When an open struggle became inevitable Gandhiji threw his weight on the side of the workers and took

over active leadership. He issued daily bulletins intended to educate both the workers and the employers, exhorting the former to conduct their struggle in the spirit of satyagraha and calling for a change of heart in the latter. He recalled the struggle of Indians in South Africa and the martyrdom of Valliamah and Hurbatsingh. He reminded the workers of their own shortcomings and taught them to look upon the struggle for increase in wages as part of a larger effort to improve their way of life. When he noticed signs of their weakening in the face of hardships, he undertook an indefinite fast to demonstrate his readiness to die for their cause. Though he made it clear to everyone concerned that the fast was not intended to put pressure on the mill-owners, he admitted that it could not but have such an effect and, therefore, when the latter yielded, Gandhiji refused to take full advantage of the situation and press for a complete acceptance of the workers' demands. His stand possibly antagonized a section of the workers for a while, but he succeeded in pacifying them. The conclusion of the struggle thus embodied the spirit of compromise which was always an integral element in Gandhiji's conception of satyagraha.

Almost before he was out of the mill-hands' strike, Gandhiji was faced with the possibility of his first serious conflict with the authorities. Crops had sustained serious damage owing to floods in Kheda district in Gujarat and the local public workers felt that the situation warranted whole or partial remission of revenue under the Revenue Code. But the Government was unresponsive to popular feeling in the matter. Gandhiji's advice was sought while he was still in Champaran. On his return from there, he actively interested himself in the people's grievance. After a first-hand study of the crop situation, he came to the conclusion that the popular demand for remission was justified. However, representations to the authorities made no change in their unsympathetic attitude. Gandhiji then advised active resistance on the part of the people. "It seems self-evident to me that there is nothing unlawful if, to express one's sense of injustice, one refuses to pay a tax, in a perfectly civil manner, and lets it be collected [forcibly]" (p. 217). On March 22, addressing a meeting at Nadiad, he invited the people to take a pledge to refuse payment of revenue, making the local grievance a matter of wider principle. He observed, " . . . in this country, it has become a practice with the Government to insist that it is always in the right. It is intolerable that, however just the people's case, the Government should have its own way. Justice must prevail and injustice yield" (p. 277). In almost every speech he made during the struggle,

he drew attention to this wider significance and sought to educate the people in the democratic spirit which should inform the Government's dealings with them. He wanted the people to cultivate a sense of sacrifice. "All nations which have risen have done so through suffering" (p. 277). Again, "Authority is blind and unjust. A Government that says that such authority must be respected cannot last" (p. 323). "No King," he told them further, "can remain in power if he sets himself against the people. I have taken it as the chief mission of my life to prove this" (pp. 328-9). Referring to the Commissioner's address at a meeting on April 12, which he had advised the people to attend, he felt compelled to say that it was "the sacred duty of every loyal citizen to fight unto death against such a spirit of vindictiveness and tyranny" (p. 340).

On April 25, the authorities showed evidence of a change of policy, if not of heart. Orders were issued that, if those who were in a position to do so paid up the arrears, those who were not would be exempted. When the orders were publicized early in June, Gandhiji accepted them, though he felt and declared that the concession lacked grace. The gains by way of actual relief were insubstantial, but the people had acquired a spirit of fearlessness and a consciousness of their strength to employ satyagraha whenever necessary. This, to Gandhiji's mind, was sufficient reward for the suffering which the struggle had entailed.

The end of the Kheda struggle must have come to Gandhiji as a relief since it left him free to give his attention to the larger question of war effort as a national issue and demonstrate his readiness, as a satyagrahi, to help the Government. Believing still in the usefulness of the British connection to India and allowing his chivalrous instinct to prevail for the moment over a purely logical interpretation of his doctrine of non-violence, Gandhiji offered his services to the Empire. Politically, he hoped, co-operation in the war effort would have its effect on the better side of the British character and, in any case, generate sufficient strength in the country to make it impossible for the British Government to ignore the national aspiration for Home Rule. Overcoming his initial hesitation, he attended the Viceroy's War Conference in Delhi on April 28 and made up his mind to work actively for the war effort. On May 25, he publicly advocated enlistment in the army. Tilak and other leaders had reservations as to the wisdom of unconditional co-operation. The situation must have been more than embarrassing to Gandhiji when, at the Provincial War Conference in Bombay on June 10, Lord Willingdon, the

Governor, stopped Tilak and Kelkar from proceeding with their speeches. Gandhiji took up the matter with the Governor and told him in so many words that his action was a serious blunder. He led in the public disapproval of the Governor's tactless behaviour and demanded an apology for what he considered an affront to the nation. Nevertheless, he called for co-operation in the war effort and went to the length of undertaking a strenuous recruiting campaign in Kheda district, with unhappy consequences for his health. The apparent inconsistency of the apostle of non-violence recruiting for the army invited comment even from friends and he had to explain, what he repeated time and again afterwards, that non-violence cannot be invoked to shield cowardice, that he himself would refrain from violence in all conceivable circumstances, but would advise others, who did not share his belief in the supremacy of non-violence, not to shrink from violence out of fear or weakness. If the Indian people, he argued, wanted the benefits of the British connection, they must help to defend the Empire. However, he put his faith exclusively in satyagraha for realizing the country's political aspirations. "It is our supreme duty", he wrote to a public worker, "to take every occasion to show in action the wonderful power of satyagraha" (p. 144). Again, in his speech at Indore, on March 30, he declared: "If we can ensure the deliverance of India, it is only through truth and non-violence" (p. 299). Gandhiji felt, all the same, the complexities of the moral issues involved in pursuing the non-violent way in human affairs. "One cannot climb the Himalayas in a straight line. Can it be that, in like fashion, the path of non-violence, too, is difficult?" (p. 516).

Small matters claimed the same earnest attention from Gandhiji as did big national issues. He tried to put the contentious question of cow-protection in better perspective by relating it to a compassionate concern for the welfare of the animal world. His constructive approach to the problem is revealed in his emphasis on improved breeding, humane treatment of bullocks, setting up of model dairies and so on. Another problem which had come to engage more and more of his attention was that of education. He was unhappy for several reasons with the educational system established by the British, but his main objection was to the unnatural importance given to English by its being made the medium of instruction. He spoke and wrote on the abolition of the practice of untouchability and acceptance of caste restrictions only in the measure that they promoted self-control.

In all his multifarious activities, Gandhiji was sustained by a burning love for India. "Only if I die for India shall I know that I was fit to live" (p. 43). He was impatient to deliver his message to the country while his influence was in the ascendent. But he was aware of his limited experience of Indian conditions and felt his way in politics rather cautiously. Presiding over the Gujarat Political Conference on November 3, 1917, he described himself as "a baby of two years and a half in Indian politics. I cannot trade here on my experience in South Africa" (p. 48). Yet he had to be in political life. Asked by Montagu the reason for this, he had replied that otherwise he could not do his religious and social work, adding later : "I think the reply will stand good to the end of my life" (p. 478). The abysmal poverty of the country weighed on his mind day and night, all the more so since the people seemed helpless to do anything about it. Political freedom was essential for progress in all other spheres too and he wanted the country to have the right to err. "He who has no right to err can never go forward. . . The freedom to err and the power to correct errors is one definition of swaraj" (p. 54). He subordinated all other public concerns to the one central aim of securing swaraj for the country, and welcomed the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms as a step towards it.

A notable feature of this volume is the large number of letters covering over one third of it. Addressed to close relatives, co-workers and associates in India and in South Africa, to friends, public workers, academicians, editors, officials at all levels and politicians of all schools, the letters reveal Gandhiji's political and other concerns blending with his human interest in the correspondents. As his circle of personal and political contacts widens and public work becomes ever more strenuous, his concern for individual men and women seems, if anything, to grow deeper and more active.

CWMG - C

PREFACE

This volume covers the period from August 1918 to July 1919, a half-year of enforced rest for Gandhiji followed by another of stormy developments which drew him into the thick of the national struggle. What led to this unexpectedly sudden assumption of national leadership by Gandhiji was the Rowlatt legislation of February-March 1919, followed by the indiscriminate shooting of unarmed men and women in a meeting in Amritsar on the evening of 13th April, 1919. The Jallianwala Bagh tragedy, as the gruesome incident has come to be known, and its aftermath hurt the nation's self-respect deeply and transformed a constitutional agitation for modest political rights into a massive national struggle relying increasingly on popular sanctions. Gandhiji embodied in his person the wounded feelings of the nation and its will to assert self-respect, and sought to give the national awakening a positive character by educating the people in the principles of satyagraha. This volume presents the beginnings of his epic effort and thus introduces the Gandhian era in Indian history.

It opens with "Speech at Surat" (1-8-1918), which logically belongs to the preceding two months, covered in Vol. XIV, during which Gandhiji went touring Gujarat, and in particular Kheda district, in a strenuous effort to help the Government with recruits. The consequent strain brought on the first serious and prolonged illness of his life. The period from the middle of August 1918 to the end of January 1919 must have been a time of much physical suffering and pain for him. One day, on October 1, 1918, as Mahadev Desai records in his Diary, he was "at death's door". The Ashram inmates gathered round him and recited his favourite verses from the second chapter of the *Gita*. Relief came with a surgical operation in January 1919.

This period of six months, uneventful politically, is rich in revelations of the gentle humanity of Gandhiji. With unaffected truthfulness, he accepted the illness as the consequence of his own lapses and submitted to it in patience. His peace of mind and serenity remained unaffected by the physical suffering, which he regarded with detachment of spirit, and there followed a certain relaxation of the will which is something more than the experience common to most during a time of convalescence. In a letter to Maganlal Gandhi, he speaks of his discovery of "the principle

that satyagraha has a universal application.'' (p. 19) This is no mere intellectual recognition, but a realization of the truth that one's body is an autonomous entity with laws of its own and should be treated in the same spirit of truth and non-violence, which inspires the practice of satyagraha towards other human beings. The profound humility which this realization induced in Gandhiji runs like an undercurrent through all the letters of the period, and gives them a flavour of mellowness more natural to the contemplative than to the man of action. It seems as though, denied self-expression in action, Gandhiji had turned to the word in the manner of an artist to convey the emergence of a new dimension of being.

In January 1919 came the operation, and doctors and friends alike insisted that he should start taking milk. He had given it up many years earlier in South Africa on grounds of conscience. It was an agonizing choice he had to make now, between, on the one hand, his desire to be faithful to his vow in spirit and letter and, on the other, his sincere concern for the suffering of Kasturba Gandhi and his burning passion to continue his mission of service to India and humanity. Succumbing to ''a strong desire to live'', he justified his choice to himself and to friends, e.g., to Maganlal Gandhi (pp. 70-1) and to Narahari Parikh (pp.73-5 and 78-9), but felt profoundly humbled all the same. Later, when he described this experience again, it was in a different vein. (*Vide An Autobiography*, Part V, Ch. XXIX.) The illness had been, there is no doubt about it, a spiritual education of the highest value.

Before he had come out of this contemplative mood and recovered in full his energy for action, the country was faced with the Rowlatt Bills which it took as an attack on national self-respect. Gandhiji worked actively to give organized expression to popular resentment. He pledged himself and his co-workers to determined agitation against the proposed legislation, through civil disobedience of laws if need be. Weak though he was, he undertook an extensive tour of the country and, to demonstrate the strength of popular feeling against the Bills, issued a call to the nation to observe April 6 as ''Satyagraha Day'' with prayers and fasting, and taking the pledge of civil disobedience. The day passed off peacefully in Bombay. There were, however, reports of impending trouble in the Punjab. Gandhiji left Bombay on the 8th and proceeded to the Punjab to help preserve peace in the Province. He was prevented from entering and taken into custody. The news provoked violent reactions in parts of the country. The atmosphere

was charged with violence and fear and the country-wide tension culminated in the fateful shooting in Amritsar, on April 13, followed by the imposition of martial law in the Punjab and the cruel indignities which accompanied it.

Gandhiji's reaction to the outbreak of violence was his historic confession of a Himalayan miscalculation. He did not minimize the strength of the provocation but, at the same time, spared no words to condemn the people's loss of self-control and announced a 72-hour fast by way of expiation.

Having unreservedly admitted this in his letter to the P. S. to Viceroy (pp.218-20), Gandhiji issued a statement to the Press on April 18, temporarily suspending the civil disobedience part of satyagraha. In the letter to the P. S. to the Viceroy he had categorically affirmed his continued reliance upon satyagraha and his hope that in the course of time it would be accepted both by the people and the Government. The suspension of civil disobedience did not, therefore, mean abandoning satyagraha itself but indicated only a change of approach.

In a series of "Satyagraha Leaflets" and through speeches and public statements, he strove to explain to the people the meaning of satyagraha as a weapon of moral force. Civil disobedience of laws, he explained, was only incidental to the practice of satyagraha, which was essentially a process of self-purification and required its votary to follow swadeshi as the most natural expression of one's concern for the welfare of one's neighbour. Though he had started much earlier his propaganda for swadeshi, after the events of April he took it up with increasing earnestness as the most effective expression of healthy and constructive patriotism.

On April 26, 1919, B. G. Horniman, editor of *The Bombay Chronicle* and a fearless champion of the nationalist cause, was deported by the Bombay Government. Gandhiji trusted the people to exercise self-restraint and again gave a call for peaceful hartal on May 11. With his trust in the authorities, he continued to plead with them for justice and reason. "Yes," he wrote to C. F. Andrews on May 4, "in the midst of all the carnage, prosecutions, martial law, military dispositions, I find the law of love answering fully and being abundantly proved."(p. 272.) He appealed for an independent "inquiry to examine the causes of disturbances in the Punjab and the administration of martial law in the Province, including the sentences passed by the Martial Law Tribunal." (pp. 334.) Failing redress on these matters, he was ready to revive civil disobedience and gave intimation of his intention to the Viceroy. He went ahead in June with preparations for its

resumption, carrying on simultaneously intensive propaganda for swadeshi. Finally, in July, he decided on indefinite suspension of civil disobedience and explained his reasons for doing so in a statement to the Press, which was a challenge both to the Government and the satyagrahis : "If my occasional Civil Resistance be a lighted match, Rowlatt legislation and persistence in retaining it on the Statute-book are a thousand matches scattered throughout India, and the only way to avoid Civil Resistance altogether is to withdraw that legislation. . . I have thus suspended Civil Resistance to hasten the end of that legislation. But satyagrahis will pay for its removal by their lives if it cannot be removed by lesser means." (p. 470.)

This volume, like others, has its wealth of personal letters. The very first letter says that in the Champaran, Kheda and Ahmedabad struggles, "I followed His will and no other and He will lead me 'amid the encircling gloom'." (p. 4.) The letter to A. B. Dhruva written from his sick-bed amidst terrible pain reveals his spirit of joyous submission : "I see most clearly that there is no kindness like nature's. Nature is God and God is love; and every mistake is punished in love. I am learning much through this illness." (p. 24.) Towards the end of the volume (p. 485), one hears a call to prayer through action: "He alone prays sincerely who acts as he prays."

CWMG-C

PREFACE

This volume covers the six months from August 1919 to January 1920. It was a period of uneasy peace following a storm and the foundering of hopes. Gandhiji's overall assessment of the first nine months of 1919 runs thus: "...we are faced with despair everywhere. It was confidently hoped that, at the close of the War, India would get something substantial, but the hope turned out to be false. For aught we know the reforms may not come. Even if they do, they will be worthless. . . . We have to wait and see. The Punjab has been a scene of most revolting episodes. Innocent lives have been lost. . . . The gulf between the rulers and the ruled has been widened." (p. 259). The only silver lining to the "thick dark cloud of despair", according to Gandhiji, was the dawn of satyagraha.

The Rowlatt Act, which had been the cause of the upheaval of April 1919, had not been repealed. Greatly distressed over this, Gandhiji asked: "Is the will of the people to prevail or that of the Government?" (p. 23). For securing its repeal, Gandhiji tried, in the first instance (p. 53), the old method of sustained and orderly agitation and education of public opinion. He recommended a mass petition after the style of the Congress-League Scheme memorial. When the All-India Home Rule League drew up such a petition, he appealed to all the people to sign it (p. 236). Montagu was reported to have declared that the Rowlatt Act would never be repealed. To this Gandhiji's retort was that General Smuts had said the same thing about the Transvaal Asiatic Act in 1909, but the Indians' satyagraha had compelled him to remove the racial bar from the Immigration Law in 1914. Official intransigence stiffened Gandhiji's attitude and he soon realized that the only answer to the Rowlatt Act was civil resistance and that constitutional measures like a petition were totally ineffective (p. 449).

The Punjab occupied the major part of Gandhiji's public activity during this period. He was grieved over the sufferings of the people under the repressive acts of the Government and lent his active support to measures for organizing relief. Time and again he used the columns of his papers to raise his voice against the arbitrary, unjust and disproportionate sentences which were passed on all and sundry. He wrote: "During the whole course of my practice of law, by no means inconsiderable, extending over an

unbroken period of nearly twenty years, I have never come across cases in which capital punishment has been so lightly pronounced on the flimsiest evidence taken down in a most perfunctory manner. . . . " (p. 45).

Examining the Martial Law cases critically, he demanded review, revision and, often, the reversal of the cruel sentences imposed on innocent people. He was convinced that Doctors Kitchlew and Satyapal, the deported leaders, were accused of all sorts of things they had never done or speeches that they had never made (p. 85). It was no joke for him, he wrote, to be outside prison walls when so many in the Punjab were suffering imprisonment for no fault save that of daring to serve their country to the best of their ability (pp. 72-3). The least that could be done in the circumstances was to have an impartial enquiry held into the happenings in the Punjab. Writing on September 7 regarding the appointment of the Hunter Inquiry Committee, Gandhiji hoped that justice would be done and called upon experienced men everywhere to present facts fearlessly before it. On October 2, he urged Swami Shraddhanand, the Arya Samaj leader, to set up a central body to collect and tender evidence.

On October 29, along with C. F. Andrews, Gandhiji met Lord Hunter, the chairman of the Disorders Inquiry Committee, which held its first sitting in Delhi on November 3. Gandhiji wrote to the Lt.-Governor of the Punjab demanding recognition of the right of public bodies to lead evidence before the Hunter Committee. It was also necessary to release the Punjab leaders on parole for this purpose. The Punjab Government's refusal to let imprisoned leaders appear before the Committee amounted, in Gandhiji's opinion, to the denial of a right to which any criminal was entitled. He conveyed to the Punjab Government the decision of the Congress Sub-committee, which was set up to inquire into the Punjab disturbances, to boycott the Hunter Committee. The Congress Sub-committee appointed Motilal Nehru, C. R. Das, Abbas Tyabji, Fazl Hussain and Gandhiji as Commissioners for preparing an independent Congress report on the disturbances. Gandhiji made an extensive tour of the Punjab, addressing gatherings, meeting people and collecting evidence—an experience which he described as 'precious' and shared with the readers of *Navajivan* in a series of "Punjab Letters".

To the widespread discontent over the continuance of the Rowlatt Act was added another grievance. The Muslim demand for the continuance of the Khalif's control over Arabia and the holy places of Islam was one of the issues which dominated the

political landscape during this time. On September 18, Gandhiji addressed the Khilafat meeting in Bombay, which adopted a resolution expressing anxiety over the dismemberment of Turkey and demanded the fulfilment of British promises. October 17 was observed as 'Khilafat Day'. Gandhiji addressed letters to the Press and stressed in *Navajivan* the significance of the 'Day'. He also communicated with important Indian leaders. When official peace celebrations were announced for the middle of December, Gandhiji considered it necessary for Indians to completely dissociate themselves from them so long as the Muslim demand was not granted. The Khilafat claim, he emphasized, was backed by justice, the declarations of British Ministers and the united strength of Hindu and Muslim opinion. Gandhiji made the 'Khilafat' a plank for Hindu-Muslim unity, believing as he did that, if the Hindus befriended the Muslims in the hour of their trial, the two communities would come closer together.

Popular resentment over the Rowlatt Act and its aftermath and the Muslims' apprehensions about the Khilafat notwithstanding, Gandhiji continued to believe in the country realizing its political aspirations with British co-operation. In the first week of December 1919, the Reforms Bill had its third reading in the House of Commons. Gandhiji was against rejecting the Reforms, as they conceded important rights, for which thanks were due to Mr. Montagu. The country had to send honest and competent representatives to the legislature and secure justice vis-a-vis the Rowlatt Act and the Punjab. In the last resort they had the weapon of satyagraha (p. 342). When the Royal Proclamation was issued on December 24, Gandhiji described it as evidence of the British intention to do justice. He considered it the duty of the country to work the reforms in order "to make them a thorough success and thus anticipate the time for a full measure of responsibility" (p. 361). A logical corollary to this was Gandhiji's moving the Reforms resolution at the Amritsar Congress which, *inter alia*, hoped that "the authorities and the people will co-operate so to work the reforms as to secure an early establishment of full responsible government" (pp. 363-4).

The most significant feature of this period, from the point of view of the evolution of Gandhiji's leadership, was his patient effort at educating public opinion on the meaning of satyagraha. The events of April 1919 had convinced him of the absolute necessity of such education. Neither the people nor the Government had understood that Gandhiji conceived satyagraha not merely as a political weapon but as a technique of employing soul-force for

solving all the problems of life. It could be applied for almost any reform in any sphere (p. 123). It meant, in essence, resistance of wrong by quiet and dignified suffering (p. 317). It encompassed the spheres of swadeshi, social reforms and political reforms. The permanence of these reforms was ensured only so far as these were based on satyagraha (p. 260). It was his purpose in life, he declared, to demonstrate that the strongest physical force bends before moral force when it is used in the defence of truth (p. 23). In his reply to the 'Pennsylvanian', Gandhiji emphasized that satyagraha was nothing else but a moral revolution and that civil resistance was only a necessary part of it (p. 49). In his famous rejoinder to Lokamanya Tilak's interpretation of the *Bhagavad Gita*, he affirmed that the law was not to return evil for evil, but good for evil (pp. 490-1).

The record of Gandhiji's testimony before the Disorders Inquiry Committee is an outstanding document. On January 5, he submitted a statement to the Committee in which he gave a brief exposition of the science of satyagraha and the movement against the Rowlatt Act. Referring to the developments in the Punjab and Ahmedabad, he said that he did not believe "there was any revolutionary movement behind the excesses. They could hardly be dignified by the term 'rebellion' " (p. 371). He clarified the purpose of the general hartal in April 1919, criticized the restraint order served on him to turn him "away from a mission of peace" (p. 389), and considered the violence in Ahmedabad and Viramgam as unjustified and the work of "half-educated raw youths" (p. 392). Satyagraha had been suspended not because it was unsuitable to the masses, but because it was not in the right season (p. 416). Gandhiji confirmed that it had been neither the cause nor the occasion of the upheaval (p. 426). After setting out the objections to the Rowlatt Act, Gandhiji declared: "But for satyagraha, India would have witnessed scenes perhaps more terrible than it has passed through" (p. 460).

For India's triple malady of disease, hunger and lack of clothing, swadeshi was his sole remedy. Through swadeshi he hoped to restore to the agriculturists an old-time subsidiary occupation of theirs (p. 8). Through it, he held, every village in India could become self-supporting and self-producing. It was an evolutionary process which would gain strength as the country went forward (p. 482). He looked upon it as a movement which nourished the life of the nation, helped its poor and protected the chastity of its women. It was calculated to bring economic independence to the country in a simple and easy manner (p. 132). But he distinguished

between boycott and swadeshi. The former, he said, was a sign of anger and indicated weakness.

In the midst of all his pressing preoccupations with the Indian situation, Gandhiji still found time, now and again, to educate public opinion through the Press on worsening conditions in South Africa. The passage of the 'Undesirables Ordinance' in the Transvaal virtually amounted to the confiscation of Indians' primary trading and land rights in South Africa. The announcement of a Commission of Inquiry with the possibility of Indian representation on it relieved the gloom, but only a little as its terms were restricted to trading licences. Withal, Gandhiji deprecated the adoption of retaliatory measures by India. A vivid flashback into Gandhiji's motivation in the Kheda and Champaran struggles was furnished in his defence of Sankaran Nair's minute of dissent in the Viceroy's Executive Council. His fearless criticism of executive high-handedness and what he considered judicial irresponsibility brought him into conflict with the Bombay High Court. He did not allow this, however, to deflect him from his arduous duties in the Punjab.

It was during this period that Gandhiji took up the publication of *Young India* and *Navajivan* under his own editorial care. He felt that he had something to give to India which no one else had in equal measure, and wanted to give it through his own journals (p. 92). While using them to educate public opinion on political matters, he made them instruments of social service and the regeneration of national life in all fields. *Navajivan* means "renewal of life", and Gandhiji sought to bring this about by activating the moral energy which the people had inherited through the centuries. In simple, easy Gujarati, he addressed the people directly, argued with them, coaxed and rebuked them as one of themselves. In the process, he freed the language from the artificiality of an exclusive tradition of writing and ushered in a new era in Gujarati literature.

CWMG - C

PREFACE

The five months from February 1920 to June 1920 covered in this volume witnessed the birth of non-co-operation in India. The discontent over the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms was augmented by the failure of the Allies to take note of the concern of Indian Muslims over the Khilafat. The Hunter Committee Report, published in May 1920 along with the Government of India's despatch and the Secretary of State's endorsement of the Government's conclusions, added to the discontent which swelled into a flood. Gandhiji, who had earlier advocated the working of the Reforms in a constructive spirit, felt obliged to advise the country to withdraw co-operation from a Government which had shown no regard for justice. This was no mere change of tactics. It meant a profound change in Gandhiji's attitude towards the Empire. He had more or less accepted the British claim that their Empire rested on moral and political principles and that India had benefited greatly by membership in it. That faith was now shaken and Gandhiji wanted the country to generate sufficient moral strength to mend or end the Empire. This was to be the guiding principle of his leadership henceforth.

The idea of direct action appealed to the prevailing mood, and conditions seemed favourable for Gandhiji assuming the sole leadership of the country. The Muslim leaders who headed the Khilafat agitation welcomed Gandhiji's help and counsel, though they did not agree with him in the emphasis he laid on the ethical basis of his programme. He was associated with the Khilafat deputation which had waited upon the Viceroy in the preceding January. It was at this time that he had mooted the plan of non-co-operation. It was recommended to Muslims by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad in his presidential address to the second Khilafat Conference at Calcutta, held on February 29, 1920. On March 7, Gandhiji issued a statement to the Press embodying his programme. In April and May of the year, there was talk of his leading a deputation to England and he was inclined to do so if the Muslim leaders were earnest about the proposal. Thus, during the period covered by this volume, the Khilafat agitation was Gandhiji's main concern in the political field.

His identification with the Khilafat agitation provoked many doubts and questions both as regards his motives and the wisdom

of his action. He was accused by unsympathetic critics of wanting to unite Hindus and Muslims against the British and of exploiting an unreasonable religious sentiment to embarrass the British Government. Gandhiji replied to these charges with the utmost patience and forbearance: "It is contrary to my creed", he said, "to embarrass governments or anybody else" (p. 350). "I have thrown myself heart and soul into this question because British pledges, abstract justice and religious sentiment coincide. I can conceive the possibility of a blind and fanatical religious sentiment existing in opposition to pure justice. I should then resist the former and fight for the latter" (p. 411). He was convinced that on the Khilafat issue the Muslims were in the right. The plea of self-determination for the Armenians and Arabs could be reconciled with the suzerainty of the Sultan of Turkey, as demanded by Muslim religious sentiment; British pledges, as interpreted by Gandhiji, had promised that this sentiment would be respected. In any case, the plea was insincere inasmuch as it was only meant to cloak the political designs of the Allies in the Middle East. Gandhiji felt, therefore, that, as between the British Government and the Indian Muslims, justice was on the side of the latter—both politically and morally.

To the criticism that he was misleading the country as a whole, and Hindus in particular, in supporting the Muslims on a religious issue involving the fate of another Power, his reply was that the Hindus' duty as neighbours dictated that they should sympathize with Muslims and support their demand if it was not intrinsically unjust. Writing to the Viceroy in June 1920 to explain his connection with the Khilafat issue, Gandhiji said: "I consider that as a staunch Hindu wishing to live on terms of the closest friendship with my Mussulman countrymen, I should be an unworthy son of India if I did not stand by them in their hour of trial. In my humble opinion their cause is just" (p. 503). In Gandhiji's view, thus, the Khilafat issue was linked up with the question of Hindu-Muslim unity. Writing in *Young India* in February 1920, he said: "What then does the Hindu-Mohammedan unity consist in and how can it be best promoted? The answer is simple. It consists in our having a common purpose, a common goal and common sorrows. It is best promoted by co-operating to reach the common goal, by sharing one another's sorrows and by mutual toleration" (p. 46). Strong Hindu support for the Muslim demand, though offered unconditionally, was bound to generate goodwill among Muslims and strengthen the forces of unity. As a result of his efforts it appeared in the middle

of 1920 as if the basis had been laid for enduring Hindu-Muslim unity.

The fear was expressed, by Mrs. Besant among others, that non-co-operation would lead to violence. Gandhiji did not agree. Writing in *Young India* on April 28, 1920, he said: "I however do not fear any evil consequences, for the simple reason that every responsible Mohammedan understands that non-co-operation to be successful must be totally unattended with violence" (p. 352). Again: "We certainly cannot claim that violence will never occur but, having taken all precautions against its occurrence, we must, I feel, go ahead with our programme" (p. 372). There was also a more practical reason for doing this: "I am convinced that, had there been no move for non-co-operation, violence would long since have broken out. . . .The Muslims are boiling over, but they have kept their patience in the belief that the Hindus are with them" (p. 415). In any case, the programme was to be implemented gradually and the people's response to each step watched carefully before the next was taken.

The disillusionment about the moral basis of British rule was complete with the publication of the Hunter Committee's Report in May 1920. The Congress had boycotted the proceedings of the Committee as a protest against the refusal of the Lt-Governor of the Punjab to give a fair opportunity for the presentation of the people's case before it. But Gandhiji had not lost hope that the Committee would arrive at the right conclusions on the basis of even the incomplete evidence before it. Even so, the Congress had appointed a Committee of its own, with Gandhiji as member and its report, drafted by him, was published in March 1920. Gandhiji had worked on the report day and night for a fortnight, confined all the time to the Ashram at Ahmedabad where he had returned after a strenuous tour of the Punjab. The report is no mere legal or journalistic piece of writing; it is a narrative of imaginative breadth and places the Punjab tragedy in the right perspective by presenting it as the culmination of the anti-national policy followed by the Lt-Governor, Sir Michael O'Dwyer. The conclusions which it drew, and the action which it demanded, were stated with moderation and dignity. In contrast to this, the majority report of the official Committee seemed to have treated the unhappy events merely as a law-and-order problem and did not go beyond admitting a few errors of judgment and recommending nominal punishment of the guilty officials. The members seemed to have been plainly concerned with whitewashing official misconduct. Gandhiji called this "political freemasonry"

(p. 480), and saw in it an added reason for withdrawing co-operation from the British Government.

Gandhiji never missed an opportunity of emphasizing that action in the political field was only one aspect of the total regeneration of national life to which the people should direct their efforts. In April 1920, he joined the All-India Home Rule League, yielding to the persuasion of friends, and accepted the office of President. He took the opportunity to set out the principal aims of his programme: swadeshi, Hindu-Muslim unity, the propagation of Hindustani as the national language and the use of regional languages for all public purposes in the respective regions (p. 97). Elsewhere, he emphasized the imperative need of working for the removal of untouchability.

Literature too, he argued, should reflect national aspirations and further the national effort. He told the men of letters attending the sixth Gujarati Literary Conference in Ahmedabad on April 2, 1920, that they should write for the masses, that the culture which they served should unite the saint and the peasant (pp. 301-3). With literature as an expression of imagination, pure and simple, Gandhiji had no patience and he did not mince words in making this clear to the learned audience, which included Rabindranath Tagore, an ardent champion of the autonomy of the aesthetic life. The temperamental difference between the two subsequently led to a public controversy.

Gandhiji never made a secret of the fact that the central motive of his life was the aspiration for *moksha*. In other words, he was a man of religion. And by religion he meant "not the Hindu religion, which I certainly prize above all other religions, but the religion which transcends Hinduism, which changes one's very nature, which binds one indissolubly to the truth within and which ever purifies" (p. 406). Explaining why though religiously inclined and having no interest in politics whatever, he had been busy for months with nothing but politics, he declared: "The sole reason for this is that I doubt whether I would be able to follow my dharma without thus participating in political affairs" (p. 48). It is not merely that he engaged in political and social work for the purpose of disinterested service in the spirit of *karmayoga*; his creed was that no person aspiring after perfection in his individual life could remain indifferent to his environment or could try to serve the world without seeking to transform its life ethically and spiritually. Hence his concern for "spiritualizing politics"—a phrase of Gokhale's which he often repeated. He told the members of the All-India Home Rule League: "Whilst

I would not expect the League to follow me in my civil disobedience methods, I would strain every nerve to make truth and non-violence accepted in all our national activities'' (pp. 348-9).

Gandhiji's consuming passion for perfection in himself and in others was tempered by a childlike love for others. The uncompromising standards which he laid down for his co-workers and those bound to him by personal ties set up stresses and conflicts in them which must have caused them considerable pain. Gandhiji's letters to Esther Faering and Mahadev Desai, included in this volume, reveal the magic of his healing touch.

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PREFACE

This volume covers the four and a half months from July 1 to November 17, 1920. The chief interest of the period is Gandhiji's country-wide tour of mass education, in the course of which he launched a powerful attack on the British Empire and the Government of India, which he repeatedly described as *Ravanarajya*. The vehemence of the attack must have surprised his contemporaries; it certainly invited adverse comment as being inconsistent with his doctrine of non-violence. But Gandhiji had cherished his faith in the British Government for so long in the face of disturbing evidence that when the revulsion came it expressed itself in language which was unmistakably strong. He had declared war on the evil which the system of government in India represented and he wanted to arouse the people to the magnitude of this evil. He took pains, however, to emphasize that they were fighting the evil itself and not the British nation, and that the only way to do this was to re-order national life so as to purge it of centuries-old evils. Withdrawal of co-operation from the Government was only the first step in the process. He, therefore, never wearied of telling his audiences and his critics that non-co-operation as he had conceived it was a movement for self-purification.

It was no easy task simultaneously to make the people feel the wrongs of the British Government and the evils in society. The audiences differed in their outlook, their temperaments and their interests. The theoretical justification of civil disobedience and non-co-operation, which Gandhiji derived from Thoreau, was beyond the comprehension even of the English-educated class in the country. But Gandhiji had an unrivalled gift of identifying himself with his audiences and addressing his arguments to them in a language which they could understand. Whether he was speaking to English-educated audiences in the South or to Muslims in the North, whether to devout women in Gujarat or to university students and teachers in any part of the country, he instinctively adapted his point of view to theirs. He soon emerged as the national leader with the widest appeal both among the educated classes and the masses. Gandhiji used this position for transforming the Congress into an instrument of dynamic change. "In drafting the constitution," he said in a letter to N. C. Kelkar on July 2, 1920, "I have attempted to give the Congress a representative character such as would make its demands irresistible" (p. 3). This

aim may not have been realized to the full, but the revised constitution and the mass appeal which Gandhiji wielded soon changed the character of the Congress beyond recognition.

Gandhiji started his tour with the North. In speech after speech, at Amritsar, Lahore, Rawalpindi, Karachi and Hyderabad (Sind), he appealed to the people for active participation in the non-co-operation movement. His non-co-operation programme included boycott of the visit of the Prince of Wales, of schools, courts and councils, of titles, medals and honours; of foreign cloth, of Government loans and even of the army. It included adoption of khadi and swadeshi. It was not easy to win over Muslim audiences to his creed of non-violence. He dwelt, therefore, on the practical consequences of violence and on the heroism and courage of facing death unarmed. For instance, he said at Rawalpindi: "It seems to me that you will face defeat if you use your swords; not only that, but your swords will be turned against your people, men and women alike . . . (p. 64). Proclaim to the Government: 'You may hang us on the gallows, you may send us to prison, but you will get no co-operation from us. . .' " (p. 66).

To an audience in Madras, he spoke in a different accent, almost with the passion of a prophet: "As soon as India accepts the doctrine of the sword, my life as an Indian is finished. It is because I believe in a mission special to India, and it is because I believe that the ancients of India, after centuries of experience, have found out that the true thing for any human being on earth is not justice based on violence but justice based on sacrifice of self, justice based on *yajna* and *kurbani*—I cling to that doctrine and I shall cling to it for ever. . . I am not anti-English; I am not anti-British; I am not anti-any Government; but I am anti-un-truth—anti-humbug and anti-injustice. So long as the Government spells injustice, it may regard me as its enemy, implacable enemy. . . .Even if I should die in the attempt, it is worth dying for than that I should live and deny my own doctrine. . . . May God grant the people of India the right path, the true vision and the ability and the courage to follow this path, difficult and yet easy, of sacrifice" (pp. 146-54). He expounded this conviction in still more forceful and measured language in "The Doctrine of the Sword" in *Young India*: "Non-violence is the law of our species as violence is the law of the brute. . . . I have therefore ventured to place before India the ancient law of self-sacrifice. For satyagraha and its offshoots, non-co-operation and civil resistance, are nothing but new names for the law of suffering. . . . Working under this law of our being, it is possible for a single individual to defy the whole

might of an unjust empire to save his honour, his religion, his soul and lay the foundation for that empire's fall or its regeneration. . . . I want India to recognize that she has a soul that cannot perish and that can rise triumphant above every physical weakness and defy the physical combination of a whole world. . . . India's acceptance of the doctrine of the sword will be the hour of my trial. I hope I shall not be found wanting. My religion has no geographical limits. If I have a living faith in it, it will transcend my love for India herself'' (pp. 133-4). In ''The Inwardness of Non-co-operation'', he described Western civilization as representing powers of darkness'' and ''the spirit of Satan'', in opposition to which the movement of non-co-operation represented ''the powers of light'' (p. 235).

Gandhiji adopted a different approach when writing in *Navajivan* or addressing audiences which shared his religious sentiments. He explained the war in the *Ramayana* as the war of good and evil, good as represented by Rama who had purified himself through self-denial and self-discipline, and evil as represented by Ravana who followed the ways of self-indulgence and self-will. He described the British Government as *Ravanarajya* and the ideal swaraj of his conception as *Ramarajya*. He appealed to the traditional sentiment of being defiled by association with evil and called upon the people to shun the British Government in India and its favours and benefits. Before women, he held up the example of Sita who, as Ravana's prisoner in Lanka, had refused to do the oppressor's will and despised his gifts. This traditional approach perhaps obscured the essentially progressive vision of Gandhiji and led to misunderstanding in some quarters.

The most controversial item in the non-co-operation programme was Gandhiji's call to students to leave schools and colleges. He not only wanted, in this way, the supply of clerks to the Government to be stopped, but sought to deliver the people from the fruits of what he described as an education for slavery. The educational system as it had been built up by the British had concentrated on intellectual training, to the exclusion of moral education. Moreover, the prevailing atmosphere in educational institutions discountenanced the growth of an independent and upright spirit and gave a pro-British slant to all liberal studies, especially history. Gandhiji often appealed to students over the heads of their parents, taking the stand that everyone above the age of 16 was entitled to choose his own course in life. He of course qualified his appeal by equal insistence on self-discipline and courtesy on the part of students who decided to leave their

institutions, but the general effect of his call was to make the young less submissive to authority, whether for good or ill. Simultaneously, Gandhiji sponsored constructive efforts in the educational field. A national university, Gujarat Vidyapith, was established in Ahmedabad. His speech at a students' meeting in Ahmedabad and his inaugural address on November 15 as chancellor of the Vidyapith provide a comprehensive statement of his position on the subject of education.

The non-co-operation movement was to start on August 1. Gandhiji himself inaugurated it on this day by his "Letter to Viceroy" (pp. 104-6), returning the Kaiser-i-Hind medal and the other medals granted to him for his humanitarian services during the Zulu rebellion and Boer War in South Africa. On this very day, Destiny removed Lokamanya Tilak from the national scene. Gandhiji's spontaneous admiration for Tilak's patriotism and service to the country inspired a glowing tribute from his pen to the departed leader (pp. 110-1). Tilak's death left Gandhiji undisputed leader of the nationalist forces. His programme of non-co-operation was accepted at a special session of the Congress in Calcutta in September. The volume closes with Gandhiji firmly declaring, in his reply to Government's *communique* on the non-co-operation movement, "Till . . . clear repentance comes, . . . so far as I can read the national mind, non-violent non-co-operation will and must remain the creed of the nation. . ." (p. 479).

CWMG

PREFACE

This volume covers the five months from November 19, 1920, to April 13, 1921—a period of intense activity, during which Gandhiji carried the non-co-operation movement one step forward. Gandhiji's effort, during the preceding six months, to develop an uncompromising popular opposition to the existing system of government had borne fruit, and the task now was to help the national awakening to express itself in constructive action. At the annual session at Nagpur in the last week of December, the Congress, under Gandhiji's leadership, accepted a new objective for the national struggle : "the attainment of swaraj by the people of India by all legitimate and peaceful means", reaffirmed the resolution on non-violent, progressive non-co-operation passed at the special session in Calcutta in September 1920, appealed to the people to intensify the struggle and, finally, adopted for itself a village-based constitution which would transform it into a mass organization and an instrument of effective action. Later, at its meeting held in Bezwada on March 31, 1921, the All-India Congress Committee laid down a definite programme of action to be completed before June 30, 1921.

Except for a brief interruption during the annual session of the Congress, Gandhiji was on the move practically all the time, addressing vast audiences in the Punjab, the U.P., Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, the C.P. and the South. While he exhorted the masses to rally behind the movement, his message was especially addressed to the youth of the nation. One of the most important items of the non-co-operation movement was the boycott of Government-controlled schools and colleges, and Gandhiji called upon students to empty them and take no thought of their careers. He asked them to reject the existing system of education not because it was bad—though bad it certainly was—but because it was vitiated, even "defiled", by the very fact of its having been imposed on the country by an evil Government. Students had responded to the call in large numbers and a chain of national schools and colleges, with primary emphasis on character-building and constructive service, came into being in the country. The several speeches to students of such institutions included in this volume bear testimony to the impact of Gandhiji's call on the student world. (Items 43, 68, 126, 144, 159, 172, 176, 226 and 274.)

This appeal to students and the movement for the removal of untouchability which Gandhiji took up actively during this period provoked opposition to him from both quarters, the modernist and the orthodox. Madan Mohan Malaviya, though as ardent a lover of the Indian way of life as Gandhiji, believed that the existing educational system could be made to serve the aim of national regeneration and had laboured for many years to get the Benares Hindu University established. Gandhiji wished that the University would give up the Government's charter, but Malaviya was not convinced of the wisdom of such a step. In the speech at the students' meeting in Banaras (pp. 24-31), Gandhiji dwelt on the differences between them at some length. He asked the students to listen to Pandit Malaviya's advice with the utmost respect, and follow the course suggested by himself only if they felt the promptings of conscience to withdraw co-operation from an evil Government. They would, then, have to justify their claim to conscience by a life of self-control in keeping with the country's traditional ideal of student life. At all the students' meetings he addressed, he dwelt on the need for discipline and for respectful behaviour towards elders and did not hesitate to denounce in the strongest terms the attempts by some students to disturb speakers who did not agree with them. But critics were not reassured and, it seems, Gandhiji could not carry conviction even with a close friend like C. F. Andrews, to whom he found it necessary to protest that he did not want to neglect either science or education in general (p. 359).

But the impression that Gandhiji was blindly opposed to modern progress persisted. Hostile critics suddenly discovered his *Hind Swaraj*, published in South Africa in 1909 and translated into English as *Indian Home Rule*, and used the booklet to present him as an advocate of return to medieval conditions. Gandhiji was indeed opposed to modern Western civilization as being excessively concerned with material pursuits, but was certainly not opposed to the West as West. He took pains to emphasize the distinction when answering criticism on this score. His open letter to Narasinhrao (pp. 176-81) is a frank statement of his point of view which appeals through its profound humility and sincerity. And while he adhered to the thesis that "government over self is the truest swaraj. . .synonymous with *moksha* or salvation" (p. 80) and claimed that even then he as an individual was working for this kind of self-rule, he admitted that India as a whole was not yet ripe for it and that his corporate activity was "undoubtedly devoted to the attainment

of parliamentary swaraj in accordance with the wishes of the people of India.'' (p. 278.)

The opposition to Gandhiji's ideas from the orthodox was equally determined, though less effective. He declared himself a *sanatani* Hindu in his attitude to the caste system (pp. 83-5 and 174-6) and in his reverence for the cow, but the traditionalists were alarmed by his insistence that the Shastras, including the *Manusmriti*, were not infallible, that they were subordinate to the light of a conscience purified by a life of self-control and devotion to the five ethical ideals of truth, non-violence, *brahmacharya*, non-stealing and non-possession. The issue was brought to the fore by Gandhiji's public espousal of the cause of the untouchables. The senate of the newly established Gujarat Vidyapith had resolved that all institutions affiliated to it would be open to *Antyaj* children, and this set off an angry debate in Gujarat in which Gandhiji's very claim to being a *sanatani* Hindu was questioned (p. 7). Gandhiji replied by expounding in a series of articles in Gujarati (pp. 72-4, 97-100, 140-2 and 327-32) the essentials of Hinduism as he understood it and his general position with regard to the authority of the Shastras. These articles reveal the source of Gandhiji's religious inspiration in the Hindu tradition itself, which the influence of modern ideas had helped him to interpret in its essence. His attachment to Hinduism and to what, in his eyes, it stood for, made him impatient with those who appeared to be clinging merely to its outer crust. If he used strong language to denounce the evil of British rule, he was no less severe in denouncing ''the Hindu Dyers'' (p. 288). He was often warned of the inexpediency, from a political point of view, of antagonizing the orthodox while the country was fighting the Government, but he refused to compromise. To him, the issue of untouchability was fundamental to the future of Hinduism.

At first, the Government had tried to dismiss the non-co-operation movement with ridicule and scorn, but, as it progressed and gathered strength from month to month, critics sought to discredit it as being inspired merely by hatred, pointing to the occasional display of intolerance by some of the adherents of the movement. They warned against the danger of its ultimately taking a violent turn and prophesied anarchy and chaos if the British withdrew. Others pointed to the weakness of the people and the impracticability of the programme. Patiently, and at the risk of unending repetition, Gandhiji met all such criticisms with the skill of an inspired journalist. Answering fears of possible anarchy or foreign

invasion following a complete withdrawal by the British as demanded by the Congress, he declared complete confidence in the power of non-co-operation to transform India into a strong and self-reliant country and the power of non-violence as a purifying force. "But," he added, "I refuse to contemplate the dismal outlook. If the movement succeeds. . . the English, whether they remain or retire, will do so as friends. . . . I still believe in the goodness of human nature, whether it is English or any other." (p. 174.) Despite the painful experiences of the past two years, Gandhiji continued to believe in the possibility of an honourable equality with the British and the new creed accepted by the Congress at Nagpur had left the door open for India to remain in a future British Commonwealth as a free partner.

In terms of concrete action, the response to the 11-point programme outlined in "Nagpur Congress" (pp. 206-9) was not spectacular, but it was enough for Gandhiji that the prestige on which British rule in India had rested was destroyed. He naturally did not want the bureaucracy to exploit the visit of the Duke of Connaught to bolster up that prestige and, at the risk of being charged with discourtesy to the Duke, advised the people to boycott all official functions and celebrations in connection with the visit. Having thus succeeded in creating the proper climate for fighting the Government, Gandhiji got the All-India Congress Committee to accept, at its meeting on March 31, 1921, a limited but definite programme of action which would extend the influence of the Congress to almost the entire adult population in the country. But, ultimately, the success of the non-co-operation movement rested on the degree of moral purity which the country achieved. To Gandhiji political action was *tapashcharya*: "How should we celebrate this week? Only by showing more scrupulous regard for truth, by strengthening our determination, by being more humble and making ourselves purer, by acquiring greater strength. . . This week should be spent in pure *tapashcharya*, pure devotion to God and the purest spirit of renunciation. During this week let us beg forgiveness of God for our offences and of those against whom we may have committed them. In humility lies our strength. Let us not wish ill to the British or others who act in opposition to us; we shall not talk offendingly to them." (p. 451.)

Gandhiji's letters to C. F. Andrews and Saraladevi Chowdharani included in this volume are interesting for the problems of personal relationship which they present. Andrews had not been able to understand all the items in the non-co-operation programme

and often stated his misgivings to Gandhiji. The latter's replies uniformly breathe gentleness and affection, but never evade the issue or minimize the difference of opinion between them. With Saraladevi Chowdharani, he was frank and criticized her little weaknesses. But here he does not appear to have succeeded in winning complete understanding of his views. What these letters reveal, above all, is the profound humility which enabled him to face such difficult situations with serenity.

CWMG - C

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PREFACE

This volume covers the four months, April 14 to August 15 of 1921, the year of the slogan : "Swaraj in one year". Everything that Gandhiji said or did at this time was directed towards clarifying his concept of swaraj, training people to attain fitness for it, and mentally preparing them for its early achievement. His speeches and writings in *Young India* and *Navajivan* concentrated at first on the Bezwada programme of March 1921, which had fixed specific targets to be reached by June 30 for the Tilak Swaraj Fund, Congress membership and the spread of the charkha.

Gandhiji was clear in his own mind that the promise of "Swaraj in one year" was far from unconditional. He would test fitness for swaraj not only in terms of the Bezwada mandate but also by the fulfilment of the swadeshi programme, perfect non-violence and Hindu-Muslim unity.

Gandhiji's opposition was to the system of Government. In his appeal to "Every Englishman in India" he wrote : " . . . man is superior to the system he propounds. . . . Here in India you belong to a system vile beyond description. It is possible, therefore, for me to condemn the system in the strongest terms, without considering you to be bad. . . . Our corporate life is based on mutual distrust and fear. This, you will admit, is unmanly . . . join me in destroying a system that has dragged both you and us down." (pp. 366-7) Gandhiji's aim was "a commonwealth of nations which will combine, if they do, for the purpose of giving their best to the world, and of protecting, not by brute force but by self-suffering, the weaker nations or races of the earth." (p. 296)

How was swaraj to be established? Gandhiji's reading of history was that the British people did not yield to justice pure and simple. It was too abstract for their common sense. They would respond when the Indian people had shown sufficient strength of purpose and undergone a measure of self-sacrifice, or when justice was allied with force. Whether it was brute force or soul-force, they did not mind.

But Gandhiji was sure that the force he should employ was non-violent non-co-operation. He deprecated methods of subterfuge, secrecy and violence. At the Gujarat Political Conference on June 1, he moved the resolution which advocated non-co-opera-

tion. In persuading the Ali Brothers to issue a statement disclaiming any intention to resort to violence or to league with foreign enemies, he brought on himself much criticism from many quarters, but morality was for him higher than politics, and he commended the apology as "a guiding-star to the straying non-co-operators. They must continually purify themselves even in front of their opponents, and at the risk of their action being mistaken for weakness. In the process of putting themselves in the right, they must not count the cost. That is the implication of following truth for truth's sake . . . " (p. 249)

The Non-co-operation campaign had been aimed at removing "the hallucination about titles, law-courts, schools and Councils." (p. 14) It was not, it could not be, suspended till the end was reached. It was always open to the people to resort to it. It was a movement "intended to invite Englishmen to co-operate with us on honourable terms or retire from our land . . . to place our relations on a pure basis, to define them in a manner consistent with our self-respect and dignity." (p. 16)

The primary aim of the movement was self-purification, the revival of the Kshatriya spirit. "Even our prayer should be not for swaraj, but for strength to win it." (p. 100) "We are not even trying to change the British, we are trying to reform ourselves." (p. 122) His "Himalayan mistake" lay in his misjudging "the preparedness of the country". (p. 61) To criticism by *The Times of India* that he had changed, he replied that there was no real difference between the old Gandhi and the new, but that the new had a clearer conception of satyagraha and prized the doctrine of ahimsa more than ever.

Criticism from the Poet, Rabindranath Tagore, was a challenge that Gandhiji met in firm and categorical terms. He counselled patience and a clear distinction between the movement and its excrescences. He wrote : "Non-co-operation may have come in advance of its time. India and the world must then wait, but there is no choice for India save between violence and non-co-operation." The Poet need not fear that the movement was "intended to erect a Chinese wall between India and the West. On the contrary, non-co-operation is intended to pave the way to real, honourable and voluntary co-operation based on mutual respect and trust. . . . Non-co-operation is a protest against an unwitting and unwilling participation in evil." (p. 162)

In the course of a note on "English Learning", Gandhiji made his classic declaration insisting on the native strength which alone

can assimilate foreign influence. "I hope I am as great a believer in free air as the great Poet. I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the cultures of all the lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any. I refuse to live in other people's houses as an interloper, a beggar or a slave. . . . Mine is not a religion of the prison-house. It has room for the least among God's creation. But it is proof against insolence, pride of race, religion or colour." (p. 159)

The ground was being prepared for a fresh expression of the non-co-operation spirit. The Viceroy's Simla speech was "all right"—a preliminary effort at a study of the movement. "One misses in the Viceregal speech," Gandhiji wrote a little later, "a frank recognition of the many failures of the past, and therefore, a sincere desire for opening a new page." (p. 188) Yet on June 24, he was "deeply grieved" over the Viceroy's *communique* and speech regarding the Ali Brothers' apology neither of which was factually correct. On June 28, he asked that an agreed account of the circumstances and character of his interviews with the Viceroy in May be published. He feared that the Viceroy had passed into the hands of a bureaucracy that was "clever, united and unscrupulous".

It became the duty of the non-co-operators henceforth to preach disaffection for the existing system of Government and to prepare the country for civil disobedience. He made clear the relationship between non-co-operation and civil disobedience. "Disobedience is the acutest form of non-co-operation . . . It is a total denial of the authority of the State, and is permissible only when the State has proved itself corrupt beyond redemption." (p. 229) Gandhiji had himself refused to appear as a witness before the Military Requirements Committee.

On July 17, the Non-co-operation Committee consisting of Gandhiji, Shaukat Ali, Dr. Kitchlew and Khatri issued a report urging greater effort for fulfilling the Bezwada and Non-co-operation programmes. Gandhiji recognized that the most religious of all movements, as he described it, would entail a great deal of sacrifice and suffering. "The Temple of Freedom is not erected without the blood of sufferers." (p. 441) Repeated arrests and continuous incarceration were part of the price the people had to pay.

Gandhiji did concede the "dangerous" character of civil disobedience. While, on the one hand, it could never be put down

if the civil resisters were prepared to face extreme hardships, it was "a most dangerous experiment—that of inducing thousands of Mussulmans and, for that matter, Hindus too, to become and remain strictly non-violent, although their final creed permits them to resort to violence under given conditions." (p. 493) Nevertheless, Gandhiji discounted the feasibility of starting a civil disobedience movement then or in the immediate future. The country was not ready for its adoption on an extensive scale.

The target of the Tilak Swaraj Fund—a crore of rupees—had been reached by the end of June—a sensational achievement. More emphasis was now placed on swadeshi and boycott of foreign cloth—in order to create "an atmosphere that would enable us to inaugurate civil disobedience on a scale that no Government can resist." (p. 466)

On July 1, Gandhiji gave the call for complete boycott of foreign cloth by August I, for, as he wrote, "To be able to enter the temple of swaraj, what we need is swadeshi. Swadeshi means boycott of foreign cloth." (p. 341)

About the middle of July, Gandhiji put into circulation a pledge to use only hand-woven swadeshi clothes. It was about this time that the 'bonfire' of foreign cloth became the 'burning' topic of the day. Gandhiji recommended all people to take a pledge on August 1 abjuring the use of foreign cloth. The people took the swadeshi vow *en masse*. The public meeting at Parel, at which there was the first huge bonfire of foreign cloth, took place on the night of July 31, which Gandhiji described as "a sacred day for Bombay". It was reminiscent of the meeting in Johannesburg in August 1908, at which the Indians had made a bonfire of their registration certificates. He stressed the significance of the act: "I look upon the ceremony of burning as a sacrament." (p. 455) The "outward fire is a symbol of the inner fire that should burn up all our weaknesses . . . our purified reason must show us the true economics of swadeshi." (pp. 458-9) "A glow of freedom passed through that vast concourse. It was a noble act nobly performed. . . ." (p. 486) And in a letter to Andrews he explained: "What I am trying to do just now is to perform a surgical operation with a hand that must not shake. . . . I look upon life as one of discipline and restraints . . . the people are silently and unconsciously transferring their hatred of sinners to sin itself." (p. 499)

What was the shape of the swaraj for which this was the preparation? Gandhiji left no room for doubt or ambiguity:

"Swaraj is a state of being of individuals and nations." (p. 99) "Swaraj is the abandonment of the fear of death." (p. 503) "Ability to plod is swaraj." (p. 528) *Ramarajya* meant "swaraj or the rule of dharma or people's rule. Such rule can be established only when the people themselves come to have a regard for dharma and learn to be brave." (p. 122) ". . . swaraj could not be granted even by God. We would have to earn it ourselves." (p. 133)

With the structure of swaraj Gandhiji refused to concern himself at the moment. So, when Bipin Chandra Pal raised the question, Gandhiji considered it premature and compared it with the act of a "mason trying to tackle the topmost storey before the foundation was solidly laid." (p. 232)

Such swaraj, or *dharmarajya*, the Kingdom of the righteous, could be achieved only by the means of non-violent non-co-operation. Gandhiji declared: "I have no desire to see anything but Right triumph. I have never believed and I do not now believe that the end justifies the means. . . . You cannot achieve a good end by bad means." (p. 492) He wanted to see India stand erect. In free India, there was no room for a governing class. The people were insistent more and more on governing themselves. "Good Government, they are coming to see, is no substitute for self-government." (p. 188) He was unable to accept the proposition that "whilst the distant goal must be one of freedom for India, its present state must be that of tutelage. . . . British rule is tainted with the blood of the innocent victims of Jallianwala, and with treachery towards Islam." (p. 189) Until these causes were removed, the unrest in India could not be cured. When England washed her hands clean, there was a possibility of even swaraj "within the Empire". But the Congress creed had been "purposely made elastic enough to admit of a demand for independence". (p. 355)

Of this independence Congress was obviously to be the instrument—Gandhiji emphasized. The Congress Constitution had been so devised "as to tax and prove the nation's capacity for self-government". He claimed that the greater the authority of Congress, the less must be that of the Government, so that "when the Congress commands complete confidence and willing obedience to its instructions, there is full swaraj." (p. 293) He wrote to N. C. Kelkar on July 4: ". . . we should make the Working Committee a swift, powerful and homogeneous body. . . . I do believe we can achieve all we want by efficiently working the Congress constitution. . . ." (p. 322)

Gandhiji continued to focus attention on social evils like untouchability. Wherever he spoke, he inveighed against the practice. It was Hindu society's duty to get rid of it. It was unacceptable to reason. It was contrary to truth and non-violence and, therefore, was certainly not dharma. He recognized that by this relentless criticism, he had alienated and antagonized many; but he would not compromise with untouchability. Likewise he persisted in emphasizing the need for communal unity. It was not a mere copy-book maxim with him. He saw clearly the truth: "Divided we must fall." (p. 89) He envisaged closer ties between labour and capital—not by legislation but by practice. Legislation in advance of public opinion was often worse than useless. Prohibition, too, was a compelling need. He declared: "Under every system of government, total prohibition, so far as I can see, will be insisted upon by the nation." (p. 368)

Perhaps the most precious thing in this Volume is "A Confession of Faith" (pp. 369-71), a touching tribute to Gokhale, in which Gandhiji stresses the sacredness of the *guru-shishya* relationship and praises his master in terms which the world would willingly apply to the disciple as well: "Pure as crystal, gentle as a lamb, brave as a lion, generous to a fault. . . the most perfect man in the political field."

CWMG-C

PREFACE

The present volume covers the period August 21 to December 14, 1921. The month of September was the last lap in the race for "swaraj within a year". The stage was being set for a dynamic programme of action which would deliver the final blow and compel the Government to bow to the strength of public opinion. Unable to fathom the meaning of swaraj, which for Gandhiji was more a spiritual than a political state, many people believed that he would work some miracle and bring them freedom in the overt sense before the end of the year. But, even as preparations proceeded apace for pure, concentrated satyagraha in the form of mass civil disobedience in the selected areas of Bardoli and Anand talukas in Gujarat, Gandhiji had an uneasy feeling that he might not see India free within the time-limit set, and the thought filled him with unbearable anguish of mind. The contents of this volume tell this two-fold story of preparations for the final phase of the struggle on the one hand and of shocks and misgivings on the other.

To prepare the ground for the silent revolution which he wished to bring about among the people, Gandhiji had undertaken a "*pradakshina* of the country", a pilgrimage which took him from Karachi in the west to Dibrugarh in the east and from Rawalpindi in the north to Tuticorin in the south. While he was far away in Assam in the course of this tour, he saw newspaper reports of a sudden outbreak of violence in Malabar. In this coastal strip in the south-west, the Moplahs, descendants of Arab immigrants who had for centuries lived in isolation from the mainstream of national life, had on August 20 risen in revolt and declared a "holy war". They had but the vaguest notions of the Khilafat movement and no conception whatever of non-violent non-co-operation. In their unthinking fury, they attacked their Hindu neighbours and committed atrocities against them which threatened the growing Hindu-Muslim amity in the country. Things were made worse by the attitude of some Muslim leaders which seemed to condone the outrages. Gandhiji was hard put to it to assuage the feelings of the Hindus in the south. He recognized that the Moplahs had lost their balance, but appealed to the Hindus to preserve a sense of due proportion and not allow the aberration of the Moplahs to weaken the foundation of Hindu-Muslim unity. He blamed the Government for letting the situation assume the

proportions it did and assailed it for preventing non-co-operation leaders from exercising their influence to restore peace and communal harmony in the region. He pleaded for the nation's sympathy for the Moplahs for the inhuman treatment they were receiving from the authorities. Despite his sincere efforts to heal the wound, the repercussions of this local upheaval continued to be felt for a long time.

Gandhiji's efforts to preserve Hindu-Muslim amity seemed to be handicapped by the absence of the Ali Brothers. They were the principal interpreters between the Muslims and him during this time. Some of their speeches during the months preceding the period covered in this volume had tended to create an atmosphere of violence and made them controversial figures in the public life of the country. They were now arrested for supporting the Resolution of the Karachi Khilafat Conference regarding military service, and prosecuted in Karachi. Gandhiji stood by the Brothers. He defended and justified their conduct against every criticism, and in speech after speech repeated what the Ali Brothers were reported to have said at Karachi. He arranged for the issue of a Manifesto signed by prominent leaders from all over India, supporting the stand of the Ali Brothers (p. 235), and even persuaded the Working Committee of the Congress to pass a resolution reiterating the Karachi Resolution (p. 274). And he wrote a challenging article, "Tampering with Loyalty", in which he declared: ". . . I have no hesitation in saying, that it is sinful for anyone, either as soldier or civilian, to serve this Government which has proved treacherous to the Mussulmans of India and which has been guilty of the inhumanities of the Punjab. I have said this from many a platform in the presence of sepoys" (p. 221). This was one of the articles on the basis of which Gandhiji was prosecuted and sentenced in March 1922.

If, as Gandhiji saw and admitted, Hindu-Muslim unity was a delicate plant which required careful nurturing, the swadeshi movement too needed much vigorous propagation before it could command universal appeal. The bonfires of foreign cloth had distressed even a friend like C. F. Andrews, as being an expression of unreasoning hatred of the foreigner (p. 41). Answering this criticism, Gandhiji said: "Destruction is the quickest method of stimulating production. By one supreme effort and swift destruction, India has to be awakened from her torpor and enforced idleness" (p. 44). Answering another critic, Gandhiji argued: "In burning foreign clothes we are burning our taste for foreign fineries. . . . The motive was to punish ourselves and not the foreigner. . . . The

idea of burning springs not from hate but from repentance of our past sins. . . . The disease had gone so deep that a surgical operation was a necessity'' (p. 102).

But the misgivings of critics were not allayed. A more vibrant dialogue over the subject took place between the poet, Rabindranath Tagore, and Gandhiji in October. The two had met in Calcutta on September 6. There were differences of opinion between them. Incorrect reports of the interview appeared in the Press in an obvious attempt to divide the two. In the October issue of *Modern Review* appeared Tagore's ''brilliant essay'' on the swadeshi movement, under the title ''The Call of Truth.'' The Poet had seen in the movement an attempt to shut out modern, international influences from the country. In an emphatic rejoinder under the title ''The Great Sentinel'', Gandhiji answered the Poet: ''He presents to our admiring gaze the beautiful picture of the birds early in the morning singing hymns of praise as they soar into the sky. These birds had their day's food and soared with rested wings in whose veins new blood had flowed during the previous night. But I have had the pain of watching birds who for want of strength could not be coaxed even into a flutter of their wings. The human bird under the Indian sky gets up weaker than when he pretended to retire. . . . I have found it impossible to soothe suffering patients with a song from Kabir. The hungry millions ask for one poem—invigorating food. They cannot be given it. They must earn it. And they can earn only by the sweat of their brow'' (p. 291).

The intensity of Gandhiji's identification with the hungry masses led to a change in his personal life. While discussing the dearth of khadi, Gandhiji often recommended to the people severe austerity in apparel. And he decided to practise what he preached. On the early morning of September 23, he went clad only in a loin cloth to a meeting of Madura weavers. Explaining the change, he said: ''In our climate we hardly need more to protect our bodies during the warm months of the year. Let there be no prudery about dress'' (p. 180). On October 31, Gandhiji took a vow to spin half an hour every day before the second meal, and to forgo the meal if he failed to spin. Another life-long vow which Gandhiji took during this period was his weekly fast on Monday, which was to be a ''silence day''.

This last vow was an outcome of his fast following the riots in Bombay on November 17, the day on which the Prince of Wales landed in the city. Gandhiji had felt ''that the Prince's visit is being exploited for advertising the ''benign'' British rule

in India'' (p. 350), and said that it was ''being heralded by repression in the land'' (p. 351). He, therefore, had advised the people to organize a complete boycott of all functions held in the Prince's honour, but had also warned that there would be ''some who would want to take part in the various functions from fear or hope or choice. They have as much right to do what they like as we have to do what we like'' (p. 352). On the 17th, even as Gandhiji was congratulating the people at a public meeting on the perfect calm which they had so far preserved despite provocation, in another part of the city a mob had started molesting people who had not joined the boycott. He was far more deeply humiliated by this outburst of violence than he had been by the disturbances in April 1919 (*vide* Vol. XV). In a letter written on the same day, he said: ''We have had a foretaste of swaraj. I have been put to shame'' (p. 461). Two days later, he issued an appeal to the citizens in which he confessed: ''The swaraj that I have witnessed during the last two days has stunk in my nostrils'' (p. 466). And he added: ''You can see quite clearly that I must do the utmost reparation to this handful of men and women who have been the victims of forces that have come into being largely through my instrumentality'' (p. 467). By way of penance and reparation, he undertook an indefinite fast till the different communities in the city made peace with one another.

Gandhiji was soon enabled to break the fast, but the political atmosphere in the country had been sufficiently vitiated, from his point of view, to force him to abandon the mass civil disobedience for which intensive preparations had been going on in selected areas in the country. But, although Gandhiji was inclined to hold his hand, the Government seemed to have decided to force the issue. Volunteer organizations were disbanded in Bengal, in the U.P., the Punjab and Delhi; nationalist newspapers were suppressed and national leaders like Lala Lajpat Rai, Motilal Nehru, Jawaharlal Nehru and C. R. Das, the President-elect of the forthcoming session of the Congress at Ahmedabad, were arrested in quick succession. Gandhiji urged the people to take up the challenge. Speaking at Ahmedabad on October 29, he said: ''Now we do not have even two full months. The Congress will be meeting on December 25. If we do not have the flag of swaraj unfurled by that time, what will be the use of having convened the Congress?'' (P. 360)

The preparations for the session of the Congress at Ahmedabad bring out the down-to-earth practicality of Gandhiji. His instructions in respect of shoe-parking, lavatories, urinals, drink-

ing water, lighting, language-wise kitchens, etc., in *Navajivan* (pp. 50-2 and 144-6) reveal his attention to the minutest detail even when he was occupied with problems of gigantic magnitude.

In another context he warns us against the newspaper reports of speeches. "In spite of all the goodwill in the world, reporters have rarely succeeded in reporting my speeches correctly. Indeed the best thing would be not to report speeches at all, except when they have undergone revision by the speakers themselves. If this simple rule were followed much misunderstanding could be avoided" (p. 537).

Though the writings included in this volume are necessarily dominated by political issues, others which reveal more intimate aspects of Gandhiji's personality are not wanting. The account of his tour of Assam (pp. 53-8 and 84-91) is touched by a poetic sense of discovery, and reveals Gandhiji's unfeigned joy in the beauty of physical nature and his delight in the simplicity of unsophisticated human nature. The social problem of the "fallen sisters" in Barisal overpowered him with shame at the thought of the crime perpetrated by man against woman. "As the picture of these sisters grows more vivid in my mind, the thought strikes me,—what if they had been my sisters or daughters? Why this 'if'? They are so indeed" (p. 94). In a self-sufficient statement on Hinduism as he understood it, he described his attachment to it with the winning frankness of an essayist: "I can no more describe my feeling for Hinduism than for my own wife. She moves me as no other woman in the world can. Not that she has no faults. I dare say she has many more than I see myself. But the feeling of an indissoluble bond is there. Even so I feel for and about Hinduism with all its faults and limitations. Nothing elates me so much as the music of the *Gita* or the *Ramayana* by Tulsidas, the only two books in Hinduism I may be said to know" (p. 249).

He found at the end of the year that his message of swaraj through the constructive programme of self-purification had met with no response and that he had reached only the ear of the people and not pierced their heart. "Should I not kneel down in all humility before my Maker and ask Him to take away this useless body and make me a fitter instrument of service?" (P. 458) But the mood soon passed, and the serenity of Gandhiji's faith survived the painful disillusionment of his passionate hope for a regenerated India by the end of the year. The one year's time-limit which he had set for the attainment of swaraj served only to involve the people more closely in the spiritual *sadhana* whose ful-

filment was the pre-requisite for attaining political freedom. He had laid down easy conditions and had told the people: "Fulfil these conditions and win swaraj" (p. 557). As for himself, he was no atheist and, therefore, no pessimist. "Why indeed should I commit suicide because India may not have won swaraj ? If she sincerely desires swaraj, let her fight for it and get it" (p. 331).

CWMG - C

PREFACE

The period covered in this volume, from December 15, 1921 to March 3, 1922 forms a distinct watershed in India's non-violent struggle for independence. When Gandhiji, on the very crest of a wave of successful insurrection, withdrew mass civil disobedience on account of mob violence at Chauri Chaura, he proved, convincingly and once for all, that for him non-violence was indeed an article of faith, not mere policy. "The drastic reversal of practically the whole of the aggressive programme may be politically unsound and unwise", he declared, "but there is no doubt that it is religiously sound . . . " (p. 417).

The volume opens with a call to the nation to supply men and women for imprisonment as fast as the Government could arrest them, and ends with an appeal to the members of the All-India Congress Committee "to be indifferent to the clamour for immediate action" and to concentrate on "self-purification, introspection, quiet organization" (p. 502). The writings in this volume trace the course of the changes of decision and explain Gandhiji's hesitation and misgivings ending up with the indefinite suspension of the civil disobedience programme.

Though Gandhiji's confidence in the country's readiness for non-violent mass civil disobedience had been shaken by the Bombay disturbances of November 17, the Government's indiscriminate arrests of leaders and other measures intended to suppress the Non-co-operation and Civil Disobedience movements left him with no choice but to revive the plan of individual and mass civil disobedience. He saw the action of the Government as a challenge to national self-respect and called upon the country to meet it as such. Addressing the Congress session at Ahmedabad on December 28, 1922 he said: "I am a man of peace . . . . but I do not want peace at any price. I do not want the peace that you find in stone; I do not want the peace that you find in the grave . . . " (p. 104). The British, who professed sincere interest in the constitutional advance of India towards responsible self-government, did not understand the new temper of the country in which it would no longer tolerate condescending patronage. Commenting on a speech of Lord Reading's, Gandhiji asked him to "understand that the non-co-operators are at war with the Government" (p. 28). For the immediate present, however, Gandhiji

wanted the people to concentrate on the vindication of the fundamental rights of free speech and free association. In this limited fight, he was anxious to win the support of the Moderates. He repeatedly urged non-co-operators to cultivate their goodwill, and himself attended the All-Parties Conference convened by Pandit Malaviya in Bombay to consider the possibility of a round table conference with the Government. Gandhiji described its outcome both as a success and a failure, "success in that it showed an earnest desire on the part of those who attended to secure a peaceful solution of the present trouble, and in that it brought together under one roof people possessing divergent views" (p. 214), and a failure because the gravity of the real issue did not seem to have been realized by all. A compromise resolution was passed by the Conference, and the Congress Working Committee responded favourably to it on Gandhiji's advice (pp. 210-1). He however, was not hopeful of positive results from the proposed round table conference. He knew the British temper well enough to be convinced that they would not yield except under sufficient pressure. "From that standpoint", he said, "I do consider the idea of the conference for devising a scheme of full swaraj premature. India has not yet incontestably proved her strength. Her suffering is great indeed, but nothing and not prolonged enough for the object in view" (p. 218).

The Government rejected the appeal for a round table conference and, thereupon, as contemplated in the Congress resolution passed at Ahmedabad in December 1921, Gandhiji decided to launch mass civil disobedience in Bardoli. He wrote to the Viceroy on February 1 to give notice of his intention and make a last appeal to the latter to end "the lawless repression", promising that, if the Government made the necessary declaration, he would advise the country to engage "in further moulding public opinion without violent restraint from either side and trust to its working to secure the fulfilment of its unalterable demands" (p. 305). Meanwhile, preparations for mass civil disobedience had been going on in Bardoli, and Gandhiji was satisfied that the people had practically fulfilled the conditions for such a campaign (p. 295). The Government, too, he declared, had acted with a most exemplary restraint. "I have watched their conduct with wonder and admiration. Both sides have up to the time of writing behaved in a manner worthy of chivalrous warriors of old" (p. 297). Gandhiji ended the article with a quotation from his favourite hymn, *Lead, Kindly Light*.

Then came the tragedy which Gandhiji called the "Crime of Chauri Chaura" (p. 415). On February 4, 1922, a procession at Chauri Chaura, in Gorakhpur district in U.P., under much provocation set fire to a police station, killed 21 policemen and burned their bodies (pp. 385 and 415). Gandhiji looked upon the incident as a "divine warning" (pp. 423-7) and promptly retraced his steps. At his instance, the Congress Working Committee passed resolutions on February 12 indefinitely suspending all forms of civil disobedience and advising people to concentrate on the constructive items of the Non-co-operation programme (pp. 377-81). The entire body of workers in Bardoli, young and old, who were getting ready for mass civil disobedience told Gandhiji that if he retreated after throwing out a challenge to the Government, the whole country would be disgraced before the world (p. 377). And in saying this they spoke for the nation. Gandhiji was aware of the national mood. Writing to Jawaharlal Nehru, who was in jail, Gandhiji said: "I see that all of you are terribly cut up over the resolution of the Working Committee" (p. 435). He stood firm, however, in the midst of the storm and refused to lead a movement "half violent and half non-violent, even though it might result in the attainment of so-called swaraj" (p. 351), for it would not be real swaraj as he had conceived it.

The resolutions of the Working Committee provoked "a hurricane of opposition" (p. 501.) at the All-India Congress Committee meeting in Delhi on February 24 and 25. Gandhiji warned the Committee. "I am incorrigible. . . . The only tyrant I accept in this world is the still small voice within" (p. 500). Although the A.I.C.C. adopted the resolution without material change, Gandhiji considered himself "a sadder and, I hope, a wiser man" (p. 500) at the end of the meeting. He had been aware for some time that all non-co-operators were not sincere in their adherence to non-violence even as a matter of policy. Writing to Jawaharlal Nehru after the suspension of the civil disobedience programme, he said: "I must tell you that this was the last straw. My letter to the Viceroy was not sent without misgivings as its language must make it clear to anyone. . . . With all this news in my possession and much more from the South, the Chauri Chaura news came like a powerful match to ignite the gunpowder and there was a blaze" (p.436). For months past he had engaged himself in educating public opinion on the absolute necessity of preserving an atmosphere of non-violence in the country and carrying out the constructive items of the Non-co-operation programme, namely, swadeshi, Hindu-

Muslim unity and eradication of untouchability. In his speeches and in his writings in *Young India* and *Navajivan*, he had repeatedly stressed the need for forbearance and self-restraint in the face of severest provocations from the Government, and for the utmost tolerance towards political opponents. Gandhiji's fears were not about the people themselves. In fact, he believed that the temper of non-violence was deeply ingrained in the Indian people by a long tradition of culture (p. 262). He found fault, however, with the non-co-operation workers. "It became clear to me that the workers were in no mood to do any serious work of construction. The constructive programme lent no enchantment. . . . They wanted to deliver 'non-violent' blows" (p. 501).

The indefinite suspension of the Civil Disobedience programme seemed to be a complete failure of Gandhiji's political leadership. Critics spoke of his "somersaults" (p. 494). This was not the first time that Gandhiji's faith was tested and strengthened by the humiliation of outward failure. From the beginning, he was sustained in all his public activities by his utter faith in God. The very first item in this volume contains an expression of this faith : "If we can but throw ourselves into His lap as our only Help, we shall come out scatheless through every ordeal that the Government may subject us to. . . . The way to stand erect before the tyrant is not to hate him, not to strike him, but to humble ourselves before God and cry out to Him in the hour of our agony" (p. 4). It was in this spirit that Gandhiji faced the present ordeal. The personal mortification was indeed great. " 'But what about your manifesto to the Viceroy and your rejoinder to his reply?' spoke the voice of Satan. It was the bitterest cup of humiliation to drink" (p. 416). However, the hesitations of the past few months were over and Gandhiji saw his way clear before him. "Let the opponent glory in our humiliation or so-called defeat . . . . "It is a million times better to *appear* untrue before the world than to *be* untrue to ourselves. . . . I must undergo personal cleansing. I must become a fitter instrument, able to register the slightest variation in the moral atmosphere around me. My prayers must have deeper truth and humility about them than they evidence" (p. 419). Accordingly, he undertook a penitential fast, as he had often done in the past. Writing to his youngest son, Devdas, on February 12, he explained the motive behind the fast: "It is the woman giving birth to a child who suffers the pains . . . I, too, wish to give birth to the ideals of non-violence and truth, so that I alone need bear the pains of fasting, etc." (p. 397).

The humility of spirit in which Gandhiji accepted the defeat of his political programme certainly did not mean the weakening of his determination to fight British rule in India till it was mended or ended. To the statements of Lord Birkenhead or Mr. Montagu, which made it plain to Indian nationalists that they should not expect India to be ever free, Gandhiji replied in words which recalled his mood in 1920 when, burning with indignation at the evils of the British rule, he had repeatedly described it as Satanic: "No empire intoxicated with the red wine of 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. . . . I am aware that I have written strongly about the insolent threat that has come from across the seas, but it is high time that the British people were made to realize that the fight that was commenced in 1920 is a fight to the finish. . ." (p. 458). Soon after this, Gandhiji was arrested, and this article, "Shaking the Manes", was among the three which formed the basis of the indictment against him.

Though the non-co-operation struggle had divided families, Gandhiji saw to it, as the note on the Malaviyas proves, that there was "no gulf between father and son" (p. 164), that while the young people followed the dictates of conscience frankly and openly, they did not forfeit the blessings of their great-hearted elders. Thus, amid all the dust and heat of battle, he cherished the imperatives of personal friendship and family loyalty.

CWMG - C

PREFACE

This volume covers the period March 4, 1922 to May 7, 1924. Nearly two years of this Gandhiji spent in Yeravda Jail, serving his first term of imprisonment in India. In this interval, a schism developed in the Congress on the issue of Council-entry and the relations of Hindus and Muslims became strained in several parts, so that when Gandhiji was prematurely released in February 1924, after an emergency operation for appendicitis, he found the political situation and the general atmosphere in the country more discouraging even than at the time of his arrest. The imprisonment, however, gave his mind and body an opportunity for rest, which he employed in study and reflection; he soon overcame the mental agitation of the months preceding his arrest and regained his accustomed peace and serenity.

In early March 1922, Gandhiji had not only anticipated his arrest, but almost welcomed it with a sense of relief. "I have," he tells T. Prakasam in a letter dated March 7, 1922, "persistent rumours . . . thrust upon me that my leave is more than over-due, and I am also told that I shall be relieved of my burdens inside of 7 days" (p. 21). Writing to C. F. Andrews after the arrest, he says, "At last I am having a quiet time. It was bound to come" (p. 93). And, again, to Mathuradas Trikumji, "I enjoy boundless peace" (p. 94). It was not so much the strain of unremitting physical activity as the burden of making correct decisions in a situation which seemed to be getting beyond control that probably taxed the inner resources of Gandhiji. The outburst of violence in several parts of the country despite his earnest and repeated appeals for peace had disturbed him profoundly. At the time of his trial, he readily accepted responsibility for them. "Thinking over these deeply and sleeping over them night after night," he told the Judge, "it is impossible to dissociate myself from the diabolical crimes of Chauri Chaura or the mad outrages in Bombay and Madras" (p. 114). But his grief over the madness of the people was matched by his intense indignation at the misdeeds of the Government. As he explained to the Judge, he had to make his 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" (p. 114). He concluded the remarks with which he prefaced his written statement, saying: ". . . by the time I have finished with

my statement, you will, perhaps, have a glimpse of what is raging within my breast to run this maddest risk that a sane man can run'' (p. 115). He felt profoundly humbled to see that his fears were realized. ''I have now a more vivid sense of Truth and of my own littleness than I had a year ago'' (p. 97).

But Gandhiji was by no means defeated. Following the mob violence at Chauri Chaura in early February, the contemplated mass civil disobedience in Bardoli taluka was indefinitely suspended, and the chief task now, as Gandhiji saw it, was to concentrate attention on the items of constructive work in the Non-co-operation programme and so create the necessary atmosphere for civil disobedience. In letters and articles, he appealed to the people to preserve complete peace in case he was arrested and urged upon all to carry on the constructive programme with zeal during his imprisonment. He especially addressed himself to critics of the Bardoli resolutions by which the Working Committee had suspended mass civil disobedience, and pleaded with them for unreserved acceptance of the implications of non-violence adopted even as mere policy. ''Our non-violence,'' he said, ''need not be of the strong, but it *has* to be of the truthful'' (p. 25).

The trial was an opportunity to challenge the moral justification of British rule, and Gandhiji did that with emphasis and force. In a written statement, he explained why ''from a staunch loyalist and co-operator, I have become an uncompromising disaffectionist and non-co-operator'' (p. 115). Though he discovered early in South Africa that he had no rights as a man because he was an Indian (p. 115), he had thought that this was an excrescence upon a system that was intrinsically and mainly good. He acted upon that faith for more than twenty-five years of public life. The first shock came in 1919 in the shape of the Rowlatt Act, and the official condonation of the Jallianwala Bagh shooting, coupled with the Imperial Government's breach of promise to the Muslims of India on the Khilafat issue, completely destroyed Gandhiji's faith in the *bona fides* of the British Government. Forced to think of the British connection in the light of this experience, he reluctantly came to the conclusion that it ''had made India more helpless than she ever was before, politically and economically. . . . I have no doubt whatsoever,'' he declared, ''that both England and the town-dwellers of India will have to answer, if there is a God above, for this crime against humanity which is perhaps unequalled in history'' (p. 117). He had no ill will, he said, against any individual administrator, ''but I hold it to be a virtue to be disaffected towards a Government which in its totality has done more harm to India than any

previous system'' (p. 118). He ended with an appeal to the conscience of the Judge: ''The only course open to you, the Judge, is either to resign your post and thus dissociate yourself from evil, if you feel that the law you are called upon to administer is an evil and that in reality I am innocent; or to inflict on me the severest penalty if you believe that the system and the law you are assisting to administer are good for the people of this country and that my activity is, therefore, injurious to the public weal'' (p. 119).

In jail, Gandhiji continued his fight against the system on a different plane. He readily submitted to the normal rules of jail life, but protested against every act of the authorities which he thought violated his rights as a prisoner or which was in disregard of human considerations. The very first letter he wrote from the Yeravda Prison, one addressed to Hakim Ajmal Khan, was withheld by the Government, and in protest Gandhiji intimated to the authorities his decision not to exercise his privilege as a prisoner to write letters at permitted intervals. The journals and periodicals of his choice were also refused to him and Gandhiji wrote to the Jail Superintendent that he regarded such refusals as ''a punishment in addition to that awarded by the convicting judge'' (p. 162). And he added: ''But, rightly or wrongly, I believe that even as a prisoner I have certain rights . . . I ask for no favours, and if the Inspector-General thinks that any single thing or convenience has been given to me as a favour, let it be withdrawn'' (p. 162). On the issue of visitors, the conduct of the authorities hurt Gandhiji more deeply. Applications for visits were not treated with due consideration, so much so that Gandhiji felt compelled to protest: ''. . . I ought to know whom I may or may not see, so as to avoid disappointment or even possible humiliation''. And ''I entertain ideas of honour and self-respect which I would like the Government, if they can, to understand and appreciate''. Concluding the letter, he said: ''I would urge the Government to let me have an early, straight and undiplomatic reply'' (p. 160).

Gandhiji had also occasion to enter into correspondence with the authorities on other issues and appeal to them to take a more enlightened view of jail administration. He wanted the special division facilities enjoyed by him as a prisoner to be extended to other political prisoners sentenced to rigorous imprisonment, and asked that a fellow-prisoner, Abdul Gani, be permitted the diet of his choice in the same manner that he was. But it was on behalf of the Mulshi Peta prisoners that he made, on humanitarian grounds, the most earnest intervention in the administration of the jail. He wanted permission to meet and persuade them to submit themselves

to jail discipline and not force the authorities to resort to flogging as a penalty for breach of it. Gandhiji hinted in one of his letters that, in case he was not permitted to use his good offices to prevent the recurrence of flogging, he might have to undertake a fast. The Governor resented the threat, but yielded, and in this instance at any rate the outcome was happy.

Voluminous as this correspondence with the authorities was, it was certainly not Gandhiji's chief interest. He looked upon the enforced rest in prison mainly as an opportunity for reading and satisfying his intellectual hunger. The diaries he maintained in jail during 1922 and 1923 (pp. 144-53 & 178-88) contain a record of his reading which for range, pace and intensity would be the envy of even the most industrious student at a University. The list included, besides metaphysical and religious books, such unexpected works as Gibbon's *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Kipling's *The Five Nations*, *Barrack-room Ballads* and *The Second Jungle Book*, Jules Verne's *Dropped from the Clouds*, Macaulay's *Lays of Ancient Rome* and Shaw's *Man and Superman*.

Prison gave Gandhiji the opportunity to recall and set down *The History of Satyagraha in South Africa*. By the time he left jail, he had written some 30 chapters which were to appear serially in *Navajivan* and *Young India*.

However, the record of his reading and writing in jail should not lead one to believe that he lived the life of a recluse. With his spontaneous interest in all human beings and their affairs, he kept his eyes and ears open and observed jail life with an acuteness which enabled him, after his release, to write vivid reminiscences of his experience of the jail officials, of the convict officers in attendance upon him and of the general atmosphere in the prison.

What helps to complete the picture of a man ever concerned with others is the story of his serious illness necessitating surgical treatment. His whole attitude and deportment at this time, his "high-mindedness, forgiveness, chivalry and love transcending ordinary human nature" are well recorded by Srinivasa Sastri in a statement which also brings out the great leader's "serene vision and sensitiveness to honour" (p. 190).

Gandhiji was released on February 5, 1924. As he explained in "Answers to Drew Pearson's Questions" (pp. 195-8), his attitude to religion, politics and modern civilization was confirmed by reflection in solitude. But the country seemed, if anything, less responsive to his message in 1924 than it had been in 1920-21. Writing to Mahomed Ali on February 7, he said: "Though I

know very little of the present situation in the country, I know sufficient to enable me to see that, perplexing as the national problems were at the time of the Bardoli resolutions, they are far more perplexing today'' (p. 200). The Hindu-Muslim unity forged during the Non-co-operation movement seemed to be in danger of dissolving under the shocks of frequent communal riots, and the very principle of non-co-operation was set aside by the Congress when it permitted its members to enter the Councils. These members, led by the veteran leaders Motilal Nehru and C. R. Das, had formed a new party, the Swaraj Party, within the Congress and were bitterly opposed by others who were described as No-changers. Gandhiji had too high a regard for the leaders of the Swaraj Party to force an open break with them, and he took long to study the situation before publicly expressing his opinion on their programme. When ultimately he did express it, he stated his disapproval of the Swarajist programme in the clearest terms saying that it had retarded the nation's progress towards swaraj and that the policy of obstruction had a strong smell of violence about it (pp. 414-8). But he accepted Council-entry as a settled fact, a necessary evil, and devoted his efforts to securing co-operation between the two camps in the Congress.

Other regional issues, too, claimed Gandhiji's attention soon after his release. These were the Vykom Satyagraha in Travancore for securing to the untouchable communities the right to use roads leading to a Hindu temple, and the Sikh agitation in the Punjab for reform of the Gurdwaras and opposing the action of the Government against the Nabha ruler. On these issues, however, Gandhiji found it easy to formulate and express his views in terms of the basic principles of satyagraha (pp. 229-35, 440-3 & 477-80).

Resuming the editorship of *Young India* and *Navajivan*, he took the first opportunity to reiterate the spiritual basis of his political activity. In the article ''For the Readers Past and Present of *Young India*'', 3-4-1924, he said: ''I have no new programme. . . . I live for India's freedom and would die for it, because it is part of Truth. Only a free India can worship the true God . . . . But my patriotism is not exclusive; it is calculated not only not to hurt any other nation, but to benefit all in the true sense of the word'' (p. 340). He was more categorical in another article, ''My Mission'', in the same issue: ''My national service is part of my training for freeing my soul from the bondage of flesh. Thus considered, my service may be regarded as purely selfish. I have no desire for the perishable kingdom of earth. I am striving for the Kingdom of Heaven which is *moksha* . . . . So my patriotism is for

me a stage in my journey to the land of eternal freedom and peace. Thus it will be seen that for me there are no politics devoid of religion. They subserve religion. Politics bereft of religion are a death-trap because they kill the soul'' (p. 349). And by religion he did not mean Hinduism, ''but the religion which transcends Hinduism—the basic truth which underlies all the religions of the world'' (p. 196). The table contrasting truth and untruth (pp. 147-8) and the extracts from Boehmen (pp. 150-1)—like the note on *moksha* and *swarga* (p. 359)—reveal the profundity of his meditation and his concern for tidiness in innermost as in outward living.

Writing to Esther Menon on her wedding (p. 23), he sums up in non-technical terms the traditional Hindu concept of dharma leading to *moksha*, of freedom rooted in responsibility. This faith in truth and in the variety of the aspects in which it appears to honest seekers remained the spiritual bedrock of his public activities throughout life. And he strikes the same note in a letter to a Christian friend in the Transvaal: ''I have no axes to grind, no worldly ambition to serve. The only purpose of life is to see God face to face, and the more I see of life and its experiences, the more I feel that everyone does not receive the light in the same way . . .'' (p. 267).

CWMG-C

PREFACE

This volume, which covers the period from May 8, 1924 to August 15, 1924, records Gandhiji's effort to restore purpose and discipline to the National movement and the temporary failure of that effort. During his absence in jail from March 1922 to February 1924, the movement seemed to have drifted away from the basic principles of the Non-co-operation programme. For nearly three months after his release, Gandhiji studied the situation in the country from Juhu, in Bombay, where he was resting, and deliberated with other leaders on the two main issues of the day, Council-entry and Hindu-Muslim tension. Having formed his opinions, he expressed them towards the end of May ("Statement to Associated Press of India," pp. 109-11, and "Hindu-Muslim Tension: Its Cause and Cure," pp. 136-54), and put forward concrete proposals for making the Congress a better knit and more effective organization. In expressing his views, Gandhiji sincerely tried to be fair to every side, but probably the very frankness with which he tried to put the truth as he saw it before the country provoked some opposition.

Gandhiji's difference with the Swaraj Party, led by Motilal Nehru and C. R. Das, was one of fundamental principle. Permitted by the Delhi and Cocanada resolutions of the Congress, its members had entered the Councils while Gandhiji was in jail, and their action seemed to Gandhiji a violation of the very basis of the Non-co-operation programme accepted by the Congress in 1920. Whereas that programme was intended, through constructive activities and by adherence to truth and non-violence, to generate sufficient internal strength in the country to compel the British to hand over power, the Swarajist programme of obstruction from within the Councils aimed purely at exerting pressure on the Government and ultimately relied upon British public opinion for securing the freedom of the country. By concentrating attention on agitation against the Government, it diverted people's minds, Gandhiji felt, from the constructive programme and the task of bringing about a regeneration of national life through it. While, however, he disapproved of the Swarajist programme, as a realist Gandhiji recognized that Council-entry was a settled fact and tried to come to terms with the Swarajists and devise a compromise which would enable the Congress to function as a

homogeneous organization. He, therefore, adopted an attitude of complete neutrality to the Swaraj Party, but sought to put the Congress under the executive control of those who believed in devoting the energies and resources of the organization exclusively to the constructive programme. With this aim in view, he gave notice of certain resolutions which he proposed to move at the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee scheduled to be held at Ahmedabad at the end of June. The effect of these resolutions would be to exclude members of the Swaraj Party from the representative and executive organs of the Congress. Gandhiji's aim was not merely to introduce homogeneity in these bodies, but to ensure vigorous prosecution of the constructive programme. His proposals, therefore, were intended to ensure "that appearance corresponded with reality". The main proposal was that every member of the Congress elected to a representative or executive body of the organization should spin for at least half an hour daily and send every month to the All-India Khadi Board a fixed quantity of well-spun, even yarn. This would make the Congress a truly mass organization by requiring its active members to identify themselves with the economic distress in the country. The resolution was adopted by the All-India Congress Committee by a small majority, but Gandhiji felt the strength of the opposition from members of the Swaraj Party and himself proposed a modification whereby the penalty clause was dropped. On the other resolutions, too, there was powerful opposition and two of them were amended to meet the point of view of the Swarajists.

These resolutions were, as he explained, Gandhiji's terms for resuming leadership of the national movement. "All the four resolutions then constitute my application for employment as general and lay down my qualifications and limitations" (p. 269). But the outcome of the deliberations at the A.I.C.C. meeting made him pause and think. "Though, on all of the four resolutions I had the honour of moving, I had a majority in their favour, I must own that, according to my conception, I was defeated. The proceedings have been an eye-opener to me and I am now occupied in a diligent search from within" (p. 332). Gandhiji wondered whether he was doing right in co-operating with those who disagreed with his fundamental principles. "I kept asking myself, 'Could right ever come out of wrong? Was I not co-operating with evil?' " His anguish is evident from this confession: "It takes much to make me weep. I try to suppress tears even when there is occasion for them. But, in spite of all my efforts to be brave, I broke down utterly" (p. 337). It was not the oppo-

sition to his resolutions so much as the lack of seriousness in the proceedings which so strongly moved Gandhiji.

Though "defeated and humbled", Gandhiji strove to find a method of working in harmony, if not co-operation, with the Swarajists. He did not want them to retire from the Councils against their conviction, merely through fear of public opinion. Writing to Motilal Nehru on August 9, 1924, he said: " . . . I was prepared to facilitate your securing the Congress machinery, actually assisting you to do so. . . . Short of my coming into your programme, I would like to place myself at your disposal" (p. 536). In a second letter, on August 15, he explained that he did not "want to be mixed up with the Councils' programme". With him in the Congress, this programme should be out of it. Or if the Swarajists were to take it up in the Congress, he himself should be practically out of it. He would gladly occupy the place he did during 1915-18. His purpose was not to weaken the power of the Swarajists, nor certainly to embarrass them (p. 578). He was afraid that the inconclusive struggle between the No-changers, those who advocated scrupulous adherence to the original Congress resolution on Non-co-operation, and the Swarajists at the A.I.C.C. meeting in Ahmedabad would be resumed at the annual session of the Congress in December. "The more I think of it, the more my soul rises against a battle for power at Belgaum" (p. 578). He pleaded with the No-changers to surrender control of the executive bodies to the Swarajists, wherever necessary, to avoid bitter fighting in the Congress and advised them to concentrate their energies on constructive work, especially on propagation of khadi (pp. 471-3).

Gandhiji himself took every opportunity, in *Young India* and *Navajivan*, to exhort readers to take up spinning, and gave detailed publicity to the khadi work being done in different parts of the country. He proposed spinning as full-time employment even for prisoners. Addressing students and teachers of national schools on several occasions, he urged them to give more and more of their time to khadi work, and suggested that spinning should be introduced as a compulsory activity in national schools. In a series of speeches at the National Schools' Conference at Ahmedabad, in the first week of August, he set down at length his views on national education and the role of teachers.

Hindu-Muslim tension was another problem which weighed heavily on Gandhiji's mind at this time. During the heyday of the Non-co-operation movement in 1921, the two communities were almost within sight of achieving real unity, but, after the

deposition of the Khalifa, the bond of common interest provided by the Khilafat agitation weakened and, during the two years of Gandhiji's imprisonment, distrust grew up between the leaders of the two communities. There were riots in several parts of the country. Gandhiji analysed the causes of the rift in "Hindu-Muslim Tension: Its Cause and Cure" (pp. 136-54). As he explained, behind the tangible, local causes for the conflicts was the spirit of violence which had grown in the country in revulsion against the half-hearted acceptance of non-violence as a policy during the Non-co-operation movement. In *Young India*, 5-6-1924, he summarized the long statement on "the greatest of all questions for the Indian patriot" (pp. 188-90). Gandhiji's efforts served however only to provoke angry protests from both camps. Health permitting, he planned with the Ali Brothers to tour the country to restore harmony between the two communities, but the plan did not materialize. Helpless to improve the prevailing atmosphere, Gandhiji was led later to undertake a self-purificatory fast of 21 days in Delhi.

A local issue of some importance to which Gandhiji gave considerable attention was the satyagraha in Vaikom, in the Travancore State, where reformers had started a movement to secure to the untouchable communities the right to use a public road leading to a Hindu temple. The cause was dear to Gandhiji and he readily lent it his moral support, guiding the campaign from a distance from week to week. He was anxious that it should remain a local movement and an affair exclusively of Hindus, and also that the means employed should be strictly consistent with the basic principles of satyagraha, that is, of voluntary suffering aimed at bringing about a change of heart in the opponents. He felt that, judged from this stand-point, the satyagraha in Vaikom was "crossing the limits" (p. 7), and publicly disapproved of some of its features. The issues are discussed at some length in "Interview to Vaikom Deputation" (pp. 90-4). He counselled patience and moderation to the reformers so as not to alienate the orthodox Hindus in the State and elsewhere. Gandhiji, likewise, urged public workers in Kathiawar to exercise self-restraint in organizing political activities in the Indian States of their region. He pointed out that the evils of these States were the results of the British system, and that their subjects could not undertake the burden of freeing the Princes from the control of the British Government unless the latter themselves desired such freedom. At the same time, he held that there could be no satyagraha in the Princely States in order to win swaraj for India (p. 246). He advised the proposed Kathiawar

Political Conference to concentrate its efforts on improving the relationship between the Rulers and their subjects and promoting the economic, political and moral progress of the latter. This remained till the last Gandhiji's attitude to the problems of Indian States.

Among the contents of this volume is the series: "My Jail Experiences". Gandhiji discussed in some of them important issues of jail reform, like the need for a scientific classification of prisoners based on humanitarian considerations and the possibility of making the jails economically self-supporting by employing the prisoners on the right kind of work. The story of Gandhiji's efforts to persuade the Government to let him see the Mulshi Peta prisoners and plead with them, to change their attitude to jail discipline, is a little drama, with a happy end, on the application of the method of satyagraha. Major Jones, the Jail Superintendent, admitted that "this was the cleanest hunger-strike he had witnessed" (p. 98).

But more interesting still are the lively sketches of the convict-officers who were successively appointed to watch over Gandhiji and his companions in jail. The enthusiasm with which these portraits are drawn is enough to show that Gandhiji's human relations with men in authority playing their roles were "uniformly happy".

An article in *Navajivan* in a refreshingly personal strain reveals the nature of the religious feeling which filled his inner being. In "Lack or Excess of Love?" (pp. 196-8), he answered the objections of a pious correspondent. Though Gandhiji often asserted that God was Truth, and later, that Truth was God, and based his ethical principles on this abstract concept of God, his own inner life was informed with the sentiment of personal *bhakti* which he had imbibed from the *Vaishnava* atmosphere in which he had grown up as a child. Rama was his *ishta devata*, the chosen form of godhead, to whom he had surrendered himself in love. "Rama has now come into my home. I know that He would frown on me if I spoke to Him as 'Yuu'. To me—an orphan without mother, father, brother—Rama is all in all. . . . My life is His. In Him I live. . . . In the *Bhangi* and the Brahmin I see the same Rama and to them both I bow" (p. 197). Though, as a rational being, Gandhiji believed and said that Rama and Khuda and God signified the same Essence, his heart responded most naturally to his beloved Rama and he never tired of writing about the magic of His Name.

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PREFACE

This volume, covering the five months from August 16, 1924 to January 15, 1925, records Gandhiji's earnest efforts for national unity, for unity between Hindus and Muslims, between Swarajists and No-changers in the Congress and between the Congress and other political parties in the country. He attributed the internecine strife and bitterness to the frustration resulting from the suspension of the non-co-operation movement and, as the author of that movement, regarded it as his duty to cleanse the atmosphere of violence in the country. This he sought to do through penance and willing surrender to opponents. The chief events of the period, the 21-day fast in September-October, the Calcutta agreement with the Swarajist leaders followed by the All-Parties Conference in Bombay (November) and the annual session of the Congress over which he presided, all bear witness to the spirit of humility in which he strove to bring about harmony in the country.

Hindu-Muslim tension had been growing for some time and Gandhiji had, a few months earlier, analysed the causes and prescribed a cure. In August, reports were received of desecration of temples at several places and Gandhiji felt seriously concerned. His own attitude he stated categorically: "I am both an idolator and an iconoclast in what I conceive to be the true sense of the terms. I value the spirit behind idol-worship. It plays a most important part in the uplift of the human race. And I would like to possess the ability to defend with my life the thousands of holy temples which sanctify this land of ours. . . . I am an iconoclast in the sense that I break down the subtle form of idolatry in the shape of fanaticism that refuses to see any virtue in any other form of worshipping the Deity save one's own" (p. 46). He told the unknown culprits: " . . . these desecrations are cutting a deep wound in my heart" (p. 47). He believed, and stated in public, that there was some kind of an organization behind these attacks. While advising Hindus against retaliation, he spoke out strongly to the Muslims responsible for these desecrations: "Remember that Islam is being judged by your conduct. . . . Even retaliation has its limits. Hindus prize their temples above their lives. It is possible to contemplate with some degree of equanimity injury to life but not to temples. Religion is more than life" (p. 47). The climax was reached in

Kohat, in the North-West Frontier Province, where on September 9 and 10 a mass attack on Hindus forced the entire Hindu population of the town to leave their homes and flee to Rawalpindi.

In a short letter to C. F. Andrews, Gandhiji mentioned the agony and the torture which he suffered at these developments and added: "But I shall soon be at peace. I was longing to see my duty clearly. The light has come like a flash. Can a man do more than give his life?" (p. 157). He had decided to undertake a purificatory fast of 21 days. He felt that the responsibility for the riots rested on him. "Had I not been instrumental in bringing into being the vast energy of the people? I must find the remedy if the energy proved self-destructive" (p. 200).

Even so close an associate as Mahadev Desai could not understand the aim behind the fast. Answering his doubts, Gandhiji said: "Today I find that people are non-co-operating against one another, without regard for non-violence. What is the reason? Only this, that I myself am not completely non-violent. If I were practising non-violence to perfection, I should not have seen the violence I see around me today. My fast is therefore a penance. I blame no one. I blame only myself. I have lost the power wherewith to appeal to people. Defeated and helpless, I must submit my petition in His Court" (p. 175). The fast, commenced in Mahomed Ali's house in Delhi on September 17, created the atmosphere for a Unity Conference which passed, on September 27, a resolution deploring the strife which was spreading, condemning the riots as barbarous and contrary to religion and appointing a board of arbitrators who would decide disputes between the two communities and frame a scheme for protection of the rights of minorities. The Conference also appealed to Gandhiji to break his fast. He refused to do that, saying that the fast was a matter between God and himself.

With regard to the position of the Swarajists in the Congress, the situation was as complex as it could be. The No-changers, as the orthodox party in the Congress were called, wanted the original non-co-operation programme of the Congress to be scrupulously adhered to, whereas the Swarajists had adopted the programme of obstruction from within the Councils. After the A.I.C.C. meeting in June, a "tug of war" had developed between the two sections for control of the Congress. "I am sick," Gandhiji said, "of the domestic fight that is raging in the country" (p. 65). He was convinced that the Swarajist programme hindered the development of internal strength through the constructive pro-

gramme, but he was not inclined any longer to oppose it. Writing to C. Rajagopalachari on September 6, he said: "I see as clearly as daylight that we must not resist the evil that has crept into our ranks. We must abdicate power altogether. If we have faith in our mission, and if the mission is intrinsically good, we must succeed" (p. 98). But the rank and file of the No-changers were not convinced of the wisdom of this approach. They called it surrender. That was, however, exactly Gandhiji's intention. Explaining his position in *Young India*, he said: "All I know is that there is no fight left in me. This is much for a born fighter to say. I have fought my dearest ones. But I fight out of love. I should fight the Swarajists, too, out of love. But I must, I see, first prove my love. I thought I had proved it. I see I was wrong. I am therefore retracing my steps" (p. 125). Again, in "The Law of Love", he said: "I must prove to everyone that I am what I profess to be—their friend and servant" (p. 260). While Gandhiji was carrying on negotiations with Motilal Nehru with a view to arriving at complete understanding with the Swaraj Party, the Government resorted to severe repression in Bengal and arrested and imprisoned a number of persons without trial. This heightened the urgency of unity within the Congress so as to make it a disciplined organization which would respond to every call. Gandhiji and the Swarajist leaders, therefore, arrived at an agreement at Calcutta on November 6, whereby the Swaraj Party would be permitted to carry on their Councils programme in the name of the Congress and, in return, the Party would support the constructive programme and the introduction of daily spinning as a qualification for membership of the Congress. In order to bring the other parties on a common platform within the Congress, it was also proposed in the agreement to suspend the other boycotts which had formed part of the non-co-operation movement. Gandhiji justified this agreement thus in his speech at the A.I.C.C. meeting in Bombay on November 23: "I practically confess that I consider it impossible to lead the battle of non-co-operation or of civil disobedience, unless we have by us . . . a large measure of the intellect of the country, which should range on our side in sympathy with us and even actively co-operate with us. That we cannot expect unless we yield to them in some respects" (pp. 350-1).

Gandhiji's attitude of compromise towards the Swaraj Party caused bewilderment among the No-changers. He understood their difficulty, but pleaded with them for single-minded prosecution of the constructive programme irrespective of whether or not

they held power in the Congress. Writing on September 15 to C. Rajagopalachari, the most loyal of non-co-operators, he said: "I know how difficult it must be for you and others suddenly to accommodate yourselves to these sudden changes. But how shall I help myself! I know I am putting an undue strain upon the loyalty and the faith of co-workers" (p. 149). Gandhiji reasoned with the non-co-operators thus: "We must stoop to conquer. Retaining every bit of non-co-operation in our own persons, we must make the path of those who do not believe in it smooth for serving us and helping the country in the constructive effort. . . . Is it not easy enough to see that service requires no power, no office, no prestige? I would like every one of us to be a mere servant of the nation. I would like No-changers so to behave as to be wanted by Swarajists, Liberals and all others" (pp. 259-60). With characteristic solicitude for co-workers, Gandhiji wrote to Rajaji: "Let this be as balm to your lacerated heart. . . . Bardoli was the boldest experiment in non-violence in one direction. The agreement is the boldest experiment in non-violence in another direction" (p. 324).

As envisaged in the Calcutta agreement, an All-Parties Conference was called in Bombay on November 21 and 22 to forge a common front against the Government which had embarked upon a policy of repression in Bengal with the aim primarily, it was felt, of crushing the Swaraj Party. Gandhiji had seen through the official game of weakening the forces of nationalism in the country by taking full advantage of the divisions in their ranks. At his instance, the All-Parties Conference adopted a resolution condemning the action of the Government and appointed a committee "to consider the best way of re-uniting all political parties in the Indian National Congress and to prepare a scheme of swaraj. . ." (pp. 341-2). The task was no easy one; the Liberals and the Independents had objections to joining the Congress on the ground of the creed of swaraj, since the word could be interpreted to mean complete independence, the status of the Swaraj Party and the requirement of daily spinning as qualification for membership. Gandhiji had strong convictions on all these issues, but he assured the other parties: "I shall not wilfully stand in the way of any honourable means that may be desired by the committee for bringing all the parties together. . . . Let all parties then make an honest and earnest effort to find a way out. Let them approach the deliberations of the committee with faith and determination to find a common platform. Let them approach them with an open mind" (p. 363).

Gandhiji was elected President of the Congress for the ensuing year, but it was after much prayer and heart-searching that he accepted the honour, for "a gulf seems to be yawning between educated India and myself . . . and . . . the intellect of the country seems to be ranged against my ways of thought and action. . . " (p. 356). His presidential speech was a survey of the state of the nation, the Calcutta agreement and the general questions arising from it. He also explained in it his views on the importance of the Swaraj Party, on the function of national schools after the suspension of the non-co-operation movement and on the repression in Bengal. He gave a "sketch of some of the requirements of swaraj as I would have it". He would "strive for such swaraj within the Empire, but would not hesitate to sever all connection, if severance became a necessity through Britain's own fault. I would thus throw the burden of separation on the British people" (p. 481). Gandhiji concluded the address with a firm reiteration of his faith in non-co-operation and satyagraha.

Among the letters included in the volume are some which are precious for the glimpses they give of Gandhiji's personal relations with co-workers. Writing to C. F. Andrews on August 25, he advised him: "Will you not 'rest and be thankful' for a while? Work is prayer but it can also be madness. You were in fever when you wrote your Burmese article" (p. 38). Gandhiji's letters to Motilal Nehru and Jawaharlal Nehru reveal his concern for both father and son. Writing to the former on September 2, he said: "This letter like the former is meant to be a plea for Jawaharlal. He is one of the loneliest young men of my acquaintance in India. The idea of your mental desertion of him hurts me. . . . I don't want to be the cause direct or indirect of the slightest breach in that wonderful affection" (p. 65). In reply to a letter from Jawaharlal, Gandhiji said: "Father is just now in an irritable mood. And I am most anxious that neither you nor I should contribute an iota to the irritation. . . . It makes me unhappy to find him unhappy. His irritability is a sure sign of his unhappiness" (p. 148). And finally, there is the letter to Romain Rolland, where he says of Mirabehn: "What a treasure you have sent me. I shall try to be worthy of such a great confidence. I shall do everything to help Miss Slade to become a little bridge between West and East" (p. 320).

Scattered among the contents of this volume are revealing confessions of personal faith. In "My Jail Experiences", the maker of history sets down his reflections on the study of history and concludes: "That which is permanent and therefore necessary

eludes the historian of events. Truth transcends history'' (p. 129). Explaining his attitude to religion and politics, he said: ''For me humanitarian service, or rather service of all that lives, is religion. And I draw no distinction between such religion and politics. Indeed, I cannot conceive a life full of service without its touching politics. . . . I believe that the time is fast coming when politicians will cease to fear the religion of humanity and humanitarians will find entrance into political life indispensable for full service'' (pp. 52-3). Again he reiterated his humanitarian concern: ''You regard me as a Mahatma, not because of my Truth, nor for my Non-violence, but on account of my deep attachment for the poorest of the poor. Whatever happens, I can never desert the poor in their rags'' (pp. 59-60). But Gandhiji's humanitarianism sprang from his devotion to God. As he declared in ''Bolshevism or Discipline?'', his movement was not atheistic. ''It is not a denial of God. It has been undertaken in His name and is being continued with constant prayer'' (p. 19). During all the crises and perplexities of public life, he looked inward for light, and was extremely unhappy when, for a time, he failed to find it. Recalling the plight of Margaret in *Faust*, he said, ''I seem to have lost my Love too and feel distracted. I feel the abiding presence of my Lover and yet he seems to be away from me. For he refuses to guide me and give clear-cut injunctions. On the contrary, like Krishna, the arch mischief-maker to the Gopis, he exasperates me by appearing, disappearing and reappearing'' (p. 77). And Gandhiji returned again and again to the wheel and there ''found peace in refusing to find it.'' For ever the inner voice told him: ''Be 'careful for nothing', but merely do your duty as you find it'' (p. 450). Gandhiji drew ''the student readers' attention to the value of doing things regularly'', and described how he converted the dry drudgery of indexing into a daily exercise and an absorbing game (p. 155). Clarity and certitude came from right action. ''Practice is the best speech and the best propaganda. And this everyone can do without let or hindrance from anybody else. Not to worry about others is Ormuzd's way. Ahriman leads us into the trap by taking us away from ourselves. God is not in Kaaba or in Kashi. He is within everyone of us. Therefore swaraj too is to be found by searching inward, not by vainly expecting others, even our fellow-workers, to secure it for us'' (p. 451).

PREFACE

This volume covers the period of three and a half months from January 16 to April 30, 1925. Most of this time Gandhiji spent touring. The volume opens with speeches at several conferences in Gujarat. Early in February, Gandhiji visited Rawalpindi in a vain attempt to bring about reconciliation between the Hindu refugees from Kohat and the Muslim population of that town. Returning from there, he visited South Gujarat and Saurashtra, and thereafter spent a month in the South, mostly in the Travancore State where satyagraha was being carried on at Vykom for the past one year against a particularly offensive form of untouchability. In the beginning of April Gandhiji resumed his tour of Saurashtra and in the middle of April that of south Gujarat. He wrote to C. F. Andrews on April 25: "I have been moving from place to place at breakneck speed. And I am recuperating for four days at Tithal in anticipation of the Bengal ordeal" (p. 544). He was in Calcutta on May 1.

As President of the Congress, Gandhiji had chalked out his programme for 1925. Writing in *Young India* on April 16, he said: "I must apply myself to preparing efficient, non-violent, self-sacrificing workers with a living faith in hand-spinning and khaddar, Hindu-Muslim unity and, if they are Hindus, in removal of untouchability also. For the current year at any rate, this is the national programme and no other" (p. 512). Gandhiji was convinced that the successful carrying out of this threefold programme was the only means of generating internal strength, without which the Swaraj Party's work in the legislatures would be ineffective. But he was well aware that he was attempting an uphill task. People flocked to his meetings, but were not moved by his insistence on spinning and khadi. He had a painful demonstration of this truth at the Nagpur station on his way to Calcutta. A large crowd had collected on the platform to have his *darshan*. "That it was having with delirious joy. Its joy was my pain. My name on the lips and black caps on the heads,—what a terrible contrast! What a lie! I could not fight the battle of swaraj with that crowd" (p. 575). The experience saddened, but did not dishearten him. "My faith in khaddar rises as I find this indifference to if not revolt against khaddar" (p. 574). Apart from its value as a means of relieving unemployment in some

degree, the khadi programme had, according to Gandhiji, a political significance which he tried to explain to an English friend thus: "Swaraj can be peacefully attained only if the whole Indian mass work as with one will, be it on ever so little a constructive and useful thing for ever so little a time. Such an effort presupposes national consciousness. This is possible only through the spinning-wheel" (p. 49). In his public speeches, however, he dwelt rather on the economic and humanitarian implications of khadi.

The Hindu-Muslim problem had become so complicated that Gandhiji thought it wise to do nothing about it for the time being. Explaining his predicament in a public meeting in Madras on March 7, he said: "For the time being I have put away in my cupboard this Hindu-Muslim tangle. That does not mean that I have despaired of a solution. My mind will eternally work at it till I find out a solution. But I must confess to you today that I cannot present a workable solution that you will accept. In the atmosphere surcharged as it is with mutual distrust I cannot persuade either the Hindus or the Mussalmans to accept my solution" (p. 244). He confessed his helplessness again in "My Position" (16-4-1925): "I cannot tease Hindu-Muslim unity into life. It, therefore, requires no outward activity from me. As a Hindu I shall serve as many Mussalmans as will let me serve them. I shall advise those who seek my advice. For the rest, I cease to worry about what I cannot mend. But I have a living faith in unity coming. It must come even if it has to do so after a few pitched battles" (p. 514).

In this atmosphere of mutual distrust, Gandhiji found himself, on two issues, in a position which could be easily misunderstood. Maulana Shaukat Ali and he had jointly undertaken to investigate into the causes of the Kohat riot in the preceding September and effect a reconciliation between the two communities. The local Muslim leaders refused to assist them in the inquiry and, on the basis of the evidence available, Gandhiji and the Maulana came to divergent conclusions. Public admission of their difference ran the serious risk of being misrepresented and exploited by communal elements. Since the beginning of the Khilafat movement in 1920-21, Gandhiji and Maulana Shaukat Ali had worked in close association and the former had won the goodwill of the Muslim masses. A difference between the two leaders on a communal issue might or might not affect their personal relations, but it was certain to have unhappy repercussions on the

general atmosphere in the country. Gandhiji was extremely careful to present the matter in the proper light both to the Maulana and to the general public. He was aware of the possible consequences of public admission of their difference. "I tremble to publish our statements. The publication will give rise to an acrimonious discussion" (p. 191). But his faith in the power of truth was absolute and he felt that the risk must be taken. "But if after we have exhausted all our resources to come to a joint conclusion, we fail, we must dare to let the public know our difference of opinion and know too that we shall still love one another and work together" (p. 191). Hakim Ajmal Khan suggested and Pandit Motilal Nehru agreed that the statements should not be published. But Gandhiji released the statements to the Press on March 19 with the explanation: "But we, or at least I, came to the conclusion that the public which had hitherto known the Ali Brothers and me to be always in agreement about so many public things should know that we too might differ on some matters, but without suspecting each other of conscious bias or wilful perversion of facts and without mutual affection being in any way affected. Our open acknowledgment of our differences will be an object-lesson in mutual toleration" (pp. 336-7).

The second issue on which Gandhiji's position led to a controversy was an equally sensitive one. Commenting in *Young India* on a report that two members of the Ahmadiya sect had been stoned to death in Afghanistan as penalty for apostasy, Gandhiji had said: "I understand that the stoning method is enjoined in the Koran only in certain circumstances which do not cover the cases under observation. But as a human being living in the fear of God I should question the morality of the method under any circumstance whatsoever. . . . Every formula of every religion has in this age of reason, to submit to the acid test of reason and universal justice if it is to ask for universal assent. Error can claim no exemption even if it can be supported by the scriptures of the world" (p. 202). This was too radical an attitude for the orthodox and led to some angry protests. The President of the Punjab Khilafat Committee wrote, "You have shaken the belief of millions of your Muslim admirers in your capacity to lead them" (p. 226). Gandhiji explained that he had criticized not the Koran but only its interpreters. But he was by no means on the defensive. With uncompromising directness he declared that "even the teachings themselves of the Koran cannot be exempt from criticism" (p. 226). He clari-

fied his position further: "In my writing about Islam I take the same care of its prestige that I do of Hinduism. I apply the same method of interpretation to it that I apply to Hinduism. I no more defend on the mere ground of authority a single text in the Hindu scriptures than I can defend one from the Koran. Everything has to submit to the test of reason. Islam appeals to people because it appeals also to reason" (p. 415).

Gandhiji's critical attitude to tradition and authority in religion is forcefully illustrated by his ceaseless campaign against the evil of untouchability. Alike in Gujarat and South India, he appealed to people's reason. "I reject the Shastras," he told a public meeting in Madras, "if I am told that the Shastras countenance any such evil. But I am positive, as I am positive that we are sitting here together, that our Shastras enjoin or countenance no such devilry. To say that a single human being, because of his birth, becomes an untouchable, unapproachable or invisible, is to deny God" (p. 373). He had seen the evil in its worst form in the Travancore State. "Mere sight of a certain man is considered by blind orthodoxy as a sin. *Nayadis* are expected to remain invisible. I saw two men belonging to that caste in Trichur. Except for the human form I saw nothing of humanness about them. (Laughter.) My friends, it is not a matter for laughter but it is a matter for shedding tears of blood" (p. 373). Gandhiji's chief purpose in this tour was to cultivate public opinion in support of the satyagraha at Vykom for securing the use of a public road to members of these unfortunate communities. To that end, he met the authorities of the State and also representatives of the orthodox section. He put three alternative proposals before the latter, all of which were rejected. He advised the satyagrahis, nevertheless, to be charitable towards the opponents of reform and credit them with honesty of purpose. "I have found that mere appeal to reason does not answer where prejudices are age-long and based on supposed religious authority. Reason has to be strengthened by suffering and suffering opens the eyes of understanding. Therefore there must be no trace of compulsion in our acts" (p. 271). This is the essence of the method of satyagraha.

Gandhiji was often questioned, during his campaign against untouchability, about his views on the caste system and the restrictions on inter-dining and intermarriage which were an essential part of it. "I draw," he said, "a sharp distinction between untouchability and *varna* or caste. The former has no

scientific basis. . . . The caste system has in my opinion a scientific basis'' (p. 289). He explained in another context that the system was ''a healthy division of work based on birth'' (p. 540), but hastened to add that the present ideas of caste were a perversion of the original. Nor did he regard the abolition of restrictions on intermarriage and inter-dining as essential reforms. ''These self-imposed restrictions have a sanitary as also a spiritual value. But non-observance no more dooms a man to perdition than its observance raises him to the seventh heaven'' (p. 569). It was the principle of self-control implied in these restrictions that Gandhiji valued most in traditional Brahmin culture. ''I would not have the non-Brahmins to rise on the ruin of Brahmins. I would rather that they rose to the height that the Brahmins have occupied before now'' (p. 331).

In the three articles (Items 62, 269 and 322) addressed to a Revolutionary, Gandhiji expounded clearly and patiently the philosophy of life which he was both preaching and trying to practise: ''Armed conspiracies against something satanic is like matching satans against Satan. But since one Satan is one too many for me, I would not multiply him. Whether my activity is effortlessness or all efforts, remains perhaps to be seen. Meanwhile, if it has resulted in making two yards of yarn spun where only one was spinning, it is so much to the good. Cowardice, whether philosophical or otherwise, I abhor'' (p. 489). And he drew a sharp distinction between the dharma of mortals and the mysteries of godhead: ''It is idle to drag in the name of Krishna. Either we believe him to be the very God or we do not. If we do, we impute to him omniscience and omnipotence. Such a one can surely destroy. But we are puny mortals ever erring and ever revising our views and opinions. We may not without coming to grief ape Krishna, the inspirer of the *Gita*'' (pp. 567-8).

Gandhiji's full participation in traditional Hindu sentiment and his attempt to give it practical, constructive expression are seen in his approach to cow-protection. He urged his fellow-Hindus to organize model dairies which would also support infirm and disabled cows, instead of fighting with other communities to prevent their slaughter. He joined other workers in establishing the All-India Cow-Protection Sabha and drafted a constitution for it (pp. 35-7). He tried to explain his sentiment for the cow in rational terms in a letter to Jawaharlal Nehru: ''The cow is merely a type for all that lives. Cow-protection means protection

of the weak, the helpless, the dumb and the deaf. Man becomes then not the lord and master of all creation but he is its servant. The cow to me is a sermon on pity'' (p. 545).

This blending of reason and sentiment was the essence of Gandhiji's religious outlook. To a friend who objected to the mention of God in Congress pledges, he replied: ''To me God is truth and love; God is ethics and morality; God is fearlessness. . . . God is conscience. He is even the atheism of the atheist'' (p. 224). But, to Gandhiji himself, God was not a principle or abstraction; it was a deeply felt personal presence. ''We are *not*, He alone *IS*. And if we will be, we must eternally sing His praise and do His will. Let us dance to the tune of His *bansi*—lute, and all would be well'' (p. 225). The strength of his religious feeling is brought out in the account of his state of mind while assuming chairmanship of the Cow-Protection Sabha: ''My pen shakes as I write this. There are tears in my eyes. . . . My predicament is very much that of a child who weeps profusely because he does not have the stomach to eat all that he wishes to. I am greedy. I am impatient to see and to demonstrate the victory of dharma. . . . The ship of my longings is thus rolling back and forth on a stormy sea'' (p. 319). And it was the memory of his visit on the previous day to Kanyakumari which had induced this wave of emotion. In ''The *Darshan* of Kanyakumari'' he says: ''The music of the ocean-waves, sweet and gentle like strains from a *vina*, could only invite one to meditation. . . . I . . . sat in silence, my heart filled with the image of the teacher of the *Gita*'' (pp. 424-5).

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PREFACE

During the three months, May, June and July 1925, Gandhiji was engaged on a tour of Bengal. The one outstanding event was the death of C. R. Das which took place at Darjeeling on June 16. This calamity overshadows this Volume, which is naturally dominated by institutions like Santiniketan and Khadi Pratishthan, and personalities like Rabindranath Tagore and Surendranath Banerjea. The general movement for the promotion of swadeshi, communal unity and the abolition of untouchability received fresh nuances from local attitudes and conditions. Politics Gandhiji voiced only in an undertone and they were for the most part the politics of the Swaraj Party. The reorganization of the Congress as an instrument of the constructive programme was a matter of the deepest concern to Gandhiji. It was only towards the end of the period that his utterances turned militant in the face of British intransigence, and indicated a distinct probability of resort to civil resistance.

Both the political programme and the constructive programme were accepted as useful and necessary. While the Swarajists concentrated on the former, Gandhiji himself devoted his time and attention to the latter. Each party, however, well understood and tried to help the other.

On the constructive programme Gandhiji's views crystallized more clearly. He was sure that the swadeshi movement at this time was more solidly based than that of 1905-8 which, though "magnificent in conception", had little organization behind it and relied on "the broken reeds" of the Bombay and Ahmedabad mills. Now spinning served as a bond with the masses, the charkha was the device to make them all feel that they were children of the same land. The charkha had now become a magnificent obsession not only with him but with millions all over the country. He wished for it a larger place in Santiniketan (p. 181). He pleaded with C. R. Das to "learn the thing and spin religiously for half an hour for the sake of the millions and in the name of God" (p. 229).

The object of the internal programme of the National Congress was to achieve unity among all races, Hindu-Muslim unity being a short term to cover all classes. His tours had revealed to him that the major communities were filled with mutual dis-

trust, but he had no doubt that each regarded unity as a paramount national interest. Speaking at Noakhali on May 14, he laid the blame for disunity on both parties and declared that no power on earth could separate them if they were determined to be united. To an Anglo-Indian representative he gave the categorical reassurance, "the greater communities. . . had solemn obligations to perform towards the lesser communities" (p. 183). He commended concrete assistance rendered by one community to another, as during the flood relief work in Bengal, where a predominantly Hindu organization helped a predominantly Muslim population (p. 201).

When he was twitted over the lack of unity in food, drink or worship even among the Hindus, he retorted: "Unity I hanker after is one of heart. It transcends these barriers and can subsist in spite of them" (p. 319). His realistic approach to the problem was illustrated by his acclaiming the usefulness of Annie Besant's efforts "to secure freedom in spite of communal dissensions". There was room, he saw, for both, those who sought freedom despite differences and those who tried to remove differences for paving the road to freedom.

Untouchability continued to cause much heart-searching. To the untouchables he recommended a "dignified attitude and not vindictiveness" (p. 14). He held up the example of Nanda, an *Antyaja* saint of the South, whom he described as "the very embodiment of satyagraha" (p. 72). To the caste Hindus, on the other hand, his exhortation was to "honour the despised" (p. 273). Hatred was implicit in untouchability and this hatred they must do away with (p. 384). Those who were impatient with the slow progress of the reform movement he admonished and comforted with the thought that removal of abuses must come from within, not imposed from without; but he saw the Bastille of untouchability being slowly undermined (p. 287). Again and again he expounded his conception of Hinduism as a religion which never "counted heads" (p. 106). On the contrary, it was so inclusive that a practising Hindu was claimed by Buddhists, Jains, Christians and Muslims as their own. Buddha himself lived Hinduism in his own life. Buddhism was nothing but Hinduism reduced to practice in terms of the masses. One's traditional religion was however a matter of life and death. "A man does not change religion as he changes his garments. . . . It is a matter of the heart" (pp. 188-9). Addressing women missionaries he asked: "What is political and what is religious ? Can life be divided into

such watertight compartments? . . . Politics separated from religion stinks, religion detached from politics is meaningless'' (pp. 203-4).

Of the power of *Ramanama*, the unfailing means and potent expression of his faith, and of how it saved him during the course of his life, he writes with candour in an article where he confesses, ''My private life has become public life. For my part, there is not a single thing in the world which I would conceal from others. My experiments are spiritual. . . . They depend very much on self-examination on my part. I have carried them out, following the maxim: 'As in one's body, so in the universe.' The underlying assumption is that what is possible to me must be so to all others'' (pp. 107-8). Realizing the need for humility among all men of religion, he had no patience with reformers who in their anger wanted to reform the world without reforming themselves. Spiritual progress came only through service rendered in the name of God. In his letter dated July 16, to C. Rajagopalachari, he explained his position thus: ''My body and mind are living in a world by which I remain unaffected, but in which I am being tried. My soul is living in a world physically away from me and yet a world by which I am and want to be affected. . . . Your *sadhana* is the development of the place where you are and a scientific test of our theory of the value of hand-spinning'' (pp. 384-5).

His faith in non-violence found repeated and ever fresh expression. Writing to Sarat Chandra Bose on June 15, he said: ''Non-violence is love. It works silently, almost secretly. . . . Love has no play as between friends and relatives. These love one another from selfishness, not from enlightenment. It has play only as between opponents so called. It demands, therefore, the highest charity and all the chivalry one is capable of showing towards those who oppose or persecute one'' (pp. 241-2). In his continuing dialogue with the revolutionaries, for example, ''At It Again'' (pp. 48-52) and ''On the Verge of It'' (pp. 131-5), he conceded their courage and self-sacrifice, but stated with perfect frankness and clarity his unshaken faith in non-violence. Though he refused to preach universal non-violence because, at the moment, neither he nor his country had transcended *dvaitabhava*, he still pleaded with the revolutionaries ''to keep their feet firm on mother earth and not scale the Himalayan heights to which the poet took Arjuna and other heroes. . . . The plains of Hindustan are good enough for me'' (p. 135).

He told a meeting of missionaries: "I must tell you in all humility that Hinduism as I know it, entirely satisfies my soul, fills my whole being and I find a solace in the *Bhagavad Gita* and Upanishads that I miss even in the Sermon on the Mount. Not that I do not prize the ideal presented therein, not that some of the precious teachings in the Sermon on the Mount have not left a deep impression upon me, but I must confess to you that, when doubts haunt me, when disappointments stare me in the face, and when I see not one ray of light on the horizon, I turn to the *Bhagavad Gita*, and find a verse to comfort me; and I immediately begin to smile in the midst of overwhelming sorrow. My life has been full of external tragedies and if they have not left any visible and indelible effect on me, I owe it to the teaching of the *Bhagavad Gita*" (p. 435). Ever "a seeker after truth" he knew "the wonderful efficacy of silence". He remembered throughout his life the precious lesson he learned during his visit to the beautiful Trappist Monastery in South Africa: "If we want to listen to the still small voice that is always speaking within us, it will not be heard if we continually speak" (p. 438).

This constant preoccupation with matters of the spirit even in the heat and dust of politics did not mean lack of realism or interest in the assessment and handling of political trends and views. Gandhiji affirmed his confidence in C. R. Das and Motilal Nehru, leaders of the Swaraj Party, and when the death of Deshbandhu cast a spell of gloom over the land, he made efforts to honour his memory by means conducive to the welfare of the masses, a cause dear to Deshbandhu's heart. Such was his trust in the leaders of the Swaraj Party that he would do nothing in the Congress without their consent. Writing on July 18 on the misleading statement of Lord Birkenhead, the Secretary of State, he declared: ". . .whilst Motilalji will be fighting in the Assembly and leading the Swaraj Party in the place of Deshbandhu, I shall be leaving no stone unturned to prepare the atmosphere needed for civil resistance . . ." (p. 391). The Congress would then become predominantly a political party. In fact, he offered to place it at Motilal Nehru's disposal so that the Swaraj Party would become the Congress. But even during this preparation for an eventual struggle, Gandhiji never departed from his policy of friendliness towards the British, as could be seen from his letter to Fred E. Campbell dated July 28 and the statement made a few days earlier to a European that he was "dying to co-operate" with them. His way in politics was well summed up in the dictum: "You non-co-operate with measures, not with men" (p. 85).

Indian nationalism was presented in its proper perspective, as one people's *svadharma* in a universal dharma. "... it is impossible for one to be internationalist without being a nationalist. Internationalism is possible only when nationalism becomes a fact, i.e., when people belonging to different countries have organized themselves and are able to act as one man. . . . Indian nationalism . . . wants to organize itself or to find full self-expression for the benefit and service of humanity at large. Anyway, there is no uncertainty about my patriotism or nationalism. God having cast my lot in the midst of the people of India, I should be untrue to my Maker if I failed to serve them. If I do not know how to serve them, I shall never know how to serve humanity. And I cannot possibly go wrong so long as I do not harm other nations in the act of serving my country" (pp. 255-6). The struggle for India's freedom was thus part of a larger world movement concerning all mankind.

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PREFACE

The volume covers August 1, to November 22, 1925, a period during which Gandhiji toured Bengal, Bihar, U.P. and Kutch, and addressed diverse conferences and meetings. With the rehabilitation of the Swaraj Party at the AICC meeting at Patna, politics once again entered the Congress in a big way. The emphasis shifted to economic matters, as in the founding of the All-India Spinners' Association, and the intensification of the movement for swadeshi through a wider and better organized use of the charkha. On the social front, Gandhiji continued to campaign for the removal of untouchability and the adoption of the right methods of cow-protection. Wherever he went, he held dialogue with various cross-sections and classes of the people—women, students and teachers; Congress workers and factory labour, orthodox Hindus, social reformers and Christian missionaries.

In meeting the overall political situation, he continued to stress constructive work and the education of the people. Awakening the people to an awareness of their condition was possible only through sustained public work (pp. 135-6). To the provocative speech of the Secretary of State, Lord Birkenhead, the only answer was "more work". Even a unity conference would be called only when he saw a "general disposition to subordinate one's individual or party views to the present needs of the country" (p. 154).

At the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee at Patna on September 22, power was transferred to the Swarajists' hands. Gandhiji now laid down a simple formula to regulate the relations between the two wings of the Congress: "Wherever the two parties are evenly balanced, Non-co-operators or No-changers should surrender full control to the Swarajists and voluntarily give up office if they hold any. Where the No-changers are in an overwhelming majority, they should not hamper the Swarajists, and should help them wherever they conscientiously can" (pp. 261-2). The other significant change at Patna was the widening of the franchise in the Constitution, enabling more people to join the Congress, now converted into an essentially political organization which would carry on its work through the Swaraj Party (p. 355). As for his own role in the re-oriented Congress Gandhiji observed: "Wherever possible, I shall assist the Swarajists in

accordance with my promise; but the Congress programme will . . . be framed by Mrs. Sarojini Naidu in consultation with Pandit Motilalji" (p. 437). About the ultimate character of the national body Gandhiji had no doubts: "Let the Congress be ever so democratic, but democracy must not be brag and bluster, a passport to receiving service from the people. If *Vox populi* is to be *Vox dei*, it must be the voice of honesty, bravery, gentleness, humility and complete self-sacrifice" (p. 464).

Swadeshi received more and more enunciation during this time. India was a land of peasants: crores of people were without any occupation for part of the year. The result was idleness. "There can be no swaraj for an idle nation. Idleness leads to destruction. . . . This idleness is a great disease with us whose symptom is poverty" (p. 135). The idlers had to be provided an activity which would bring about the good of the individual and society. The spinning-wheel alone could offer this (p. 136). But it had a wider significance. "Its message is one of simplicity, service of mankind, living so as not to hurt others, creating an indissoluble bond between the rich and the poor, capital and labour, the prince and the peasant. That larger message is naturally for all" (p. 188).

The spirit of swadeshi had nothing exclusive or chauvinistic about it. It "was a discriminating, conservative spirit," Gandhiji told a students' meeting at Calcutta, and "would retain all that was best in national life, in ancient tradition and, at the same time, absorb by assimilation—not by base imitation—all that was best in the modern world, all that was best in the West, so that from good they might grow to better, and from better to still better" (p. 132).

When the Poet, Rabindranath Tagore offered criticism of the spinning-wheel and the opposition to machinery (Appendix V), Gandhiji in *Young India* explained at length his standpoint: "The frank criticism pleases me. . . . Machinery has its place; it has come to stay. But it must not be allowed to displace the necessary human labour" (pp. 426-8). Insinuations of personal jealousy Gandhiji dismissed summarily, observing: "Where the differences between us are not fundamental—and these I have endeavoured to state—there is nothing in the Poet's argument which I cannot endorse and still maintain my position regarding the charkha. The many things about the charkha which he has ridiculed I have never said. The merits I have claimed for the charkha remain undamaged by the Poet's battery" (p. 429). And he added: "If I adore the Poet, as he knows, I do in spite of differences between us" (p. 430).

The All-India Spinners' Association, the establishment of which had been decided at the Patna Congress meeting, Gandhiji defended as "an Association for service and not for satisfying one's desire for power and authority" (p. 290). In such a body he saw no scope at all for rivalry in regard to authority or leadership.

References to the communal problem came up off and on during Gandhiji's tours. His advice generally was that the two major communities must come together through "absorption in common constructive work" (p. 154), while arriving at a sincere understanding, without sacrifice of principle, on matters in dispute, such as music before mosques (p. 367).

Gandhiji's attitude to religion was consistently rational and socially oriented. Writing on cow-protection, he observed: "I believe that from its very nature religion embraces economic, political and other problems. The religion which is opposed to true economics is no religion, nor that which is opposed to true politics. Economics devoid of religion should be shunned, and political power uninformed with the spirit of religion is Satanic. There is no such thing as dharma unrelated to economic and other activities. Individuals and society, both survive through dharma and perish without it . . . If cow-protection is opposed to true economics, we have no choice but to give up the effort. Not only that, but we shall discover in that case that we cannot succeed in protecting cows even if we wish to do so" (p. 158).

In regard to the removal of untouchability, too, he saw that mere propaganda would not do. "There is no good of propaganda when there is no solid work behind to elevate the *Panchamas*" (p. 168). Speaking at Patna, he observed: "Untouchability has made Indians untouchables in the whole world and those who wanted to see the condition of untouchable Indians should go to South Africa and realize what untouchability meant" (p. 196). He was convinced that untouchability as it was being practised was not and could never be an essential part of Hinduism. "There is sheer ignorance and cruelty behind it. I look upon it as an excrescence of Hinduism. It does not protect religion, but suffocates it" (p. 348).

Speaking to teachers, Gandhiji traced the cause of foreign domination to the people's own inherent weakness. "Self-government means continuous effort to be independent of Government control, whether it is foreign Government or whether it is national. Swaraj Government will be a sorry affair if people look up to it for the regulation of every detail of life" (pp. 33-4). "Swaraj will

not drop from the clouds. It will be the fruit of patience, perseverance, ceaseless toil, courage and an intelligent appreciation of the environment'' (p. 117).

If India's freedom was for Gandhiji an aspect of individual and social morality, it had also a bearing on world affairs. In a memorable speech at Calcutta on August 28, he said: "I want freedom of my country so that the resources of my country might be utilized for the benefit of mankind just as the cult of patriotism teaches us today that the individual has to die for the family, the family has to die for the village, the village for the district, the district for the Province and the Provinces for the whole nation. . .'' And speaking of his idea of Indian nationalism, he added: "My love . . . of nationalism, or my idea of nationalism is that my country may become free—free that if need be, the whole of the country may die—so that the human race may live. There is no room here for race hatred. Let that be our nationalism'' (p. 129).

Abroad there was growing appreciation of the larger significance of Gandhiji's message and mission. From Europe and America came letters seeking light on certain problems. Besides replying to correspondents, he wrote in *Young India* on the common basis of violence between India and Europe: "The peoples of Europe have no doubt political power, but no swaraj. Asian and African races are exploited ... by the ruling class or caste under the sacred name of democracy. At the root, therefore, the disease appears to be the same as in India. The same remedy is, therefore, likely to be applicable. Shorn of all the camouflage, the exploitation of the masses of Europe is sustained by violence'' (p. 148).

To invitations to visit Europe or America Gandhiji gave a characteristic reply: "My patriotism includes the good of mankind in general. Therefore, my service of India includes the service of humanity . . . If I go to America or to Europe, I must go on my strength, not in my weakness, . . . I mean, of my country'' (p. 186). It was this same sense of diffidence that prompted him to turn down a request from Dr. M. A. Ansari to cable to the League of Nations for intervention in the case of the Druses in Southern Syria. He wrote in *Young India*, 12-11-1925: "I do not believe in making appeals when there is no force behind them, whether moral or material. Moral force comes from the determination of the appellants to do something, to sacrifice something for the sake of making their appeal effective. . . . Unless we recognize and are prepared to reduce to practice this principle,

we can but expose the Congress and ourselves to ridicule, if not worse" (p. 440).

Gandhiji had a lively awareness of his limitations. He claimed to be "merely a seeker after truth, undoubtedly striving to attain human perfection which all of us can attain by continuous effort" (p. 67). He did not "claim to lead or have any party, if only for the reason that . . . I seem to be constantly growing. I must respond to varying conditions and yet remain changeless within" (p. 87). His life was "full of joy in the midst of incessant work" (p. 270). He found much cause for depression in things happening: "When I think of the horizon about us", he wrote to Dr. Ansari, "my heart becomes sick and weary. And when I listen to the still small voice within, I derive hope and smile in spite of the conflagration raging around me" (pp. 437-8). It was this that sustained him.

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PREFACE

This volume covers the period from November 22, 1925 to February 10, 1926. It commences with Gandhiji's book *Satyagraha in South Africa*, the serial publication of which was concluded in *Navajivan*, 22-11-1925.[1] *Satyagraha in South Africa* constitutes a basic document for understanding the genesis and progress of an epic struggle which Gandhiji has recollected in tranquillity and recorded with scrupulous care for the benefit of those who "would follow in all its detail the working out of the search for Truth". Besides the vivid narrative of events and portraits of persons, there are reflections (like those on the value of account-keeping, pp. 102-3) which explain the simplicity and strength of Gandhiji's practical philosophy.

The short period of less than three months covered by this volume is marked, at the outset, by a 7 days' fast by Gandhiji due to moral lapses in the Ashram. On December 1, he addressed the students before breaking the fast and issued a statement to the Press after it. Arriving at Wardha on December 10, he rested there for 11 days, and left on December 22 for the Congress session at Kanpur where, on December 26, he made a powerful speech on the resolution on South Africa.

On January 3, in *Navajivan*, Gandhiji announced his decision to voluntarily retire for one year from public work and rest within the confines of the Ashram. Tours were cut out; the period was thus uneventful and offered few occasions for public speaking. In his speech at Wardha on December 21, he dwells movingly on the beauty of life in the Ashram.

The problem of Indians in South Africa features prominently in this volume. This was due to Dr. Malan's Bill which, Gandhiji said, "breathes through every line of it, the racial spirit" and is "a clear breach" of the Gandhi-Smuts Agreement of 1914. In "Indians in South Africa", "The South African Deputation", and particularly in "South African Puzzle", Gandhiji deals with this problem of "highly racial legislation". The last of these items stands out as a vigorous and well-reasoned piece of writing,

[1] Gandhiji's autobiography (*The Story of My Experiments with Truth*) was likewise published serially in *Navajivan* from 29-11-1925 and in *Young India* from 3-12-1925 and will be included in Volume XXXVIII of the *Collected Works* under 3-2-1929, the date of the last instalment in *Navajivan*.

notable for its quiet strength. On January 28, writing again in *Young India* on the South African Question, he observed: "The principle of the measure is itself wrong. . . . the history since 1914 is a history of a series of attacks upon the Indian position" (p. 431). On February 4, 1926, he wrote: "The measure is a manifest breach of the Smuts-Gandhi Agreement" (p. 439).

Another matter that received Gandhiji's attention was the Vykom Satyagraha. On January 21, 1926, he issued an appeal to the Travancore Government pleading for temple-entry ultimately (p. 425).

Gandhiji explained the genesis and underlying motives of his fast of November 1925 thus: "I am a searcher after truth. My experiments I hold to be infinitely more important than the best-equipped Himalayan expeditions. And the results? If the search is scientific, surely there is no comparison between the two. Let me therefore go my way. I shall lose my usefulness the moment I stifle the still small voice within. . . . I can but do the will of God as I feel it. The result is in His disposing. This suffering for things great and small is the keynote of satyagraha. . . . If I am to identify myself with the grief of the least in India, aye, if I have the power, the least in the world, let me identify myself with the sins of the little ones who are under my care. And so doing in all humility I hope some day to see God—Truth—face to face" (pp. 290-1).

In "Indulgence or Self-denial", he describes his identification with the masses and tells of "the affection of the masses between whom and myself there is a bond which defies description but is nevertheless felt alike by them and me. I see in the fellowship with them the God I adore. I derive from that fellowship all my consolation, all my hope and all the sustaining power I possess. If I had not realized that bond in South Africa, now fully thirty years ago, life would not be worth living for me. But I know that whether I live in the Ashram or whether in their midst, I work for them, think of them and pray for them. I want to live only for them and so for myself" (p. 382). Spinning served as a symbol of this living union: "Spinning for me is an emblem of fellowship with the poorest of the land and its daily practice is a renewal of the bond between them and ourselves. Thus considered, it is for me a thing of beauty and joy for ever. I would rather go without a meal than without the wheel and I would like you to understand this great implication of the wheel" (p. 454).

Among the valuable documents in this volume is the Trust-deed stating the aims of the Satyagraha Ashram (pp. 434-6). The

personal letters—of which there are more than a hundred in the volume—provide intimate glimpses into Gandhiji's mind, the agony as well as the sense of calm surrender. For example, in the letter to M. A. Ansari, he confesses: "I am sick unto death over the unreality and untruth that surrounds us at the present moment. Please therefore forget me for any other work than the humble work of khadi and untouchability and the unpopular method of protecting the cow. I confess my utter inability to tackle successfully any other problem" (p. 284). Beside this cry of despair, there is a letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta expressing affectionate concern and tenderness for others: "I want your promise not to fret about khadi, no matter what happens to it. Who are we? God will surely make it prosper if it is a good thing. We are but instruments in His hands. We have deserved well if we keep pure and keep the door ever open for Him to enter. Let Him have the reins and drive us how He will" (p. 446).

Among Gandhiji's many descriptions of his religion, the following must hold a high place: "I want to take the whole world in the embrace of my love. My *anekantavada* is the result of the twin doctrine of *Satya* and *Ahimsa*. . . . He is *one* and yet many; He is smaller than an atom, and bigger than the Himalayas; He is contained even in a drop of the ocean, and yet not even the seven seas can compass Him. Reason is powerless to know Him. He is beyond the reach or grasp of reason. . . . He is merciful, and compassionate. He is not an earthly king needing an army to make us accept His sway. He allows us freedom, and yet His compassion commands obedience to His will. But if any one of us disdain to bow to His will, He says: 'So be it. My sun will shine no less for thee, my clouds will rain no less for thee. I need not force thee to accept my sway'" (pp. 411-2).

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PREFACE

The volume covers the period February 11 to June 14, 1926, the year of Gandhiji's self-imposed retirement at the Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati, for rest and quiet work. The projected visit to Mussoorie for health reasons was dropped. Invitations to visit America, China and Finland were ultimately turned down, for Gandhiji felt: "If there is any power in my message it would be felt without the physical contact" (p. 542). It was only because of his concern for the Indian peasants that he visited Mahabaleshwar and had talks with the Bombay Governor about the Agricultural Commission which the Government of India proposed to set up.

Staying at the Ashram, Gandhiji continued to write the Autobiography chapter by chapter, to deal with problems of public interest in the columns of *Navajivan* and *Young India*, and to correspond with numerous persons, known and unknown, on a wide range of subjects of individual, social and international interest.

The racial situation in South Africa exercised his mind so much that he assured a deputation of South African Indians that he was ready to go there again if necessary. The reactionary Asiatic Bill he considered to be a "breach of faith"; he could not approve of Government of India's acquiescence in Dr. Malan's proposal that it should place evidence before the Select Committee only through the Paddison Deputation. Congratulating the Government, however, on its diplomatic victory in getting the Areas Reservation Bill postponed, he urged it to stand firm on the claim of Indians to justice and equality. He had no doubt in his own mind that the salvation of the settlers lay finally in their own hands. He wrote: "Let them be and remain absolutely united. And above all let them be resolute in suffering for the common good" (p. 377). On May 5, the A.I.C.C. meeting at Sabarmati adopted Gandhiji's resolution on South Africa. He assured the South African Indian Congress that C. F. Andrews and he would continue to do in India whatever was possible against the Colour Bar Bill. He, however, expected Indians overseas, whether in East Africa or in Australia, to unite and "to cultivate strength for satyagraha" (p. 502). When the Colour Bar Bill was passed, Gandhiji considered it worse than the Class Areas Reservation Bill. It would "set up the whole of the native population of South Africa against the white settlers" (p. 446). The two Racial Bills

he condemned as giving legal sanction to "The Bar Sinister" (p. 517). The Government of India's assurances in its *communique*, he held to be "simple camouflage" (p. 555).

The allied problem of injustice in India, the problem of untouchability, Gandhiji continued to attack vigorously in his writings as also through constructive action. Writing in *Young India* on the plight of the untouchables, he compared their condition with that of Indians in South Africa in the matter of denial of human rights (p. 380).

Gandhiji continued to voice his opposition to other social evils like addiction to drugs and liquor. In his message to *Prohibition*, Herbert Anderson's quarterly journal, he defended picketing, and added, "The only lasting remedy is total prohibition because, the drunkard is a diseased man quite unable to help himself. Many of them would gladly welcome outside help. . . " (p. 222).

The prevailing communal distrust and disharmony caused Gandhiji distress bordering on agony. He saw his own helplessness in bridging the widening gulf between the two major communities. "Anything I say at present," he wrote, "will just be a cry in the wilderness" (p. 372). The schism in the country was manifested even within the Congress body. His own view was clearly against Council-entry (p. 371). But what depressed him most was the breakdown of the Sabarmati Pact between the Swarajists and Responsive Co-operators at the A.I.C.C. on May 4 and 5. "The tallest among us distrust one another. . . " (p. 419).

It was not unnatural therefore that, in the face of so much that was frustrating and disheartening, Gandhiji turned to his constructive programme with ever-increasing zest. The spinning-wheel as a remedy for Indian poverty was a persistent theme of his writing in *Navajivan* and *Young India*. He took pains to elaborate the economics of the spinning-wheel, as in his interview to Katherine Mayo on March 17 (pp. 119-24) and his letter to her of March 26 (pp. 178-9). Deep in his heart was the conviction—reflected in his reply to diffident co-workers — "one true man is enough for any reform, no matter how impossible it may appear in the beginning. Ridicule, contempt and death may be, and often is, the reward of such a man, but though he may die, the reforms survive and prosper. He ensures their stability with his blood" (p. 378).

He was equally firm in regard to non-violence which he believed men should strive to attain. When critics of the doctrine, as in "From Far-off America", raised voices of doubt about its

feasibility, Gandhiji's answer was categorical: "If we are to make progress, we must not repeat history but make new history. We must add to the inheritance left by our ancestors. If we may make new discoveries and inventions in the phenomenal world, must we declare our bankruptcy in the spiritual domain? Is it impossible to multiply the exceptions so as to make them the rule? Must man always be brute first and man after, if at all" (p. 415)?

To a seeker from Sweden who sent an article critical of the non-co-operation movement, Gandhiji's reply was: "The movement of non-violent non-co-operation has nothing in common with the historical struggles for freedom in the West. It is not based on brute force or hatred. It does not aim at destroying the tyrant. It is a movement of self-purification. It therefore seeks to convert the tyrant" (p. 5). He repudiated the suggestion that the Indian movement had failed, observing that "Non-violence has found an abiding place in India's struggle for freedom," (p. 5) a declaration which was largely borne out by subsequent events.

This volume is studded with numerous gems of letters — to Ashram children and inmates as well as strangers from afar, co-workers and colleagues — dealing with a wide range of subjects and revealing deep concern for all human beings, critics and friends, young and old.

In the midst of frustration, turmoil or calamity, he had an unfailing formula for peace: "It can only come from within and by waiting upon God and trusting Him with implicit faith. No man need ever feel lonely who feels the living presence of God near him and in him. Whatever peace I have found, has been found by increasing faith in the hand of God being in everything. Calamities then cease to be calamities. They test our faith and steadfastness" (p. 562).

In private and public his emphasis was on the strength of the spirit. "Strength of numbers is the delight of the timid", he said in his message to students of the Gujarat Mahavidyalaya, "the valiant of spirit glory in fighting alone. And you are all here to cultivate that valour of the spirit. Be you one or many, this valour is the only true valour, all else is false. And the valour of the spirit cannot be achieved without Sacrifice, Determination, Faith and Humility" (p. 579). Similar emphasis is placed on consistency between one's private life and public image in the article on "Truth *v.* *Brahmacharya*" (pp. 13-6), which provides a clue to events and utterances of twenty years after.

CWMG - C

PREFACE

This volume covers the period June 15 to November 4, 1926, during which Gandhiji continued to observe the self-imposed vow of a year's abstention from all avoidable public engagements. This voluntary retirement for rest and quiet contemplation was broken only by two brief visits to Bombay in connection with the problems of Indians in South Africa. While staying in the Satyagraha Ashram at Sabarmati, Gandhiji carried on his experiment on fruit diet in order to cure his constipation and conducted daily classes on the *Bhagavad Gita* and the *Ramayana*. Though he confined himself to the precincts of the Ashram, he corresponded with people in India and abroad and expressed his views on current affairs in *Navajivan* and *Young India*, which he called his weekly letters to friends who cared to follow the activities that engrossed him.

While maintaining silence on the work of the Legislatures and Hindu-Muslim quarrels, he devoted his attention to the removal of untouchability, the spinning-wheel and national education. For him the charkhas were the tiny wheels of God, which "spin slowly but most effectively" (p. 369). Spinning enabled him to identify himself with God in the form of the poor and the downtrodden. Wearing of khadi would help bring about boycott of foreign cloth, as a result of which Indians would acquire self-confidence and added strength and the country would save crores of rupees annually. With the spinning-wheel, according to Gandhiji, was bound up the well-being of the whole mass of Indian humanity. "Surely, a cause is often greater than the man. Certainly, the spinning-wheel is greater than myself" (p. 47). He continued his spinning with religious regularity.

Gandhiji described untouchability as a hydra-headed monster and felt the need, every time it lifted its head, to deal a blow. The notions of high and low, according to him, were the fruit and symptom of the disease of untouchability. It was a painful discovery to him that even after five years of continuous propaganda against untouchability there were educated people to support such an immoral and evil custom. Gandhiji wrote with some feeling: "If some well-known character in religious books sinned against God or man, is that a warrant for our repeating the sin? It is enough for us to be told, once for all, [that] *Truth* is the only that matters in the world, that *Truth* is God" (p. 212).

In an article, "Tyranny of Words", Gandhiji said reason and rationalism had to yield first place to faith and prayer. Rationalism, according to him, was a hideous monster when it claimed omnipotence for itself for "works without faith and prayer are like an artificial flower that has no fragrance" (p. 498). He did not want suppression of reason but due recognition of faith which sanctified reason itself. Prayer was an essential part of his being. He could do without food but not without prayer. According to him, "A man may live without eating for days on end. He does not live without worship for a single minute. He may not acknowledge the fact as many an ignorant man may not acknowledge the possession of lungs or the fact of circulation of blood" (p. 102). To a correspondent he wrote, "The prayer is meant for daily purification. It is to the heart and mind what a daily bath is to the body" (p. 225). Prayer was not an asking—it was a longing of the soul. Replying through the columns of *Young India* to the principal of a national institution who had no faith in prayers, Gandhiji observed: "God's existence cannot be, does not need to be, proved. God is" (p. 440). It was this faith that enabled him in the most trying situations to preserve inner peace and maintain a tranquil course.

Saturated with the spirit of ahimsa and regarding non-violence and truth as two lungs without which he could not breathe, he saw with ever-increasing clarity and conviction the immense power of ahimsa and the littleness of man. He wrote in *Young India*: "Non-violence is the greatest force man has been endowed with. Truth is the only goal he has. For God is none other than Truth. But Truth cannot be, never will be, reached except through non-violence" (p. 141). He wanted this message to reach every man and woman. Without non-violence, which he called the Law of Love, there could be no peace—it could only be an armed peace. The cry for peace would be a cry in the wilderness, so long as the spirit of non-violence did not dominate millions of men and women.

Non-violence was not a cover for cowardice, but it was the supreme virtue of the brave. Exercise of non-violence required far greater bravery than that of swordsmanship. Cowardice was wholly inconsistent with non-violence. Non-violence presupposed the ability to strike and was a conscious, deliberate restraint on vengeance. "But vengeance is any day superior to passive, effeminate and helpless submission. Forgiveness is higher still. Vengeance too is weakness" (p. 292).

In a series of eight articles, "Is This Humanity?", Gandhiji

boldly and frankly defended the killing of stray dogs. He counselled his critics, friendly or hostile, to bear with him. He had often the misfortune of being misunderstood but he saw no contradiction in his stand and remained unmoved. Angry and irrelevant argument would not convince him. For he said he who was angry was guilty of *himsa*. "Anger is the enemy of ahimsa; and pride is a monster that swallows it up" (p. 489). Gandhiji's ahimsa did admit of destruction of rabid dogs or a man "found in the act of killing" (p. 487). He held that this opinion was perfectly in accord with his conception of ahimsa. In this world which was so full of *himsa* it was no easy thing to walk on the "sharp sword-edge of ahimsa" (p. 489).

His unswerving faith in non-violent non-co-operation continued to find expression in his writings and in letters to friends and strangers alike. Those who had faith would know that it was not dead but was very much alive and that it would give a very good account of itself when the darkest cloud threatened the horizon. It would be found then to be the one sheet-anchor of India's hope (p. 8).

The greatest contribution that India could make to the sum of human happiness was to attain her freedom by peaceful and truthful means. Whether such a thing would ever come to pass was more than he could say; indeed, appearances contradicted any such belief. Nevertheless, he held that India would gain her freedom only through peaceful and truthful means and no other. He stated time and again, and proved in action, his belief that means and ends were intimately interconnected. That is, good could never be achieved through bad means.

Gandhiji's service to India was but a part of his service to humanity. "One who serves another selflessly and without any attachment serves all" (p. 122). Humanity could not be served without sacrifice. Self-sacrifice therefore was the highest law for him. He gave the same advice to Indians, whether in India or in South Africa, that success ultimately depended upon themselves. There was no help, he said, in the world like self-help. He wanted the Indians in South Africa to be moderate in their demands, to speak with one voice and never to swerve even an inch from truth. He advised them to discharge their part of the contract, that is, to conform strictly to all sanitary and building regulations and, above all, to "be prepared in a body to suffer for their cause" (p. 460), for there was no salvation without suffering.

Though Gandhiji did not intervene in the Hindu-Muslim quarrels, the problem continued to exercise his mind. It was

in part a creation of the British Government which was based on distrust. Distrust, he said, involved favouritism and favouritism bred division. To prove this, he did not find it necessary to impute motives to officials of the Government. But he blamed the people primarily for the communal dissensions. For, he argued, if the people were themselves not disposed to quarrel no outside power on earth could make them do so. The policy of 'divide and rule' continued since the Government considered its interests to be antagonistic to those of the people. It was being demonstrated daily that swaraj was an impossibility without Hindu-Muslim unity. The situation was only seemingly hopeless and he had not a shadow of doubt that, at the end, the people would feel stronger and purer because there would be some who did not want this feud and who believed in non-violence as the final rock. He was optimistic enough to believe that unity would come "in spite of ourselves" for where man's efforts might fail, God's would succeed, and His government was not based upon a 'divide and rule' policy (p. 291).

In a series of articles entitled "Towards Moral Bankruptcy" condemning free play of animal passions, Gandhiji advocated continence and moral restraint to achieve birth-control. He quoted liberally from M. Paul Bureau's French book *L' Indiscipline des Moeurs* which scientifically examined the problem and concluded with Tom Mann's saying: "The future is for the nations who are chaste" (p. 312).

Several correspondents criticized Gandhiji for his reading the New Testament with the students of the Gujarat National College. In an article entitled "Crime of Reading Bible" Gandhiji asserted that it was the duty of every cultured man or woman to read sympathetically the scriptures of the world. Claiming to be a staunch *sanatani* Hindu himself, his reverent study of other religions enabled him to "understand more clearly many an obscure passage in the Hindu scriptures" (p. 351).

A number of suggestions were sent to him by correspondents after reading the chapter "In Search of Guru" in his autobiography which was being serialized in *Young India.* But his conception of a guru was not of the ordinary, nothing but perfection could satisfy him. He was in search of one who, though in flesh, was incorruptible and unmoved by passion, free from the pairs of opposites, who would be truth and ahimsa incarnate, and who would, therefore, fear none and be feared by none. He was modest enough to say: "I must try to perfect myself before I meet the

guru in the flesh'' (p. 8). Meantime, he contemplated him in spirit. He *knew* the path. It was straight and narrow like the edge of a sword. He rejoiced to walk on it.

An outstanding document in this volume is the Will executed by him on October 10, 1926. In this he wrote: "I do not possess any property of my own. If, after my death, any article is found to be of my ownership, I bequeath the same to the Trustees of the Satyagraha Ashram . . . I also bequeath to the aforesaid Trustees all my rights in whatever books and whatever articles I have written or I may write hereafter, and also appoint them to administer my affairs after my death if and when necessary. The income derived from the said books and articles or from the copyrights thereof and the property found to be of my ownership is to be used for carrying out the objects of the Satyagraha Ashram'' (p. 491). Thus his renunciation was complete, as was his dedication to the causes he held dear.

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PREFACE

The period—November 5, 1926 to January 20, 1927—covered by this volume was a relatively quiet one. There was a lull in political activity and Gandhiji, enjoying freedom from incessant touring and public speaking, could devote his time to things that concerned him more—spinning and khadi, anti-untouchability and anti-drink work, Hindu-Muslim unity and cow-protection—besides attending to the immense volume of letters that poured in from all quarters.

But most of all it was a period of inward searching and pondering over spiritual values. One such question that exercised Gandhiji's mind at this time was that of stray dogs. The issue, as he put it, was "whether in consonance with the principle of ahimsa, it may be a duty to kill certain dogs under certain circumstances when no other alternative is possible. I submit that it may be and I hold that there cannot be two opinions in the matter" (p. 42).

Apparently there were two opinions. Those who held more formal notions of non-violence wrote indignant letters. In the series of articles under the title "Is This Humanity?", begun in the preceding volume and concluded in this, Gandhiji answered the critics and provided a lucid exposition of the principle of ahimsa as he understood it. "All action," says Gandhiji, "is tainted inasmuch as it presupposes *himsa*. And yet we free ourselves from the bondage of action through action itself . . . And this *himsa* . . . must be the lowest minimum, must be rooted in compassion, must have discrimination, restraint, detachment at its back, and must lead us every moment onward to the path of ahimsa. . . . The religion of ahimsa consists in allowing others the maximum of convenience at the maximum of inconvenience to us, even at the risk of life. Everyone has to determine for himself the amount of inconvenience he is capable of putting up with. . . . Religion, even as the soul, is both one and many" (pp. 380-1).

Pride of place in this volume goes naturally to the "Discourses on the *Gita*", the finest fruit of his sabbatical year in the Ashram. An apt introduction to this informal masterpiece is provided by the critical account of Shrimad Rajchandra with which the volume opens. It was this friend who in 1893-94 helped Gandhiji to resolve his doubts about his mother-religion, assured him that no other religion has its "subtle and profound thought, its

vision of the soul or its charity'' and thus restored to him his peace of mind. What Gandhiji sorely needed at the time, and what Rajchandra's answers to his questions (Appendix I) and the books sent by him provided in ample measure, was a spiritual motive and experience, a hope and glimpse of *moksha* in this very life, which would make it worth one's while to practise the higher ethics of utmost responsibility for oneself and freedom for others. One of the books recommended and sent by Rajchandra, the *mumukshuprakarana* of the *Yoga Vasishtha*, prescribes a strong sense of *purushakara* (human endeavour) in facing world problems, and also self-examination and critical analysis at every step of experiences as they come. If, when the ideas of Maitland and Tolstoy came to Gandhiji, he was ready to accommodate and apply them within the framework of his ancestral Vaishnavism, it was because he had already been ''converted'' to *mumukshutva*, by the wise counsel of Rajchandra. This ''serious call'' to a life of *moksha*-oriented dharma is the only conversion which Gandhiji considered legitimate and which every true religion expects at some stage from its adherents.

Though for various reasons Gandhiji declined to accept Rajchandra as a guru in the traditional sense he was grateful to the Jain philosopher for the counsel to cling to one's own faith, to respect other faiths and in due course to transcend all faiths which were like ''so many walled enclosures in which men and women were confined''. While studying the excellence of each faith and explaining it to the followers of that faith, the genuine seeker finds that ''after a certain stage is reached the Shastras give no help; experience alone helps then'' (p. 12). Beyond this stage every Shastra becomes a fetter hindering further progress. Since every accepted faith has thus to be transcended in experience, ''everyone may, following his own faith, win his freedom, that is, *moksha*, for to win *moksha* means to be perfectly free from attachments and aversions'' (p. 13).

In the ''Discourses on the *Gita*'' there are repeated references to the Bible, the Koran, *Pilgrim's Progress* and the works of Rajchandra himself, all of which show Gandhiji's readiness and ability to handle the *Gita* not as a sectarian scripture but as a manual of universal religion and pure ethics ''which persons belonging to all faiths can read'' (p. 350).

Gandhiji's interpretation of the *Gita*, as indeed of the entire epic, is *adhyatmic* or anagogical. The war described by Vyasa is no external or historical event, but a vivid poetic representation of the invisible conflict raging within each one of us. ''It tells of the

. . . Pandavas in our minds who are battling with the Kauravas in it. . . . Krishna is the *atman* in us, who is our charioteer. We can win only if we hand over the reins of the chariot to him'' (pp. 108-9).

By this surrender of the reins to Krishna within, by thus internalizing and enthroning the ideal person pictured in Ch. II, the autonomy of the individual, his freedom of choice and responsibility for effort, is strengthened rather than weakened. ''The *Gita* does not decide for us. But if, whenever faced with a moral problem, you give up attachment to the ego and then decide what you should do, you will come to no harm'' (p. 109). To measure our progress in disinterestedness, ''our yardstick is the ability to see others as ourselves'' (p. 374). Progress here is far from easy, but one is helped to ''see others in oneself by seeing them and oneself in God'' (p. 249). In this process of identification, the first step is identification with Arjuna so that the Lord's words to him are felt to be meant for us.

Hence the central importance, even in our public prayer, of 'practising the presence' of the *sthitaprajna* described in Ch. II. ''We recite these verses daily so that we may understand their meaning and be guided by them'' (p. 127). The ideal person is as a seed sown in one's heart and growing freely there in response to all the predicaments it passes through. The scripture, even the *Gita*, is soil which our mind, as the germinating seed, uses creatively, choosing what ingredients it needs and ignoring the rest. How and how far one should follow the scripture in solving the conflicts of dharma confronting one depends on one's temperament and training. While it is open to all to revel in the poetry of the *Gita* (pp. 233, 292), the earnest seeker should observe *yama* and *niyama* and other rules of discipline, should acquire *adhikara* or fitness, before taking up the study of the *Gita*. To look for ethical guidance there ''without having equipped oneself in this manner . . . would be like taking up a study of botany without ever having seen plants'' (p. 103). In other words, Gandhiji's approach to the *Gita* is functional and practical, not academic and theoretical. Its enthralling poetry is not a way of escape from life's problems, but an inspiration to follow strenuously the conduct it prescribes for eradicating the ego. We should study and understand the *Gita* ''not merely to satisfy our curiosity but with the aim of putting its teaching into practice . . . We should leave alone what we cannot put into practice. It is a misuse of our intellectual energy and a waste of time to go on reading what we cannot put into practice'' (pp. 227-8).

Unerringly Gandhiji puts his finger on the *Gita's* 'secret', its whole meaning and purpose, which is to transform or destroy the ego, the separate shape or shadow to which we cling. "There is only one spiritual evil, with only one cause and one remedy. To explain this oneness an extreme example is used. If one's kinsmen deserve to be killed, they ought to be killed. . . . We can follow truth only in the measure that we shed our attachment to the ego" (pp. 106-7). Arjuna's despondency arises not from reluctance to killing as such, but from reluctance to killing one's kinsmen.

In Discourses 41-45 which enlarge the meaning of *yajna*, Gandhiji is only exercising the liberty of interpretation permitted by the orthodox schools. As circumstances change and men become more enlightened, "sons should enrich the legacy of their fathers". One can well imagine a time when a wise man "will mean by the spinning-wheel not an article made of wood but any type of work which provides employment to all people" (p. 154).

In this expanded meaning, *yajna* means "any action performed with a view to public good" (p. 155). And so the cherishing of the gods (Ch. III. 11) means that "we should serve the humblest human beings, even those whom we never see, with respect and honour and looking upon them as gods and not as our servants; we should, in other words, serve the whole world" (p. 156). At the same time Gandhiji's restrained comments on II. 52-3 and IV. 17 show how anxious he is to avoid, in these lay talks, any revolutionary departure from tradition. What is significant in Gandhiji's approach is not originality but an earnest resolve to interrelate and harmonize faith and conduct.

With Gandhiji religion was no formal profession, it was a moral effort and spiritual experience embracing faith and conduct, action feeding knowledge and knowledge illuminating action. Hence karma was not mere ritual or prescribed action. "Activity of every kind is karma" (p. 351). "Even the decision to stop breathing is karma. Even the refraining from karma is karma" (p. 148). ". . . the very process of living is a form of karma . . . no one can escape doing karma" (p. 206).

Since karma is thus inescapable, what the *Gita* does is to integrate it with *jnana* and *bhakti*. "The *Gita* does not give the central importance to karma, nor to *jnana* nor to *bhakti*. . . . Karma, *jnana* and *bhakti*, all three are essential, and each in its place is of central importance" (p. 351). *Jnana* and karma are both excellent, but neither can be practised without the other. It is only knowledge that burns up the bonds of karma and converts it into

akarma. But this knowledge must "sink from the intellect to the heart", must be directly experienced. Food in the vessel or even food in the stomach will not satisfy hunger; "it is only when it is digested in the stomach and converted into blood that we may say that our hunger is satisfied" (p. 219).

And for our *swadharma*, the daily bread which can thus be used to satisfy our spiritual hunger, one need not go searching. It is there waiting for us, "the work which falls to our lot from hour to hour" (p. 369). It comes to us naturally and "grows and expands on its own. We can satisfactorily perform only our dharma, that which lies before us" (p. 365). The strenuous, intelligent and disinterested pursuit of *swadharma* is *karmayoga*, "a royal road, easy to follow. It is the sovereign yoga" (p. 119).

This spiritual *sadhana*, indeed the sovereign yoga, is no special religious action; it is "very much concerned with practical life. A dharma which does not serve practical needs is no dharma, it is *adharma*. Even cleaning of latrines should be done in a religious spirit" (p. 152). But the *Gita*'s karma is "not karma done under compulsion; it must be prompted by . . . knowledge" (p. 352).

When karma is done knowingly and voluntarily and for the sake of the *atman*, it is in reality *akarma*. "If we can renounce the fruits of karma, that is, work only for others, then we may work like horses. On the other hand, when working for ourselves, we should be like a piece of inert matter, have no interest in the work at all. This is a state of the heart, an attitude of mind" (p. 216).

Yajna being work for the benefit of others, "violence committed for the sake of *yajna* is not violence" (p. 353). It is the *yajna bhāvanā* that converts karma into *akarma* and even violence into non-violence. As illustrations of such non-violence Gandhiji cites Harishchandra preparing to cut his wife's throat, a surgeon performing an operation, a compassionate passer-by severing finally a half-cut head (p. 179). *Akarma* means, in practice, reducing the degree of violence involved in each karma (p. 353). "Karma done in the spirit of *yajna*, that is, for the benefit of others, does not bind" (p. 355).

The objection to violence arises not from dogmatic ethics, but from simple psychology. It is our natural human sensitivity which inhibits violence. "The desire to end the suffering of others is . . . *mahaswartha* [the supreme self-interest]" (p. 257). Let us frankly recognize that all our work is prompted by self-interest. But what is self-interest? "If this self-interest is the interest of the *atman*, then

one's work is for the benefit of others. All the activities of such a person will be prompted by the motive of service" (p. 365).

The sight of injustice or underserved suffering stirs us to our depths and causes mental confusion and despondency. "We shall not be cured till we feel a crisis. The experience is like the pangs of childbirth. . . . one feels born again" (p. 362). Instead of turning rabid and attacking others, the non-violent reformer looks inward, recognizes the common humanity of all involved in the given situation, and goes through *tapas* for redeeming one's 'opponents' as well as oneself. In this struggle against evil while befriending all those caught in it, power comes from meekness which mobilizes instead of disintegrating our human strength, physical, intellectual and moral. Physically each one of us is nothing in this vast universe, "in this universe of stars, suns and planets" (p. 376). To overcome this helplessness even the awakened intellect feels powerless. Then Yogeshwara Krishna, the Self abiding in the heart of every being, whispers: "Your intellect by itself will not serve you. You will need to do yoga, karma-yoga" (p. 363).

The evil that once maddened us now acquires a new meaning; it assumes a less substantial and more remediable shape. It existed because we supported it. If we withdraw that support, it will collapse. The world, with all its good and evil, is as much in us as we are in it. "Evil cannot by itself flourish in this world. It can do so only if it is allied with some good" (p. 97). On a total view, "it is not wickedness but goodness which rules the world" (p. 192). Not only that; it is God who permits evil, it is He that appears as Ravana and calls man to heroic action. Evil exists so that in resisting it man may perform *tapas*, gain patience and purity of mind and so grow in knowledge. The example of King Janaka and the teaching of Shri Krishna should prevail over our own experience. "We are imperfect human beings and deduce imperfect principles from our imperfect experience" (p. 364). The truth taught by these masters of action and nobly interpreted by Gandhiji, not only in these 218 informal talks, but in his whole long life, is that the way of karma leads to *jnana*, that sustained, disinterested action and honest self-examination starve the ego out of existence and bring on the joyous realization that "this whole universe exists in God" (p. 218) and that "all selves are one" (p. 280).

PREFACE

This volume, covering the period January 21 to June 15, 1927, opens with nostalgic references to Gandhiji's first satyagraha struggle in India ten years earlier: . . . "the whole tour is inspiring. Champaran has sacred memories for me. Champaran really introduced me to India" (p. 4). This is to Mirabehn. On the same day he wrote to the Ashram women: "I find that this year I shall not be able to stay in the Ashram for a long time. I am sorry for this. But we must find happiness even in our misfortune. I must wander about in the interest of khadi. Only thus can I carry the message of khadi to the masses" (p. 6). These talks on khadi had a set purpose and produced a concrete effect; they were "converting into energy" the people's desire for freedom (p. 178).

Touring incessantly through Bihar, C.P. and Berar, Maharashtra and U.P., Gandhiji so overstrained himself that on March 26th his health broke down and he was advised rest on a hill station (Appendix III). Accordingly he stayed in Nandi Hills in Mysore from April 19 to June 5. The illness was the result both of excessive physical strain and of worry about the conditions prevailing in the country. "I let the co-workers think," Gandhiji wrote to a friend, "and thought myself that my constitution would somehow or other stand the pressure that was put upon it, . . . I had intended to turn over a new leaf after finishing the Maharashtra tour and had given due notice to Rajagopalachariar that I would no longer be hurried . . . " (p. 373). The psychological reasons seemed more difficult to control. Writing to Dr. Ansari, Gandhiji explained: "My chief difficulty is how to control the mind and not let it think, unless I develop *dementia* . . . but I do not know how I can prevent the doings of Hindus and Mussalmans from making me think furiously. Nor do I know how to prevent the growing starvation of millions acting upon my mind" (p. 274). However, he accepted the spiritual lesson of the illness with gentle submission, as he had done once before during the prolonged illness from August 1918 to January 1919 (Vol. XV). Writing to Kallenbach, a German co-worker, during the South African struggle, he said: "I am taking the chastisement I hope in due humility and if He raises me from this sick-bed, I am making Him promises that I shall reform my ways and shall seek still more strenuously to know His will and do it" (pp. 314-5).

Gandhiji was passionately eager to continue working, as is evident from the conversations with Doctors Wanless (pp. 194-5) and Jivaraj Mehta (pp. 209-10), but he had cultivated non-attachment in sufficient measure not to cling to life even for the sake of service. In letter after letter written at this time, Gandhiji mentioned the possibility of his end with the utmost serenity of mind. "Anyway I do not expect to go beyond 13th April, 1928. I have nothing new to say or give. I may collect more, give a little more guidance and patch here and patch there. But really the clock has struck for me" ("Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", pp. 195-6). In another letter to the same correspondent, he said: "And then, in spite of all the extraordinary precautions, she [Nature] will one day send her messenger who like a thief in the night will steal in *some day* and unperceived by anybody administer the dose which will send me to long sleep" (p. 403).

Gandhiji's chief preoccupation at this time was khadi and he had left the political programme of the Congress in exclusive charge of the Swaraj Party led by Motilal Nehru. Though the Congress had officially accepted the khadi programme and a new body named the All-India Spinners' Association had been set up to organize khadi work, a large number of Congress members were lukewarm in their support of the programme and were opposed to the khadi franchise adopted at the Gauhati Congress (Vol. XXXII). Gandhiji seems to have been reconciled to this situation. Commenting on a plea to him by the Congress President, Shri S. Srinivasa Iyengar, to relent on the issue of the franchise, he said: "Numerical strength savours of violence when it acts in total disregard of any strongly-felt opinion of a minority. . . . I had therefore no hesitation in telling the President, that he should assist the removal of the clause about khadi if that clause could not gain willing submission from the minority" (p. 458). He added, however, that he must be allowed to retain his opinion about the clause, though that opinion should have no greater weight than the opinion of any other member of the Congress.

Mr. Saklatvala met Gandhiji at Yeotmal on February 5, and in the following month invited him in an open letter (Appendix I) to join the Communists in organizing workers and peasants and also to cease playing the Mahatma. While giving due credit to Mr. Saklatvala's patriotism and love of humanity, Gandhiji preferred to persist in his "error" which he did not recognize as such but hugged rather as his shield and solace. "I do not regard capital to be the enemy of labour. I hold their co-ordination to be perfectly possible" (p. 167). In an interview to *The Bombay*

Chronicle, Gandhiji elaborated the point further: "I want real co-operation between labour and capital. . . . As in the political so in the labour movement, I rely upon internal reform, i.e., self-purification. . . . labourers must evolve strength from within. Then capital will become a real servant of labour" (p. 189). The cult of bigness appealed to Gandhiji no more than the cult of conflict did. Supporting Ahmedabad labour's attitude of aloofness from any All-India organization, Gandhiji explained his labour policy: "The idea is to take from capital labour's due share and no more . . . by educating labour to evolve its own leadership . . . Its direct aim is internal reform and evolution of internal strength. . . . Labour . . . must not become a pawn in the hands of politicians. . ." (p. 302). When Gandhiji talked of labour taking its "due share" from capital, he certainly did not approve of "the criminal disparity that exists between the condition of labour and that of capital" (p. 271) or the "terrible contrast" between the palaces of the rich and hovels of the poor in New Delhi. The debate with Mr. Saklatvala, Gandhiji closed with the classic formula of liberalism: "It is not given to all of us to agree with one another on all our opinions; but it is given to every one of us to tender the same respect for the opinions and actions of our fellows as we expect for our own" (p. 303).

In articles on cow-protection Gandhiji lays down with clarity and utmost realism the conditions for its success. Goshalas should be scientifically managed and should function as model dairies and model tanneries. They should be conducted on a no-loss, no-profit basis. He argued that "what is economically wrong cannot be religiously right" (p. 392). It is in this context that Gandhiji stresses the fact of "changes in our ways of thought and life in every age", argues against the "horrible mental death" of social stagnation and against the superstitious acceptance of even the swadeshi doctrine. "If. . . we cannot make the sewing needle in the village, we should not set our face against the easily available and cheap needle from Austria. I see nothing wrong in accepting from any quarter whatever is good. . . and which we can assimilate" (p. 352).

How far from fanatical Gandhiji was can be seen again in the letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta suggesting that the latter in the interests of health consider seriously a return to meat-eating (p. 335). One must allow for a gap between ideal and achievement; his taking goat's milk (a form of animal food) was a concession to weakness (pp. 260-1). But such concessions should be exceptions, not the rule. In a letter to Mirabehn he makes it clear:

"The rule regarding vows is when in doubt interpret against yourself, i.e., in favour of greater restriction" (p. 277).

Earnest attempts to realize accepted ideals, constant self-examination, recognition and reporting of failures, all these are necessary steps in the process of living one's religion instead of merely professing or preaching it. Man as an evolving being can justify his existence and fulfil his destiny only by self-renewal. "A man to be a man must be twice-born as Hindus would say, reborn as Christians would say" (p. 247). Differing from Dr. B. S. Moonje's "distorted" (because literal) view of Hinduism, Gandhiji declares: "I claim in all humility to have lived Hinduism all my life" (p. 323).

One's religion comes to one not fixed and firm from some external authority but as a progressive revelation from within. "The Vedas, to me, are not the texts writ on paper, but my very conscience and the In-dweller" (p. 90). Acting on knowledge, one learns from action. "Learning without practice goes waste and serves only to turn one's head. Whatever therefore one has learned one should immediately reduce to action" (p. 428). From the study of the Vedas and the scriptures we can derive full benefit only by putting them "in the crucible of modern conditions, by objective observation and intense churning" (p. 430).

Re-interpreting the scriptures in the light of one's own experiences, one discovers unexpected agreement among contemporary seekers. For example, the words "without a cause" in *St. Matthew*, v. 22 in the Authorized Version were rejected by Gandhiji as inconsistent with truth and ahimsa, and he found that the words had been omitted by later translators (p. 355). In exercising this liberty of interpretation, one runs the least risk and one suffers no loss when one works out "one's own salvation in the religion of one's own forefathers, for, a seeker after Truth finds out that all religions melt and become one in God Who is one and the same for all His creatures" (p. 353).

Gandhiji was well aware of the rich poetic appeal of the Puranas and their efficacy in fostering love of dharma (p. 237). For the honour of women the examples of Sita and Draupadi, "free and independent", offer far better protection than the *purdah* which we must tear down (p. 45). But the dharma which the ancient poems teach and which can sustain the people's morale should be rightly understood and practised. It is a dynamic tradition and demands constant self-effort for reform. The theory of karma is really intended to "work out all evil karma and he who does not do so is not entitled to belong to the human species" (p. 397).

Like scientific knowledge, ethical knowledge (which includes practice as well as theory) is also cumulative; it progresses through communication and comparison of results. "I am a humble but very earnest seeker after truth. And in my search, I take all fellow-seekers in uttermost confidence so that I may know my mistakes and correct them" (p. 246). It is not easy and it may not be necessary to decide which fellow-seeker is competent to receive and comment on the experimenter's reports. "We can pour out our hearts only where we can, but the waters may flow where they will" (p. 5).

Of special interest among the letters included in this volume are those addressed to Manilal and his bride Sushila, to the Ashram women and to Mirabehn. They reveal Gandhiji as an educator to whom the individual required "the same care and attention as the whole problem of swaraj would . . . "(p. 450). He seemed stern in his insistence on the ideal but was ever respectful of human individuality. With the utmost frankness and without the slightest embarrassment, he explained to Manilal and Sushila the necessity of self-control in the married state (pp. 55 and 73). In his letters to the Ashram women, many of whom had had little formal education, Gandhiji explained the role of women in national regeneration, gave them news which would interest them, discussed the affairs of the Ashram, and urged them to shed their timidity and prepare themselves for service of the country. This patient effort was amply rewarded when many of these women went to jail in the Satyagraha Movement of 1930-'32 and even faced police assaults.

But it is in the letters to Mirabehn that we see at their best Gandhiji's ways, stern or gentle as occasion demanded, of dealing with those who were bound to him with the tie of love. Mirabehn had joined the Ashram at the end of 1925, having dedicated her life to Gandhiji even before she had seen him (Appendix V). She was intensely attached to him personally and always wanted to be by his side to minister to his needs. But Gandhiji wanted her to transform her devotion to him into devotion to his work. "You come in daily touch with me by doing my work as if it was your own. . . . You have come to me not for me but for my ideals in so far as I live them. . . . And when in the course of the work, God brings us physically together, it is well, but it is well also when he keeps us apart in pursuance of the common object" (pp. 297-8). He wanted her to be a perfect woman, but, he told her, "you should grow along your own lines. . . . You must retain your individuality at all cost. Resist me

when you must'' (p. 180). The news of Gandhiji's sudden illness alarmed Mirabehn and she was naturally anxious to be by his side. Gandhiji understood the quick changes in her mood and tried his human best to soothe her, but left her free to do as she pleased.

Asked for a message, he wrote to the Editor, *World's Youth*: ''TRUTH and LOVE'' have been jointly the guiding principle of my life. If God who is indefinable can be at all defined, then I should say that God is TRUTH. It is impossible to reach HIM, that is, TRUTH, except through LOVE. LOVE can only be expressed fully when man reduces himself to a cipher. This process of reduction to cipher is the highest effort man or woman is capable of making. It is the only effort worth making, and it is possible only through ever-increasing self-restraint'' (p. 452).

CWMG - C

PREFACE

This volume covers the three months from June 16 to September 15, 1927. Gandhiji had come down to Bangalore after his long stay in Nandi Hills and towards the end of June he began touring Mysore in easy stages. Well pleased with the progress as well as the friendly atmosphere of the State he said in his farewell speech at Bangalore, "More is expected of those who give much. I have found so much good in this State that I almost fancy that if you and the Maharaja together will it, you can make this State *Ramarajya*" (p. 417).

At the end of August he began a tour of Tamilnad, arrived at Madras on September 3 and proceeded south till he reached Mannargudi, East Tanjore, on September 15. In his numerous speeches he spoke as usual of khadi and charkha, of untouchability, of child widows and *Devadasis* and on the duty of municipalities to enforce sanitation. Often while addressing students, he talked about the imperative necessity of Hindus studying the *Gita*.

At the back of every word he uttered and every act he did, there was "a religious consciousness and a downright religious motive" (p. 450). But he recognized nothing as possessing spiritual or moral value "apart from work and action" (p. 451). And he recognized no religion which cannot be reduced to economic terms and no economics which cannot be "reduced to terms of religion or spirituality" (p. 452). In his brilliant tribute to the deep spirituality of C. R. Das, he says: "A time comes in the life of every Indian when mere political battle jars on him and . . . he seeks to base everything on spiritual, livingly moral foundations" (p. 500). Speaking at the Y.M.C.A., Cuddalore, on his own constant striving after perfection, he says: ". . . there is no distinction whatsoever between individual growth and corporate growth . . . The first condition therefore of individual growth is utmost humility." His advice then to students and young people wanting to serve the country and to do big things is: "First of all look after yourselves and make yourselves fairly good instruments of service." This process one has to start with a clean slate, i.e., a pure heart and this purity of the heart can only be achieved through what the Christians call a "new birth". The corresponding term in Hinduism is "to be twice born". This new birth

Gandhiji describes as an "inward change which is unmistakable. . . . It is a transformation of the heart . . . " (pp. 505-6). There is no conflict between *sadhana* and service. According to him, "the progress of the soul can best be achieved through the service of society. Service is the same as *yajna*" (p. 97). Whether it is karma, *bhakti* or *jnana*, Gandhiji is convinced "that the advancement of one promotes the advancement of all, and the fall of one implies the fall of all" (p. 334). Indeed Gandhiji derived spiritual sustenance from contact with fellow-workers. In a farewell speech at Bangalore he explains: "Man is both an individual and a social being. As an individual he may have his prayer during all the waking hours, but as a member of society he has to join in the congregational prayer. I for one may tell you that when I am alone I do have my prayer, but I do feel very lonely without a congregation to share the prayer with me" (p. 418).

All this was for the *sevaks*, not the masses. Poverty being the deep-seated disease and the sole obsession of the masses, he declared: "They will call you and me fiends if we talk about God to them. They know, if they know any God at all, a God of terror, vengeance, a pitiless tyrant" (pp. 453-4).

Hindu-Muslim dissensions weighed heavily on his mind though he spoke little about them. The silence was deliberate and a confession of humiliation which had gone "too deep for words" (p. 3). Though he had more confidence in the political acumen of Motilal Nehru and Jawaharlal Nehru, Gandhiji sponsored the election of Dr. M. A. Ansari as Congress President, because of his hope that he would help to achieve the miracle of Hindu-Muslim unity. In a frank and humorous letter, he counselled Dr. Ansari to tear to pieces his statement suggesting co-operation rather than non-co-operation by Congressmen in the Councils (pp. 304-5). When, however, the statement was published, Gandhiji wrote: "Consistently with your views about the necessity of communal unity, you may not now retire. But . . . I think it would be necessary for you to make a very brief statement making it clear that whilst you adhere to the opinion expressed in your statement, you will not seek to impose that view upon the Congress but that you will confine your own activity solely to the promotion of communal unity" (p. 403).

While in Madras, Gandhiji supported the free-lance agitation for the removal of the Neill statue. But he insisted that the art of satyagraha was to be learned from *Young India* and to be practised on the condition that success, if achieved, should go to the

credit of the Congress but failure, if inevitable, should not be allowed to bring discredit to the Congress (p. 469). He claimed to be the keeper of the lighthouse called satyagraha in the otherwise uncharted sea of Indian politics (p. 173).

Those who were nearest to him were the most liable to be harshly criticized. Answering the charge that he was tender to the Christians and Muslims but not to the Hindus, he said that he had no fear of being misunderstood by his own people (p. 537). Not that he spared the Christian Missionaries who undermined instead of strengthening the faith of the people distorting the meaning of "the richest word, God" (p. 260). He advised Hindu reformers to carry on their mission "without cutting themselves off from Hindu society, bearing no malice and with perfect love of the Hindu religion" (p. 33). However, he was far from being a revivalist. While he objected to superficial Europeanization; he refused to believe that the only alternative was "a complete reversion to the ancient Aryan tradition" (p. 315). Not only Hindu society and Hindu religion itself had to change with changing circumstances, but the changes in Western society too when they are for the better should be recognized and made use of. "Wisdom is no monopoly of one continent or one race. . . . I gladly admit that a new power for good is slowly but surely arising in the West" (p. 316). Perhaps the most sustained example of this capacity for self-criticism is the conclusion of the "Drain Inspector's Report", a balanced review of Miss Mayo's malicious attack on the Indian people and on Indian culture. Though convinced that "her case is to perpetuate white domination in India on the plea of India's unfitness to rule herself" (p. 544) and while considering "the book to be unfit to be placed before Americans and Englishmen (for it can do no good to them)", Gandhiji certified that *Mother India* "is a book that every Indian can read with some degree of profit. . . . It is a good thing to see ourselves as others see us" (p. 546).

In an article on "Prohibition" he says, people drink if they are forlorn and uncared for. Those who take to drink "are no more vicious by nature than teetotallers are saints by nature" (p. 489).

As examples of his mastery of English, one may cite his appeal to caste Hindus to "come down from their insolent heights and brother the untouchable" (p. 452) and his reference to the poor sisters of Orissa who are in rags: "But they have not lost all sense of decency, but I assure you we have. We are naked in spite of our clothing, and they are clothed in spite of their nakedness" (p. 454).

Several letters deal with satyagraha within the family circle. To his grandson Kanti, who wished to see his father Harilal, his advice is: "Try to understand what your duty at the present moment is, and act with courage and determination in accordance with that duty. Consider, not what you would like to do, but what you should do. You may show this letter to anyone you may wish to consult" (p. 19).

Approving Raihana Tyabji's decision to give up a dress on which her mother had "lavished so much time and so much love", Gandhiji suggests that all those things would go to her younger sister when "mother is satisfied that you will never be likely to want them" (p. 28). At the same time, the daughter should recognize that when it comes to reducing an abstract right to concrete practice, even considerate and liberal-minded parents do interfere with the independence of their grown-up children. In such a situation the child should realize that some restraint on liberty is demoralizing and some is uplifting. "No restraint is demoralizing which one submits to, not out of fear, selfishness or the like, but out of consideration for, or affection for others" (p. 151). Writing to Kamala Das Gupta, he warns her that the Ashram, which she wishes to join, "is a place for toilers, those who believe in the necessity and the moral value of labouring with their hands and feet" (p. 263). Later he encourages her, saying, "If you are sincere about your desire to go to the Ashram and earnest and yet gentle in your effort, you will certainly bear down the opposition of your parents. Until you can secure the permission of your parents, you can mentally live the Ashram life" (p. 388). An interesting instance of such personal advice is that offered to Mirabehn on the question of segregation during monthly sickness. Using an argument derived from Morley's *On Compromise*, which Mahadev Desai had translated into Gujarati, and referring to St. Paul's advice to his congregation to abstain from meat "if meat offend thy brother", Gandhiji explains: "There are certain things not in themselves immoral which we do for the sake of others and there are certain other things which being in themselves immoral we will not and must not do for the sake of the whole world. If self-imposed segregation appears to you as immoral, you must not do it even to please me. If however there is nothing immoral in it, then you will do it for the sake of your neighbours whom you will rightly consider to be ignorant to that extent" (p. 400).

The series of letters to and about N. R. Malkani illustrate Gandhiji's concern for integrity in those whom he loved. Public

events however grave did not shock him as much as a suspected breach of personal integrity. He declares: "Bardoli never disturbed my sleep; but Malkani does" (p. 195).

The letter to Santoji Maharaj is of high philosophical and autobiographical interest revealing as it does Gandhiji's personal and practical approach to the *Gita*. "I have somehow found something for myself by combining all the suggestions" derived from Shankara, Ramanuja, Madhva and others (p. 93). One should evolve one's code of conduct and regulate oneself in strict accordance with the code thus set up by oneself for oneself. Comparisons with "the average man" are totally wrong and "should never be held to justify sinning" (p. 198). That swaraj implies complete self-rule as well as freedom from other-rule is indicated by the recognition that "suicide becomes a duty" on certain occasions (p. 440). "Being moral requires that wherever there is a doubt, we should decide against our own interest" (p. 41).

While sentimentalists waste time and energy looking before and after, Gandhiji, the man of religion, recognizes the wisdom of "one step enough for me". The past and future are to be merged in the present and "the present means our duty at this moment. If we put all our strength into doing our duty, as we know it at this moment, we shall have made the highest human effort. Sorrow springs from dreaming of the future and from lamenting the past. Hence one who concerns himself with the present and does his duty has neither birth nor death" (p. 64). If this is karmayoga in a nutshell, it leads naturally to the attainment of *jnana*, for through the performance of *swadharma* one progressively realizes "the doctrine of oneness of life. . . Realization of the doctrine seems to be impossible unless we could reduce the 'I' in us to a complete cipher" p. (206). The non-violent worker is humbler than the mango tree that bends as it grows up and so becomes a cipher (p. 357). The humility is matched by courage and strength. "Anyone who has the strength to forget the 'I' in him and make himself a cipher can have a glimpse of this universal Soul. . ." (p. 93).

Instead of relying on light from the past, however glorious, the man of religion is content to bask and labour each day in that day's sunlight. To the missionaries who wanted to know how they might spread the glad tidings of the coming of Jesus and his death in redemption of the sins of humanity, Gandhiji replied, ". . . God did not bear the Cross only 1900 years ago, but He bears it today, and He dies and is resurrected from day to day. It would be poor comfort to the world if it had to

depend upon a historical God who died 2,000 years ago. Do not then preach the God of history, but show Him as He lives today through you. . . . It is better to allow our lives to speak for us than our words'' (pp. 261-2).

CWMG - C

PREFACE

During the period of four and a half months covered by this volume—September 16, 1927 to January 31, 1928—Gandhiji continued his tour of the South, interrupted it for an interview with the Viceroy, visited Ceylon and then Orissa, attended the annual session of the Congress at Madras in December and returned to Ahmedabad. The long tour was primarily for collection of funds for khadi work and had brought him Rs. 1,63,905 in Tamilnad and Travancore and Rs. 105,000 in Ceylon, of which modest sums he kept and published meticulous accounts (Appendix II). During Gandhiji's absence in Ceylon, the appointment of a Statutory Commission, which later came to be known as the Simon Commission, was announced and the volume ends with forebodings of a nation-wide storm of protest against it.

During his tour of the South, Gandhiji had been expressing his views on the Brahmin-non-Brahmin question and incidentally on *varnashrama*. His position on *varnashrama* dharma had given rise to apprehensions among social reformers and he found it necessary to emphasize that his "conception of *varnashrama* has nothing in common with its present distinction of untouchability and caste. *Varna* has nothing to do with superiority or inferiority. *Varna* is the recognition of a definite law that governs human happiness. And it simply means that we must treasure and conserve all the good qualities that we inherit from our ancestors" (p. 81). Writing on 17-11-1927, he explained his views more fully in reply to criticism from a correspondent and concluded: "This scheme may sound Utopian. I however prefer to live in this Utopia of my imagination to trying to live up to the unbridled licence of a society that I see tottering to its disruption" (p. 263). The stern rebuke which Gandhiji administered to youthful critics of Shri Rajagopalachari (p. 32) indicates the intensity of the prevailing bitterness. The discussions with non-Brahmin leaders in Tamilnad summarized by Mahadev Desai (Appendix I) and the *Young India* article in reply to Sjt. Nadkarni (pp. 259-63) show Gandhiji's attempt to reconcile the past and the future in the living present. To the critics who called his ideas Utopian, he urged, "It is surely given to individuals to live their own Utopias" (p. 263) without waiting for acceptance by society.

Besides appealing at every meeting for help in the cause of khadi, Gandhiji had something special to say which established

a personal bond between him and the audience. At Kanadukathan, addressing the Chettiars, a wealthy community of the South, he said, "Let us not wear our wealth so loudly" and he advised them to see that their charities were wise (p. 20). He was visibly touched by the affection of the audience at the auction at Karaikudi (p. 39). At Tuticorin Gandhiji referred to his attempts to learn Tamil so as to study the *Tirukural* in original (p. 91). He took leave of the South on October 27 with a warm message (p. 202).

Meanwhile, Gandhiji had received an invitation from the Viceroy, Lord Irwin, to meet him in Delhi on November 2. In reply to a message from Vithalbhai Patel, Gandhiji had expressed his desire to be kept out of the discussion since he was not hopeful of being able to render any useful service at that juncture. The result of the interview seemed to Gandhiji to have more than justified his pessimism. Writing to Prabhashankar Pattani on November 8, he said: "I felt that I need not have been called to Delhi. . . . The Viceroy did not wish to know others' views; he wished only to express his own" (p. 223). Varying versions of what took place at the interview are given in Appendix V.

During the tour of Ceylon, from November 13 to 29, Gandhiji dwelt on the bonds that united Ceylon and India. Speaking to Buddhists in the Island he said: "It is my deliberate opinion that the essential part of the teachings of the Buddha now forms an integral part of Hinduism. It is impossible for Hindu India today to retrace her steps and go behind the great reformation that Gautama effected in Hinduism. . . . Gautama was himself a Hindu of Hindus. He was saturated with the best that was in Hinduism, and he gave life to some of the teachings that were buried in the Vedas and which were overgrown with weeds" (pp. 244-5). In an article in *Young India*, written before the visit to Ceylon in reply to the request of an American friend, Gandhiji had explained his attitude to Hinduism thus: "On examination, I have found it to be the most tolerant of all religions known to me. Its freedom from dogma makes a forcible appeal to me inasmuch as it gives the votary the largest scope for self-expression. Not being an exclusive religion, it enables the followers of that faith not merely to respect all the other religions, but it also enables them to admire and assimilate whatever may be good in the other faiths" (pp. 166-7). Speaking at the Y.M.C.A., Colombo, Gandhiji said: "The message of Jesus, as I understand it, is contained in his Sermon on the Mount unadulterated and taken as a whole . . . . 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 . . . much of what passes as Christianity is a negation of the Sermon on the Mount'' (p. 248). To the young Buddhists in the audience Gandhiji said: ''Don't be dazzled by the splendour that comes to you from the West. Do not be thrown off your feet by this passing show. . . do not be drawn away from the simplicity of your ancestors. A time is coming when those who are in the mad rush today of multiplying their wants . . . will retrace their steps . . . God the Compassionate and the Merciful, Tolerance-incarnate, allows Mammon to have his nine days' wonder'' (pp. 250-1). But on the tenth day the ten-headed Ravana within us will have to be destroyed by Rama who too is within us. Thus he explained the symbolism of the Rama-Ravana war to the labourers in Ceylon (pp. 255-6). A world federation can be founded only on a true fellowship of faiths, where the innermost prayer of all ''should be that a Hindu should be a better Hindu, a Muslim a better Muslim and a Christian a better Christian'' (p. 461).

On his return from Ceylon, Gandhiji hastened to Orissa but had to cancel a major part of the tour owing to high blood-pressure. The little glimpse he had of the scene, however, filled him with anguish and made him write: ''The long-deferred Orissa visit has come to fill the bitter cup of sorrow and humiliation'' (p. 407). Never since the days of Champaran had he witnessed ''such death-like quiet'' (p. 408), and he exhorted the local workers to teach the people ''to shed the oppressive nervous timidity bordering on cowardice'' (p. 409).

The Congress session at Madras revealed Gandhiji's differences with other leaders on two major issues, namely, Hindu-Muslim unity and the definition of the country's political goal. On the former, he had earlier confessed that he was ''out of tune with the prevailing atmosphere'' (p. 16). Gandhiji, therefore, was not enthusiastic about the Unity Resolution (Appendix IX) passed at the Congress, though he himself seems to have helped in drafting it. Writing about it in *Young India*, he said: ''It was wholly bad in its original form. As it has finally emerged from the Subjects Committee and passed, all that can be said for it is that it is innocuous and that it is the best that could be had at this stage of the national evolution. But I for one cannot enthuse over it. I can only tolerate it as passable'' (p. 436).

Gandhiji's differences with the other leaders, particularly with Jawaharlal Nehru, centred mainly round the definition of the

political goal of the country. He described the Independence Resolution as "hastily conceived and thoughtlessly passed" (p. 438). This criticism provoked from Jawaharlal a letter of angry protest (Appendix X). In reply to this letter, Gandhiji wrote: "Though I was beginning to detect some differences in viewpoint between you and me, I had no notion whatsoever of the terrible extent of these differences. . . . I see quite clearly that you must carry on open warfare against me and my views. . . . I can't conceal from you my grief that I should lose a comrade so valiant, so faithful, so able and so honest as you have always been; but in serving a cause, comradeships have got to be sacrificed" (pp. 469-70). These theoretical differences, however, were overshadowed by the necessities of action to demonstrate the country's resentment against the visiting Simon Commission.

Among the letters included in this volume are several that Gandhiji wrote to Mirabehn, one a "soothing ointment after a severe operation" (p. 57). In a letter to Kishorelal Mashruwala (pp. 159-61), he explained the duty of a follower of non-violence when called upon to give evidence against a burglar. Compassion, he argued, had no effect unless it was natural and genuine. In his own case he admitted, two days after his meeting the Shankaracharya of Kanchi: "I have practically stopped taking interest in the Hindu-Muslim problem because I feel that the compassion in my heart is insufficient or is unnatural. Unnatural does not mean pretended, but only that it has not gone deeper than the intellect" (p. 160). In letters to Gangabehn Vaidya (pp. 162-3) and the Ashram Women (p. 164) he referred to the commotion produced in the Ashram by his criticism of the conflicts among them and advised them how they could resolve those conflicts by regarding themselves as members of a family. Writing to C. F. Andrews, he could not resist the temptation of having a dig at his doctors: "And three doctors and three instruments gave different readings yesterday — 200, 180, 160!" (p. 397).

PREFACE

During the period of five months (February 1, 1928 to June 30, 1928) covered by this volume, Gandhiji enjoyed comparative "respite from travels and onerous public duties" (p. 28) and stayed at the Ashram most of the time. He had just ended a strenuous tour of South India in the cause of khadi. Khadi had now acquired added importance as a powerful weapon in the programme of foreign-cloth boycott, which was to serve as the effective sanction behind the national demand and which Gandhiji was determined to bring about "with the assistance of mills if possible, without if necessary" (p. 77). He wanted not only that the All-India Spinners' Association and organizations working under it should be strengthened and their scope enlarged, not only that khadi activity should be "taken up by children, men, women, Hindus, Muslims and all others" (p. 171), but he wanted the mills also to help the boycott by standardizing their prices, lowering their profits and taking up the sale of khadi. The response from the mills was not very encouraging and before long it became clear to Gandhiji that "no immediate good will come out of these negotiations" with the mill-owners (p. 217). Nevertheless, "as an out-and-out believer in the method of non-violence", he persisted in the attempt to convert the mill-owners to the nationalistic view, warning them at the same time of satyagraha "if they will not listen to reason and will obstinately stand in the way" (p. 217).

The storm of protest that broke all over the country on the arrival of the Statutory Commission under Sir John Simon finds no more than an echo in the volume because Gandhiji "with great deliberation and not without the exercise of great self-restraint" refrained from active association with the boycott, as he recognized that his interference would bring the masses into the movement and "might possibly embarrass the promoters" (p. 14).

Similarly, with regard to the All-Parties Conference that was intended to put up a solid opposition to the Government and the Statutory Commission, Gandhiji maintained a grieved silence. The Conference seemed to be getting nowhere and Jawaharlal Nehru, at the end of ten days, found the strain too great for him (p. 58). "What a sorry exhibition we are making of ourselves in the face of this organized insult to a whole people," exclaimed Gandhiji in a letter to Motilal Nehru (p. 67).

The most significant event in the period was the Bardoli

Satyagraha, begun six years after the abandonment of the first Bardoli Satyagraha following the Chauri-Chaura tragedy. The 1928 satyagraha arose out of an excessive increase in the land revenue assessment. The cultivators asked for an impartial tribunal to examine the question. On the Government proving intransigent, they offered satyagraha which took the form of non-payment of revenue. The Government, quick to see in the movement a challenge to its authority, went all out to crush the spirit of the peasantry. There were wholesale arrests, intimidation by police and Pathans, seizure and auctioning of livestock and land. But the cultivators, led by the indomitable Vallabhbhai Patel, remained defiant and peaceful. Gandhiji guided the movement from a distance, even drafting letters for Vallabhbhai and Vithalbhai, and cultivated public opinion in favour of the people's case, for this limited and local satyagraha was also a step towards swaraj, as it provided training in "disciplined and peaceful resistance" and "corporate suffering" (p. 90).

There is in the present volume evidence of a deeper inwardness in Gandhiji's thinking. Referring to a newspaper report that he had predicted his own death, he wrote to Rajagopalachari: "Many are grieved that I did not die on the 17th. . . . Perhaps I am one among them. Perhaps I did die a kind of death. We shall see" (p. 118). The two years of reflection and introspection since the beginning of 1926, when Gandhiji voluntarily retired from active politics, had, it would appear, resulted in a new spiritual insight. During this period, he studied the *Gita* in detail and discoursed on it to the Ashram inmates. As he wrote his weekly instalments of *An Autobiography*, he began to look at his past life with greater detachment and greater humility. Writing to Jane Howard on March 12, he said: "But I thought that if people recognize me as a gentle peace-loving man, they should also know that at one time I could be a positive beast even though at the same time I claimed to be a loving husband. It was not without good cause that a friend once described me as a combination of sacred cow and ferocious tiger" (p. 101). He also admitted in an article in *Young India* that "it was a mixed motive that prompted me to participate in the War" (p. 108), the worldly motive being "to qualify for swaraj through the good offices of the statesmen of the Empire" (p. 109).

A grievous personal loss was suffered by Gandhiji when on April 23, 1928, Maganlal Gandhi passed away after a brief illness in Bihar, where he had gone to help his daughter in a campaign against *purdah*. Gandhiji had dreamed of and worked for this

nephew succeeding him as the head of the Ashram and now he was inconsolable. "It is perhaps the greatest trial of my life", he wrote to Andrews on April 26. In "My Best Comrade Gone" he described Maganlal as "my hands, my feet, my eyes" and added: "As I am penning these lines, I hear the sobs of the widow bewailing the death of her dear husband. Little does she realize that I am more widowed than she. And but for a living faith in God, I should become a raving maniac for the loss of one who was dearer to me than my own sons . . . His life is an inspiration for me, a standing demonstration of the efficacy and the supremacy of the moral law" (p. 263). In a Gujarati article he showed how Maganlal taught through his life the truth that service of the country, service of the world, self-realization and vision of God are but different aspects of the same thing (p. 281). Writing to his son Manilal on May 7, he said, "I feel that a change has come over my life these days. Imperceptibly and involuntarily a struggle is going on within me. Maganlal's soul rules over my heart" (p. 297).

However, as Gandhiji explained in a letter to Anne Marie Petersen, his faith in God turned the grief into joy and gave him "zest for greater service, greater dedication" (p. 307). He, therefore, concentrated his attention on overhauling the Ashram, his "best creation" (p. 1, p. 251), and "bringing it more in line with its ideals" (p. 342). Here, as in the Gujarat Vidyapith (p. 7), he was prepared to sacrifice everything to quality. He got the Ashram constitution revised, made the rule about *brahmacharya* absolute and insisted on all inmates having a common kitchen. The revised constitution, "the result of the joint labours of the main workers" (p. 398), was published in *Young India* (pp. 398-410) and criticisms and suggestions were invited.

There are several references to a possible visit to Europe—a visit that in the end did not come off. The chief purpose of the visit was to have been to meet Romain Rolland and other European workers in the cause of peace. "My anxiety is to meet Rolland. He appears to be the wisest man of Europe. He takes an unusual interest in me and feels grieved if he thinks that in any single thing my opinion is wrong" (pp. 117-8). But, as always with Gandhiji, his concern for truth was greater than his regard for a friend, and he, therefore, wrote to Rolland: "I do indeed want to stand well with you, but I must be true to myself if I am to continue to deserve your warm friendship" (p. 25). Whether Gandhiji feared mutual disillusionment as a result of personal confrontation or felt self-conscious about a mission for which he was not mentally ready, he found it extremely difficult to come

to a decision. "I can't summon up sufficient courage to make up my mind whether to go to Europe or not to go", he said in a letter to Muriel Lester (p. 226). Gandhiji even felt troubled by this indecision. Writing to Dr. Ansari on April 7, he said: "The proposed European visit is causing me much trouble just now. I can't make up my mind. I know that I should not be so undecided like this. But what is the use of hiding my weakness? I can't account for it myself" (p. 201). Gandhiji left the burden of decision to Romain Rolland, and when the latter refused to take the responsibility the matter was dropped.

In a series of articles Gandhiji exposed the hollowness of the prevailing system of education and spelt out his own ideas of a village-based, village-oriented education. Children, Gandhiji insisted, should be familiar not only with the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* but with "their modern spiritual meaning" (p. 343). Again he declared: "If we take too literally the events described in the *Mahabharata*, the *Ramayana*, etc., we shall be led along the path of untruth and fall headlong into a chasm. We shall certainly rise if we understand their inner meaning and put it into practice" (p. 456). In a speech on Ramanavami (pp. 163-6) he expounded at some length this *adhyatmik* or anagogical approach to the old stories which, by strengthening the poetic faith in Rama and Krishna, would enthrone the mythical hero as the inner ruler who can "take us across" to the direct if momentary experience of transcendental *ananda* and thus make the practice of dharma natural and easy. While laying it down that "full development of the soul is impossible without *brahmacharya*" (p. 457), he found the key to *brahmacharya* and all other virtues in single-minded devotion, which even children could learn by emulating the steadfast gaze in the eyes of Hanuman, that "incomparable devotee and servant of Rama" (p. 182).

As a cure for the many ills and difficulties arising from our doubting state, Gandhiji prescribed "decisive, firm, clear action" which "like the glistening sun" "not only dispels all darkness but destroys all disease germs" (p. 246). Convinced that true religion would show itself in the smallest detail of life, he regarded "the slightest irregularity in sanitary, social and political life" as "a sign of spiritual poverty" (p. 449).

The volume carries two memorable messages: one to the International Fellowship exalting one silent act of fellowship above "tons of professions" (p. 203), and the other to an American Y.M.C.A.: "God is Truth. The way to reach Truth is through the loving service of all that lives" (p. 276).

PREFACE

This volume shows Gandhiji being slowly drawn out of his self-imposed retirement from active politics since the beginning of 1926. It covers the four months July to October, 1928, during which important developments in the political field were preparing the ground for a renewed struggle with the British Government under Gandhiji's leadership. He watched with goodwill, but some scepticism, the efforts of political leaders to forge a united front in the face of the challenge of the Statutory Commission appointed in complete disregard of national opinion. But he was more concerned with creating a sanction for the nation's demand and, therefore, took greater interest in the Bardoli Satyagraha begun in the preceding April and also set about fitting the Ashram for a proper role in the national struggle. The work imposed considerable strain on him, (*vide* "Letter to B. G. Horniman", pp. 375-6) but the labour seemed worth while. Writing to Motilal Nehru after the successful outcome of the Bardoli campaign, he said: "I have more than enough work for me in the Ashram; I do not know whether you are aware that Bardoli was possible because the Ashram was in existence. . . . If I could but make of the Ashram what I want, I should be ready to give battle on an extensive scale" (p. 194).

If satyagraha provided the sanction for the demand of the constitutionalists, satyagraha itself derived its superhuman strength from the austerities and constructive work performed in the Ashram and made possible not only the Bardoli Satyagraha but the Dandi March and the Salt Raids two years later.

It was on August 6, during Gandhiji's brief stay at Bardoli, that the peasant satyagraha, led with equal brilliance and boldness by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, ended in a settlement. While this campaign laid the foundation of "organic" or substantial swaraj, the Nehru Report, which was endorsed by the All-Parties Conference at Lucknow at the end of August, paved the way for constitutional or formal self-government. This relationship between the two kinds of swaraj provides a recurrent political theme in the volume. In a message dated August 28 to the *Indian National Herald* Gandhiji declares: "The way to constitutional swaraj may lie through Lucknow, the way to organic swaraj, which is synonymous with Ramarajya, lies through Bardoli" (p. 212), a sentiment which he repeats in a *Navajivan* article (p. 249).

The Bardoli Satyagraha provided an opportunity to test and demonstrate the strength of people's will. It was led by Vallabhbhai Patel, but guided from a distance by Gandhiji himself. This fact gave rise to a misunderstanding about his role, and he found it necessary to clear it (p. 85). Gandhiji resisted pressure to extend the scope of the campaign and make it an all-India political issue, his motives being both ethical and practical. The very concept of satyagraha implied that the satyagrahi's pledge of truth required him not to widen the scope of his demands in the course of a campaign, unless circumstances forced him to do so. In the present case, moreover, Gandhiji seems to have felt that the country was not yet ripe for an all-out struggle. "Time," he said, "has not yet come even for limited sympathetic satyagraha. Bardoli has still to prove its mettle." Anticipating the critic's objection to his attitude as being not practical, Gandhiji wrote in the same article: "The fact is that satyagraha presupposes the living presence and guidance of God. The leader depends not on his own strength but on that of God. He acts as the Voice within guides him. Very often therefore what are practical politics so called are unrealities to him, though in the end his prove to be the most practical politics" (p. 113).

If, however, Gandhiji refused to make the Bardoli struggle a wider political issue, he also refused to yield on essentials involving the people's honour and self-respect. He, therefore, advised the people to ignore the Governor's threat made in his speech to the Bombay Legislative Council on July 23 (pp. 99-101 and 131-2). Referring to the efforts of well-meaning individuals who were trying to bring about a compromise, Gandhiji asked them not to intercede on behalf of the satyagrahis of Bardoli out of misplaced pity for them. "The latter do not need pity, they do not hanker after it; what they crave for is justice" (p. 135).

When the battle was won, Gandhiji congratulated the Government of Bombay as well as the people of Bardoli and Vallabhbhai Patel. All the demands of the satyagrahis were granted except that of inquiry into the allegations about the coercive measures adopted by the Government to enforce payment. Commenting on this concession by Vallabhbhai, Gandhiji said: "It is well not to rake up old wrongs for which, beyond the reparation made, there can be no other remedy" (p. 146). In the same spirit, he asked the volunteers who had helped in making the campaign a success, to befriend all those who had opposed the struggle and also the Government officials (p. 161). To the people of Bardoli, he stressed the necessity of constructive work as an essential as-

pect of satyagraha, citing the examples of Generals Botha and Smuts who, "though they made their mark in the world as Generals were none the less keenly alive to the value and importance of steady constructive work" (p. 164). The outcome of the campaign, Gandhiji explained, had a lesson both for the Government and the people—"for the Government if they will recognize the power of the people when they have truth on their side and when they can form a non-violent combination to vindicate it" (p. 179). For the people the lesson was that "they will not become a non-violent organization unless they undergo a process of what may be called continuous corporate cleansing" (p. 180).

In a number of articles in *Navajivan* Gandhiji examined the ethical and practical implications of ahimsa, distinguishing between the spirit and the outward forms of the ideal. Indian tradition had accepted ahimsa as the supreme dharma for man, but dharma as conceived by Gandhiji was not a derived technique or a static code of ready-made morality. It is a search from day to day for truth in action. Approaching the problem of ahimsa in this experimental spirit, Gandhiji had no hesitation in rejecting the popular notions about it. "We do not destroy", he said, answering a question by a student of the Gujarat Vidyapith, "the vipers of ill will and anger in our own bosom, but we dare to raise futile discussions about the propriety of killing obnoxious creatures" (p. 225).

The issue was brought to a head by the mercy-killing of an Ashram calf in September. The action raised a local storm that must have put Gandhiji's moral courage to a far severer test than the admission of an untouchable family to the Ashram thirteen years earlier had done. He was inundated with angry letters by outraged correspondents, some of whom, Gandhiji remarked with a touch of unaccustomed sarcasm, "seem to have made the violence of their invective against me a measure of their solicitude for ahimsa" (p. 338). As a seeker after truth, however, he welcomed a public discussion of his views as "likely to throw light on the tangled problem of ahimsa" (p. 339).

Gandhiji was aware that public opinion would not approve of his action, but he knew also that the "pathway of ahimsa, that is, of love, one has often to tread all alone" and that it is only by following the light within that one can know right from wrong (p. 311). The final test of the violence or non-violence of an act, he explained, is "the intent underlying the act" (p. 313). Mercy-killing relieves "the suffering soul within from pain" "by severing from the soul the body that has become an instrument

of torture to it", as a surgical operation does it "by severing the diseased portion from the body" (p. 312). The current view of ahimsa, Gandhiji charged, "has drugged our conscience . . . ; it has made us forget that there may be far more *himsa* in the slow torture of men and animals, the starvation and exploitation to which they are subjected out of selfish greed, the wanton humiliation and oppression of the weak and the killing of their self-respect that we witness all around us today, than in mere benevolent taking of life" (p. 312).

But whereas Gandhiji felt certain about the ethics of mercy-killing, he found the problem of providing an efficacious but non-violent remedy for the growing menace of monkeys in the Ashram orchard and fields more intractable. While he admitted that "any act of injury done from self-interest whether amounting to killing or not is doubtless *himsa*", he recognized the inescapable necessity of a certain measure of *himsa* as long as one lived in the flesh. Society has a standard as to the exact nature and the extent of permissible *himsa*, but "every seeker after truth has to adjust and vary the standard according to his individual need and to make a ceaseless endeavour to reduce the circle of *himsa*" (p. 314). To the argument that a votary of ahimsa should try to avoid direct *himsa* at any rate, even such as is involved in agriculture, Gandhiji replied with unanswerable logic: "The very idea that millions of the sons of the soil should remain steeped in *himsa* in order that a handful of men who live on the toil of these people might be able to practise ahimsa seems to me to be unworthy of and inconsistent with the supreme duty of ahimsa." The virtue of a dharma, he added, is "that it is universal, that its practice is not the monopoly of the few, but must be the privilege of all" (pp. 385-6). And because he believed that the scope of Truth and ahimsa was world-wide, he found "an ineffable joy" in dedicating his life "to researches in truth and ahimsa" and invited others to make similar experiments (p. 386).

These views were not likely to be easily appreciated by the orthodox, some of whom were distressed by them all the more because they genuinely revered Gandhiji as an embodiment of perfect ahimsa. He was glad that his views regarding the calf and the monkeys had shattered their illusion. "Truth to me is infinitely dearer than the 'mahatmaship' which is purely a burden", he declared. "All I claim for myself is that I am ceaselessly trying to understand the implications of great ideals like ahimsa and to practise them in thought, word and deed" (p. 409).

In a speech on the birth anniversary of Tolstoy (10-9-1928),

Gandhiji explained what he had learnt through him, especially through the example of his life. He also told a correspondent that "whilst it is as a general statement quite true that my life is based upon the teachings of the *Gita*, I would not be able to swear that Tolstoy's writings and teachings did not influence my decision about celibacy" (p. 240). In a rare reference to Bolshevism, while Gandhiji disapproved of its reliance on violence for the abolition of private property, he also pointed out that "the Bolshevik ideal has behind it the purest sacrifice of countless men and women who have given up their all for its sake", and that "an ideal that is sanctified by the sacrifices of such master spirits as Lenin cannot go in vain" (p. 380). When questioned about the basis of India's future economic constitution, Gandhiji answered: " . . . everybody should be able to get sufficient work to enable him to make the two ends meet. And this ideal can be universally realized only if the means of production of elementary necessaries of life remain in the control of the masses" (p. 412).

The letters in this volume illustrate, as usual, Gandhiji's capacity for identifying himself with the varied concerns of his correspondents, from a humble teacher seeking Gandhiji's advice whether he should continue to engage himself in the traditional duties of a barber (pp. 141-2) to a national leader like Motilal Nehru sharing his public worries with him. The letters to Motilal reveal Gandhiji's warm regard for him and seem to be addressed to a co-worker who, despite wide differences of outlook, could discuss national problems with him on intimate and equal terms. Another co-worker, in whose personal and family problems Gandhiji took keen interest, was Satis Chandra Das Gupta, a pioneer khadi worker of Bengal. In practically every letter that he wrote to him and his wife, Hemprabha Devi, Gandhiji's concern for them and interest in their affairs is evident. Gandhiji's frankness as well as his attitude to human frailty is brought out in a letter to Shaukat Ali: "I must confess that the only letter of yours to Dr. Ansari that I read, I did not like at all. . . . Why should I worry over what I may hold to be your error, seeing that I err often enough and need the indulgence of friends and foes alike?" (p. 304).

The volume carries the *Young India* article, "God Is", from which, during his stay in London in 1931, Gandhiji recorded his message to America. Here he tried to explain the nature of his faith in God and his views on the existence of evil which God permits though he is untouched by it. "I know too", he declared, "that I shall never know God if I do not wrestle with and against evil even at the cost of life itself" (p. 350).

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PREFACE

This volume, covering the period November 1, 1928 to February 3, 1929, marks the beginning of Gandhiji's direct involvement once again in national politics after an interval of three years. The popular demonstrations against the Simon Commission and the Government's efforts to suppress them, as highlighted by the police assault on Lala Lajpat Rai in Lahore and Jawaharlal Nehru in Lucknow, had aroused a widespread desire in the country for positive action to vindicate national honour. Gandhiji was not yet sure of his power over the masses to be able to lead a non-violent struggle (p. 5), but, yielding to Motilal Nehru's appeal (p. 290), he attended in December the annual session of the Congress at Calcutta, where he took a leading part in guiding the deliberations and evolving a compromise resolution giving one year's ultimatum to the British Government for the acceptance of the national demand. The volume ends with Gandhiji leaving the Ashram, after a month's rest, for a tour of Sind commencing on February 3, 1929, on which date also appeared in *Navajivan* the last instalment of his autobiography.

Gandhiji congratulated Lajpat Rai and Jawaharlal Nehru on the police assault on them. Since the people would have to learn "the art of dying in the country's cause", it was "the most economical thing that leaders get assaulted or shot" instead of obscure people (p. 29). He advised the people "to continue their non-violence in the face of the gravest provocation", so that the demonstrations against the Commission might be regarded "as so many lessons in non-violence preparatory to the final struggle . . ." "That day", he added, "is fast coming, faster than most of us imagine" (p. 162). Lajpat Rai died a few days after the assault. Gandhiji showered unstinted praise on him, as he had done before on Tilak (pp. 78 & 282).

Though Gandhiji was mentally preparing himself for a struggle, which he regarded as inevitable, circumstances did not yet seem favourable to his assuming active leadership of the Congress. There were wide and fundamental differences between him and influential sections in the Congress which made him sometimes feel almost helpless. Writing to Motilal Nehru about the prevailing state of affairs, he said: "I must cut my way through these grievous difficulties with patient toil. After all Dr. Bidhan and Subhas represent a definite school of thought. . . .

There is utter confusion in my mind created by the kaleidoscopic scenes going on before one in the country. . . . But I know you are as much at home with such things as I am with the charkha'' (p. 107).

The immediate occasion for this confession of helplessness was his persistent difference of view with the Reception Committee of the forthcoming Congress session at Calcutta regarding the nature of the Exhibition to be held at the time of the session. The Committee had planned to include in the Exhibition mill textiles and selected items of machinery, and it was even reported to be seeking the co-operation of local Governments for obtaining exhibits. This ran counter to the basic principles of non-co-operation and the constructive programme with khadi in the centre. Gandhiji disapproved of the plan but wrote to Dr. B. C. Roy, Chairman of the Reception Committee: "... I would not like you, an esteemed co-worker, to give up your views or principles in order to please me. . . . I assure you that I shall tender the same respect for your principles as I would crave from you and all for mine . . ." (pp. 7 & 9).

At the Calcutta Congress, Gandhiji tried to accommodate the point of view of Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose and helped in evolving a compromise resolution adopting the Nehru Report "as a great step in political advance" (p. 268) and laying down a time-limit for its acceptance by the British Parliament. As a further concession to the dissident leaders, the time-limit was advanced from 31st December 1930 to 31st December 1929. Explaining his reasons for yielding, Gandhiji said: "... the national life is a perpetual struggle whilst it is growing. It is a struggle not only against the environments that seek to crush us but also a struggle between our own ranks. . . . If we want unity, then adjustment and readjustment, a series of compromises honourable to both parties and to variety of opinions, is to be effected'' (pp. 284-5). Striking a personal note, he said: "There are in our midst today those who would stop at nothing, who in their impatience do not mind if they rush headlong even to perdition. . . . What am I to say to those flowers of the country who prize its liberty just as much as I do, if not perhaps much more?'' (p. 286)

Though he believed that even two years was all too short a time for the preparation for a civil disobedience campaign, he said to himself: "What does it matter if all these impatient young men want me to share the discredit of showing nothing at the end of one year? I will share it'' (p. 293). It was by this intensely personal and human approach that Gandhiji held together

leaders of the most diverse temperaments and widely differing points of view and welded them into a united team.

While he was prepared to co-operate on honourable terms with all the parties in the country, he was also not afraid of going to the Viceroy when he could do so consistently with the creed of non-co-operation. Both to the Indian parties and the British Government he made a similar approach and spoke in identical terms: "I non-co-operate with the evil, I do not non-co-operate with the good. I do not non-co-operate with persons, I non-co-operate with measures . . . If the Viceroy today asks me to go to him to discuss things of importance for the country on a footing of equality I will go there barefooted and still defend my non-co-operation." It was for the Congress to develop internal strength and to go to the House of Commons not as beggars but as "a high contracting party" (p. 289).

Having made himself a party to the Resolution of ultimatum to the British Government at the Calcutta Congress and drawn up a programme of active preparation for a campaign of non-violent non-co-operation, Gandhiji felt obliged to abandon his contemplated tour of Europe. Giving his apologies to European friends who had been looking forward to the visit, he wrote: " . . . I feel that I would be guilty of desertion if I now went away to Europe" (p. 416). He had thought, he said, that he would be able to interpret true non-violence to the West by word of mouth. "But the more I ponder over the thing, the more unworthy I appear to myself to be. I need greater preparation and greater self-purification to make me a worthy vehicle" of the message (p. 417).

The message, it seemed, had not been fully delivered even in India, as was evidenced by occasional political murders and the widespread secret approbation given to them. Commenting on the assassination of Assistant Superintendent Mr. Saunders of Lahore, Gandhiji called for "a new valuation of such terms as heroism, patriotism, religiousness and the like" (p. 275). "The curse of assassination and kindred crimes", he told the youth of the country, "is not advancing the progress to humanity, religion or true civilization. . . . The temple of freedom requires the patient, intelligent and constructive effort of tens of thousands of men and women, young and old" and acts of violence "retard the progress of this quiet building" (p. 276).

Symptomatic of the new dynamism in the air, there was a prolonged strike in January 1929 by students of the Gujarat College in Ahmedabad in protest against the Principal's action in im-

posing a fine on all students who had absented themselves from college on the Simon Commission boycott day. Though in itself a purely local affair, the strike seemed to demonstrate the new temper of youth in the country. Gandhiji was quick to perceive the national significance of the strike and told the students: "I am not exaggerating when I say that you are inaugurating a new era" (p. 413).

The volume contains a long and anguished letter to Maulana Shaukat Ali which is of historic importance as practically registering a final break between the two leaders. Referring to a speech by the Maulana at Kanpur, Gandhiji asked him to apologize to the Hindus for having wounded their feelings through it and added: "I would go all the way with you in accusing the Hindu of his many misdeeds; but I am unable to hold with you that he has been ever the aggressor, ever the tyrant and his Mussalman brother always the injured victim. . . . In your Cawnpore speech you are too terribly dogmatic and emphatic. The assumption of infallibility is unworthy of you" (p. 130). He was not anxious to see their correspondence published. "But", he said, "if you think that there is nothing left for you but war to the knife, by all means publish the correspondence" (p. 131). As for himself, he claimed, "mine is a unilateral partnership and therefore my partnership with you and the other Mussalmans is indissoluble. Though they may disown me a million times, I shall still be theirs when occasion demands it" (p. 132). That the Maulana's public attack had not made the slightest difference to Gandhiji's attitude even temporarily is seen from his letter, a few days later, to Dr. B. S. Moonje, a Hindu nationalist leader: "If you will take the analogy of Afghanistan, why do you expect Mussalmans to be Hindus in Hindustan? . . . For the service of India, Mussalmans, Jews, Christians should be Indians even as Hindus should be Indians" (pp. 231-2). The same comprehensive nationalism is taught in the message to Christian Indians (p. 323).

The affairs of the Ashram seem to have exercised Gandhiji's mind a good deal at this time. Having "for the sake of humility and truth" (p. 24) changed its name from Satyagraha Ashram to Udyoga Mandir and thus given rise to some speculation that the ideals of truth and *brahmacharya* were being abandoned, Gandhiji had to explain the correct position: "The name Satyagraha Ashram was adopted deliberately and with the intention of giving the fullest effect to its meaning. But the progressive realization of the meaning of the name made us conscious of our unworthiness to bear it" (p. 33). His earnest appeal to the Ashram women was:

"Always appear what you really are; whatever you do, do it openly" (p. 195). The kitchen was a school where "the food should be scientifically stored, cooked and eaten" so that the body as the "temple of God" could be "kept clean and preserved through nourishment" (pp. 236-7). Through an ever-increasing effort for self-purification, he assured the inmates of the Wardha Ashram, "you will be serving yourselves, your country and the world" (p. 128).

The numerous letters to Chhaganlal Joshi, who had been appointed Secretary of the Ashram, illustrate Gandhiji's handling of delicate human problems which arose in the Ashram from time to time, even as they show him at work training a co-worker. One such problem concerned the widow and daughters of the late Maganlal Gandhi. Gandhiji had to relax some of the rules of the Ashram for their sake much against his will (p. 82). The occasional failings of the Ashram inmates sometimes filled Gandhiji with self-doubt. "Do you not agree", he wrote to Chhaganlal Joshi, "that my boasted skill in understanding people is nothing of the kind? . . . These clouds trouble me; still bigger ones will come" (pp. 242-3). But in all difficulties aid came from an unfailing source. "The more attentively you listen to the *antaratman*, the purer will your decisions be, you will become purer, more fearless and calmer, and your health too will improve" (p. 198).

A stern taskmaster, Gandhiji did not hesitate to point out to Mahadev Desai his lapses (pp. 158 & 188-9). He helped many strangers to solve their casuistical problems (pp. 183, 377 & 393). He even drafted for Prabhavati Narayan a letter to be sent to her father-in-law (p. 208). Even while offering guidance Gandhiji issued a warning against blind faith and stressed the need for mutual communication. "You may have faith in the principles which I lay down, but the conclusions which I draw from certain facts cannot be a matter of faith. Faith has no place in a matter which can be grasped by reason. Hence, whenever you see my ignorance as regards facts and find the reasoning vitiated by that ignorance, please do correct me" (p. 217).

Explaining to a friend his horror of what he saw at Kalighat, Gandhiji said: "My soul rises in rebellion against the cold-blooded inhumanity that goes on there in the name of religion." But he did not possess the strength to offer his own life to save the lives of innocent animals. "And till I can do that", he said, "I must bear the cross of my imperfect existence" (p. 244). The same horror and the same helplessness are expressed in the account of an earlier visit to Calcutta (*An Autobiography*, Pt. III, Ch. 18).

Commenting on thin attendance at the Ashram prayers he wrote: "As the body needs food and feels hungry, so the soul needs and feels hungry for prayer. Prayer is a form of communication with God" (p. 197). In the "Eternal Duel" Gandhiji replied to a correspondent's question how to overcome cowardice, eradicate bad habits and "recreate" oneself. Once we have made our choice to ally ourselves with the forces of good against the forces of evil, the most potent means of progress was prayer, "that sacred alliance between God and man whereby he attains his deliverance from the clutches of the prince of darkness" (p. 247). It is only with the help of Rama that we can "overcome the ten-headed Ravana of passions within us" (p. 251). To secure and use this help, Gandhiji showed the way in his advice to the Ashram inmates at Wardha: "If you awake every morning with His name on your lips and invoke His aid to help you in your struggles during the day and at night time before retiring take stock of the day's failures and lapses, make a confession of them to your Maker and do a sincere penance for them—the only fitting penance for a lapse is to make a firm resolve not to allow it to happen again —you will thereby build, as it were, a solid wall of protection round you and gradually temptations will cease to assail you" (p. 255).

CWMG-C

PREFACE

This volume, which carries the *Autobiography*, covers twelve days, from the 3rd to the 14th February, 1929. Gandhiji was touring in Sind during this period, collecting funds for the Lajpat Rai Memorial and helping to resolve differences among Congress workers in the province.

On February 9, Gandhiji got the news of the death of his grandson Rasik in Delhi on the previous day. But he refused to let his pain interrupt his daily work even for a minute, since he regarded grief over the death of a dear one as a symptom of selfish attachment (pp. 431-2 & 434).

In his reply to Tcherkoff, a friend and follower of Tolstoy who had been pained by Gandhiji's justification of his support to Britain's wars in the past, Gandhiji pleaded for toleration and mutual understanding among opponents of war. His attitude on the question seems to have been partly determined by the conviction that, in her peculiar condition, India lacked the strength to practise non-violence of the brave and that, therefore, she could not oppose war on moral grounds. "What I feel," he said, "is that I am looking at peace through a medium to which my European friends are strangers. I belong to a country which is compulsorily disarmed and has been held under subjection for centuries. . . . Non-violence is not an easy thing to understand, still less to practise, weak as we are" (pp. 423-4).

The bulk of the volume consists of the *Autobiography*, the most widely read of Gandhiji's works and a document of central importance in the study of his life-story. The Gujarati original appeared in weekly instalments in *Navajivan* from November 29, 1925 to February 3, 1929. The English translation by Mahadev Desai and in part by Pyarelal Nayar, Gandhiji's secretaries, appeared in *Young India* from December 3, 1925 to February 7, 1929. The task was undertaken at the instance of some co-workers, who had first made the suggestion as far back as 1921 and who renewed their pressure in 1925 when Gandhiji seemed to be relatively free from preoccupations. Well aware of the general experience that hardly any autobiography is free from egotism and the taint of untruth, conscious or unconscious, Gandhiji was reluctant to embark on the venture. He could overcome his reluctance only by giving the story the form of an objective record of his moral

experiments in private and public life, narrated with scientific detachment and with the sole purpose of illustrating the application of truth in all spheres of life and reaffirming his faith in satyagraha as a way of life and as a means of national regeneration. "Let hundreds like me perish, but let truth prevail" (p. 5).

The Gujarati title which accorded first place to "Experiments with Truth" makes the moral purpose explicit. The lessons that Gandhiji wished to convey were not only relevant to the India of his time but are of the highest importance to man in his striving towards an integrated way of living which would express the truth that is natural to his being at a particular moment or stage of his life, his dharma, and help him to transcend it to regain his divine freedom in *moksha*. The *Autobiography* may thus be regarded as a modern contribution to the dialogue between Pilate and Jesus in *St. John*, Ch. 18, vv. 36-8. It is the story of a seeker's quest of that Kingdom which is "not of this world" only in the sense that it is not founded on force but grows out of love and knowledge. To the question "What is Truth?" Gandhiji sought or offered no facile verbal formula as an answer; instead he told the story of a life lived to realize it by the unremitting pursuit of *sreyas*, the path of spiritual progress, after a deliberate rejection of *preyas*, the path of pleasure. What Gandhiji tested and tried to prove in these "experiments in the science of satyagraha" (p. 5) was the principle that understanding and applying the relative truth present in any situation in a spirit of utmost humility helps not only to transform the objective situation into something better but also purifies one's mind and heart and heightens one's spiritual awareness. The latter hypothesis, that dharma or right action—the term "dharma" being interpreted to include the public sphere—can bring here and now a foretaste of *moksha* or transcendental peace and *ananda*, bliss, was the more daring and original principle inasmuch as it questioned, on the one hand, the predominant Hindu tradition of the aspirant after *moksha* withdrawing from worldly activity and, on the other, the scientific humanism that avoids all advertence to beatitude. It is this conviction of the identity of end and means in spiritual striving, the interdependence of *moksha* and dharma, which inspired Gandhiji's experiments and which he wanted through the *Autobiography* to prove to the satisfaction of others.

In narrating the experiments, Gandhiji wisely left out the deeper experiences which (the Gujarati original says) arise and subside in the depths of one's soul, as being beyond his powers of communication. He restricted himself to issues of dharma—which

the Gujarati original defines as "morality practised for the sake of the *atman*" —which even a child could understand, hoping that, if he could present the story objectively and in a spirit of humility, it might help other seekers (p. 3).

Gandhiji's concept of dharma was the result of many influences. Rapt listening to the *Ramayana* (pp. 31-2), the eager enjoyment of mythological stories of devotion to truth and service of parents (pp. 10-1), the observance of vows and visits to temples of both the Vaishnava and Saiva sects (p. 264) were not less important than the later study of Ruskin and Tolstoy and the Sermon on the Mount in moulding his heart and forming his outlook. In the *Autobiography* too, as in the communion of saints described by Tulsidas, we watch a moving Prayag, the confluence of three streams, the Jumna of *karma*, the Ganga of *bhakti* and the Sarasvati of *jnana*. This view of dharma, linking action and experience, morality and religion, embraced politics too, as part of an incessant war against evil in society. In an article in *Young India* (12-5-1920) Gandhiji claims to be neither a saint nor a politician, but a humble seeker after truth making experiments about some of the eternal verities of life. "If I seem to take part in politics, it is only because politics encircle us today like the coil of a snake. . . . Quite selfishly, as I wish to live in peace in the midst of a bellowing storm howling round me, I have been experimenting with myself and my friends by introducing religion into politics." By religion, he hastened to add, he meant the spirituality "which changes one's very nature . . . and which ever purifies. It is the permanent element in human nature which counts no cost too great in order to find full expression" (Vol. XVII, p. 406).

The practice of such religion required strenuous effort and vigilant discipline of the body, though glimpses of *moksha*, "intimations of immortality" which can be felt and remembered as golden moments and peak experiences, made such effort increasingly more spontaneous and easy. In this task of disciplining the body to be a willing and obedient servant of the spirit, Gandhiji believed in the usefulness of deliberate and rationally chosen vows as a built-in restraint which "far from closing the door of real freedom, opened it" (p. 167).

Self-mastery must be coupled with utmost humility. "If the acts of an aspirant after *moksha* or a servant have no humility or selflessness about them, there is no longing for *moksha* or service. Service without humility is selfishness and egotism" (p. 315). Gandhiji, however, declined to include a vow of humility among

the Ashram observances (p. 315). Refusing thus to cultivate humility as a virtue but aspiring for its occurrence as an experience, Gandhiji saved himself at once from possible hypocrisy and possible cowardice.

Genuine humility necessarily carries with it complete freedom from dogmatism. Gandhiji, who was familiar with the Jain doctrine of *anekantavada*, the many-sidedness of truth, recognized that "every case can be seen from no less than seven points of view, all of which are probably correct by themselves, but not correct at the same time and in the same circumstances" (p. 216). The *Autobiography* provides numerous illustrations of this absence of dogmatism in Gandhiji's comments on his own actions (pp. 122, 156, 200, 271 & 342).

In the practice of truth in his dealings with other human beings and with society, the *yukta*, the integrated man, proceeds on the basis of his faith in or realization of the oneness of all selves, because love of humanity, respect for other human beings, has become a part of his nature. "It has always been a mystery to me", Gandhiji concludes the chapter on Balasundaram, "how men can feel themselves honoured by the humiliation of their fellow-beings" (p. 127). After describing how he had brought about the dismissal of two corrupt officials of the Asiatic Department, Gandhiji adds that he "had nothing against them personally" (p. 220). The chapter concludes with a classical formulation of Gandhian ethics and metaphysics. "This ahimsa is the basis of the search for truth. . . . It is quite proper to resist and attack a system, but to resist and attack its author is tantamount to resisting and attacking oneself. For we are all tarred with the same brush, and are children of one and the same Creator, and as such the divine powers within us are infinite. To slight a single human being is to slight those divine powers, and thus to harm not only that being but with him the whole world" (pp. 220-1). Separating the evil from the evil-doer and having compassion for the latter, one has a better understanding of the evil and a less ambivalent and more forthright attitude in opposing it. Ahimsa, thus, besides being morally beneficial to all parties, holds also the best chance of practical success.

In satyagraha the conflict is viewed not as one between persons or groups, but as one between truth and untruth, between right and wrong. The truth in the whole situation is grasped and utilized so that it may prevail over evil. In the end no one is the loser or feels humiliated. To the extent that truth prevails, all parties share the happiness and the credit for the victory. The inte-

grated man, because of his detachment, realizes better than others the "paramount importance of facts. Facts mean truth and once we adhere to truth, the law comes to our aid naturally" (p. 110). And not only the law but public opinion and even vested interests have to bow before an orderly array of facts. This was proved in the Champaran satyagraha where there was no sound or fury in evidence but a vast array of verified statements.

Accounts regularly kept are again a record of truth and help one against one's own weakness. "Let every youth take a leaf out of my book and make it a point to account for everything that comes into and goes out of his pocket, and like me he is sure to be a gainer in the end" (p. 48). In the case of an organization, carefully kept accounts are a *sine qua non*. "Without properly kept accounts it is impossible to maintain truth in its pristine purity" (p. 125).

In conformity with the ancient Indian tradition which emphasized the impersonal aspect of truth and put greater value on the content of a revelation or teaching than on its medium or author, Gandhiji deliberately excluded from the narrative events of purely personal significance. As is clear from the Introduction, he seems to have felt uncomfortable even while making the minimum personal references inevitable in telling the story. His only interest in the past was in the lessons it taught for the present and the future and he therefore left out the human side of the story which if told would have been of immense psychological interest.

For instance, with his affectionate nature ever eager to give and receive love, Gandhiji must have suffered deeply in some of his personal relationships. We get glimpses of this in the letters, but in the *Autobiography* he generally treats such relationships as ethical problems to be solved by a votary of Truth. Relating how he once connived at Kasturba using a second-class bath-room at a railway station while holding a third-class ticket, he comments that here partiality for his wife got the better of his partiality for truth (p. 306). Mention of such incidents is quite exceptional in the *Autobiography*. A student of the *Collected Works* can imagine the vast mass of fact and sentiment which the *Autobiography* could have included but omits. One example of such omission is the powerful intellectual ferment brought about by the advancing spiritual re-orientation of Gandhiji's life and his disillusionment with Western civilization and with British statesmen which crystallized into the philosophy of life expounded in *Hind Swaraj*. Nor

does the work describe Gandhiji's fervent patriotism, the adoration of Mother India, which found expression in his speech at a farewell meeting on the eve of his departure from South Africa. "I am about to leave a *bhogabhumi* for a *karmabhumi*. . . . Anyone who seeks deliverance must go to the sacred soil of India" (Vol. XII, p. 455). This love of the motherland became identified in Gandhiji's mind with the love of her suffering millions. In his first meeting with the peasants of Champaran he said he was "face to face with God, Ahimsa and Truth" (p. 328). But the *Autobiography* does not record the genesis and progress of this strong emotional bond between the Mahatma and the Indian masses. Similarly in the pages of *Navajivan* we have ample evidence of Gandhiji's deep and reverent love for nature's beauty. But there is little hint of this in the *Autobiography*.

The work is thus not a full or satisfying self-portrait. Nor is it a critical commentary on contemporary history. But despite these self-imposed limitations of interest, the *Autobiography* remains of supreme importance to the student of Gandhiji's inner life-story. From the vantage point of the spiritual insight he had gained at the time of writing it Gandhiji examines and analyses the successive stages of his moral growth and draws appropriate lessons from each incident. The very writing of the story, the recollection and critical analysis of the motives and inner consequences of action, was an experiment in truth (pp. 223-4) and an exercise which gave him "ineffable mental peace" (p. 401).

The story is narrated with a detachment which is a measure of the advance Gandhiji had made in his *sadhana* of cultivating self-effacement. This detachment permits occasional flashes of gentle humour. The offer to do scavenging work was "naturally made by me, but it was Maganlal Gandhi who had to execute it" (p. 309). "The efforts of my companions to save me from *darshan*-seekers were often of no avail, and I had to be exhibited for *darshan* at particular hours" (p. 332). This humour, combined with the complete absence of penitential outbursts usual in 'confessions', preserves an impersonal and relaxed tone throughout. The transparent sincerity of the narrative lets the reader see clearly what aspects of the past were emotional realities for Gandhiji at the time of writing and what he had completely outgrown. The memories of boyhood, for instance, connected with his experiments in moral emancipation and his early marriage, are evidently charged with deep emotional significance. There is ample evidence in the *Autobiography* to bear out J. J. Doke's observation: "When Mr. Gandhi speaks of his parents, those who listen realize that they

are on holy ground'' (*M. K. Gandhi, An Indian Patriot in South Africa*, Publications Division, p. 20). In contrast, the youthful attempts to play the English gentleman in London are described in a relaxed vein which suggests that they are being viewed from an appropriate mental distance.

A poignant memory of the early period in Gandhiji's life relates to an incident which illustrates his occasionally harsh treatment of Kasturba, who, with her conservative background and upbringing, could not keep pace with Gandhiji's reforming zeal. But the memory belongs to an aspect of his self that was dead and, instead of being painful, seems to have had a softening and cleansing effect on him. The vivid image, in the Gujarati original —''The Ganga and the Jumna streaming from her eyes''—which Gandhiji employs to describe Kasturba's despair as he, blinded by rage, dragged her towards the gate (p. 222), reveals the tender love in his heart which had replaced the old impatience and wilfulness. It was Kasturba's endurance and her submission to the sacrifices demanded of her that had made her gain ''what no other woman has done'' (Vol. XIV, p. 518) and brought in their lives the contentment and happiness of the purer relationship which Gandhiji goes on to describe in the *Autobiography* (p. 223). In his later life, Gandhiji used gratefully to acknowledge Kasturba's sacrifice and assert the superiority of woman's capacity for non-violence over man's.

In 1903, under the influence of Theosophist friends Gandhiji seriously took up the *Bhagavad Gita* for daily study and discovered in its teaching a way of life that fully answered his need. Henceforward his multifarious activities and experiments were anchored in the *Gita* doctrine of the surrender of the fruits of work to the Indwelling Lord, and in course of time its ideal of the *sthitaprajna* and the *bhakta* gave a direction to Gandhiji's aspiration for *moksha*. Its ethical ideal of *samatva*, equi-mindedness to pleasure and pain, success and failure, praise and blame, sank deep in his heart and sustained him not only in his satyagraha campaigns but in all his trials, both in private and public life.

The *Gita* teaching of *aparigraha*—non-possession—which Gandhiji interpreted to mean holding possessions in trust for society (p. 212), seems likely to have prepared his mind for an instantaneous response to Ruskin's *Unto This Last*, which he read during a railway journey from Johannesburg to Durban in 1904. He proceeded without delay to put into practice its ideal of simplicity, as he understood it, in his own and his co-workers' lives through the Phœnix establishment. As the spiritual orienta-

tion of Gandhiji's life advanced, this ideal combined with moral disciplines and evolved into a plan of Ashram life modelled on the forest-dwellings of ancient India. Gandhiji's experiments in food, which to begin with were conducted from the point of view of health, now acquired more and more an ethical purpose and were regarded as an aid in achieving self-mastery. Did not the *rishis*, the seers of the Upanishads, live on fruits alone and enjoy complete freedom from impure thoughts?

The most important step, however, which Gandhiji took during this period was the vow of life-long *brahmacharya.* He has candidly confessed that he did not know how the idea of the vow first came to him (p. 165), but he has stated that his experiences as leader of the Indian Ambulance Corps during the Zulu Rebellion of 1906 had a share in the final resolve (p. 167). Following Indian tradition, which reverences Hanuman as the ideal servant of Rama, he came to look upon perfect observance of *brahmacharya*, interpreted in its widest sense, as an essential condition of service and spiritual growth and the vow, therefore, became of central importance in Gandhiji's spiritual striving (p. 253). It led him ultimately to a realization of man's helplessness against the workings of his nature and to an increasing reliance on the power of prayer, of Ramanama in his case (pp. 254 & 274), for self-purification.

A practical problem during this period to which Gandhiji gives considerable space in the *Autobiography* related to the education of his sons. At first, his high-minded patriotism prevented him from sending them to schools from which other Indian children were excluded or in which the medium of instruction was English (p. 161). Later, when his outlook on life had undergone a change, his distrust of modern civilization and the material values on which it was based had its effect on his attitude to the method and content of school education. He attached more importance to character-building and acquisition of bodily skills than to instruction in letters and formal training of the intellect, and experimented with his ideas on his own and other children at Phœnix and Tolstoy Farm. His sons felt the deficiency of formal education at the time, though later they appreciated more and more the value of what they gained by the education that their father had given them, compared to what they had missed. But the discontent of the eldest, Harilal, resulted in complete estrangement between father and son, with tragic consequences for the latter.

The attempt to teach others taught him that "the training of the spirit was possible only through the exercise of the spirit."

The boys and the girls thus became his teachers; "I must be good and live straight, if only for their sakes" (p. 271).

Gandhiji returned to India with the ambition, as he had put it earlier in a letter to Lord Ampthill (30-10-1909), of taking his "humble share in national regeneration" (Vol. IX, p. 509). He landed in Bombay in January 1915 with his views about national affairs fully formed, though, in deference to Gokhale's wish, he did not express them publicly for one year. Explaining in the first issue of *Navajivan* (7-9-1919) the aims of the journal, he said: "Despite these limitations of mine, I clearly see that I have something to give to India which no one else has in equal measure. With much striving I have formulated some principles for my life and put them into practice. The happiness I have found that way, I think, I have not seen in others. Many a friend has testified to this. It is my sincere aspiration to place these principles before India and share my happiness with her" (Vol. XVI, p. 92). The practice of satyagraha, thus, while helping to remove evil, should bring inner peace and happiness to the satyagrahi.

As opportunities offered themselves, Gandhiji cautiously tested these principles in securing redress of grievances in Champaran and Kheda and in settling a labour dispute in Ahmedabad. He met with considerable success in Champaran and he has narrated his experiences there in some detail. The experiments in Kheda and the mill-hands' strike in Ahmedabad were only partial successes. The publication of the Rowlatt Bills in February 1919 gave Gandhiji an opportunity to try satyagraha on a countrywide scale. He had been ill since the breakdown during the recruiting campaign in Kheda in August 1918, but his "intense eagerness to take up the satyagraha fight" seems to have strengthened his will to live, even to the extent of inducing him to relax the vow against milk taken many years earlier in South Africa (p. 361). The popular response to Gandhiji's call was a wonderful experience to him and the excitement of those days comes through the calm detachment of the narrative in the *Autobiography*. After an initial set-back, the agitation gathered momentum and Gandhiji soon found himself leading the first mass movement against British rule in India.

The narrative ends here. But this is by no means the end of the story even as far as the *Autobiography* is concerned. The Gandhiji who summarizes the lessons of his life-story in the "Farewell" is not the confident leader of the national movement who had promised the country swaraj in a year. The author of the "Introduction" and the "Farewell" has experienced failure

and defeat and grown spiritually through them. He had been torn, after the launching of the non-co-operation movement in 1920, between his distress at the periodic outbreaks of popular violence and his indignation with the system which he held responsible for the intolerable condition of the starving millions in the country. At his trial in the Sessions Court in Ahmedabad in March 1922, he had given the presiding judge "a glimpse of what is raging within my breast to run this maddest risk that a sane man can run" (Vol. XXIII, p. 115).

The imprisonment in Yeravda came as a great relief to Gandhiji. He used it for systematic study and sustained introspection; when he was released in February 1924, he came out of the prison a changed man. He tried to revitalize the Congress through the constructive programme, but failed to carry influential leaders like Motilal Nehru and C. R. Das with him on the question of khadi. Finding Motilal Nehru unyielding, he willingly surrendered control of the Congress to the Swaraj Party led by him and, at the end of 1925, retired from active politics for a year. He spent most of the time at the Sabarmati Ashram, concentrating on khadi and other constructive activities, studying the *Gita* and discoursing on it to the Ashram inmates (Vol. XXXII). He understood better the meaning of self-effacement and renunciation of the fruits of work. Above all, in his struggle for self-purification he turned for strength to Rama, his chosen God, with increasing humility and faith. "Rama has now come into my home," he had declared in an article in *Navajivan* dated June 5, 1924. ". . . My life is His. In Him I live. . . In the Bhangi and the Brahmin I see the same Rama and to them both I bow" (Vol. XXIV, p. 197). Ramanama gave him infinite capacity for suffering (p. 274). This was the final discovery resulting from his innumerable experiments in truth. This faith in Ramanama was to sustain him in the darkest days of the last two years of his life and enable him to meet his end as he had always wished to meet it.

These experiments of Gandhiji in the spiritual field, giving him increasing self-knowledge and inner strength, were the source of such power as he possessed "for working in the political field" (p. 3). The power consisted in an ability to raise men and women above their usual selves, to call forth and use for common good the heroic goodness inherent in all people. Gandhiji's authority throughout his long political career depended wholly on the free choice of individuals moved by "admiration, hope and love". In his *Jail Diary* (Vol. XXIII, p. 151) he noted down carefully this saying of Boehme: "If thou rulest over the creatures externally

only and not from the right internal ground of thy inward nature, then thy will and ruling is in a bestial kind or manner.'' The only sanction behind Gandhiji's innumerable orders was the voluntary acceptance of his leadership. Yet no man in history commanded such obedience from so many for so long. If conscientious practice of dharma strengthens one's moral being and confers such moral power to use the inherent goodness of the people as a force in politics, these experiments in bringing religion from heaven to earth, from the closet to the open, from the temple to the market-place, were well worth making and are well worth careful study.

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PREFACE

Gandhiji's chief preoccupations during the period covered in this volume (February 15 to May 31, 1929) were khadi propaganda and organization of foreign-cloth boycott in preparation for the struggle for swaraj envisaged in the resolution passed by the Congress at Calcutta in December 1928. The Congress Working Committee at a meeting held in Delhi on 17th February had, after four hours' discussion, accepted Gandhiji's scheme of boycott and the Foreign-cloth Boycott Committee was formed with him as Chairman. Gandhiji invited Jairamdas Doulatram, a prominent Congress worker from Sind, to resign his seat in the Bombay Legislative Assembly and take up full-time work as Secretary of the Committee. A detailed programme was drawn up and Gandhiji appealed to the country to pursue it vigorously. He visited Burma in March to collect funds for khadi and other constructive activities and carried his message of the boycott of foreign cloth there too. In April-May he undertook an extensive tour of Andhra, penetrated deep into the remotest villages and addressed thousands upon thousands of villagers.

For Gandhiji boycott of foreign cloth was not a political weapon against the British but a means of relieving the chronic underemployment in the country and attaining "swaraj in terms of the hungry millions" (p. 78). He asked everybody to put in his mite: "Let no one belittle his or her own individual effort. Complete boycott means an aggregate of individual effort. . . . It is the individual effort that will have precipitated the national response whenever it comes" (p. 44).

The programme of public bonfires of cloth was revived and on March 4, at a meeting in Shraddhanand Park, Calcutta, Gandhiji himself lighted one such bonfire in disregard of a police notice declaring that the act would be an offence in law. Gandhiji questioned the validity of this interpretation of law and, when subsequently charge-sheeted in a court, reiterated what he had explained at length at the meeting: "This boycott is not part of civil disobedience. There was no intention to defy the police notice for the sake of defiance and courting imprisonment" (p. 181). Gandhiji was convicted and fined Re. 1. He was not surprised by the magistrate's finding. It only confirmed his opinion "that in cases of a serious clash between the authorities and the public, the judges would, even if unconsciously, exonerate the former" (p. 201).

Commenting on the incident in *Navajivan*, Gandhiji had said: "I hope that the lathis of hundreds of thousands of policemen will not be able to extinguish the fire that was kindled in that park on that day" (p. 84). The incident did serve to raise the political temperature in the country and gave momentum to the boycott movement. Gandhiji, however, was not satisfied. He was conscious of the weakness of the country and the Congress and was convinced that without national regeneration, which he called self-purification, they would not be able to reform the Government (p. 19). Constructive work, including khadi, was for him "a symbol of soul-force and of faith in it" (p. 271). But in the course of his tours he realized that the programme was not being prosecuted in that spirit. He missed, he said, "a living faith in the method of non-violence, I have felt even a want of faith in it. An atmosphere of despair undoubtedly pervades the air. This demoralizing uncertainty disables workers from appreciating to the full the programme prescribed by the National Congress" (pp. 260-1).

The Government's policy of repression seemed to have given rise to what Gandhiji described as a "philosophy of mad revenge and impotent rage" (p. 259). On April 8, when President Vithalbhai Patel rose in the Central Legislative Assembly to give his ruling on the Public Safety Bill brought forward by the Government, Bhagat Singh and Batukeshvar Dutt threw two bombs and some red pamphlets from the visitors' gallery. Gandhiji publicly condemned their action, but also told the Government that they were "in no small measure to blame for the madness of the bomb-thrower" (p. 259). At the same time he warned Congress workers too: "Congressmen whose creed is non-violence will do well not to give even secret approval to the deed but pursue their method with redoubled vigour, if they have real faith in it" (p. 260).

During the Burma tour from March 8 to 22, Gandhiji utilized the opportunity to advise the Indian residents to maintain correct relations with the Burmese and to sympathize with their aspirations (pp. 106 & 112). On the demand for the separation of Burma, he advised the Indians "not to take sides and to let the Burmans decide the question for themselves" (p. 183). On non-political matters, Gandhiji gently drew the attention of his hosts to the evils that he noticed in their midst. "There are things in your practice which I have not been able to reconcile with the teachings of the Buddha. . .", he told a public meeting in Mandalay (pp. 159-60). He wanted the Burmans to "become torch-bearers lighting the path of a weary world towards the goal of

ahimsa'' and to adopt the path of self-purification and penance for that purpose (pp. 161-2).

Returning from the Burma tour Gandhiji presided over the Kathiawar Political Conference. He counselled the local workers moderation in dealing with the Princes, arguing that it was possible to bring about reforms in the Indian States and that, therefore, he did not seek their destruction as he did that of the British Government (pp. 189-90). ''Indian Princes are like us,'' he said later in an article in *Navajivan*, ''they are the products of this land, they have the faults which we have and we should cultivate the charity to grant that they may have even the good qualities which we ourselves have'' (p. 301).

The Andhra tour, from April 6 to May 21, was the longest he had undertaken in any province and fetched the highest collection from any single province: about Rs. 2,64,400. This was his longest and most intensive tour (p. 433), but he would repeat it ''a hundred times under . . . a superintendent like Deshabhakta and amid a people like the Andhras'' (p. 412). In his speeches Gandhiji reminded the people of ''the four pillars of swaraj: wear only khaddar, eradicate the drink and drug evils, remove untouchability, and work for Hindu-Muslim unity and inter-communal unity'' (p. 316). The most memorable incident of the tour, for him, was his visit to a girl-widow named Satyavatidevi who wished to gift all her ornaments and jewellery to the Khadi Fund. ''The story of Satyavati'', Gandhiji wrote afterwards, ''is enacted in hundreds of Hindu homes every day. The curse . . . descends upon Hindu society so long as it keeps the widow under an unforgivable bondage'' (p. 322).

The volume provides ample illustration of Gandhiji's personal *tapascharya* in pursuit of the goal of *moksha* through service of humanity to which he had dedicated his life. Writing on the death of Rasik, his grandson whom he had brought up himself since Harilal's estrangement and whom he had been training for national service, he said: ''With the views I hold on death Rasik's death has caused me no grief, or such grief as I have felt is purely based on selfish considerations. . . . His death therefore only brings me closer to God, makes me realize my responsibility more fully than before'' (p. 14). Writing to Mirabehn towards the close of his Burma tour, he said: ''I shall feel the parting with Dr. Mehta. I see that I can comfort him if I am there. But this is a private privilege I may not enjoy'' (p. 158).

It was, however, the affairs of the Ashram that tested Gandhiji's capacity for *anasakti*—non-attachment—to the utmost. Since the

death of Maganlal a year earlier Gandhiji had been taking keener interest in introducing greater ethical and community discipline in the Ashram. But this seems to have proved beyond the immediate capacity of most inmates. The crisis came in April after serious moral lapses by two co-workers and violation of an Ashram rule by Kasturba were brought to Gandhiji's notice. Undeterred by the risk of incurring obloquy for the Ashram, Gandhiji wrote about these lapses in *Navajivan* under the caption "My Shame and Sorrow", and the article was translated in *Young India* (pp. 209-12). He wrote to Mirabehn: "We are the better for the exposures" (p. 251). And to G. D. Birla he confessed "the sweet joy of publicly confessing one's own guilt" (p. 311).

Gandhiji took the responsibility for these lapses upon himself. "I hold the manifestation of the corruption in the Mandir," he said, "to be merely the reflection of the wrong in myself" (p. 211). The anguish in his mind breaks out in his questions: "But what am I to do? Should I flee or commit suicide or embark on an endless fast or immure myself alive in the Mandir or refuse to handle public finance or public duty?" He could do none of these things mechanically, he said, but must wait for the voice within. "An activity commenced in God's name may be given up only at His bidding. And when He wishes this activity of mine to be brought to a close He will surely prompt society to hound me out of its pale and I hug to myself the hope that even in that dread hour of retribution I shall still have power to declare my faith in Him" (p. 212).

The tensions that seem to have followed the disclosures led several inmates, including Mahadev Desai and Narandas Gandhi, to think of leaving the Ashram. Gandhiji, realizing the practical limits on the pace of growth in the Ashram, decided to lighten his control and let the inmates themselves shape it in the manner they thought best (p. 338). The Ashram was a medium for conducting "an experiment in absolute 'democracy' " (p. 368). He told Chhaganlal Joshi, Secretary of the Ashram, that he would not mind any of the activities of the Ashram, or the Ashram itself, being wound up. "I have made it my profession in life to break up homes and have felt no wrench in the heart at any time while doing so. . . . I shall, then, feel no wrench in my heart in breaking up this Ashram and building a new one" (pp. 347-8). All that he craved for was sincerity on the part of co-workers. "Sincerity may sometimes appear cruel. You should not shrink from appearing to be cruel to me. Be sincere at any cost" (p. 348).

In a letter to Chhaganlal Joshi in connection with the Ashram

affairs, Gandhiji said: "Truth is never ashamed of itself anywhere in the world. When truth feels ashamed of itself, you may be sure that it is not truth but falsehood" (p. 306).

Replying to an open letter from the Rev. B. de Ligt on his attitude to war, he said: "I can no longer in any conceivable circumstance take part in Britain's wars. And I have already said in these pages that if India attains (what will be to me so-called) freedom by violent means she will cease to be a country of my pride; that time would be a time for me of civil death" (p. 365).

In a discussion with Dr. John Mott, an evangelist of repute who met Gandhiji at Sabarmati, he deprecated conversion. The effort should never be to undermine another's faith but to make him a better follower of his own faith. Recognizing that he was up against a solid wall of Christian opinion, he still declared that the prophets spoke "not through the tongue but through their lives" (p. 60).

In a brief but moving article (pp. 245-6) addressed to young people struggling for self-mastery, Gandhiji recommends repeated reading of the *Gita* and the *Ramayana* as a means of strengthening the heart and purifying the mind. A review article on an Antyaja Directory concludes thus: "True art is never useless. . . . Nature abounds in art and . . . art is filled to the brim with utility. There is not a single useless colour in a peacock's plumage; if we are not aware of their purpose the reason is our ignorance, not the extravagance of Nature" (p. 342).

CWMG - C

PREFACE

During the period of four and a half months (June 1 to October 15, 1929) covered in this volume, Gandhiji continued his efforts to educate public opinion for the coming struggle for independence in terms of the Calcutta Congress Resolution of the preceding year. After a strenuous tour of Andhra in April-May, he went for rest to Kausani in Almora, where he finished his Gujarati translation of the *Bhagavad Gita*, published later under the title *Anasaktiyoga*, on which he had been working for some time. The volume also records the progress of yet another experiment in food which Gandhiji had commenced during the Andhra tour. During July-August, he studied in depth the Ahmedabad textile workers' case for a living wage which had been referred to him and Sheth Mangaldas Girdhardas as members of a permanent board of arbitrators, and drew up a carefully documented statement in support of the case for submission to an umpire (pp. 359-63). In early September, Gandhiji resumed travelling and left for a khadi propaganda tour of the U.P.

The volume begins with an assessment of the work of the Foreign-Cloth Boycott Committee. Gandhiji paid a compliment to the "enthusiastic and dutiful Secretary" of the Committee, Jairamdas Doulatram, but complained of lack of sincerity on the part of the leaders in regard to the khadi programme. He emphasized the imperative necessity of increasing khadi production for the success of the boycott and suggested ways and means of doing so. One cause of public apathy to the khadi programme was the fact that "the intellectual wing of the Congress has weakened with the widening of its base. . . . Students of European economics, shaped according to the Government's model, could not appreciate the organization's rural bias . . . could not make the necessary sacrifices and therefore left it" (p. 257). Another cause of the apathy was the total want of faith on the people's part in their ability to do anything and their acceptance of slavery as "our natural condition". "This is a most debasing state for anyone to be in," he commented (p. 64).

Condemning the police search of the house of Ramananda Chatterjee, of the *Modern Review*, Gandhiji charged the Government with following a policy of "studied humiliation" of the whole people. "The tallest among us must be occasionally bent, lest we forget ourselves. Hence this exhibition of the red claw" (p. 19).

There were frequent prosecutions for sedition under Section 124-A of the Indian Penal Code and Gandhiji suggested a strong public agitation for the repeal of the Section (p. 195), adding, however, that "the force required really to repeal that Section is the force required for the attainment of swaraj". But he had "a suspicion that many of us want swaraj as a gift instead of earning it by the sweat of our brows" (p. 196). To an impatient critic of his khadi programme, Gandhiji replied: "You cannot get swaraj by mere speeches, shows, processions, etc. What is needed is solid, steady, constructive work; what the youth craves for and is fed on is only the former" (p. 276). Replying to the correspondent's suggestion that youthful leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose be told to raise a national volunteer force and Vallabhbhai to organize labour and peasantry to rise, Gandhiji stressed the inter-dependence of the leaders and the led. Vallabhbhai needed a Bardoli to make good his leadership. "How many Bardolis are there ready in the country today?" (p. 276), he asked.

In view of the impending struggle, a large majority in the Congress desired that Gandhiji should accept the presidentship of the organization for the coming year. But he declined to shoulder the responsibility, saying: "I know too that I am not keeping pace with the march of events. There is therefore a hiatus between the rising generation and me. . . . I know that I must take a back seat and allow the surging wave to pass over me. . . . Older men have had their innings. The battle of the future has to be fought by younger men and women. And it is but meet that they are led by one of themselves" (p. 240). Recommending Jawaharlal Nehru for the honour, he said: ". . . his being in the chair is as good as my being in it. We may have intellectual differences but our hearts are one. And with all his youthful impetuosities, his sense of stern discipline and loyalty make him an inestimable comrade in whom one can put the most implicit faith" (p. 241).

Gandhiji admitted to being "a crank, faddist and mad man" in regard to his dietetic experiments (p. 34), but pleaded, in a letter to G. D. Birla, that such experiments were an integral part of his life and were essential for his mental peace (p. 13). "As a searcher for Truth I deem it necessary to find the perfect food for a man to keep body, mind and soul in a sound condition" (p. 307). Though he found "after prolonged experiment and observation that there is no fixed dietetic rule for all constitutions" (p. 263), he enthusiastically shared with his readers and correspondents the details and results of his experiments and

offered them advice on the basis of his experiences (pp. 34-6, 59, 196-9, 210, 214 & 263-5). His latest experiment, in uncooked food, was a failure and had to be terminated in the middle of August but he hoped to revert to it later with greater caution (p. 307).

In Almora, Gandhiji drank in the beauty of the Himalayas with a poet's delight. He called them "this king of seers" (p. 72) and wrote about the "hills clad with greenery, as though, feeling shy, they had covered their bodies with it" (p. 79). But the thought of the country's plight weighed so heavily on his heart that he could not permit himself the "luxury" of enjoying such beauty without some excuse of work in Almora (pp. 79 & 148). Gandhiji fancied himself hearing Sankaracharya, who had propounded the theory of *maya*, say: "This is indeed a marvellous sight, but all this is an illusion created by God. The Himalayas do not really exist, I do not exist and you do not exist. Brahman alone is real." "The true Himalayas," Gandhiji concluded, "exist within our hearts. True pilgrimage. . . consists in taking shelter in that cave and having *darshan* of Siva there" (p. 184).

Writing in *Hindi Navajivan* on "Reason *v*. Faith", Gandhiji explained that whatever is "amenable to rational inquiry" cannot be the subject of faith. "In every matter," he added, "faith must be supported by empirical knowledge. For ultimately experience is the basis of faith and everyone who has faith must at some time pass through experience" (pp. 435-6). We should, he said in another context, "subject even a "mahatma's" word to the test by means of our intellect and if it does not stand the test we should discard it" (p. 55). He wanted to be saved from the "horror of touching-the-feet devotion" (p. 351), and was pained by Mirabehn's hankering after his company, which he diagnosed as a disease of "idolatry" (p. 78).

Gandhiji's intense dislike of some aspects of modern civilization is reflected in this entertaining description of the contents of newspapers: ". . . the progress of motion pictures, of the progress made in aviation, stories of murders, facts describing the various revolutions that are going on in the world, dirty descriptions of dirty proceedings of law-suits, news regarding horse races, the stock exchange and motor-car accidents" (p. 187). Speaking from long personal experience Gandhiji confessed his strong faith in the practice of taking vows: "A vow imparts stability, ballast and firmness to one's character" (p. 272).

The volume carries the *Anasaktiyoga* (the Yoga of Non-attach-

ment), with comments on selected verses and with a lucid and reasoned preface expounding his interpretation of the *Gita's* teaching. An English rendering by Mahadev Desai of the verses and of Gandhiji's comments on them, with a scholarly introduction entitled "My Submission" and additional notes on the verses, was published in 1946 under the title *The Gospel of Selfless Action or The Gita according to Gandhi.* The preface in the original Gujarati was rendered into English by Gandhiji himself in Yeravda jail in instalments of one or more paragraphs daily and was published in *Young India* of 6-8-1931. The manuscript of this English rendering, in Gandhiji's own hand, is available, and variations between it and the translation as edited for *Young India* (which is reproduced in this volume) are indicated in the footnotes. Like the English version of *Hind Swaraj* (Vol. X), this translation of the preface in *Anasaktiyoga* provides a valuable illustration of Gandhiji's method of translating his own Gujarati.

Disclaiming all pretension to scholarship and ignoring the subtleties of metaphysical doctrine, Gandhiji in the preface and in his notes concentrated on bringing out the fundamental ethical teaching of the *Gita* for the benefit of the lay reader, of women, Vaishyas and Shudras "who have little or no literary equipment, who have neither the time nor the desire to read the *Gita* in the original and yet who stand in need of its support" (p. 92). His only qualification for this task was, he said, "an endeavour to enforce the meaning in my own conduct for an unbroken period of 40 years" (p. 92). On the basis of that experience, Gandhiji made bold to offer an interpretation of the *Gita's* teaching which departed from the traditional views of it in important respects. His approach to the subject illustrates his attitude to all scriptures. He claimed the freedom to interpret the revealed word in the light of a disciplined and purified conscience. "A poet's meaning," he says, "is limitless. Like man, the meaning of great writings suffers evolution" (p. 99). By extending the meanings of words like *yajna* and *sannyasa*, the author of the *Gita* "has taught us to imitate him" (p. 100). It was this attempt to interpret the scriptures in consonance with modern ethical insights that enabled Gandhiji to exemplify in his life the living truth behind the old religious formulas. In *Anasaktiyoga*, Gandhiji approached the *Gita* in this spirit and attempted a systematic exposition of a personal and creative interpretation of its teaching.

The traditional view of the *Gita* doctrine of *karmayoga*, spiritually oriented action, was bound up with the supposedly historical context of the teaching. As an exhortation to Arjuna to overcome

his attachment masquerading as compassion and to do his dharma as a Kshatriya, leaving the result of the fighting in God's hands, the *Gita* was believed to enjoin disinterested performance of caste functions and duties, including the Kshatriya's duty of righteous war. In modern times the emphasis on caste duties was dropped and the meaning of *niyata karma*, the allotted duty (III. 18)—the phrase has also been interpreted to mean self-controlled action—was enlarged to embrace public and national service, and the doctrine of disinterested work so interpreted inspired a host of patriots, led by Shri Aurobindo and Bal Gangadhar Tilak, in the struggle for the emancipation and regeneration of the Motherland.

Gandhiji had discovered the *Gita via* the medium of a rather free English translation (Edwin Arnold's *The Song Celestial*), and he naturally read it in the light of the moral and religious ideas which were fermenting in his mind while he was studying for the Bar in England. He instantaneously saw in the work a confirmation of his own as yet vague intuitions (Vol. XXXIX, pp. 60-2), and closer study of the work, after 1903, deepened those intuitions and integrated his developing political, humanitarian and ethical concerns by providing them with a spiritual foundation. Henceforward the *Gita* became for him "a spiritual reference book" (p. 91).

Gandhiji disengaged the *Gita's* teaching from its historical context by interpreting the Mahabharata battle anagogically, as describing, under the guise of physical warfare, "the duel that perpetually went on in the hearts of mankind" (p. 93). "Krishna of the *Gita*," he says, "is perfection and right knowledge personified; but the picture is imaginary" (p. 94). The primary aim of the work, thus, is not to rouse a warrior to physical battle in a just cause, but to teach an aspirant to found all his activities in spiritual consciousness and to show him the means of doing so. This means consisted in doing one's duty in the spirit of *yajna*, sacrifice, dedicating the fruits of the sacrifice to the Lord seated in the hearts of all beings. Such endeavour ruled out, according to Gandhiji, violence and untruth in any form and for any cause (p. 98). The characteristics of the *sthitaprajna*, the man whose intellect is firmly anchored in the spiritual centre of his being, described in Chapter II of the *Gita*, do not have, Gandhiji argued, the remotest connection with the specific duties of a warrior (p. 93). And the characteristics of the *bhakta*, the man whose heart abides for ever in loving devotion to God, described later in Chapter XII, are no different from those of the *sthitaprajna*.

Similarly, Gandhiji enlarged the traditional meaning of the two key terms, *yajna* and *swadharma*, in the *Gita* teaching.

Gandhiji interpreted *yajna* to mean, not a mere ritual offering, but "acts of selfless service dedicated to God" (p. 106). *Swadharma* meant, according to him, not merely caste functions and duties, but the duty of service in whatever occupation one followed (p. 108). All action not performed in this spirit was, according to the *Gita*, a cause of bondage, and since no human being could escape the necessity of action in obedience to the laws of universal Nature to which he is subject, the *Gita* enjoins disinterested performance of *yajna*, the worshipful offering of all actions to the Lord, as the only means of deliverance (III. 5 & 9 and IV. 27). This, according to Gandhiji, was the core of the *Gita's* teaching.

The *Gita* is thus not a mere exhortation to spiritual endeavour or a code of morals and ethics; it is a practical guide to the most effective way of attaining self-realization, and in this lay its excellence (p. 94). Gandhiji offers a simple and universal remedy for the ills of life. "That matchless remedy is renunciation of the fruits of action. This is the centre round which the *Gita* is woven" (pp. 94-5). Such renunciation is possible only to a true *bhakta* (p. 95), and Gandhiji exemplified its efficacy by his life-long *sadhana* of public service, sustained in failure and success by his faith in Ramanama as a potent form of prayer. "Ramanama is a matter of faith not of the intellect. . . . Whether or not one gets peace from it, whether one feels happy or unhappy, one ought to keep up the repetition in the faith that Ramanama alone is real" (p. 246).

CWMG-C

PREFACE

The period covered in this volume (October 16, 1929 to February 28, 1930) represents a major turning point in the struggle for freedom, with Gandhiji firmly resuming active leadership of the movement after a lapse of nearly eight years and identifying himself with the demand of the radical school, headed by Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose, for complete independence as the country's goal. Gandhiji had opposed the demand when it was first voiced at the Madras session of the National Congress in December 1927 and opposed it again the following year at the Calcutta session, arguing that the word "swaraj" possessed a richer and more tangible connotation for the masses and included independence. But having been a party to the compromise resolution at the Calcutta Congress giving to the British Government a year's time within which to concede a Dominion Status constitution as envisaged in the Motilal Nehru Report of 1928, Gandhiji himself sponsored at the Lahore session in December 1929 a resolution proclaiming complete independence as the country's immediate goal and authorizing the launching of a civil disobedience movement to achieve it. "Organizations like men . . . must have a sense of honour and fulfil their promises", he said explaining his stand to English friends (pp. 424-5). "The nation wants to feel its power more even than to have independence. Possession of such power *is* independence" (p. 426).

Gandhiji had been touring the U.P. since about the middle of September, and this volume carries detailed accounts of the tour written by Gandhiji himself which are fine specimens of his narrative style and his manner of stressing the educative purpose of the tours. In the Westernized atmosphere of luxury at Mussoorie he felt "like a fish out of water" and at the civic meeting "he pointedly reminded the citizens of their duty towards the poor people" (p. 71). He seems to have felt uncomfortable in the Aligarh University meeting too, where, though he was made an honorary member of the University Union and there was, otherwise, no want of enthusiasm, khadi "was practically conspicuous by its absence among the students" and no purse was presented for *Daridranarayana* (pp. 153-4). At Mathura also, the "absence in this celebrated holy place of Hinduism of anything to remind one of the nativity of Krishna, the first among the cowherds of the world . . . preyed upon his mind" and he "emptied his soul

before the meeting on behalf of the cow'' (p. 154), for to Gandhiji the cow was our mother and the bullock our brother (p. 80).

These disappointments, however, were more than made up for by his pleasant discovery during the tour that some of the young talukdars and zamindars in the province were shedding their fear and actively supporting the national cause. The Raja Saheb of Kalakankar and his family were habitual khadi-wearers and invited Gandhiji to light a bonfire of foreign garments drawn from their wardrobes. At the public meeting he expressed the hope that the rich would act as trustees of the people, and said: ''The dream I want to realize is not spoliation of the property of private owners but to restrict its enjoyment so as to avoid . . . the hideously ugly contrast that exists today between the lives and surroundings of the rich and the poor'' (p. 201).

But though Gandhiji complimented the zamindars and talukdars on their patriotic zeal, he was not fully satisfied with the change in their lives. There was, he said, still a wide gulf between them and the ryots and ''a great deal of patronizing and self-satisfaction over the little that has been done'' (p. 239). He wanted ''a definite recognition on the part of the moneyed class that the ryot possesses the same soul that they do and that their wealth gives them no superiority over the poor'' (p. 239). And he concluded with the warning: ''There is no other choice than between voluntary surrender on the part of the capitalist of superfluities . . . on the one hand, and on the other the impending chaos into which . . . awakened but ignorant, famishing millions will plunge the country . . . '' (p. 240). Writing in another context, Gandhiji referred to ''the presence in our midst of the indigenous interests that have sprung up from British rule . . . All these do not always realize that they are living on the blood of the masses, and when they do, they become as callous as the British principals whose tools and agents they are'' (p. 452).

During the visit to Meerut, Gandhiji had a one and a half hours' holiday with the undertrial prisoners of the so-called Meerut Conspiracy Case. With his humour delightfully turned against himself, he kept the prisoners laughing all through the visit and seems to have enjoyed the meeting so much that ''he was loath to part with them'' (p. 106).

The tour also took Gandhiji to Hardwar where he was evidently repelled by the prevailing insanitation, both physical and moral, and confessed, ''In spite of my innate love of Hinduism, in spite of my conservatism that ever seeks to respect and justify ancient institutions, these holy places have few man-made attractions for me'' (p. 75).

On October 31, the Viceroy, Lord Irwin, issued an official statement in which he declared on behalf of the British Government that in their judgement "it is implicit in the declaration of 1917 that the natural issue of India's constitutional progress, as there contemplated, is the attainment of Dominion Status" (*vide* Appendix I), and announced the British Government's intention to call a Round Table Conference in London to discuss a new constitution for India. Gandhiji issued with leaders of other parties a joint statement which cautiously welcomed the Viceroy's announcement, assuming that "the Conference is to meet not to discuss when Dominion Status is to be established but to frame a scheme of Dominion Constitution for India" (p. 81). A specific assurance on this point was sought by Gandhiji from the Viceroy at their meeting on December 23, but this the latter was unable to give. The Congress thereupon proceeded at Lahore to act upon its previous year's ultimatum and passed a resolution, on the last day of the year, proclaiming *purna* swaraj, complete independence, as the country's goal.

But Gandhiji does not seem to have reconciled himself to this radical step without an inner struggle. Replying earlier to cables from English friends advising him to reciprocate the effort of the Labour Government to help India, he had said he was "dying for co-operation. My non-co-operation is a token of my earnest longing for real heart co-operation in the place of co-operation falsely so called. . . . I can wait for the Dominion Status constitution, if I can get the real Dominion Status in action . . . " (p. 150). He recognized, however, that India had not developed sufficient strength to assert her right and added: "I have patience enough to wait. I can work and live for no other goal" (p. 151). Gandhiji displayed the same sense of realism in opposing Subhas Bose's suggestion of a "parallel government": "You cannot establish freedom by the mere passing of a resolution. You will establish freedom not by words but by deeds" (p. 356).

This approach, however, did not appeal to the younger nationalists and Jawaharlal Nehru, President-elect of the Congress, felt extremely unhappy after signing the All-Parties Leaders' Statement at Gandhiji's persuasion (*vide* Appendix II). Replying to his letter, Gandhiji said: "I have always honoured your resistance. . . . Resist me always when my suggestion does not appeal to your head or heart. I shall not love you the less for that resistance", but added, "As an executive officer now and President for the coming year . . . your signature was logical, wise and otherwise correct" (p. 96).

The Congress resolution provoked a storm of criticism both in India and England and Gandhiji made an offer to the Viceroy that he would be satisfied for the time being with immediate relief in terms of the famous eleven points which he enumerated in a *Young India* article, "Clearing the Issue", and which he described as the "very simple but vital needs of India" (p. 434). The eleven points—the fourth of which was abolition of the salt tax—served to give "a body in part to the elusive word independence", as he explained in another article. "Even an Independence Constitution is not an end in itself. . . . Independence means at least those eleven points, if it means anything at all to the masses, the man in the street. . . . It means the consciousness in the average villager that he is the maker of his own destiny, he is his own legislator through his chosen representatives" (p. 469).

The cumulative result of the continuing frustration of nationalist aspirations and deepening poverty was a rapid spread of the spirit of violence in the country and the consequent growth of the terrorist party. Gandhiji intuitively sensed at the Lahore Congress the mounting impatience of nationalist India and, while he feared and disapproved of terrorist violence (pp. 361-4 and 423) he realized, as he told C. F. Andrews, that "the spirit of violence must be dealt with by non-violent *action* if the situation is to be at all saved". He added: "I have made up my mind to run the boldest risks" (p. 444). While admitting that "there are undoubtedly forces of violence to be seen on the surface which I may not be able to control", he hoped that "true non-violence which I advocate might yet be able to circumvent and rise superior even to these forces . . ." (p. 421). The contemplated civil disobedience campaign was thus intended both to combat the organized violence of British rule and to "save the country from impending lawlessness and secret crime" (p. 423). Appealing to the violent revolutionary to suspend his activity, he confessed, "I dread him more than I dread Lord Irwin's wrath" (p. 435). Non-violence, he explained in another context, did not amount to cowardice. "Non-violence is the greatest virtue, cowardice the greatest vice. . . . Perfect non-violence is the highest bravery. Non-violent conduct is never demoralizing, cowardice always is" (p. 73).

For a long time, however, Gandhiji was not clear about the form of the campaign. He told Jawaharlal Nehru that "in the present state of the Congress, no civil disobedience can be or should be offered in its name and that it should be offered by me alone or jointly with a few companions . . ." (p. 382). He wanted to dis-

cover a formula which would enable him to avoid having to suspend the campaign because of any popular violence as he had done in 1922 after the incidents in Chauri Chaura. He retired to the seclusion of the Sabarmati Ashram for a while to evolve a suitable plan of action. "It is absolutely necessary for the person controlling such a movement," he told the correspondent of *The Daily Express*, "to keep himself in tune with the voice of his followers, and therefore he must be as impervious to outside influences as he has to be sensitive to every little thing that goes on within" (p. 420). It was his own limitations, he added, which made it impossible for him to penetrate the surrounding darkness (p. 421). While Gandhiji thus sought the guidance of the inner voice, he was fully aware of the need for the utmost vigilance in trusting to it. "How can one know," he asked, "when the inner voice is speaking and when one or more or all of the six inner enemies are speaking?" (p. 235). "But the shining cover that overlays the truth", he told C. F. Andrews, "is thinning day by day and will presently break" (p. 444). The solution was at last provided by the Congress Working Committee resolution of February 15, 1930, which authorized Gandhiji and those of his co-workers who believed in non-violence as an article of faith for achieving swaraj, to start civil disobedience, and called upon all Congressmen to extend full co-operation to the civil resisters. The resolution, said Gandhiji, gave him "my charter of freedom" binding him "in the tightest chains. It is the formula of which I have been in search these long and weary months" (p. 480). The speech at the prayer meeting on February 15 was a serious call to suffering, to the conversion of the Ashram into a "lamp of sacrifice" (pp. 477-8). In a *Young India* article he declared his intention "to start the movement only through the inmates of the Ashram and those who have submitted to its discipline and assimilated the spirit of its methods" (p. 497).

Gandhiji had the rare gift of being able to understand and sympathize with completely opposite points of view sincerely held. If he could honour Jawaharlal Nehru for his resistance, he also prized his bond with the poet Rabindranath Tagore and the Liberal leader V. S. Srinivasa Sastri both of whom were outspoken critics of some of Gandhiji's policies. The differences between him and Tagore had occasionally assumed the form of public controversies which seem to have caused him much pain (*vide* Vol. XXI, pp. 287-91 and Vol. XXVIII, pp. 425-30). He was, therefore, very pleased to report to C. F. Andrews: "Gurudev passed a delightful two hours with me. . . . We came nearer each other this time

and I was so thankful'' (p. 444). The differences with Srinivasa Sastri persisted, but Gandhiji could fully appreciate the latter's point of view, which had been in fact his own for many years. ''I wish you had written the letter you intended to'', he wrote to Sastri. ''You know how I prize your opinion. It would give me immense relief to be able to adopt your mode of thought'' (p. 445).

Gandhiji's greatest service in the field of social reform, besides his campaign for the eradication of untouchability, was the revolutionary change that he effected in the traditional attitude towards women. ''I do not need to be a girl to be wild over man's atrocities towards woman. . . . I am uncompromising in the matter of woman's rights'', he said, commenting on a letter from Raihana Tyabji requesting him to support the cause of women's rights of inheritance (p. 4). But he blamed women, too, for the existing state of affairs. The root of the evil, he said, lay not in legal inequalities but in ''man's greed of power and fame and deeper still in mutual lust'' (p. 5). In fighting for their freedom, however, Gandhiji wanted the women of India not to imitate the manner of the West but to apply ''methods suited to the Indian genius and Indian environment.'' It is from Sita and Draupadi, Savitri and Damayanti that women today can derive strength and guidance for heroic conduct, the inner control which, while bringing the ideal into current practice, will conserve the best and reject the base (p. 6). The innocence which he wanted women to cultivate was the purity of Shuka (p. 254), not the prudery of affected modesty. To another correspondent who had sought his advice as to how to abolish distinctions of high and low, Gandhiji wrote: '' . . . there can be no greater propaganda than one's own conduct. What one wants others to do, one should do oneself'' (p. 78).

History based on the imperfect events of the passing hour holds less of truth and value for Gandhiji than a poem like the *Mahabharata* which is based on timeless and imperishable inner experience. Janaka's example continues to be relevant today; it is no mere ''brinjal in a book'', but a ''fresh brinjal to be plucked and eaten, as the ones growing in our field'' (p. 228). Advising students on the necessity of making congregational prayers compulsory, Gandhiji said: ''Restraint self-imposed is no compulsion. . . . the man who binds himself to rules and restraints releases himself. . . . If we will be men walking with our heads erect and not walking on all fours, let us understand and put ourselves under voluntary discipline and restraint'' (p. 413).

PREFACE

This volume (March to June 1930) covers the famous Dandi march and the launching by Gandhiji, under the authority of the Congress, of the Civil Disobedience movement known as Salt Satyagraha, against the background of mass arrests and repression let loose by the Government and large-scale resignations by Indian members from the Central and Provincial Legislatures.

The movement was inaugurated with the historic letter that Gandhiji wrote to the Viceroy on March 2 and sent through Reginald Reynolds, a young Englishman, thus dramatizing what he regarded as the very essence of satyagraha, total absence of ill will towards the opponent. The letter told "the tale of India's ruination" under British rule and invited the Viceroy "to pave the way for immediate removal" of evils such as the terrific pressure of land revenue, liabilities incurred in the name of India and an administration "demonstrably the most expensive in the world", with the Viceroy getting "much over five thousand times India's average income". Should the Viceroy be unable to see his way to deal with these evils, Gandhiji announced his intention to "proceed, with such co-workers of the Ashram as I can take, to disregard the provisions of the salt laws," which he considered "the most iniquitous of all from the poor man's standpoint".

The movement, Gandhiji was at pains to point out, was directed against the system, not against the Englishman or "any legitimate interest he may have in India". In a *Young India* article he had asserted, "My indictment is not against the English as men, it is against Englishmen as the ruling caste. As men they are as good as we" (p. 265). He handsomely acknowledged the gifts of the British to the Indian people, for example, punctuality, reticence, public hygiene and independent thinking (p. 15). But while British contacts might have had a good moral influence, British rule was nothing but a curse. The Indian struggle for freedom was "designed to free India and also Britain" and he claimed to be a true and wise friend of Britain and an equally true and wise servant of India (p. 54). Even against Indian officials, there was the danger of violence breaking out and Gandhiji warned a follower that the fight was against Dyerism, not Dyer. "We should examine our attitude by putting ourselves this question: 'How would I behave with the officer if he were my own brother?' " (p. 371).

Gandhiji was fully aware of the risk of popular violence in one form or another. He was deterred for long by fear of such violence from embarking on Civil Disobedience. But, though nothing had happened externally, the internal conflict had now ceased and he felt positively certain that the time for Civil Disobedience was ripe (p. 44). "I had no confidence in myself," he told a meeting in Broach. "I was straining my ear to listen to the still small voice within. . . . But suddenly, as in a flash, I saw the light in the Ashram. Self-confidence returned. . . . I feel that now is the time or it will be never" (pp. 125-6). But the struggle was to be "exclusively non-violent", as he had assured a prayer meeting at the Ashram. "The reins of the movement will still remain in the hands of those of my associates who believe in non-violence as an article of faith" (p. 46). True non-violence, he said, was an intensely active force and he wished "to set in motion that force as well against the organized violent force of the British rule as [against] the unorganized violent force of the growing party of violence." And "the victories of truth", he added, "have never been won without risks, often of the gravest character" (p. 6). To the warning, "History will have to repeat itself in India", Gandhiji replied: "Let it repeat itself if it must. I for one must not postpone the movement unless I am to be guilty of the charge of cowardice" (pp. 42-3). Tyranny, he said, generated rage among the victims which remained latent because of their weakness and burst in all its fury on the slightest pretext. "Civil disobedience is a sovereign method of transmuting this undisciplined life-destroying latent energy into disciplined life-saving energy whose use ensures absolute success" (p. 133). The civil resisters struggled both against the violence of the Government and the violence of those among the people who had no faith in non-violence. "Satyagrahis, if they are true to their creed, will either come out victorious or will be ground to atoms between the two mills" (p. 301).

The Viceroy's reply to Gandhiji's appeal was simply an expression of regret that the latter should be contemplating "a course of action which is clearly bound to involve violation of the law and danger to the public peace." "On bended knees I asked for bread and I have received stone instead," Gandhiji commented (p. 51). The Viceroy, he added, "represents a nation that does not easily give in, that does not easily repent. . . . It readily listens to physical force. . . . It will listen also to mute resistless suffering." As regards violation of the law, Gandhiji asserted that "the only law that the nation knows is the will of the British adminis-

trators, the only public peace the nation knows is the peace of a public prison. . . . I repudiate this law and regard it as my sacred duty to break the mournful monotony of the compulsory peace that is choking the heart of the nation for want of free vent" (p. 52).

What distinguished the Civil Disobedience campaign this time from the Non-co-operation movement of 1920-21 was the stress Gandhiji laid on the present occasion on the economic grievances of the masses and the meaning of political freedom for them. "I have," he claimed, "endeavoured to give a new orientation to the national demand," which consisted in "familiarizing the nation with the contents of Independence" (p. 58). Whereas the Non-co-operation movement was launched to secure redress of the Punjab and Khilafat wrongs, this time Gandhiji emphasized the economic, political, cultural and spiritual ruin of the country under British rule and pleaded for immediate relief to the masses from what he described as "the killing weight" of an expensive, top-heavy administration (p. 5). Unless, he argued, "the motive that lies behind the craving for independence" was constantly kept in view, "there is every danger of independence coming to us so changed as to be of no value to those toiling voiceless millions for whom it is sought and for whom it is worth taking" (p. 4). This seemed all the more necessary because, as Gandhiji was aware, "those who are engaged in the war of independence are not, it is obvious, moved by the economic wrong. *They* do not *feel* it. *They* are moved solely by the moral and spiritual wrong which they feel in every fibre of their being. . . . In their impatience to break through the snaky coil they do not mind what they do so long as they do something, even though it may destroy them" (p. 54).

The thought of the intolerable condition of the masses preyed upon Gandhiji's mind. In Yeravda prison, he did not wish to avail himself fully of the modest monthly allowance of Rs. 100 that the Government had suggested for him. "It is an obsession (if it is to be so called) with me," he said in a letter to the Inspector-General of Prisons, "that we are all living at the expense of the toiling semi-starved millions," and the fact that his food was a costly affair grieved him very much (p. 401). In his prayer speech on the morning of March 12 before the march commenced, he had told the volunteers: "We hope to become the representatives of the poorest of the poor, the lowest of the low and the weakest of the weak." And if they did not have the strength for that, he asked them not to join the struggle (p. 60). The volunteers' rations during the march were strictly regulated and

nobody was to accept more than what the rule permitted (p. 73). At one place during the march Gandhiji rebuked the local workers who had ordered milk to be brought from Surat in a motor-lorry and had provided heavy kerosene burners during their treks at night. He appealed to the local workers to understand his agony and insisted on the volunteers accounting for every pice spent (p. 148). Twice in one issue of *Young India* he repeated: "Accounts should be accurately kept and frequently published. Books should be weekly examined by auditors" (p. 310). "There should be an absolutely accurate and systematic account of all receipts and expenditure. This should be periodically audited" (p. 312).

The popular response to the march was beyond all expectations. On the very first day the route from the Ashram through the outskirts of the city and beyond was lined by vast crowds and the scene, Gandhiji felt, "was the form in which God's blessing descended on me" (p. 84). "Yesterday's demonstration," he told Mirabehn, "was a triumph of non-violence" (p. 65). After the commencement of nation-wide Civil Disobedience from April 6, the people of Gujarat seemed "to have risen in a body as it were" (p. 214). "At present India's self-respect, in fact her all, is symbolized as it were in a handful of salt in the satyagrahi's hand. Let the fist holding it therefore be broken, but let there be no voluntary surrender of the salt" (p. 215). "Whole villages have turned out. I never expected this phenomenal response" (p. 258). It was as though, as Gandhiji told Mahadev Desai, his very thoughts had grown wings and seemed to have effect even when not expressed in speech or action (p. 216). Later, commenting on Mahadev Desai's conviction, Gandhiji recognized the spontaneous and self-sustaining strength of the movement. It was a happy sign that heroes and heroic actions had become common and went unnoticed, like "myriads of sunbeams each as important as the sun itself" (p. 359). Quoting with approval Sir Martin Conway's dictum "it is in crowds that ideals reside . . . upon crowds our spiritual life depends", Gandhiji added, "If non-violence could not affect masses of mankind, it is a waste of effort for individuals to cultivate it. I hold it to be the greatest gift of God. And all God's gifts are the common heritage of His creation and not a monopoly of cloistered monks or nuns" (pp. 308-9).

The most remarkable aspect of this national awakening was the eagerness of women to join the struggle. But Gandhiji dissuaded them from participating in actual breaking of the salt law, or at any rate from deliberately joining crowds which they knew

were likely to be charged. "For women to be in the midst of such danger. . . was against the rule of chivalry," he said (p. 269). "Just as Hindus do not harm a cow," he had explained to the Ashram women, "the British do not attack women as far as possible. For Hindus it would be cowardice to take a cow to the battle-field. In the same way it would be cowardice for us to have women accompany us" on the march (pp. 12-3). "In this non-violent warfare," Gandhiji said, "their contribution should be much greater than men's," for they were immeasurably superior to men, if by strength was meant not brute strength but moral power. For them to confine themselves to the campaign against the salt tax "would be to change a pound for a penny" (p. 219). He wanted them, instead, to take up picketing of liquor shops and foreign-cloth shops. "Drink and drugs sap the moral well-being of those who are given to the habit. Foreign cloth undermines the economic foundation of the nation and throws millions out of employment". By taking up the boycott of these two, therefore, women would contribute more than men to national freedom (p. 220). Accordingly Gandhiji called a conference of women workers on April 13 at which a committee was set up to organize the work of picketing. Encouraging women to shed fear and gain confidence to take up this special task of picketing liquor shops, Gandhiji wrote: "Rama and Ravana dwell in every human being. If women would act through the Rama who is in them, the Ravana who dwells in man would be powerless. Rama awakens less readily in men than in women. Who can harm one who is protected by Rama? Who can protect one with whom Rama is displeased?" (pp. 272-3).

Gandhiji attached so much importance to the boycott of foreign cloth and its replacement by khadi that in every village on the route he enquired in detail about the progress of khadi and exhorted people to start spinning so as to accelerate the manufacture of khadi to meet the increased demand. Writing to Jerajani, a khadi worker of Bombay, he suggested that it should be made known that khadi would be sold not for money, but only against hand-spun yarn. This was, he said, "the only way to make it clear to people that khadi is not a mere commodity, . . . but . . . a symbol of the nation's strength and aspiration" (p. 305).

In this countrywide awakening brought about by the launching of the Civil Disobedience campaign a discordant note was struck by some Muslim leaders, especially Maulana Shaukat Ali, who alleged that the movement was not for swaraj but for Hindu Raj and against Mussalmans. Gandhiji pointed out, in

reply, that Civil Disobedience was "a process of developing internal strength and therefore an organic growth," and invited the Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Parsis and others to join the struggle (p. 56). To the Maulana's personal attack on him, Gandhiji replied: "I am the same little man that I used to be in 1921. I can never be an enemy of Mussalmans, no matter what any one or more of them may do to me or mine . . . " (p. 57). But an even more convincing reply was the nomination of Abbas Tyabji and Imam Bawazeer as "dictators" or "first servants" of the movement.

The Government displayed admirable forbearance during the march, for which Gandhiji publicly complimented it (p. 179). But he was not sure whether it would tolerate the actual breach of the salt laws. His fears were proved true by the events. From the very first day of the commencement of Civil Disobedience, the police resorted to force to seize the contraband salt from the satyagrahis. "Salt in the hands of satyagrahis," Gandhiji asserted, "represents the honour of the nation. It cannot be yielded up except to force that will break the hand to pieces" (p. 205). The Government answered the satyagrahis' determination with increasing employment of physical force to break their morale, especially after the outbreak of sporadic violence in Karachi, Calcutta, Peshawar and Chittagong. Gandhiji deplored these outbreaks, saying that popular violence was as much an obstruction in the country's path as Government violence, but he refused to stop the struggle because of them. The Government's repression soon assumed proportions which provoked Gandhiji to describe it as "Goonda Raj" (p. 361). He called upon the people to "answer this organized hooliganism with great suffering" (p. 363). Recounting the police brutalities in a letter which he addressed to the Viceroy on May 4, he said: "Before, then, the reign of terrorism that has just begun overwhelms India, I feel that I must take a bolder step, and if possible divert your wrath in a cleaner if more drastic channel." He also added that if, in spite of his repeated warnings, people resorted to violence, "I must disown responsibility save such as inevitably attaches to every human being for the acts of every other human being." History, he said, would "pronounce the verdict that the British Government, not bearing because not understanding non-violence, goaded human nature to violence which it could understand and deal with" (p. 392).

On the midnight of May 5, Gandhiji was arrested and removed to Yeravda jail to be detained there under Regulation 25 of 1827, to "suffer imprisonment during the pleasure of the Govern-

ment'' (p. 399). Once in jail, he left the problems of the movement behind him and became absorbed in the new routine of jail life in the spirit of *anasakti*, non-attachment, which he had learnt from the *Gita*. ''I have been quite happy and have been making up for arrears of rest,'' he said in the very first letter, to Mirabehn, that he wrote from jail (p. 402). In the letter to Narandas on the same day (12-5-1930), Gandhiji described in some detail the new routine and gave him information about his health. This relaxation from the long tension is seen at its finest in the letter that he wrote to the Ashram children, teaching little birds how to fly without wings (p. 406). In a letter to Gangabehn Vaidya a few days later, he said: ''I remember every day all the women and the children, but I do not worry about anything. Here, too, I keep myself busy and do not remain unoccupied even for a minute. That way alone can I have peace of mind. I can see God only through work'' (p. 413).

Above all Gandhiji felt no bitterness whatsoever against the Viceroy for the measures the Government was adopting to crush the movement. But he reminded him, in a letter written from jail, of ''the simple fact that disobedience ceases to be such immediately masses of people resort to it'' (p. 411). This was satyagraha at its classic best. As Gandhiji had explained in a *Navajivan* article, ''God is present in all of us. . . . though many we are all one. . . . the sin of one is the sin of all. And hence it is not up to us to destroy the evil-doer. We should, on the contrary, suffer for him. . . . The satyagrahi always acts in the spirit of atonement. . . . He regards himself also as a sinner'' (pp. 82-3).

The prevailing mood of the period, which is religious rather than political, is well brought out in a critical but self-revealing communication to Mahadev Desai: ''Who knows where I myself may be going wrong? . . . My thinking nowadays takes the form exclusively of prayer. I do not use my reason, but look into my heart. . . . The truth is that even the Government does not know where it stands and what it wants to do. What is happening is something quite new for it and for the whole world'' (pp. 321-2).

CWMG - C

PREFACE

This volume, covering the five and a half months from July 1 to December 15, 1930, consists for the most part of the letters that Gandhiji wrote from Yeravda to Ashram workers and others, carrying on from inside the jail his educative effort to raise ordinary men and women above their usual selves and make them dedicated servants of the country. The "Tuesday Morning" discourses to be read at the Ashram prayer meetings explained the ethical significance of the eleven vows and related them to the spiritual aim for which the Ashram had been founded. For the benefit of Mirabehn and as an atonement for the pain he had often caused her, Gandhiji also translated as a labour of love the prayers and songs in the *Ashram Bhajanavali*. "In translating the hymns for you", he said in a letter to her, "I am giving myself much joy. Have I not expressed my love oftener in storms than in gentle soothing showers of affection? The memory of these storms adds to the pleasure of this exclusive translation for you" (p. 51). Outwardly these months in jail were an uneventful period except for two ripples, a mediation effort which failed and a threatened fast which did not come off.

Some Liberal leaders believed that civil disobedience was harming the country and two of them, Tej Bahadur Sapru and M. R. Jayakar, took the initiative for a truce between the Congress and the Government with a view to enabling the Congress to participate in the Round Table Conference. Gandhiji's response to their proposals was characteristic of his "loud thinking" even on important political issues, his insistence on fundamentals and readiness to compromise on details. Though reluctant to give "a decisive opinion on matters happening outside the prison walls" (p. 44), he stated his provisional view that the Congress could attend the Round Table Conference if the principle of self-government was conceded and the Conference was to meet only to discuss the details of safeguards during the transitional period, and he reserved to himself the liberty of "testing every swaraj scheme by its ability to satisfy the object underlying the 11 points" listed in his letter to the Viceroy. He also laid down the minimum conditions for suspension of civil disobedience, which included non-enforcement of the penal clauses of the Salt Act and restoration of the normal rule of law. Not knowing whether

his stand would appear too rigid or too weak to other leaders, he said he would not stand in the way of an honourable settlement, if the time for it was ripe and he would support "any stronger position up to the letter of the Lahore resolution" (p. 44) which had declared complete independence as India's goal.

After detailed discussions on August 14 and 15 with the Liberal leaders and with Motilal and Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel and other Congress leaders who were specially brought to Yeravda for the purpose, Gandhiji communicated their conclusion that the time was "not yet ripe for securing a settlement honourable for our country" (p. 81). There was no evidence that the English official world had been converted "to the view that it is India's men and women who must decide what is best for India" (p. 82). Tej Bahadur Sapru and M. R. Jayakar made one more effort but no meeting ground could be discovered. "There need, however, be no disappointment" Gandhiji commented, "for the apparent failure of the peace negotiations. . . . The nation has resorted to a weapon which the rulers being unused to it will take time to understand and appreciate. We are not surprised that a few months' suffering has not converted them" (p. 121).

Gandhiji's concern for the welfare of fellow-prisoners and co-workers seemed at one time to threaten a crisis. Having read newspaper reports of ill-treatment of prisoners in Yeravda Jail, he asked for permission to see them occasionally or to live with them, offering to let go the comforts which had been permitted to him. If his request was not met Gandhiji hinted at serious consequences. "I should no longer be interested [in] the preservation of a body that cannot be used for the service that the dweller within yearns after. I am human. Even as a prisoner I cannot divest myself of the human in me" (p. 156). Again he wrote to the Inspector-General of Prisons that the request was a peremptory call of his fundamental being and added, "Unless, therefore, I get satisfaction by Saturday noon next, I must begin to withdraw my co-operation as to the upkeep of my body" (p. 184). Fortunately the authorities permitted him to see periodically those whom he needed to meet "for the sake of service" and the threatened crisis was averted.

Unable to accept the Government's restrictions regarding visitors, Gandhiji refused to see anyone including his closest relations and co-workers and contented himself with "spirit meeting spirit". "No power on earth can stop that blessed contact", he wrote to Mirabehn (p. 32). As State prisoner, Gandhiji was

isolated from the other prisoners and his only companion in jail was Kakasaheb Kalelkar and, after his release, Pyarelal, whose being near him, Gandhiji compared to "a goat being near a wolf" (p. 371).

This outward calm and congenial solitude were filled with strenuous spinning and spiritual activity. Gandhiji had been studying and reflecting on the *Gita* for many years past and the poem had now come to dominate both his mind and heart. "In all my spiritual difficulties", he said, "I run to mother *Gita* and to this day she has never failed to comfort me" (p. 276). During his previous term of imprisonment in 1922-23, Gandhiji spent much of his time in reading. The list of books mentioned in his jail diary revealed the vast range of his interests (Vol. XXIII, pp. 178-88). This time, answering a correspondent who wanted suggestions for reading, Gandhiji wrote: "For me, the *Gita* and Tulsidas suffice . . ." (p. 35). He advised other correspondents to read the *Gita* "over and over again" (p. 2) and to "read Chapter XII over and over again and reflect on it" (p. 4). Gandhiji had embodied the fruit of this study in his Gujarati translation, *Anasaktiyoga*, "the yoga of non-attachment", published on the very day on which the Dandi March commenced. But he was so full of this subject that, accepting a correspondent's suggestion, he started a fresh series of discourses on the *Gita* (p. 276). And he told Mirabehn: "I want to pour myself out into those chapters" (p. 298).

From the *Gita* teaching of non-attachment Gandhiji had learnt the positive lesson of single-minded absorption in the task on hand. "He who lives his life in the spirit of *yajna* and works without attachment will always be engaged in one task at a time", he wrote to Mahadev Desai (p. 302). True soldiership or devotion to God or spiritual living, he explained, consisted "in being content with the duty which falls to our lot. Absorption in the work of service which has come to us unasked is the only true *samadhi*" (p. 17). A life of sacrifice, he told Narandas Gandhi, was the pinnacle of true art, and "the source of ever fresh springs of joy which never dry up and never satiate" (p. 260). For such serene devotion to service, Ramanama should be "the unvarying accompaniment to all our thoughts and activities, like the tune on the *tamboora* in a musical recital" (p. 302).

This teaching of non-attachment Gandhiji exemplified to perfection during his imprisonment in Yeravda. Having released an unprecedented flood of popular energy, which was still rising at the time of his arrest on May 5, he showed no further con-

cern for the subsequent course of the movement and concentrated his thoughts on spinning and on his correspondence. He felt that he had been slack outside jail in mastering the art and science of spinning, which he regarded as a "daily *mahayajna*" (p. 241), a supreme collective effort at national regeneration through service of the poor. "If God is in truth God of the poor, . . . and if khadi is the symbol of His grace . . . how slack have I been in putting into practice my own teaching!" (p. 303). And so he dedicated himself heart and soul to spinning and other related processes and constantly thinking about the subject (p. 337). To a suggestion from Mirabehn that he should translate *Anasaktiyoga* into English, he replied that he could not suspend for the purpose his spinning which was "applied translation of the *Gita*" (p. 20). His letters to Mirabehn, Narandas Gandhi and others are full of details of his progress in spinning and his failures or successes in handling different types of charkhas. "The charkha, the *takli* and the bow have become a fascination with me", he told Mirabehn (p. 299).

Gandhiji took keen interest in the problems of the Ashram and offered detailed suggestions to Narandas Gandhi in every letter to him. He explained to Premabehn Kantak, "We should feel more interest in solving the problems of the Ashram, especially of the women in it, than we do in solving the problems of the country. For the solution of these problems contains the key to the solution of bigger problems" (p. 52). For years Gandhiji had been training the Ashram women for a big role in the freedom struggle. And now he had called them out to go into villages and to organize picketing of foreign-cloth shops and liquor booths. All this new work meant complete freedom of movement for them which was not unattended with risks. Gandhiji, however, had full faith in them and did all he could to strengthen their self-confidence. He told one of them, "I wish to see you and all other women perfect in every respect. . . . I have put all my hopes in you women. I strongly feel that the ultimate victory of non-violence depends wholly on women" (p. 136). He wrote to Gangabehn Vaidya: "As souls man and woman are equal. If a man does not recognize his spiritual nature but a woman does, the latter is the stronger of the two, as Sita was stronger than Ravana . . . . Even today there are countless Sitas in the world who require no man's help and are yet safe against all danger" (p. 309). To Narandas Gandhi he wrote: "Women have been so completely suppressed that in their helplessness they cannot even think. The Ashram, therefore, should adopt a very liberal attitude towards them.

This involves many risks. We should take them if we wish to serve women'' (pp. 91-2). And again: ''We wish to uphold the fullest freedom for women. It does not matter if we miss the path on our way, if we stumble, are pricked by thorns or fall down'' (p. 147). ''We have'', he repeated in another letter to Narandas Gandhi, ''adopted an attitude of full trust in the women. . . . The Hindu man is under a heavy debt to the Hindu woman'' (p. 275). And he told Jaisukhlal Gandhi, a relation of his and a khadi worker, who could not live in harmony with his wife because of her orthodox ideas, that she had ''the same freedom of conduct which we claim for ourselves. If you get angry with her, she will only suppress her real feelings. I have made that mistake myself and I tell you this from experience'' (p. 179).

Gandhiji asked Gangabehn Vaidya, an Ashram worker in whose training he took great interest to ''pass on your depression to me. . . . I can be both a father and a mother'' (p. 162). Numerous letters in the volume illustrate this blend of paternal firmness and maternal solicitude. In a letter to Pandit Khare, Music Teacher in the Ashram, Gandhiji confessed, ''I frequently examine myself to see if I feel the love and sympathy which a father should feel . . . '' (p. 140). Many letters to Mirabehn reveal his concern for her health and his insistence on her taking proper care of it through needed rest and available facilities. On questions of moral principle Gandhiji took a firm stand while at the same time exercising the utmost charity to individuals and taking due note of their temperamental shortcomings. To Premabehn Kantak who was said to be in the habit of beating children in the Ashram school, he wrote: ''Our Ashram exists to prove that we can do without a gun'' (p. 349) and offered the advice: ''Call a meeting of the children. . . . You may punish them in the manner which they suggest. You should not punish those who do not want you to punish them. . . . you should keep up this discussion'' (pp. 380-1). Having listed to Narandas Gandhi the complaints the latter's nephew Keshu had made against him, Gandhiji said: ''I have written to Keshu and told him that . . . [I] see no fault in you . . . . Now you should, yourself, call him and show to him his complaints which I have described. . . . You may then try to satisfy him if you can'' (p. 373).

People had, of course, to change for the better and help each other in bringing about such change, but it was always with oneself that the recognition of the need to change and the heroic effort to change must begin. Hence Gandhiji's advice: ''Our virtues are for others to see. We should try to discover our short-

comings'' (p. 268). Again, ''non-violence means being strict towards oneself and liberal towards others. . . .'' (p. 10). Gandhiji explained at length, in a letter to Mahalakshmi Thakkar, why we should be strict in judging our own weaknesses but generous in judging others' (p. 364). A small but significant instance of discovering an error and promptly correcting it is provided in the letter to Valji Desai (p. 168), in which Gandhiji confessed that his previous insistence on dating his letters according to the Gujarati instead of the Gregorian calendar had been wrong and added the general comment: ''Surely we are not going to reject everything foreign'', but by way of self-doubting afterthought asked the addressee's opinion on what he thought was the right thing to do.

Thinking that did not lead to action was unnecessary and was in fact ''so much poisonous matter''. The principle of non-possession, of not accumulating useless lumber, is ''applicable to thoughts as well as to things'' (p.104). This was a corollary from the central teaching of the *Gita*, which was non-attachment. ''Let good news as well as bad pass over you like water over a duck's back'', he advised Mirabehn. ''When we hear any, our duty is merely to find out whether any action is necessary and if it is, to do it as an instrument in the hands of Nature . . . . Hence the necessity of using the brain . . . merely as a transmitting station. Whatever is there received is either transmitted to the heart for immediate action or it is rejected then and there as being unfit for transmission'' (p. 377). In a letter to Premabehn Kantak he wrote: ''I don't always remember the reasons behind my decision'' (p. 333). Discursive thinking is a function of a part of man while action proceeds from the heart and reflects his whole being. That Gandhiji with all his penchant for strenuous outward action was a close, if diffident, observer of the movements of his mind is shown in the account (p. 258) of a ''happy dream'' in which he drew up a reading list for Manilal which might be equally useful to Ramdas and Devdas, who should be guided, however, by Mahadev rather than by an opinion expressed in a dream.

The discourses on the Ashram vows were the fruit of long experience and were in turn intended for actual practice leading to similar experience on the part of the hearers. On the swadeshi vow he was not inclined to write as any discussion of the subject might touch on politics which were a self-imposed taboo for this prisoner (p. 186). All the discourses are as clear as they are profound and have become widely popular; those on equality of religions (the ninth vow) and on *yajna* and humility (which are not included among the vows) are of special interest to students of

Gandhian ethics. "The one religion is beyond all speech. . . . Everybody is right from his own standpoint, but it is not impossible that everybody may be wrong." All religions are "based on common fundamentals. They have all produced great saints" (p. 167).

While truth and love can be cultivated, humility does not lend itself to being deliberately practised. To cultivate it is tantamount to cultivating hypocrisy. The experience of humility however "is an indispensable test of ahimsa". The truly humble person realizes that he is as nothing. "A drop in the ocean partakes of the greatness of its parent, although it is unconscious of it. But it is dried up as soon as it enters upon an existence independent of the ocean. . . . True humility, therefore, requires us to dedicate ourselves to the service of all living creatures. . . . We shall reach it some day all unawares if we have truth in us. It is unattainable if we consciously strive for it" (pp. 205-7). The ocean and the drop are "beautifully interdependent. And if this is true of the physical, how much more so of the spiritual world!" (p. 131). Humility grows of itself as one cultivates the spirit of non-violence, when one forgets the sense of 'I' and becomes a mere cipher (p. 231).

The word '*Satya*' or Truth which of course is the *fons et origo* of the Ashram and all its vows should be understood in the widest sense to mean "Truth in thought, Truth in speech and Truth in action" (p. 41). The aim of the Ashram was to insist on truth and on conduct conforming to truth. "Everything is organized with Truth as the focal point. There are not many ideals in the world and there ought not to be. The apparent manifold is only a golden lid hiding the Truth. When it is removed we will see the One alone" (p. 246). This one Truth is impersonal and ineffable and can only be realized and expressed partially and that too more through action than through speech.

Gandhiji took pains to explain, especially to Christian correspondents, the concept of *Nirguna* Brahman, an experience of pure awareness, and the related concept of attaining *moksha* through dharma, freedom through discipline. He wrote to P. G. Mathew: "Man is a person, God is not in the same sense. . . . Our difficulty arises through our effort to measure God by our little selves. And He eludes all measure" (p. 169).

In a sustained correspondence with J. C. Kumarappa, as in letters to others, Gandhiji stressed the necessity of vows. "A vow", he told Narandas Gandhi, "means unflinching determination, and helps us against temptations. . . . the example of a man who gives up his life rather than his pledge is likely to wean drunkards from

liquor and thus become a great power for good in the world. . . . Taking vows is not a sign of weakness but of strength. . . . never doubt the necessity of vows for . . . self-purification and self-realization" (pp. 219-21). It is arrogant pride in our human strength that makes us unwilling to take a vow which is an advance bespeaking of "God's assistance to give us strength at the crucial moment" (p. 312). The idea is explained graphically in another letter to J. C. Kumarappa: "We have to deal with two dwellers within: Rama and Ravana, God and Satan, Ormuzd and Ahriman. The one binds us to make us really free, the other only appears to free us so as to bind us tight within his grip. A 'vow' is a promise made to Rama" which we may not have the strength to keep "unless we are tied down . . .. " If we are higher than the sun, we should be "at least as true and faithful as the sun . . . . A life of vow is like marriage, a sacrament. It is marriage with God indissoluble for all time. Come let us marry Him" (pp. 264-5). Though the freedom to grow from good to better is unlimited, self-indulgence is to be restrained by vows as inviolable as Nature's laws. "God is the very image of the vow. God would cease to be God if He swerved from His own laws even by a hair's breadth. The sun is a great keeper of observances; . . ." (p. 220). It would thus be seen that Gandhiji's religion was the religion of daylight and common sense, an extension, not a contradiction, of science, which can spread joy and peace in widest commonalty. Item 118 of the *Ashram Bhajanavali* (p. 419), celebrating *sahaja samadhi*, is typical of this attitude to religion, as the "natural magic" of normal living.

It should be remembered that the *Bhajanavali* contains only translations from Sanskrit, Hindi, Gujarati, Marathi and other Indian languages, while the actual prayers included passages from the Koran, the Bible, the Zend Avesta and many songs from foreign sources. Gandhiji's congregational prayers beneath an open sky in an unwalled space were truly cosmopolitan and helped "to break through all bonds of race, class and creed . . . "(p. 20). He saw nothing wrong in replacing 'Rama' by 'Ormuzd' or 'Vaishnava' by 'Christian' in the hymns sung during prayers (p. 189). These translations of hymns drawn from ancient Sanskrit texts and popular folklore were primarily for Mirabehn's benefit. "Save for the fact that it is an act of love, it has no other merit — certainly no literary merit" (p. 370). Indeed the translations are racy and almost literal with no pretensions to literary sophistication or polish. Gandhiji retained the myths and symbols because he shared with the common folk of our country the "pre-

literate sensibility'' which responded to their infinitely rich suggestions. Prahlad, Draupadi and Harishchandra stand for recognizable ''peak'' experiences incommunicable otherwise than through these given characters in given situations long and lovingly remembered. Hence Gandhiji's preference for these old stories sung and woven into the consciousness of the common folk. ''The story of Harishchandra may be only a parable; but every seeker will bear witness to its truth from his personal experience and, therefore, that story is as precious as any historical fact'' (p. 115). The *bhajans* were no musical escape from reality, but an inspiration to *purushartha* which Gandhiji defined as manly endeavour to conceive an ideal and ''make a Herculean effort to reach it, no matter how difficult it is . . . . To degrade or cheapen an ideal for our convenience is to practise untruth and to lower ourselves'' (p. 80). His use and translation of the *bhajans* thus provide further evidence, if further evidence was needed, that he was a humble and orthodox Hindu who believed that the human condition derived strength from religion which was essentially a call for right thinking and heroic action. He had no use for mere form and ritual. Not attending prayers and helping to put out a fire was for him ''real prayer'' and ''an example of non-action in action'' (p. 367).

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PREFACE

This volume, covering the four months from December 15, 1930 to April 15, 1931, is chiefly concerned with the Gandhi-Irwin negotiations which resulted in a truce between the Congress and the Government paving the way for Congress participation in the Round Table Conference. The agreement was approved at the plenary session of the Congress held in Karachi towards the end of March under the Presidentship of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, and Gandhiji was appointed by the Working Committee, a few days later, to be the sole Congress representative at the Conference. The plenary session also passed a resolution on fundamental rights to be incorporated in any future constitution of the country, thus setting the seal of formal approval on the new, radical trends in national politics which were emerging under the influence of Gandhiji and Jawaharlal Nehru. At the very beginning of this new phase in the freedom struggle, the country suffered a grievous calamity and Gandhiji an irreparable personal loss in the passing away of Motilal Nehru.

The ground for the Gandhi-Irwin parleys was prepared by the mediatory efforts of the Liberal leaders, V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, Tej Bahadur Sapru and M. R. Jayakar. Gandhiji and other members of the Working Committee were released on January 26 as a conciliatory gesture in keeping with Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald's statement on January 19 at the concluding session of the first Round Table Conference. The three Liberal leaders, on their way back to India from the Conference, had cabled to Gandhiji appealing to him to suspend judgment on the statement till they had met him and apprised him of the situation. Gandhiji responded to their appeal unreservedly. "I have come out of jail", he declared in the very first public statement after release, "with an absolutely open mind, unfettered by enmity, unbiased in argument and prepared to study the whole situation from every point of view . . ." (p. 125).

But soon misgivings arose in his mind. The continuing repression, he said in reply to a cable from the *Daily Herald*, robbed the release of the leaders of all grace and made it valueless for the intended purpose of creating an atmosphere suitable for calm discussion of the political problem (pp. 130-1). Writing to the Viceroy, Gandhiji said : "But I assure you that I am simply waiting for a sign in order to enable me to respond to your appeal.

I confess, however, that some of the signs are highly ominous'' (p. 136). The civil disobedience campaign could not be called off, he said, ''without a reasonable hope of a final settlement'' and also ''unless the hope of a settlement is shared by the vast mass of the people'', and he saw no possibility of this ''so long as repression in its virulent form continues'' (p. 138). Gandhiji expressed his doubt to Srinivasa Sastri, too: ''The atmosphere in India does not seem to me to support your and other friends' jubilation.'' But he added: ''I would like however to feel that there was no foundation for my fears'' (p. 160). He was, he said in an interview to *The Pioneer*, a man of peace, and it was ''no joy to me to submit thousands who have a childlike faith in me to suffering''. Gandhiji, therefore, hoped that Sastri, Sapru and Jayakar, ''who love their country as intensely as I claim to do'' (p. 151), might be able to convince him that their optimism was justified.

Gandhiji seems to have been particularly agitated by what he described to the Viceroy as ''a cruel, uncalled for and unchivalrous lathi-charge . . . upon wholly innocent women and girls''. ''I cannot recall'', he commented, ''anything in modern history to parallel this official inhumanity against wholly defenceless and innocent women'' (pp. 136-7). He expressed his pain and indignation in equally strong words in a letter to T. Rangachari: ''The man in the street and now the woman also must, if the authorities can help it, for ever lie under the police heels, a situation that I for one cannot tolerate for a moment longer than I can help'' (p. 163).

But while Gandhiji condemned the Government's heartlessness in attacking women, he felt proud of the latter's role in the movement. ''They have brought swaraj nearer'', he said in a Press interview. ''They have added several inches to their own height and that of the nation'' (p. 129). To the Ashram women who had taken part in the procession at Borsad and sustained injuries, he expressed admiration for their courage and their freedom from anger. Writing to Gangabehn Vaidya, he said: ''I got excited when I knew about this atrocity, but was not pained in the least.'' On the contrary, he felt happy. ''How I would have smiled with pleasure'', he said, ''to see your sari made beautiful with stains of blood'' (p. 145).

The Gandhi-Irwin talks form a landmark in the history of British rule in India. For the first time since its establishment the British Government dealt with a representative of the country, one who had defied its authority, on a footing of equality and with respectful courtesy. The negotiations yielded no tangible gains

to the nationalist cause; the Viceroy drove a hard bargain and secured all the immediate advantage and the truce terms were bitterly criticized by the radical nationalists. But the dialogue had the effect of legitimizing satyagraha as a weapon of political warfare and demonstrating the power of *jana shakti*, the moral strength of the people.

From the personal point of view, the meetings provided high drama of great psychological interest. The Viceroy and Gandhiji were drawn to each other by a common faith in a higher Power and in the moral governance of the universe. And yet they were genuine opponents struggling to safeguard the interests, the one of the Empire and the other of the people, they represented. If Gandhiji believed that revolutions are caused by people themselves (not by great men) and obey rigid laws of their own (p. 95) and that public opinion (not artificially created) is the pure basis of *Ramarajya* (p. 328), Lord Irwin for his part disclaimed personal credit for halting the war and declared, "the broad forces that were at work were working very hard in the direction of peace" (Birkenhead: *Halifax*, p. 303). The general line taken by His Majesty's Government had, in his words, "immensely strengthened our moral position both here and all over the world" and he "felt it a great privilege to have some part in this great play" (*ibid*., p. 307). Both protagonists joined in the prayer that "history may say you and I were permitted to be instruments in doing something big for India and for humanity" (p. 268).

"It was a most strenuous fight today, but it left no unpleasantness in the mouth at the end", reported Gandhiji to Mahadev Desai after the second meeting (p. 197). This could well be said of the entire series. Gandhiji wanted to meet "not so much the Viceroy of India as the man" in Lord Irwin (p. 176). He did meet both and, in keeping with the spirit of satyagraha, he yielded much to the Viceroy because of his regard for the man. Lord Irwin was extremely considerate to Gandhiji in personal matters, and once or twice paid him compliments which Gandhiji duly reported to Mahadev Desai. Irwin also admitted, "You planned a fine strategy round the issue of salt" (p. 200). But the Viceroy stood firm on the prestige of the British Government. He turned down, at the very first meeting, Gandhiji's demand for an inquiry into charges of police excesses on the ground that such an inquiry would place the police in a position of defendants, and to this he could not agree (p. 187). On the issues of salt, picketing and restoration of confiscated lands in Kaira District he made minor concessions. In regard to picketing, for instance, he noted: "I

have very little doubt that, if you can get rid of the political-weapon drive of it and have it purely as an economic and social thing, it will be dead in three weeks. This is the very strong view of all the Indians who come and talk to me about it'' (p. 241). Referring to the difficulties which, towards the end, developed on the issue of the restoration of confiscated lands in Kaira District, the Viceroy noted that ''it is essential to give no more time for moral scruples to develop'' (p. 247). Once or twice the Viceroy had mental reservations about Gandhiji's motives, too, and was determined not to ''allow the break which I anticipated to come, as I felt certain Mr. Gandhi would try to engineer it, on Police alone'' (p. 239). And he thought that Gandhiji's firmness on the issue of salt was ''mainly vanity'' (p. 240).

Gandhiji seems to have approached the talks in an entirely different spirit. He had spelt out his attitude in a letter to Reginald Reynolds in reply to the latter's strong criticism of Gandhiji's conciliatory statements after his release. Satyagraha ''can be gentle'', he said, ''and should be gentle, where gentleness is a duty'' (p. 221). ''Remember too'', he added, ''that satyagraha is a method of carrying conviction and of converting by an appeal to reason and to the sympathetic chord in human beings. It relies upon the ultimate good in every human being'' (p. 222). The Viceroy himself has borne testimony to this essentially personal approach of Gandhiji. Describing how Gandhiji yielded on the issue of inquiry against police excesses, he noted: ''In the course of a short discussion we had about this, he revealed what I have by now discovered as the right method of dealing with him. He said: 'When you or Mr. Emerson use your best arguments it does not always have much effect on me, but, when you tell me that Government is in a difficulty and cannot do what I want, then I am inclined to capitulate to you!' This was exactly the history of the Police discussion'' (p. 244). Gandhiji was well aware of the difference between the Viceroy's official approach and his own personal approach, for he reported: ''I cannot yet say that he is sincere, but he was friendly and frank. . . . To a certain extent I may say I have found him sincere, but that was because he had to reciprocate my sincerity'' (p. 208).

In keeping with the spirit which had informed the talks, Gandhiji, as soon as they had concluded, took up the task of building an atmosphere of peace and co-operation in the country. In a Press statement issued on the day on which the truce terms were finally agreed upon, he paid a handsome tribute to the Viceroy for his ''inexhaustible patience and equally inexhaustible

industry and unfailing courtesy'' during the talks (p. 250). He also disclaimed victory for the Congress. ''For a settlement of this character, it is not possible nor wise to say which is the victorious party. If there is any victory, I should say it belongs to both'' (p. 251). He appealed for the co-operation of the Princes and the goodwill of the English. Appreciating the former's gesture in accepting the idea of federation, he invited them also to concede the principle of democracy in their States. Appealing to the English he said their active help was absolutely necessary and urged them ''to let India feel the same glow of freedom which they themselves would die in order to possess'' (p. 253). Reassuring British commercial interests, he declared in a Press interview that he would not ''repudiate one single farthing that can be legitimately debited to us . . . what the Congress has asked for, and will insist upon, is proof of the justness of the obligation . . . '' (p. 266).

And as for the people, Gandhiji urged them to eschew whatever violence had crept into the movement. ''Having suspended civil disobedience'', he told a public meeting in Delhi a few days after the conclusion of the talks, ''we now enter a period of disciplined obedience. We are now pledged to eschew all passive and active violence, direct and indirect violence in picketing foreign-cloth and liqour shops . . . '' (p. 273). Writing in *Young India* on the subject, he said: '' . . . the cent per cent observance of the conditions of the settlement to be fulfilled by the nation will make the Congress an irresistible power for vindicating the national position'' (p. 282).

Gandhiji, however, was under no illusion that a change of heart had occurred (p. 355). He had changed the method, he explained to the correspondent of the *Chicago Tribune*, because the situation had changed (p. 331). Earlier, the nation did not have a complete measure of its strength, but after the ''magnificent spectacle'' (p. 331) of the civil disobedience campaign of the preceding ten months, they could negotiate with a consciousness of strength (p. 296). ''The satyagrahi'', he explained at a public meeting in Bombay, ''whilst he is ever ready for fight must be equally eager for peace. He must welcome any honourable opportunity for peace'' (p. 305).

Jawaharlal Nehru and other younger nationalists were not easily reconciled to the settlement, and Gandhiji strove patiently to win them over to his point of view. In a note presumably addressed to Jawaharlal, he said: ''You seem to be feeling lonely and almost uninterested. . . . I want your active support in what I am doing. And that I cannot get unless you criticize, alter,

amend, reject and do many other things'' (p. 242). Gandhiji's position in relation to them was made extremely difficult by the execution of Bhagat Singh on the eve of the annual session of the Congress at Karachi in the last week of March. He had pleaded for clemency at his very first meeting with the Viceroy, not as condition for a settlement, but on humanitarian grounds. In the last-minute appeal to him on the day of the execution, Gandhiji wrote: ''Since you seem to value my influence such as it is in favour of peace, do not please unnecessarily make my position, difficult as it is, almost too difficult for future work'' (p. 333). ''Charity never faileth'', he reminded the Viceroy (p. 334). The appeal went unheeded, and Gandhiji declared that the Government had ''missed a golden opportunity, to win over the rebels to its side. . . . The reliance on violence is perhaps ominous and it suggests that in spite of high-sounding and pious proclamations, it does not want to part with power'' (p. 336). Gandhiji fully sympathized with the young men who had greeted him with black flags and the slogans, ''Down with Gandhism'', ''Go back Gandhi'', which he considered were ''a legitimate expression of their anger'' (p. 344). But his own position remained unchanged. The staying of the executions was no part of the truce agreement, and he would not therefore be deflected from the path he had chosen. While paying a glowing tribute to the bravery and sacrifice of Bhagat Singh and his comrades, he added: ''But I want the greater bravery . . . of the meek, the gentle and the non-violent, the bravery that will mount the gallows without injuring, or harbouring any thought of injury to a single soul'' (p. 344). Violence against the foreigner could not be separated from violence against one another. The Kanpur riots, he said, were ''the handwriting on the wall . . . we have harboured violence in our hearts, we have been guilty of using coercion''. Making a passionate appeal to the country for sanity, Gandhiji said: ''I have felt deeply ashamed of these deeds of blood, and to whoever my voice may reach I wish to declare that such things may any day prove more than I can bear. . . . as soon as I feel that life is unbearable, I should hope to have the courage to fast myself to death rather than witness these blood feuds'' (pp. 350-1).

Though Gandhiji insisted on adherence to non-violence for the sound practical reason that in the special conditions of India it had a better chance of success than violent resistance, his faith in it as a political weapon rested on another, deeper intuition, namely, that it alone gave promise of successfully rebuilding Indian society on juster foundations. For Gandhiji's ambition was not only

to win political freedom for India but also to establish a just society, "dharmaraj, *Ramarajya* or the people's raj (democracy)" in which princes and paupers would live in enjoyment of equal rights (p. 328). In reply to a question by the correspondent of the *Chicago Tribune* he said: "I should like to take an active part in the reconstruction of my country . . . That, indeed, would be a labour of love" (p. 332). In fact, Gandhiji was rebuilding the country even through the satyagraha campaigns themselves. "Satyagraha is the most important tool for the people's education and awakening", he said, and added: "Self-purification is another name for satyagraha" (p. 329). Swaraj thus won through non-violent struggle and self-purification would solve the problem of the minorities in India, for, under this method, swaraj "can never be achieved by usurping the rights of any community big or small but by ensuring even-handed justice and fair treatment to all — even the poorest and the weakest in the land" (pp. 231-2).

At the end of an article "The Giant and the Dwarf" deprecating the demand for equality between British and Indian interests, Gandhiji envisaged India's role as a member of the world community : "My nationalism, fierce though it is, is not exclusive, is not devised to harm any nation or individual" (p. 343). On the contrary, his conception of swaraj implied scrupulous regard for the interests of all. He preferred the positive term, "Swaraj" to the negative term "Independence". Swaraj meant "disciplined rule from within", whereas independence might mean licence to do as one liked (p. 263). "Swaraj" was a sacred word, a Vedic word, meaning self-rule and self-restraint. *Purna* swaraj would pave the way for voluntary association with other nations for mutual benefit (p. 264).

For Gandhiji, patriotism was not an ultimate value. While denying the charge that he was "sacrificing the country for Truth", he asserted parenthetically but categorically that he "should, if there could be such a choice, most decidedly sacrifice the country for Truth" (p. 340).

As he had explained at length in *Hind Swaraj* (Vol. X), India must have the courage to be herself, to remain rooted in the soil of her own spiritual and moral tradition. He did not want India to "be swamped by the onrush of Western civilization" (p. 397). His ideas about its evils, which he had expressed in *Hind Swaraj*, had changed little (p. 333). He had said then, and he still held, that if Britain remained in India on a footing of equality they would "benefit each other and the world". But this could happen, he had foreseen, "only when the root of our

relationship is sunk in a religious soil'' (Vol. X, p. 62). Gandhiji wanted the dealings between nations to be governed by equality and justice and he welcomed the provisional settlement as a stage in building an Indo-British relationship based on dharma or morality.

To rebuild one's country and the world on moral foundations one must begin with oneself. ''The remedy for every evil'', Gandhiji wrote from jail to a friend, ''is self-purification. If there is but one self in all, you should have faith that self-purification contributes to the welfare of the entire world'' (p. 113). Indeed swaraj was self-purification and purity of life led to self-rule. (p. 249). The country was to acquire strength through self-purification and the past twelve months had made it clear that ''swaraj will come when it does, from within, by internal effort . . .'' (p. 311). This process of self-examination, self-reform, consists in noticing our defects, trying to get rid of them and not resting till we have got rid of them. ''If there is a snake in the house, we shall not feel easy in mind till we have caught and removed it. . . . This is also true about snakes and other such poisonous creatures in our hearts'' (p. 56).

In his anxiety not to embarrass the Government or the jail authorities, Gandhiji warned Mirabehn not to publish news of his illness (pp. 81-2) as he warned Narandas Gandhi not to give publicity to his efforts for securing for Appasaheb Patwardhan and other political prisoners the permission they had sought to do sacrificial spinning (p. 124). The letters from prison also throw some precious light on his inner life. His horror of *himsa* is well brought out in the account of the '' holy experience'' of seeing God in a worm and a weevil which he might have killed but luckily did not (p. 20). Equally revealing is the half-serious mention of his lectures to the birds and secret talks with the stars (p. 79). The ideas and values symbolized by the Hindu gods were more real, he felt, ''than the so-called real things we perceive with our five senses'' and hence recitation of a hymn to Saraswati was for him ''a mystical act'' (p. 98).

Amidst the many public cares and burdens that he had to carry on the morrow of his release he found time to arrange for the supply of a denture to a fellow-prisoner named Wheeler (p. 126). In disposing of the yarn spun by him in jail, he would give their due share to the A.I.S.A. and to the Cow-protection Society, but he would like Narandas Gandhi ''to use the rest to get a sari woven for Ba'' (p. 181).

PREFACE

The two months, from April 16 to June 17, 1931, covered in this volume show Gandhiji struggling, against increasing odds, to get the Provisional Settlement implemented in the spirit of mutual trust and co-operation which had inspired it. He found the attempt, as he explained to C.F. Andrews, "an uphill fight" (p. 51) "in the teeth of official sullenness, unwillingness and even opposition" (p. 89). The task was made harder still by the continuance of terrorist activities, and Gandhiji strove patiently to convince the extremists of the futility of violence in the Indian context. Absence of a Hindu-Muslim agreement further complicated the constitutional problem and made Gandhiji doubt the usefulness of his attending the forthcoming Round Table Conference in London. The fear of a possible breakdown of the Settlement in his absence strengthened Gandhiji's disinclination to go. In this state of uncertainty, similar to what he had gone through before the launching of the civil disobedience movement in March 1930, Gandhiji relied, as he had done on that occasion, on the guidance of his inner voice. "I refuse to speculate", he replied to a friend's caution against a hasty decision to go. "I would go where the light leads me in the fullest faith that all will be well if I follow it" (p. 53).

The volume opens with a strong condemnation of "The Cult of Violence". Gandhiji regretted that the Congress resolution about Bhagat Singh had had quite a contrary effect to what was intended and seemed "to have given a passport for extolling" political murders. "I repeat my deliberate opinion", he said, "that whatever may be true of other countries, in India at least political murder can only harm the country" (p. 1). It was "through the non-violent method alone", he claimed, "that the phenomenal mass consciousness, including the awakening of women, has come into being" (p. 2). Giving "hard facts" in support of his view that revolutionary murder was futile, harmful and opposed to Indian tradition, Gandhiji concluded: ". . . if I had a completely peaceful atmosphere we would have gained our end already" (p. 30). Gandhiji's stand on this issue was often misrepresented in Bengal, and he was even accused of provincial bias (pp. 357-9.) "Bengal is as dear to me as the Punjab", Gandhiji replied, adding, "And I owe a special debt to Bengal for the inspiration it gave me in my youth". "But", he declared, "whether I retain my hold on the youth of Bengal or any other province or I do not, I must pro-

claim my creed from the house-top. Freedom of India's starving millions is attainable only through Truth and Ahimsa'' (p. 359).

The cult of violence was confined to a microscopic minority, but its effect on the atmosphere was out of all proportion to the size of its following. Gandhiji recognized that though the mass of the people had remained non-violent in action during the civil disobedience campaign, there was ''a great deal of thoughtless approval of political murder'' (p. 120) and that even civil resisters were often guilty of ''violence in thought and less often in speech'' (p. 1). Referring to an incident in Karachi where a ''half-cracked man'' had collected unemployed and other labourers and tried to use them to coerce merchants and moneyed men, Gandhiji warned the country that the ''awakening of masses hitherto drugged into sleep by ignorance and despotism can easily prove their own undoing together with a wreckage of the social structure'', and urged upon the people the imperative necessity of discipline. ''Storms and floods there always will be'', he said, ''but discipline is to disorder what bulwarks and embankments are to storms and floods'' (p.140). Accordingly he advised workers to stop picketing if absolute peacefulness could not be preserved (p. 96). Gandhiji also cautioned Congressmen against hasty experiments in the revival of Panchayats, lest they developed into new instruments of oppression. ''No Panchayat'', he advised, ''should have any authority to impose fines, the only sanction behind its civil decrees being its moral authority, strict impartiality and the willing obedience of the parties concerned.'' And likewise he also disapproved of social boycott. ''Social boycott in villages has been found to be a dangerous weapon in the hands of ignorant or unscrupulous men'' (p. 240).

Gandhiji's chief concern at this time, however, was to prevent a breakdown of the Settlement. It was ''a gentleman's agreement'' and he had, he assured H. W. Emerson, Home Secretary in the Government of India, pledged his honour ''to Lord Irwin that I shall do nothing that I could honourably refrain from doing to prevent a breakdown'' (p. 48). Even though, as he told C.Y. Chintamani, the Liberal leader, many occasions had arisen when he might have broken up negotiations with local authorities, he was not going lightly to declare war. The thought that it ''would hurt Lord Irwin to the quick would alone make me wait a thousand times before embarking on any such step'' (p. 267). But this self-restraint sometimes proved agonizing. The officials, long accustomed to rule the people without their authority ever being questioned, found it impossible to adjust themselves to the relationship of mutual

trust and co-operation envisaged in the Settlement. Local Governments, Gandhiji told Rajagopalachari, had evidently not liked the Settlement. "To get them to implement the Settlement is therefore like drawing the lion's teeth" (p. 163). The Commissioner of Northern Division, for instance, refused to concede that in matters relating to the Settlement "the Congress must be recognized as the intermediary between the Government and the people whom the Congress represents" (pp. 21 & 43). For Gandhiji this raised "a question of the first magnitude" (p. 21) and he reported to the Home Secretary that, so far as Gujarat was concerned, the Settlement was in imminent danger of a breakdown (p. 25). The issue arose over the Government threat of coercive processes to recover land revenue dues in Gujarat over Gandhiji's head. Innumerable other points of dispute arose in all parts of the country, and Gandhiji was invited to Simla for a detailed discussion with the Home Secretary. The latter represented to Gandhiji the "Constitutional, political, Communal, financial, agrarian and terrorist" difficulties that the Government faced, and appealed for a concerted effort by all to solve them (p. 415). At the end of the meeting Mr. Emerson recorded his impression that Gandhiji was "more sincere than ever in his desire to see the Settlement through" and had "definitely mellowed during the past few months" (p. 416). But though Gandhiji may have been somewhat reassured about the Government's intentions in regard to the Settlement, his apprehensions regarding its future did not altogether disappear. He could not still overcome his reluctance to go to England, for, as he explained in a telegram to the Viceroy, he "could not leave India whilst anxious difficulties are experienced regarding its working" (p. 197). On the difficulties persisting, Gandhiji was forced to propose "the appointment of a permanent Board of Arbitration to decide [the] question of interpretation of the Settlement. . . " (p. 381).

The communal problem, too, remained unsolved. Delicate negotiations had been going on behind the scenes, and Gandhiji had been advised to watch them silently and express no views in public (pp. 80 & 119). He had declared from the very beginning that he would not go to the Round Table Conference until a communal solution was found, and he reiterated his attitude whenever the subject was referred to. Explaining his reason to Dr. M. A. Ansari, a Nationalist Muslim leader, he asked: "What can I ask and what strength can I put forth in the national demand if we are a house divided against itself?" (p. 225). It seems, however, that Gandhiji found it extremely difficult to come to a firm decision on this question. "In this matter too", he wrote to C. Y. Chintamani, "I am

feeling my way and, if I at all can, I would certainly attend the Conference. I have come to no irrevocable decision'' (p. 267). He even considered the possibility of going to London to explain the Congress position to responsible statesmen and the public, without participating in the Conference (p. 254), and ''to do a little lobbying also'' (p. 276), provided the working of the Settlement permitted him to leave the country. ''My desire is certainly to go there'', he told C.F. Andrews, ''but the inner voice says 'no' and the external atmosphere confirms the guidance of the inner voice'' (p. 275).

While adopting a conciliatory attitude in regard to most points of conflict between the Congress and the Government, Gandhiji remained uncompromising on the issue of boycott of foreign cloth. This item in the programme had affected the material interests of Great Britain and was having a significant effect on its cotton industry. It, therefore, easily lent itself to a misunderstanding and misrepresentation of the Congress policy. As a result of the Settlement, the Congress lifted the boycott of British goods, which had been adopted as a purely political weapon, but the boycott of foreign cloth, including British cloth, remained as ''an economic necessity for the semi-starved millions'' (p. 102). Writing in *Young India* on the ''needlessly bitter and unwarranted agitation'' launched against the movement in England, Gandhiji asked the Lancashire mill-owners to ''realize that India to be free from chronic starvation must for ever banish foreign cloth whether English, Japanese or any other. . . . Let all the foreigners understand that this boycott movement is a mass movement, it is a humanitarian movement. . . . It has political consequences, but being a purely economic and humanitarian movement it should command the support of the whole world'' (p. 26). Gandhiji admitted that the Lancashire workmen might have to suffer during the transition stage. ''But can it be any reason'', he asked, ''for India's millions starving themselves?'' ''Lancashire did wrong in killing India's cottage industry'', he said, and it must now ''turn to a less injurious industry'' (p. 324). Aware of the intensity of feelings on this issue in Britain, Gandhiji readily accepted an invitation to visit Lancashire, in case he went to London for the Round Table Conference, and ''demonstrate to the people of Lancashire that I personally and the Congress have no ill-will against Lancashire and that the Congress would do all in its power to help Lancashire'' (p. 212).

Gandhiji was aware of the necessity of educating public opinion in India, too, about the ''true purpose and implications of the boycott programme'' and asked the nation to work it ''in such a way that the benefits accrue pre-eminently to the villagers'', and

this could only be "by the nation according to khadi a position above all other indigenous cloth". He, therefore, urged upon the people to revise their taste in cloth and take to coarse, thick khadi (p. 59). "Though the intellect admits the desirability of abjuring foreign cloth," Gandhiji noted, "the heart yearns after the fineries which only come from foreign countries. Love of self predominates over love of the country or rather love of the semi-starved millions" (p. 141). Repudiating the charge that the boycott was "designed or calculated merely to benefit the mills to the injury of the masses", Gandhiji said the "Indian mills come in to supplement khadi", and that "the boycott would stand in spite of the Indian mills if they opposed khadi". Once foreign cloth was out of the way, he stated, "indigenous mills will readily suit their prices and production to khadi, or will themselves face a boycott even like foreign mills" (p. 308). Emphasizing the humanitarian aspect of khadi in a vivid phrase, Gandhiji said: "Khadi is a sort of *hundi* drawn by the poor. There should be men and women in cities who would always accept such *hundis*" (p. 341). "Village economics", according to Gandhiji, "is different from industrial economics. Human economics is not the same as that of exploitation of mere dead matter" (p. 361).

From the ethical standpoint, khadi was part of the universal law of swadeshi which requires that "its votary will as a first duty dedicate himself to the service of his immediate neighbours. . . . Pure service of one's neighbours can never, from its very nature, result in disservice to those who are remotely situated, rather the contrary" (p. 254). Swadeshi is "*swadharma* applied to one's immediate environment" and its practice can never harm anybody (p. 255). But Gandhiji also cautioned against the perversion of the doctrine of swadeshi: "To reject foreign manufactures merely because they are foreign and to go on wasting national time and money to promote manufactures in one's country for which it is not suited would be criminal folly and a negation of the swadeshi spirit" (p. 256). "Swadeshism", Gandhiji concluded, "is not a cult of hatred. It is a doctrine of selfless service that has its roots in the purest ahimsa, i.e., love" (p. 257).

Gandhiji's loin-cloth too, as he explained to a supercilious critic, was the expression of his desire to bring himself "in a line with the ill-clad masses" (p. 55). "But", he added, "in so far as the loin-cloth also spells simplicity let it represent Indian civilization." While admitting that India should adopt from European civilization "whatever may be good and capable of assimilation by us" (p. 55), he also warned against "the incessant search for material comforts

and their multiplication", which he pronounced an evil which the Europeans themselves would have to shake off "if they are not to perish under the weight of the comforts to which they are becoming slaves". In any case, "for India to run after the Golden Fleece is to court certain death" (pp. 55-6).

A twisted Press report of Gandhiji's remarks on the work of foreign missionaries in India had provoked angry comments both in newspapers and from private correspondents, one of whom had "gone into hysterics without condescending to verify the report" (p. 27). Clarifying his views in an article, Gandhiji declared: "Every nation considers its own faith to be as good as that of any other. Certainly the great faiths held by the people of India are adequate for her people. India stands in no need of conversion from one faith to another" (p. 28). He objected to the modern methods of conversion which had become "a matter of business, like any other". He considered "proselytizing under the cloak of humanitarian work . . . unhealthy" and added: "Faith is not imparted like secular subjects. . . . If a man has a living faith in him, it spreads its aroma like the rose its scent" (p. 28).

While acknowledging his debt to a "prayerful reading of the Sermon on the Mount" and recognizing in Jesus "one of the greatest teachers of the world", he could not subscribe to the orthodox Christian doctrine of "his exclusive divinity" (p. 71). But while conversion from one faith to another was to be deplored, there was urgent need for "conversion in the sense of self-purification, self-realization" (p. 29). The religions of India, Gandhiji claimed, were all-sufficing and adequate for her, but the professors of the respective faiths could and should learn from one another. "If there is sympathetic contact established between the various faiths and no evil designs suspected, each can gain a great deal from the rest. What is resisted is the idea of gaining converts and that too not always by fair and open means" (p. 239).

Gandhiji was deeply attached to the Satyagraha Ashram at Sabarmati and had been training its inmates to be the instruments of the non-violent revolution that he aspired to bring about in the country. He, therefore, used to keep up a continuous correspondence with them from wherever he was. But since his release on January 26 he had been so busy that this had not been possible. He, therefore, asked Narandas Gandhi to advise them to rely on the *Gita*, the *Bhajanavali* and the *Ramayana*. "I believe," he said, "and I want you to believe, that the constant reading of these with faith will be a greater source of strength than letters from me or than living with me" (p. 232). For Gandhiji, moral strength was an indispens-

able condition of public service and he, therefore, insisted on the volunteers scrupulously observing the rule of khadi even if that meant fewer volunteers. Such strength of character, he held, required unceasing vigilance on one's part. "Human nature tries to avoid difficulties. It seeks an easy way out. The easy way takes one downhill, the difficult way leads one upwards. The rule of physics applies also to spiritual matters" (p. 39). Explaining the source of his peace of mind, which friends envied, Gandhiji said: "It comes from absolute faith in God and His goodness. That faith enables me humbly to do the task allotted to me without being anxious for the result" (p. 292).

Though Gandhiji's political philosophy and methods of struggle were truly revolutionary, he rightly claimed that he was as much a moderate as an extremist and explained his apparent inconsistencies as the result of his accepting service as "its own and sole reward", the test of service being the approbation of one's own conscience, not the approbation of the public. Thus he could write of the Servants of India Society: "Though our views may be as poles asunder, . . . I have always felt that we are at heart one, being disciples of the same guru", viz., Gopal Krishna Gokhale (p. 194). And he could also write to a critic of adult suffrage, "every form of suffrage will be liable to abuse, adult suffrage perhaps the least so" (p. 46). Gandhiji had faith in the people and in their capacity to exercise responsibility as well as power. He wanted all Congress organizations to get their account books inspected by some experienced person and to economize public expenditure (p. 160). And he wanted district organizations to finance the provincial organizations of the Congress, not *vice versa*. The centralization of finance he compared to "a person trying to walk on his head instead of naturally on his feet" (p. 161).

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PREFACE

The difficulties over the implementation of the Delhi Settlement reached the breaking point in the period covered in this volume (June 18 to September 11, 1931), and Gandhiji was forced to ask the Viceroy to inform the British Government that he had decided not to attend the Round Table Conference in London. However, last-minute discussions between the Viceroy and Gandhiji in Simla, spread over three days, resulted in a working compromise which enabled Gandhiji to take the Down Frontier Mail just in time to reach Bombay and board the s.s. *Rajputana* on August 29. His reluctance to attend the Conference on the ground of absence of Hindu-Muslim accord had been overruled by the Congress Working Committee, and when, therefore, he found his path cleared by a convenient formula, he decided to go though not without a profound sense of uneasiness in his heart. "When I think of the prospects in London," he wrote in an article for *Young India* dictated in the train, "when I know that all is not well in India, that the second Settlement is bereft of all grace and is charged with no pleasant memories, there is nothing wanting to fill me with utter despair" (p. 369). But being a born optimist, he explained in a Press statement, he was hoping against hope. "My faith is in God", he said, "and He seems to have made my way clear for me to go to London" (p. 384).

On the basis of accumulating evidence Gandhiji had begun to suspect that members of the Civil Service were "hindering the working of the Settlement" or even "wilfully breaking it" (p. 56), and it looked "as if the Government was at war with the Congress" (p. 115). In Gujarat, the trouble spots were Borsad and Bardoli where Gandhiji had practically encamped himself to ensure the observance of the truce terms by the cultivators. The local authorities, however, resented the mediatory role of the Congress and insisted on dealing direct with the cultivators, relying upon coercive processes to recover land-revenue dues instead of availing themselves of the co-operation of the Congress. The Commissioner, Gandhiji said, "never pardoned the Congress for presuming to represent the peasantry. Had he had his way, it is likely that he would rather have collected what he could through coercion than received all but a few thousand of the current dues in Bardoli and Borsad through the Congress agency"

(p. 320). It was evident that the authorities were not willing to recognize "the fact that the power is passing to the people" and to acknowledge "that the Congress represents the people" (p. 321).

This unwillingness or inability of the local authorities to adjust themselves to the changed temper of the people led to serious conflicts in the U.P. and the North-West Frontier Province. In the former Province, there was acute economic distress in the countryside and the peasantry found it impossible to pay their annual dues. The large-scale evictions which followed gave rise to widespread unrest, and the Congress, under Jawaharlal Nehru's leadership, took up the cause of the *kisans*. The Government, while professing sympathy with the peasants, were concerned with protecting the interests of the zamindars and resorted to wholesale gagging of Congressmen and intimidation of *kisans* through hundreds of notices (p. 109). To the argument that evictions were lawful, Gandhiji replied that there was "something wrong in a system which allows of so many evictions" (p. 371). And he further reminded the Governor, Sir Malcolm Hailey: "With the tremendous awakening that has taken place all over India there is a sensitiveness to wrongs which was not felt 12 months ago" (p. 371). To deal with the wrong, Gandhiji advised the Governor to send for Jawaharlal Nehru and establish direct touch with him. But this was exactly what the Civilians could not bring themselves to do.

In the North-West Frontier Province, a new order of political workers had emerged during the civil disobedience campaign of the previous year, the Khudai Khidmatgars led by Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan. After the Settlement, Khan Saheb had come and stayed with Gandhiji and intimate contact with him had convinced the latter that he implicitly believed in non-violence (p. 13). But the local authorities seem to have been alarmed by the manifestations of political unrest in this sensitive region, and Khan Saheb complained to Gandhiji that severe repression was continuing even after the Settlement (p. 160). The Government, however, gave Gandhiji their own version of the conditions in the Province. He, therefore, decided to send his son, Devdas, on a mission of peace, after assuring the Viceroy that he would be asked "to refrain from making any speeches or accepting any addresses" (p. 178).

The crisis was precipitated by the action of the Collector of Surat in Gujarat who, while Gandhiji had gone to Simla in the middle of July to meet the Viceroy to find a solution of the mounting conflicts between the Provincial authorities and the Congress, had started coercive processes to force full payment of

revenue dues from the peasants of Bardoli. Gandhiji was extremely upset when he learnt about these on his return. " . . . I was unprepared for the terrible events of the past ten days" (p. 198), he wrote to the Collector, and intimated that unless proper satisfaction was given he would regard "the Settlement and the implied faith having been broken by the Government and regard myself as free to take such action as may be necessary to protect the interests of the people whom the Congress represents" (p. 199). Telegraphing the substance of the letter to the Home Secretary, Government of India, Gandhiji said the matter involved his personal honour since he had openly told the people at public meetings that if they paid according to their ability no coercion would be used against them (p. 200). Gandhiji also wrote to the Home Secretary, Government of Bombay, seeking the Governor's intervention "if he can enter into my feelings" (p. 201). The Government took more than two weeks to reply. It rejected Gandhiji's contention and stated categorically: "Neither the Government nor the Collector have ever accepted the position that the collection of land revenue should be dependent on the advice of the Congress, . . . the decision as to whether particular persons can or cannot pay must rest with the Collector" (p. 446). Gandhiji found this position impossible for the Congress to accept. His conclusion was that "great civilians here do not want me to attend Conference or if they do they do so under circumstances which a national organization like Congress can never tolerate" (p. 289). Gandhiji held that between the people and the Government the Congress was an intermediary, and he feared "that it is because the Government do not wish to recognize this natural consequence of the Settlement that Government has broken on the Bardoli matter" (pp. 312-3). "Bardoli therefore was for me the acid test" (p. 322). "A debtor who cannot pay interest is never going to pay the capital", Gandhiji had said earlier to a friend (p. 221), explaining why he thought his going to London would be of no use if the things arising out of the Settlement were not put right.

The Congress Working Committee endorsed on August 13 Gandhiji's decision not to attend the Round Table Conference. Events moved swifty thereafter, and the entire correspondence between the Government and Gandhiji, together with the Congress "charge-sheet" against the Government, was released for publication. Probably under the pressure of public opinion, the Viceroy and Gandhiji met again in Simla from August 25 to 27 in a desperate effort to reach an agreement. The negotiations seem to

have been none too smooth. At one point we even find Gandhiji getting a little impatient and writing to Emerson: "In my opinion there is ample room for discussion and accommodation if we mean the same thing. If we do not, the sooner the agony of suspense ends the better" (p. 359). Ultimately, a not very satisfactory compromise solution was worked out seeking to reconcile the widely divergent points of view of the Congress and the Government, and Gandhiji left immediately for Bombay on the evening of the 27th, greatly relieved that the suspense was over. "One stage in the journey is reached", he wrote to the Viceroy from the train. "I know that I have caused you endless worry. But the only consolation I can derive for myself and give to you lies in the fact that I have given myself no less worry and anxiety" (p. 365). The Viceroy sent in reply "his blessings and all good wishes" (p. 366).

Gandhiji had not taken the earlier decision to cancel the London visit without an inner struggle. He seems to have looked forward to it for personal reasons and was "grieved to arrive at the decision not to go", but "deep down I have the feeling that it was the best thing and that the time was not ripe for me to go to London" (p. 294). While coming to the decision, he told C. F. Andrews, "I had Sastri, Polak and above all Muriel, in my mind. But duty knows no personal ties" (p. 294). Gandhiji was also disappointed that he would not be meeting Romain Rolland, but believed "it was God's will that I should not go" and cherished the hope that "some day, somehow we shall meet in the flesh" (p. 297). If thus the decision not to go had not been an easy one, the decision to go was not so either. Gandhiji was going as the sole representative of the Congress, and for a moment he seems to have been overwhelmed with a sense of his helplessness. "But just before the way became clear for me to go to London," he wrote in an article for *Young India* entitled "Alone, Yet Not Alone" dictated in the train taking him to Bombay, "and more when the way was opened at 7 p.m. on the 27th, my weakness burst upon me as never before, and I have not got over it even as I dictate these lines. . ." (p. 368). But he was sustained by his faith in God. "I must go to London with God as my only guide", he continued, and added: "One has therefore to appear before Him in all one's weakness, empty-handed and in a spirit of full surrender, and then He enables you to stand before a whole world and protects you from all harm" (pp. 368-9). Writing to Rajagopalachari, Gandhiji said: "When I think of myself with all my limitations and ignorance I sink in utter des-

pair but I rise out of it immediately, as I think and feel that it is God within Who is moving me and using me as His instrument. He will give me the right word at the right moment'' (p. 372). That did not mean, he added, that he would make no mistakes. ''But I have come to believe that God as it were purposely makes us commit mistakes if only to humble us'' (p. 372).

Gandhiji repeatedly stated that he was going to London without much hope of success for his mission. ''My expectations of the Conference are zero'', he said in a statement to *Al Ahram*, ''if I am to base them on a survey of the horizon'' (p. 397). He had, if he had not been prevailed upon by the Congress Working Committee to go, a mass-oriented plan of action calculated to win the substance instead of the shadow of swaraj. As he had declared times without number, for him political power was not an end in itself but a means of bettering the conditions of the masses. He would not have the nation ''look to England or Simla or Delhi for swaraj. The right course for the people is to rely on themselves. . . . if we win anything it will be through our own strength and in the measure of our strength'' (p. 352). Holding that real swaraj could be gained ''without political power and by directly acting upon the powers that be'' (p. 2), side by side with constructive work, he would have the Congress fight for redress of the concrete grievances of the masses in all parts of the country; such popular struggles would, he felt, unite the masses across communal or regional lines as no paper pacts among leaders could do. ''Let the communal-minded Hindus and Muslims and others'', he said in a Gujarati article, ''share a little power with the British under that Constitution. . . . The Congress instead of asking for power from that Government will demand the things for which they want power and, if they are refused, it will fight through satyagraha'' (pp. 425-6), for he was convinced ''that whatever is needful and can be gained by political power can perhaps be more quickly and more certainly gained by satyagraha'', (p. 2) which was a more potent form of direct action than adult suffrage.

Gandhiji discovered, to his pleasant surprise, that fifteen out of the twenty clauses in the Fundamental Rights Resolution passed at the Karachi Session of the Congress in the preceding March could be implemented by the people themselves without State assistance. If, he argued, ''we do not do the things we ought to today, when the power comes to us we shall be found unready for them'' (pp. 235-6). ''A popular State can never act in advance of public opinion'', he explained further. ''If it goes

against it, it will be destroyed. Democracy disciplined and enlightened is the finest thing in the world. A democracy prejudiced, ignorant, superstitious will land itself in chaos and may be self-destroyed'' (p. 236). He, therefore, wanted the Congress and the people to concentrate their energies on constructive and self-purificatory tasks, and opposed the methods of terrorists on the ground that ''the capacity to run the Government of the country on behalf of the people and for the people . . . will not come simply if the British leave or are killed'' (p. 208).

Gandhiji was aware of the fundamental difference of outlook between himself and the majority of Congressmen. For him non-violence was an article of faith, whereas the Congress had accepted it as a policy and even so adhered to it only half-heartedly. ''I cannot get rid of the conviction,'' Gandhiji said while commenting on the attempted assassination of the Acting Governor of Bombay, ''that the greatest obstacle to our progress towards swaraj is our want of faith in our policy'' (p. 232). He reminded Congressmen that they shared responsibility for the deeds of the misguided youth. ''Those who commit murders are also our brethren'', he said, adding, ''When we claim to represent them we also must accept the responsibility for what they do'' (p. 261). Gandhiji was still more distressed by the violence of communalism. During the A.I.C.C. meeting in Bombay on August 8, while referring to a recent manifestation of communal intolerance Gandhiji almost broke down and explained, ''I am feeling unnerved and seem to have lost all power'' (p. 274). Even this feeling of helplessness Gandhiji turned into a source of spiritual strength, for it enabled him to realize the truth of the Tamil saying: ''God is the Help of the helpless.'' ''This realization'', he believed, ''will show us a way out of the present impenetrable darkness. . . .'' (p. 286).

Gandhiji's letters to C. F. Andrews and Mirabehn reveal the nature of the bond that united him to them. Andrews seems to have appealed to Gandhiji to relax the boycott of British cloth out of compassion for the sufferings of the workers of Lancashire. Gandhiji, while arguing that the ''remedy for unemployment in England is not thoughtless generosity of India but a complete realization by England of the awfulness of exploitation of people'' (p. 15), could fully enter into Andrews's feelings. ''As is your wont'', Gandhiji told him, ''you are distressed over what your eyes see and ears hear. . . . My heart goes out to the unemployed. It goes out to you in your terrific moral struggle'' (pp.47-8). Mirabehn's mother was ailing in England and was

slowly sinking. Gandhiji, however, did not urge her to go to London to see her. "True love consists", he told her, "in transferring itself from the body to the dweller within and then necessarily realizing the oneness of all life inhabiting numberless bodies" (p. 111). Writing to her on receiving the news of her passing away, Gandhiji said: "I read your suppressed grief in every line of your letter", and while sympathizing with her grief as "very human", he urged her to eradicate it (p. 128). But, he told her in another letter, there was "no reason for suppressing from me your grief if it is there. These things are not remedied immediately there is intellectual conviction" (p. 204). For Gandhiji, the cause of service had always precedence over personal attachment. He had been, he told Mirabehn after sending her away from him, " on a bed of hot ashes all the while I was accepting your service. You will truly serve me by joyously serving the cause" (p. 49).

Gandhiji adopted this personal approach even to his political opponents. At the end of the Simla talks, he wrote to Emerson to tell him "how grieved I felt in Simla over what appeared to me to be your obstructive tactics. . . . The securing of a constitution is nothing to me compared to the joy of discovering human contacts by which one could swear". Gandhiji added, however: "I shall soon forget the sad memories of the past three days and I know you will forgive me if I have unwittingly misjudged you" (p. 374).

Gandhiji based even political decisions not on mere expediency but on some ethical principle or other. Explaining his attitude in regard to satyagraha in Indian States, he said: "It is a law of life that some good work being done at any point in an environment is bound to have its effect on the rest of it" (p. 154).

His letters to the Ashram inmates offered in every case positive help and encouragement. To Gangabehn he wrote : "The intellect has less value, the heart has more. And the heart is something which everyone has" (p. 72). In a letter to Chhaganlal Joshi he listed the many merits of Premabehn and added: "It is true that she has defects. But is there anyone among us who has none?" (p. 207) To Premabehn herself he confessed his inability "to do justice" and explained: "I have assumed the role of your father and mother and, therefore, I can give you but one-sided advice. A satyagrahi . . . never demands justice. Justice means 'measure for measure'. Satyagraha means truth even against cunning, non-violence against violence, forbearance against anger and love against hatred" (p. 217).

The speeches at the prayer meetings on board the s.s. *Rajputana* are of special significance. The first carries Gandhiji's practical testimony on prayer which, yearned for as indispensable food for the soul, yielded the incomparable gift of illumination and inner peace (p. 394). The second, setting out to recommend "a simple, childlike faith . . . which is also a token of humility", sums up with unsurpassed clarity and certitude the *advaitic* conviction, "If I exist, God exists" (p. 399).

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PREFACE

This volume (September 12, 1931 to January 3, 1932) covers Gandhiji's visit to London to attend the second session of the Round Table Conference. This was for him "a mission of peace" (p. 2) that could end the "turbulence and strife in India" (p. 1). It was only after much hesitation that he had decided to go, for he had seen in the atmosphere in India no sign of a genuine change of heart or willingness to part with power on the part of the British. In less than a week in London Gandhiji began to get impatient with the "hopeless uncertainty" about the Government's intentions (p. 26), and as the weeks passed he discovered that he "had miscalculated the forces arrayed against India and the Congress" (p. 228). Though Gandhiji's mission seemed thus to have been a complete failure in terms of concrete results, he utilized the visit to educate public opinion in England on the conditions in India and tried to win over influential men and women to his dream of a new partnership between Britain and India, based on complete equality and working not only for mutual benefit but for the good of the whole world. On the return journey, Gandhiji met Romain Rolland at Villeneuve and, during a brief halt in Italy, also Mussolini and paid a visit to the Vatican where he was profoundly moved by the "living image . . . of Christ Crucified". "It was not without a wrench", he confessed, "that I could tear myself away from that scene of living tragedy. I saw there at once that nations like individuals could only be made through the agony of the Cross and in no other way" (p. 434).

For Gandhiji the Indian struggle possessed a wider, moral significance transcending the issue of mere political freedom. In a message to the world given through *The Evening Standard* as he was approaching the shores of England, Gandhiji asserted: "If India gains her freedom through truth and non-violence, I feel convinced it will be the largest contribution of the age to the peace of the world" (p. 1). In a message to America, he elaborated the theme: ". . . the Indian Conference bears in its consequences not only upon India but upon the whole world. . . . the world is sick unto death of blood-spilling. The world is seeking a way out, and . . . perhaps it will be the privilege of the ancient land of India to show that way out to the hungering world" (pp. 8-9). The means of truth and non-violence adopted by India, Gandhiji claimed, transformed Indian patriotism into internationalism and it was,

therefore, in the interests of the world that India should be able to attain her freedom through these means (pp. 3-4). It was, he asserted in a speech at a meeting of Indian students in London, for the good of the British people themselves that the Conference should succeed. "I have", he said, "known the English nature in its hideous form in the Punjab. . . . It is my purpose by every means at my command to prevent such a catastrophe occurring again. I am more concerned in preventing the brutalization of human nature than in preventing the sufferings of my own people", for "people who become brutalized . . . not only drag down themselves but mankind also" (p. 145). Children of the same God and sharers of the same divine essence, "we must", Gandhiji felt, "partake of the sin of every person, whether he belongs to us or to another race" (p. 146).

In the political discussions, Gandhiji's stand was governed by the Congress mandate to him, which reiterated the national demand for complete independence, implying full control over the army, external affairs, finance and fiscal and economic policy, but gave him freedom "to accept such adjustments as may be demonstrably necessary in the interest of India" (p. 17). Gandhiji interpreted the mandate to permit a partnership with Great Britain on terms of complete equality and with freedom to either party to terminate it at will. He, therefore, laid stress on the nature of the new relationship that he wished to see established. He did not want to dissolve the British connection, but to transform it (p. 331). Echoing the eloquence of Edmund Burke's speech on American Conciliation, he asked: "What cannot two nations do—one a handful, but brave, with a record for bravery perhaps unequalled . . . and another a very ancient nation, counted in millions, with a glorious and ancient past, representing at the present moment two great cultures, the Islamic and Hindu cultures . . .?" (p. 19) This idea of Great Britain and India co-operating as equals for mutual benefit and for the good of the world was a recurrent theme in Gandhiji's speeches throughout the visit.

In regard to the controversial issues which came up for discussion, Gandhiji claimed that the Congress represented "in its essence the dumb, semi-starved millions" in both British India and Indian India, and stated that all other interests "would have to subserve the interests of these dumb millions". Accordingly, he advocated adult suffrage and opposed the demand for statutory protection to special interests, British or Indian, or for special representation of any class interests excepting those of the two great minority communities, the Muslims and the Sikhs. But, recogniz-

ing the special position of the Princes, he adopted a conciliatory attitude towards them, appealing only to their sense of generosity. He complimented them for having agreed to join a Federation, but, as "a man of the people, from the people, and endeavouring to represent the lowest classes of society", he urged "upon them the advisability of finding a place for these also in any scheme that they may evolve. . ." (p. 29).

The idea of adult suffrage sounded too radical in the prevailing climate of opinion at that time, but Gandhiji, "having lived and mixed with the poorest of villagers", had no fear of the masses. On the contrary, he knew "that some of the finest specimens of humanity are to be found amongst these poor people, amongst the very untouchables themselves" (p. 30). Adult suffrage, he said, would satisfy "all the reasonable aspirations" not only of the Muslims, but also of the Depressed Classes and the Christians and of the working classes as well. At the same time, however, to minimize the problems that might be posed by the vast numbers of voters, he proposed a method of indirect election with village-wise electoral colleges, which would permit personal contact between the candidate and the voters. The idea, however, did not find favour at the Conference, not even among the delegates belonging to the minority communities.

The Congress had evolved a scheme of joint-electorates with reservation of seats for Muslims and Sikhs and statutory guarantees for the protection of their religious rights. But it had agreed, in the event of this scheme being rejected, to accept any other solution that might be acceptable to the Hindu, Muslim and Sikh delegates. Such an agreement, however, did not materialize at the Conference notwithstanding Gandhiji's efforts at mediation through informal discussions among the delegates. The delegates subsequently agreed to leave the decision to the Prime Minister, Ramsay MacDonald. Gandhiji refused to join in the request on the ground that MacDonald would be arbitrating not as an individual but in his capacity as Prime Minister.

On the question of separate electorate for the Depressed Classes, Gandhiji took a firm stand. Any such arrangement, he believed, "would divide the Hindu community into armed camps" (p. 161). While fully appreciating the psychological reasons for Dr. Ambedkar's demand, Gandhiji nevertheless felt that "the great wrong under which he has laboured and perhaps the bitter experiences that he has undergone have for the moment warped his judgment" (p. 298). "Will untouchables remain untouchables in perpetuity?" he asked, and added, "I would far rather that Hindu-

ism died than that untouchability lived.'' Saying that separate electorate for the Depressed Classes would ''create a division in Hinduism'' which he could not tolerate, he uttered the solemn warning, ''if I was the only person to resist this thing, I would resist it with my life'' (p. 298). And he was to demonstrate later, by undertaking an indefinite fast in Yeravda Jail in September 1932, that he had meant what he said.

Opposing the demand for special representation for Europeans, he reminded them that hitherto they had been the privileged class, enjoying liberal protection from the foreign government (pp. 34-5). He appealed to them ''to try once in a while to live on the goodwill of the people'' and ''make common cause with the masses'' (p. 35). He was equally forthright in opposing their demand for protection of their commercial rights through statutory provision against discrimination. ''No protection will protect British trade in India if that trade is inimical to Indian interests'', he declared. ''Every 'interest', British or Indian, will have to pass this acid test: Is it or is it not in the interests of the people?'' (pp. 60-1). He would not agree that ''the rights of all Indian-born subjects themselves could even be guaranteed as equal'', for ''the future Government of India would be constantly obliged . . . in order to equalize conditions . . . continually to discriminate in favour of the famishing Indians against those who have been blest by nature or by the Government themselves with riches and other privileges'' (p. 315). An undeveloped country like India, he said, would have ''to develop her own economics. . .'', and ''if the key industries are not taken over by the State itself, the State will at least have a predominant say in the conduct and administration and development of the key industries'' and this might mean discrimination not only against European but against Indian capitalists too (p. 321). The speech at the Federal Structure Committee which carried this warning was described as, ''openly inspired by Bolshevik ideas'' and created ''consternation among my friends'' (p. 413).

Gandhiji's views about the control of the Army also must have sounded impractical to many. Asserting that the Indian Army was meant wholly for the defence of British interests (p. 305), he said that it should be disbanded if it did not pass fully under Indian control. He hoped, however, that such a necessity would not arise, and that at the time of transferring the control the British would ''teach a new lesson'' to the Indian and British troops in the Army. ''It should be the proud privilege'', Gandhiji said, ''and the proud duty of Great Britain now to initiate us in the mys-

teries of conducting our own defence. Having clipped our wings, it is their duty to give us wings whereby we can fly, even as they fly'' (p. 307).

The British Government was of course in no mood to meet Gandhiji even half way. There had been a serious economic crisis, and the Labour Government had lost its majority and general elections were ordered while the Conference was in progress. The Conservatives returned to power with a huge majority, though Ramsay MacDonald continued as Prime Minister at the head of a National Government. In the midst of all these changes, no big decisions were possible and the British Government made it appear that progress in constitution-making was held up by the absence of a communal agreement. Gandhiji, it seems, had anticipated this move. Reporting the failure of informal discussion among Hindu representatives and delegates from minority communities, he told the Conference that the causes of failure ''were inherent in the composition of the Indian Delegation''. They were there by nomination of the Government and lacked representative status. Moreover, their discussions lacked ''the sense of reality in that we do not know what it is that we are going to get''. The solution to the communal problem, he said ''can be the crown of the swaraj constitution, not its foundation, . . . the iceberg of communal differences will melt under the warmth of the sun of freedom'' (p. 116). Outside the Conference, Gandhiji stated his views more bluntly and charged the British Government with having followed the policy of ''Divide and Rule''. ''We will'', he said, ''continue to remain divided so long as the wedge of foreign rule remains there, and sinks deeper and deeper. That is the way of the wedge'' (p. 185). He invited the Government to declare ''that they are going to withdraw from India whether Indians agreed or not'' and promised that agreement would soon follow. What was offered instead was ''simply a share in the power of the bureaucracy to exploit India and this sets up an apple of discord in our midst'' (p. 186).

Gandhiji found that one great obstacle to a proper appreciation by the British public of the nationalist demand was its utter ignorance of the conditions in India. From childhood they were brought up, not on truthful, real history, but upon false history so that it was impossible for them to realize ''that the sum total of the activities of British administration in India has been harmful rather than beneficial to the nation''. Advancing ''two infallible tests'' to decide this, he asked: ''Is it or is it not a fact that India today is the poorest country in the world, . . . ? Is it or is it not a fact that India has been rendered emasculated . . . ?''

(p. 109) Admitting the responsibility of the Indian money-lender also, Gandhiji said: " . . . if we were acting violently, the Indian Bania would deserve to be shot. But then, the British Bania would deserve to be shot a hundred times. . . . I do not know of another instance in history of such an organized exploitation of so unorganized and gentle a race" (p. 187).

Gandhiji's views about machinery seemed to have perplexed even sincere well-wishers of India and he was repeatedly cross-examined on the question. Explaining to Charlie Chaplin the psychological cause for his aversion to machinery, Gandhiji said: "Machinery in the past has made us dependent on England, and the only way we can rid ourselves of the dependence is to boycott all goods made by machinery" (p. 48). He admitted to H. N. Brailsford that it was "only the devoted few who can live the simple life without machinery. The masses will never do without it" (p. 137). "I should have", he said on another occasion, "most delicate machinery to make fine surgical instruments" (p. 385). Speaking to an American correspondent, Gandhiji agreed that he was opposed to machinery, but "only because and when it concentrates production and distribution in the hands of the few", for, as he explained, "whatever cannot be shared with the masses is taboo to me" (p. 167). He was not opposed to mass production as such, for the spinning-wheel also was a means of mass production, but mass production in people's own homes, individual production multiplied millions of times. What he held to be wrong was mass production in the sense of "production by the fewest possible number through the aid of highly complicated machinery". On the Russian experiment in State-controlled production and distribution, he said, "If it were not based on force, I would dote on it" (p. 166).

At some of the meetings he addressed, Gandhiji put aside politics and spoke about matters nearer his inmost heart, for, as he explained in the speech at Guildhouse Church, though his mission seemed to be political, its roots were spiritual (p. 50). Narrating his progress towards the ideal of voluntary poverty as a means of remaining "absolutely untouched by immorality, by untruth . . .", he confessed that "it was a difficult struggle in the beginning and it was a wrestle with my wife and—as I can vividly recall—with my children also" (p. 51). But "a time came when it became a matter of positive joy to give up" the things to which he had become accustomed; "a great burden fell off my shoulders", he felt, "I could now walk with ease and do my work also in the service of my fellowmen with great comfort and still greater joy"

(p. 51). In order to realize the ideal of poverty in its fullness, Gandhiji argued, one must not cling even to one's body for "the body has been given to you as a temporary possession" and must be "surrendered at the will of God, and while it is at my disposal, must be used not for dissipation, not for self-indulgence, not for pleasure, but merely for service and service the whole of our waking hours" (p. 54). Addressing a conference of Missionary Societies, Gandhiji explained why he disapproved of the idea of converting people to one's faith. "A man of prayer", he said, "believes that God works in a mysterious way and wants the whole world to possess the truth he himself has seen. He would simply pray for it to be shared. It passes; it takes wing. . . . Religion is like a rose" (p. 121). For him the ideal missionary was C. F. Andrews who lived rather than preached his Christianity (p. 122). While he admitted that missions had done indirect good to the country, he claimed: "I feel I adore the same Father though in a different form. I may not adore him as 'God'. To me that name makes no appeal, but when I think of Him as Rama, He thrills me. . . . There is all the poetry in it" (p. 127). Accepting many symbols for the one Reality and deprecating the reification of man through institutions, he countered a critic with the assertions: "Your God is also mine for I believe in your God, in spite of the fact that you do not believe in mine. . . . man is always good . . . it is only bad institutions that turn him from the straight road" (pp. 386-7).

Commenting on the relationship between art and religion, Gandhiji said: ". . . the fundamental experience in both of them belongs to the domain of man's relationship with God. . . . The central experience of life will for ever remain the relationship which man has to God" (p. 149).

Though politically Gandhiji's mission seemed to have failed, he was not in the least unhappy. He wrote to Vallabhbhai that all his work was done outside the Conference (p. 233). He told a meeting of the Friends of India that, despite chilling difficulties in his work, he was having "perennial joy outside the Conference and the committees" (p. 115). Even the visit to Lancashire, where the workers had reason to bear him a grudge, was a great success from a personal point of view. He was deeply moved by "the manifestation of deep affection that the crowds of people lining the streets . . . spontaneously showed" to him, and said he would "ever treasure that affection as one of the pleasant recollections of my life" (pp. 75-6). Concluding his speech at the Plenary Session of the Conference, Gandhiji said: "I am carrying

with me thousands upon thousands of English friendships. . . . All this hospitality, all this kindness will never be effaced from my memory no matter what befalls my unhappy land'' (p. 368). Reverting to the subject in ''A Retrospect'', he said: ''During my stay in East London, I saw the best side of human nature and was able to confirm my intuitive opinion that at bottom there was neither East nor West. . . . This experience has brought me closer to England if such a thing was possible'' (p. 433).

During his three-day visit to Switzerland to meet Romain Rolland at Villeneuve, Gandhiji addressed a number of public meetings. Replying to the question ''What is Truth?'' at one of those meetings, Gandhiji said he had solved it for himself by saying that it was ''what the voice within tells one''. It was, however, ''not proper for everyone to claim to hear the voice of conscience'', for ''Truth is not to be found by anybody who has not got an abundant sense of humility'' (p. 406). At another meeting he said: ''Real love for man I regard to be utterly impossible without love for God'' (p. 412). Paying a tribute to the International Red Cross for its humanitarian work, Gandhiji suggested that it ''should cease to think of giving relief after war but of giving relief without war''. ''Believe me'', he said, ''there are millions wounded by their own folly'' who need the ministrations of ''the non-violent societies of tomorrow'' (p. 421).

Gandhiji seems to have acquired during this visit to England a deeper understanding of the power of suffering as a means of purification and conversion. Since 1920, he told a meeting at the Quaker Settlement of Woodbrooke in England, ''the conviction has been growing upon me, that things of fundamental importance to the people are not secured by reason alone, but have to be purchased with their suffering'', for ''you must not merely satisfy the reason, you must move the heart also'' (p. 189). In a Christmas talk aboard the ship on the return voyage, Gandhiji argued that to experience peace in the midst of strife, one must destroy one's whole life, crucify oneself, and added: '' . . . as the miraculous birth is an eternal event, so is the Cross an eternal event in this stormy life'' (p. 439). And so, when on return to India he found that resumption of civil disobedience was inevitable, he wrote to Rabindranath Tagore and asked him to give his best ''to the sacrificial fire that is being lighted'' (p. 489).

PREFACE

This volume covers the first five months (January 4 to May 31, 1932) of Gandhiji's detention in Yeravda Jail after his return from the Round Table Conference in London. The imprisonment gave Gandhiji much-needed rest after nearly a year of strenuous political activity which left him so exhausted that, during the first few days in jail, we find him noting in his Diary and reporting in letters to Mirabehn and Narandas Gandhi that he was making up for arrears of sleep (pp. 4, 13 and 505-6). In the company of Vallabhbhai Patel, who was arrested at the same time as Gandhiji and lodged with him in Yeravda Jail, and Mahadev Desai who joined them in March, Gandhiji seems to have relaxed himself completely for a few months and, as the contents of this volume and Mahadev Desai's Diary for the period show, passed his time in peace such as he was not destined to enjoy ever again in his life.

On landing in Bombay on December 28, 1931, Gandhiji found that the Government was determined to destroy the influence of the Congress. It refused to enter into negotiation with him except on terms which would be humiliating for him and the Congress to accept, and he, therefore, advised the country to resume civil disobedience. But, as he said in a letter written from jail, to the Secretary of State for India, he had "reached Bombay with every intention of co-operating" (p. 10) and was psychologically unprepared for a renewal of the struggle. The imprisonment, therefore, came to him probably as a great relief. "Infinite is God's mercy", he said in the note addressed to Vallabhbhai on being told of the arrival of the police (p. 1).

As was usual with Gandhiji, once he was in jail he ceased to take further interest in political developments in the country, except to address a letter of gentle protest, first to the Governor of Bombay and then to the Secretary of State, against the excessive repression resorted to by the Government to put down the civil disobedience movement. In a hurriedly-written note to Verrier Elwin at the time of arrest, Gandhiji had asked him to tell the British people "that I love them even as I love my own countrymen. I have never done anything towards them in hatred or malice and God willing I shall never do anything in that manner in future" (p. 2). The letter to the Governor concluded with a similar assurance: "I write this as a friend wishing well to the

English. . . . I would like the fight to be conducted honourably on either side so that at the end of it either party may be able to say of the other that there was no malice behind its actions'' (p. 20). The letter to Sir Samuel Hoare was couched in stronger terms: ''Repression appears to me to be crossing what might be called the legitimate limit. A Government terrorism is spreading through the land. Both English and Indian officials are being brutalized.'' And he hinted that, as a satyagrahi, he might have to embark on an indefinite fast in order to prevent further embitterment of the already bitter relations between the two peoples (p. 192).

Concerned though he was about the human consequences of repression, Gandhiji was far more seriously exercised over the possibility of the British Government granting separate electorates to the Depressed Classes, a step which, he thought, would ''vivisect and disrupt'' Hinduism. Though he admitted that ''no penance that caste Hindus may do can, in any way, compensate for the calculated degradation to which they have consigned the Depressed Classes for centuries'', he held that ''separate electorate is neither penance nor any remedy'' for that degradation (p. 191). He, therefore, informed the British Government that ''in the event of their decision creating separate electorate for the Depressed Classes, I must fast unto death'', urging in defence of his decision that ''for me the contemplated step is not a method, it is part of my being. It is a call of conscience which I dare not disobey . . .'' (p. 191). The fast, when it came later in September, gave a new turn to the national movement and led ultimately to the suspension of the civil disobedience movement in favour of constructive work for amelioration of the conditions of the Harijans, as the Depressed Classes came to be called.

As in 1930, this time also Gandhiji spent much of the time in jail in spinning and writing letters but in addition, as the entries in the Diary show, he did a great deal of general reading and found time as well for a serious study of economics and astronomy, watching the stars with great zest. The letters, though they served for him a primarily moral and educative purpose (p. 457), also satisfied a strongly felt need for human contacts. Requesting the Government's permission to meet fellow-prisoners, Gandhiji said: ''This meeting of some of my companions now and then is a human want I may not deny myself without shaking and impairing the whole nervous system'' (p. 173). It was this ''human want'' that was also met by contacts through letters. Writing to Maganlal, son of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta, he

says: "Remember that parents can never have enough of letters from their children" (p. 493). Gandhiji was as father to many co-workers and Ashram inmates and he, therefore, welcomed, and answered letters from them on all subjects ranging from serious metaphysical problems to the best way of brushing one's teeth (pp. 214-5).

To Gandhiji nothing was too trivial or beneath notice. Advising the Ashram boys and girls how to make their letters interesting, he said: "So many things happen every day around you that, if you properly observe them, you will be able to write enough to fill pages" (p. 89). Some of his own letters illustrate this abounding curiosity of Gandhiji and his interest in the minutest details of life. The descriptions of the cat and her ways with the kitten (pp. 413-4 and 466-7) are a fine example of Gandhiji's gift of observation. In the articles on "Watching the Heavens" (pp. 295-9 and 312-5), we see a side of Gandhiji's intellectual personality which his political and ethical concerns did not let him satisfy fully. In them his sense of the vastness, orderliness and beauty of creation finds almost poetic expression. "No drama", he wrote, "composed or acted by human beings can ever equal the great spectacle which nature has arranged for us on the stage of the sky" (pp. 297-8). Witnessing the ever-changing patterns of this eternal dance, he seemed to hear "those shining bodies in their utter silence singing the praise of God" (p. 298). "This study", he told Mirabehn, "puts me in more tune with the infinite" (p. 342), for the sight "instantaneously reveals the presence of God" (p. 296).

The letters to Narandas Gandhi are mainly about the affairs of the Ashram. They illustrate at once Gandhiji's concern for the moral and spiritual progress of its inmates and for the well-being of Narandas. Besides offering advice regarding the human and administrative problems that arose from time to time, Gandhiji also sent suggestions for new experiments to make the Ashram an ever better instrument of service. But he was anxious not to impose too heavy a burden on Narandas and wrote to him: "I am simply pouring out before you the stream of thoughts . . .. You are a steady man, and, therefore, I do not hesitate to put before you whatever ideas come to me. . . . When you are fed up with this, please drop a hint and I shall calm down" (p. 436).

The letters to Mirabehn reveal a new phase in their relationship. He had, Gandhiji admits to Premabehn, "not made any man or woman weep as bitterly as I have made her. My hardness of heart, impatience and ignorant attachment were respon-

sible for such conduct. I . . . wish to see her perfect. The moment I see any imperfection in her . . . I rebuke her sharply. . . . These instances have opened my eyes to the presence of violence in me and, recalling them, I have been trying to reform myself'' (p. 157). We see this change of attitude reflected in Gandhiji's letters to Mirabehn. Advising her to exercise self-control regarding visits to him, he says: ''But self-control to be self-control must brace one up. It becomes mechanical or superimposed when it unnerves or saddens one'' (p. 61). He, therefore, permitted her to visit him as often as she pleased if she found that self-denial in this matter depressed her. Gandhiji had often insisted in the past that Mirabehn would serve him best by serving his cause. We find him relenting now. ''When I come out'', he tells her, ''you shall certainly be with me and resume your original work of personal service. I quite clearly see that it is the only way for your self-expansion. I shall no longer be guilty as I have been before of thwarting you in any way whatsoever. . . . I see once more that good government is no substitute for self-government'' (p. 279).

It was, however, Premabehn Kantak who drew out Gandhiji into some of the rarest personal references to be found in his letters. He encouraged her to put him any questions she liked, and she seems to have availed herself of the permission without any inhibitions. Answering her questions about the Ashram, he explained how ''it subserved moral and economic ends alike'', and how through service of the country and service of the world it could ''help us to attain *moksha*, to see God'' (p. 38). While hinting to other correspondents of ''a faint glimpse'' (p. 42) and an ''almost a matter of direct experience'' (p. 223) of the thought-free, but far from inert, state of pure consciousness, he wrote to her at some length about the knowledge of Brahman ''which does not speak about itself'' but whose presence, like the sun's, is ''revealed by its own light'' (p. 428). Gandhiji welcomed her frank criticisms because, as he told her: ''God has never let any delusion of mine last for ever. . . . Your letters help that process of awakening'' (p. 157). Admitting the justice of her description of his inconsistencies, Gandhiji said: ''The writer of articles in *Young India* is one person, and the man whom the inmates of the Ashram know intimately is another. . . . I am, moreover, a votary of truth and can make no attempt consciously to hide my weaknesses. Hence, the Kauravas dwelling in me make their presence felt in one way or another'' (p. 94). The Kauravas, he felt, were being vanquished but ''one cannot yet be positive about that'', for ''the final judgment about

a man can be expressed only after his death'' (pp. 93-4).

Writing to her about his visit to Rome on his return journey from England, Gandhiji said: ''I very much enjoyed seeing the paintings in Rome . . .. If I could spend two or three months there, I would go and see the paintings and sculptures every day and study them attentively.'' Comparing European art with Indian art, he said: ''Indian art is entirely a product of the imagination. European art is imitation of Nature.'' ''You will be able to see from this'', he concluded, ''that I do take interest in art. But I have renounced, have had to renounce, many such interests'' for the sake of ''the joy which everything connected with the search for truth gives me . . .'' (p. 37).

Gandhiji wrote to the Ashram inmates about his experiences in England. He described to the boys and girls his visit to a Montessori school and a children's tea-party. Gandhiji held up before the women the example of European women, with their fearlessness, spirit of service and capacity for self-sacrifice. Though Indian women were in no way inferior to European women, he felt that much of their strength lay suppressed (p. 33). ''I have observed one great defect in our women'', he said, ''namely, that they hide their thoughts from the world. . . . At every step they do things which they dislike in their hearts and believe that they must do them'' (p. 265).

From his rich experience in spiritual striving, Gandhiji offered valuable guidance to other seekers of truth. But he rejected a suggestion that he should write a *smriti*. ''What I write or say'', he explained, ''has not been thought out in conformity with a system. I have only enough strength to enable me to meet every situation as it arises in the course of my quest for truth'' (p. 256). Stating the same thing in a different way in a letter to Narandas Gandhi, he said: ''I have one limitation, or say a gift. I express certain thoughts only in certain circumstances. . . . my ship sails as the wind blows. I have no map of the course with me. . . . Having such a map is contrary to the spirit of *bhakti*'' (p. 32). He relied upon spontaneous intuitions of the heart in interpreting Shastras, too. ''The seeker'', he said, ''should faithfully adhere to the meaning that appeals to his heart and act accordingly. . . . For the person wishing to construct a way of life for himself, there is only one harmony to be achieved—between the meaning accepted by him and his daily life'' (p. 257).

The letters on the *Gita* provide for the most part a clear, flowing summary of the great poem's main argument that progressive purification of the mind through good actions and devotion to

God leads ultimately to realization of absolute truth. Refusing any facile or premature choice between the empirical and the spiritual world, Gandhiji asserted that "the Ashram exists in our hearts as much as it does on the bank of the Sabarmati" (p. 48). He recognized that of all spiritual maladies the one common "cause is always one and that is the ego. The remedy also is one—giving up the ego, that is, reducing oneself to a cipher" (p. 106). In this purification of the mind and attenuation of the ego, not only disinterested service but a shared enjoyment of the old heroic myths could, according to Gandhiji, play a useful part. The war against evil has to be waged simultaneously within one's heart and in the world without. While the external enemy is social or institutional and changes from age to age, the internal enemy is inherent in our common human nature and can only be overcome by invoking the God in man. Hence Gandhiji's acceptance and use of "poetic truth" through *adhyatmika* interpretation of the national epics. The *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* describe "the eternal war between God and demon in man, between Rama and Ravana" (p. 111). "The real Kurukshetra is the human heart which is also dharmakshetra (the field of righteousness)" (p. 113). Unsparing condemnation of evil, while sparing evil-doers, is the duty of the honest seeker who approaches absolute truth (*sat*) through firm acceptance and strenuous practice of the relative truth (*satya*) as he sees it from time to time; the relative at each stage is "for us as good as the absolute" (pp. 478-9).

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PREFACE

The peaceful tenor of Gandhiji's life in jail reflected in the previous volume came to an end during the period (June 1 to August 31, 1932) covered in this volume. It was disturbed, first, by a change in the Government's policy in regard to his correspondence resulting in considerable delay in clearing both outgoing and incoming mail, and then by the news of the passing away of his closest personal friend, Dr. Pranjivan Mehta. Finally came the announcement, on August 17, of Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald's award, recognizing the Depressed Classes as a minority community entitled to separate electorates. In keeping with his declared intention to resist any such decision with his life (*vide* Volumes XLVIII and XLIX), Gandhiji wrote to the Prime Minister informing him that he would embark on "a perpetual fast unto death from food of any kind" from the noon of September 20. The fast, he said, would cease "if during its progress the British Government, of its own motion or under pressure of public opinion, revise their decision and withdraw their scheme of communal electorates for the 'depressed' classes . . . ". The step, Gandhiji added, was "but the due fulfilment of the scheme of life, which I have tried for more than a quarter of a century, apparently not without considerable success" (pp. 383-4).

Already in May a conflict had started between Gandhiji and the Government over the issue of permitting Mirabehn to visit him in jail. The volume opens with a letter informing her that he had "decided to stop the interviews from next week" if the Government did not change their attitude. As he explained in a letter to the Inspector-General of Prisons, Gandhiji had "long ceased to make any distinction between family members and others", and therefore, if he could not see a co-worker like Mirabehn, he would also not like to see other visitors, most of whom were his relations or Ashram inmates (p. 21). The decision, he admitted to Devdas, would shock Kasturba the most. "But", he said, "she is born to endure shocks. All those who form or keep connections with me must pay a heavy price" (p. 250). Reasoning along similar lines Gandhiji told Devdas also, when the latter was ill in Gorakhpur jail, that he "would not like to ask anybody from the western part to run up to Gorakhpur". "If I don't practise my philosophy on you", he asked, "on whom else should I? ... God is your relations and your friends and your parents; all

others are so only in name'' (p. 50). Vallabhbhai Patel, however, prevailed upon Gandhiji to send a wire to the Governor of the U.P. requesting Devdas's transfer to a jail situated in a place with healthier climate.

The difficulty regarding the correspondence took nearly a month to be resolved, and it was not before Gandhiji had addressed a strong letter of protest to the Inspector-General of Prisons that the Government yielded. ''This delay'', he said, ''in sending my letters to their destination seems to me to be highly unjust to me and hardly becoming for the Government. . . . I know no reason for this vexatious change in the disposition of my correspondence'' (p. 273). Commenting, two days later, on the Government's revised instructions regarding his correspondence in Gujarati, Gandhiji charged that they betrayed ''want of confidence in Indian officials as a class and, naturally therefore, a disregard of the great languages of the country spoken by the millions of its inhabitants''. ''It hurts me to think'', he added, ''that no Indian officials knowing the respective languages are considered fit or trustworthy enough to decide whether letters I write in Gujarati or Hindi or Urdu do or do not come within the passable limits'' (p. 280).

These letters seem to have had the desired effect. The clearing of the outgoing mail became regular once again and just at the right time, for on August 4, the very next day after the new instructions authorizing the Jail Superintendent to deal with the outgoing mail were received (p. 460), Gandhiji learnt of the passing away of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta in Rangoon. The death of his ''lifelong faithful friend'' (p. 327) was not only a personal loss to Gandhiji; he also felt deeply concerned about the welfare of Dr. Mehta's three surviving sons, one of whom, Ratilal, who lived near the Ashram at Sabarmati, used to suffer from attacks of insanity and another, Maganlal, the youngest, had gone abroad for study. Writing to H. S. L. Polak on the same day, Gandhiji hoped that Dr. Mehta ''had preserved his original circumspection to make suitable financial arrangements for Maganlal's studies'', and added: ''I feel that I am not by his people's side at the present moment. But not my will, let His be done, now and for ever'' (p. 328). ''What will happen to Magan now?''—he asked in a letter to Dr. Mehta's nephew, and added: ''A beautiful nest is in danger of being ruined. . . . But I am unable to do anything from here to keep his nest whole, and that makes me unhappy'' (p. 329). ''If I had been free,'' Gandhiji wrote to Chhaganlal, Doctor's eldest son, ''I would be by your side now. Perhaps Doctor would have

drawn his last breath in my lap'' (p. 331). For a good many months from now on the affairs of Doctor's family remained one of Gandhiji's chief concerns.

There were other deaths, too, during this period and in each case Gandhiji wrote to the bereaved with his rare combination of warm human sympathy and philosophical serenity. Writing to C. Rajagopalachari on the death of his son-in-law in the prime of his youth, Gandhiji said: ''I loathe to argue about death in the face of the tragedy that has overtaken you. You will say with Job, 'miserable comforter'. But I do feel that if we would know God, we have got to learn to rejoice in death'' (p. 292). And similarly, writing to a Parsi correspondent on the loss of her brother, he said: ''My whole heart goes out to you and your aged mother. . . . But we do, or ought to, know that God is wholly good and wholly just'' (p. 294). To those bereaved his usual advice was to ''forget the grief and plunge . . . in service . . .'' (p. 295).

An important document in this volume is ''History of the Satyagraha Ashram'', which Gandhiji had commenced writing on April 5, 1932, and the last available portion of which is dated July 11. This is largely an exposition of the ideals which inspired the Ashram and an assessment of its efforts to live up to them. ''The history of the Ashram is taking a strange shape'', Gandhiji wrote to Kakasaheb Kalelkar. ''There is in it very little about individuals. I have explained what the Ashram observances are, and how they are being followed'' (p. 278).

The Ashram, as Gandhiji explains, had its origin in a personal need and it was only in course of time that it came to be transformed into an institution for experiments in national regeneration. ''Looking at the past in the light of the present'', Gandhiji says, ''I feel that an ashram was a necessary of life for me. As soon as I had a house of my own, my house was an ashram in this sense, for my life as a householder was not one of enjoyment but of duty discharged from day to day'' (p. 188). This concern for dharma seems to have been as spontaneous as it was deep, and the *Autobiography* traces how it progressed and became stronger from stage to stage in his life. It crystallized into a concrete plan of action after his reading of Ruskin's *Unto This Last*. Founding the Phœnix Settlement in 1904 was the first step, as Gandhiji explains in the ''History'', in the evolution of his ashram ideal. The next step, the vow of *brahmacharya* in 1906, also grew out of a personal need, but the two subsequent steps mentioned in the ''History'', namely, the establishment of Tolstoy Farm near Johan-

nesburg in 1911 and the conversion, in 1912, of Phœnix into a colony for satyagrahis, were the outcome of Gandhiji's developing concept of satyagraha as a way of life and his acceptance of discipline in personal life as a necessary and effective means of fitting oneself for national service. In India, the ideal expanded still further and the Ashram was conceived as an experiment in community living based on truth, ahimsa and other ethical elements of the Indian spiritual tradition, "to remedy what it thought were defects in our national life from the religious, economic and political standpoints" (p. 192). This orientation of ethical discipline and spiritual *sadhana* to a social purpose was the creative feature of Gandhiji's Ashram which distinguished it from the ancient models, and which he probably had in view when he claimed, as he often did, that the Ashram was his most important creation and his success or failure as leader should be judged by the success or failure of the Ashram.

The Ashram vows were based in the main on the traditional *yamaniyamas*, but the attempt was to observe them in the spirit as much as in the letter. Gandhiji claims no outstanding success in this attempt. On the contrary he admits that the Ashram was "far, far indeed, from its ideal of truth", and doubtless this was true of the other observances as well. But he claims that "the men in charge of the Ashram are wide awake, fully conscious of their imperfections and constantly trying to make sure that untruth does not find a foothold anywhere" (p. 197). Accepting full responsibility for the failures of the Ashram, Gandhiji nevertheless asks: " . . . was I to leave the Ashram, and resort to some Himalayan cave and impose silence upon myself?" That, he believed, would be sheer cowardice. "The quest of truth cannot be prosecuted in a cave. . . . One may live in a cave in certain circumstances, but the common man can be tested only in society" (p. 194). Gandhiji was confident that "if only the men at the top are true to themselves, the Ashram is sure to stand the test, no matter how hard it is", for if the individual seeker "is wide awake and is striving constantly, there is no limit to his power" as there is none to "the potency of truth" (p. 197).

The boldest experiment in the Ashram was probably in regard to the vow of *brahmacharya.* Men and women lived and worked together and many of them enjoyed "considerable freedom in meeting one another", for the Ashram ideal was that one member "should have the same freedom in meeting another as is enjoyed by a son in meeting his mother or by a brother in meeting his sister" (p. 210). For a *brahmachari*, Gandhiji asserts, woman is not

the "doorkeeper of hell" but is "an incarnation of our Mother who is in Heaven". This freedom, Gandhiji admitted, involved "to a certain extent a deliberate imitation of life in the West" (pp. 210-1) and he was fully aware of the risks that it carried. But he trusted to God, who is the "Master Potter". If, as Gandhiji rightly claims, the women in the Ashram had "imbibed the spirit of freedom and self-confidence as no other class of women have done to my knowledge", it was because they were "placed on a footing of absolute equality with the men in all activities" (pp. 234-5). As he had said in a letter to Premabehn Kantak, Gandhiji did not admit "any differences between men and women except those created by Nature" (p. 91). His views in this regard seem to have changed gradually. In an intimate letter to his son Ramdas, he wrote: "My ideas about the relations between husband and wife have changed of course. I would not like any of you to behave towards his wife as I did towards Ba" (p. 354).

A similar softening is noted by him in his attitude to other Ashram inmates. After years of unremitting vigilance to educate members of his family and Ashram workers for the ideal of disciplined and dedicated life which he had set before them, Gandhiji could, he told Ramdas in the same letter, now influence people's behaviour with a mere rebuke and, therefore, felt "the slightest degree of strictness to be as heavy as the weight of the Himalayas" (p. 353). One reason for this relaxation of will was that Gandhiji had become "less exacting" to himself. "The body", he said, "does not obey me. I naturally feel reluctant to ask others to do what I myself cannot" (p. 354). Even though we get ill through our own faults, he advised Mirabehn, we should not "always be chiding ourselves when we do get ill" (p. 407).

Gandhiji advised similar detachment in dealing with one's mental problems also. To feel miserable because of impure thoughts was "self-made hell", he told a correspondent. "You should not brood over the fact that you get impure thoughts. Instead, you should go on as if they never troubled you" (p. 24). But this did not mean lessening of vigilance against such thoughts. Just as we clean out daily the dust in our houses, we should expel impure thoughts from our minds; instead of hiding them, we should tell some friend about them (p. 55). The votary of truth lives a spontaneous and open life; he appears as he is for there is "unity in his thought, speech and action" (p. 285). To achieve this unity, one has to learn the art of thinking; if we can master it, "everything else will follow in beautiful order". The yoga of skill in work demands thoughtfulness in action; scavenging no less

than spinning can become *yajna* if it is done with a mind alert and a heart of compassion (pp. 436-7). But idle thoughts, plans and resolutions not taken seriously, are "mental incontinence" and amount to a "violation of *brahmacharya*" (pp. 409-10). Control over such "idle thoughts" could be a source of immeasurable power (p. 26).

The way to such psychological self-mastery, according to Gandhiji, is prayer and work. Prayer removes the self-created obstacle to the operation of the Infinite Power in us (pp. 248-9), for "man becomes what he thinks" and "Ramanama follows this law" (p. 326). A man or woman who is spiritually awake "will think every thought with God as witness and as its Master. . . . Such a person . . . will every moment feel Rama dwelling in his heart" (p. 246).

But prayer, though essential, was not enough. "All our prayers, fasting and observances are empty nothings so long as we do not feel a live kinship with all life" (p. 328), and "all our philosophy is vain, if it does not enable us to rejoice in the company of fellow-beings and their service" (p. 364). "Man can achieve real and enduring purification of heart only through work" (p. 411), though in exceptional cases, Gandhiji conceded, "the thoughts of a man possessing a pure heart are an activity by themselves and can produce far-reaching results" (p. 13). This mental *yajna*, like the *yajna* of constructive work, demands identification with all creatures, and has nothing to do with the "heartless doctrine" of the greatest good of the greatest number. "The only real, dignified, human doctrine", according to Gandhiji, "is the greatest good of all, and this can only be achieved by uttermost self-sacrifice" (p. 14).

While ever ready to help with advice Gandhiji was anxious to "cure people of excessive dependence" on himself (p. 26). His talks and writings on spiritual matters had "individuals in view" and their mainspring was "not the intellect, but the heart" (pp. 79-80). The inner voice, which he recognized and had to obey, could not be "described in words". This working harmony of heart, mind and body, which Gandhiji never "suddenly felt as some new experience", had indeed become his *sahaja* or normal nature. Hence his claim or confession that his "spiritual life has grown without my being conscious of the fact in the same way as hair grows on our body" (p. 326).

PREFACE

During the period covered in this volume (September 1 to November 15, 1932) the national movement under Gandhiji's leadership, which in its spirit had always been a movement of self-purification, became more clearly and openly so, following his indefinite fast against the British Government's decision to constitute the depressed classes into a separate electorate for the purposes of the new constitution then under consideration. Gandhiji's aim behind this "final act of satyagraha in the cause of the down-trodden" (p. 55) was "to sting the Hindu conscience into right religious action" (p. 62), and this aim seemed to be amply realized by the instantaneous country-wide awakening which followed the commencement of the fast and led to an agreement, known as the Poona or the Yeravda Pact, between Hindu leaders and representatives of the depressed classes on the constitutional provisions for the Harijans. The agreement was accompanied by a pledge by the Hindu leaders at public conferences in Bombay on September 25 and 30 to secure for the Harijans complete political and social equality and to work for removal of all the disabilities and hardships suffered by them.

Though the immediate aim of the fast was to secure the reversal of the British Government's decision, and it was criticized by many as a form of coercion, for Gandhiji it was a deeply spiritual act, "resolved upon in the name of God for His work and, as I believe in all humility, at His call" (p. 62). The political aspect of the matter was of secondary importance to him. He opposed the British Government's decision because he believed that it would "arrest the marvellous growth" of the Hindu reformers' work for the eradication of untouchability (p. 32). He was convinced that separation of the depressed classes from Hindu society would not serve their real interests and would in any case be impossible. "They are", he said, "part of an indivisible family. . . . There is a subtle something—quite indefinable—in Hinduism which keeps them in it even in spite of themselves" (p. 63). "What I want," he said in a Press interview on the day of commencement of the fast, "what I am living for, and what I should delight in dying for, is the eradication of untouchability root and branch" (p. 118), and through the fast he wished to appeal to "the affection of the millions" who used to flock to his meetings (p. 266) and between whom and himself, he believed,

an indissoluble bond existed (p. 386). It was "a whip administered to lethargic love" (p.253) and was aimed against all "those who have faith in me, whether Indians or foreigners" and "those countless Indians . . . who believe that I represent a just cause" (p. 62). "If the Hindu mass mind", he told the people, "is not yet prepared to banish untouchability root and branch, it must sacrifice me without the slightest hesitation" (p. 63). This "conception of giving my life for the untouchables", he said in a letter to Sarojini Naidu, "is not of yesterday. . . . There was no call from within for years. But the Cabinet's decision came like a violent alarm waking me from my slumber and telling me this is the time." And he instinctively seized the psychological moment it provided (p. 71).

Gandhiji looked forward to the fast in a mood of almost exultant joy. He regarded it as "both a privilege and a duty" (p. 56), a "God-given opportunity for a final act of satyagraha in the cause of the downtrodden" (p. 55). It was to him "an expression of, and the last seal on, non-violence" (p. 65), and he "would experience nothing but the profoundest peace" if he had to carry it to its logical end (p. 52). "Only one in millions meets death for which he has prayed" (p. 52), he told Kasturba and asked her to thank God if it was his good fortune to do so. In a touching letter to Khushalchand Gandhi, for whom he felt the deepest reverence, Gandhiji asked him to "rejoice that you had a younger brother whom God had granted the strength to complete such a *yajna*" (p. 91). While, however, Gandhiji rejoiced at the prospect of laying down his life for a cherished cause, he was also humble enough to recognize that he might be mistaken in regard to both his motive and his strength. "If I am wrong," he said in a letter to Narandas Gandhi, "people will judge my step as a sign of false pride and an instance of demoniac self-mortification" (p. 53). In the statement to the Press sent to the Government for publication before the commencement of the fast, Gandhiji went further and said that if his faith was a hallucination, "I must be allowed to do my penance in peace. It will be the lifting of a dead weight on Hinduism" (p. 64). Similarly, asking Mirabehn "to rejoice with me that such an occasion seems to have come to me," he explained, "I say 'seems' for my faith has yet to be tried. No one can dare talk of his own strength in a matter of life and death" (p. 56). The mood of exultant yet humble self-abandonment comes out clearly in a letter to a fellow devotee: "The fast is not mine but that of Rama; the responsibility is His, not mine. If it is unfruitful He will be blamed, not I, and if fruitful He

not being concerned with praises, I, a beggar at his door, will accept it'' (pp. 99-100).

Gandhiji also felt the human cost of the sacrifice. ''As I wrote that first letter conveying my vow,'' he told Mirabehn, ''I thought of you and of Ba. And for a time I became giddy'' (p. 102). But Gandhiji had hardened his heart with the thought, ''No anguish will be too terrible to wash out the sin of untouchability'' (p. 102). ''And have we not deserved'', he asked in a letter to G. K. Devdhar, ''the most terrible chastisement from God for our treatment of the untouchables?'' (pp. 110-1) As a Hindu who was a ''touchable'' by birth but an ''untouchable'' by choice (p. 111), he must atone for this sin. ''This is a wonderful ordeal'', he said in the letter to Devdhar. ''I deserve it all. For I have the Hindu heart'' (p. 110). Human that he was, Gandhiji yearned for the approval of friends like Rabindranath Tagore and Srinivasa Sastri for this act of supreme sacrifice. Writing to the former his first letter in the early morning of the day of the fast, he said: ''I enter the fiery gate at noon. If you can bless the effort, I want it. . . . I am not too proud to make an open confession of my blunder . . . if I find myself in error'' (p. 101). And to Sastri he wrote: ''Perhaps this step of mine has been for you the last straw. Even so I want to have your laceration. . . . At this (maybe) last crisis, you must not cease to strive with me. Send me your curses or your blessings'' (p. 102). And both friends, for a long time uncompromising critics of Gandhiji's philosophy of non-co-operation, sent their unreserved appreciation. ''Our sorrowing hearts'', Tagore said, ''will follow your sublime penance with reverence and love'' (footnote 2, p. 109). Sastri paid tribute to Gandhiji's ''superb service performed in your superb style'', and added, ''the result vindicates and establishes you as indisputably the foremost untouchable and 'unapproachable''' (footnote 2, p. 137).

Tagore and Sastri summed up, by and large, the response of the country. Gandhiji described the wonderful manifestation throughout India as a ''modern miracle'' (p. 137). ''It was travail of new birth'' both to himself and to ''superstitious ignorant Hinduism'' (p. 157). At one blow the foundations of a centuries-old belief and practice seemed to lie in ruins. From a spiritual point of view, too, this was probably the happiest experience in Gandhiji's life. The fast, like a lover's who ''fasts to prevent the loved one from going astray'', was ''the cry of an anguished heart ascending to heaven'' (p. 253). And, Gandhiji confessed, never before had he experienced ''such an immediate response to prayer'', for those days were ''days of basking in the sunshine of

His presence'' (p. 266). ''God was never nearer to me than during the fast,'' he told Horace Alexander (p. 186). And this despite the fact that Gandhiji experienced considerable physical and mental suffering during the days of the fast (p. 174). As he confessed, ''There is a deep unconscious joy felt during such purifying agony'' (p. 157).

Gandhiji realized, however, that this marvellous public awakening to an acknowledged social evil did not mean the immediate end of untouchability. ''The settlement arrived at'', he said in a message to the British people, ''is to me but the beginning of the work of purification'', and added: ''The agony of the soul is not going to end until every trace of untouchability is gone. . . . I shall undergo as many fasts as are necessary in order to purify Hinduism of this unbearable taint'' (pp. 140-1). Likewise he assured the Harijans that, though the British Government had accepted only that part of the Agreement which referred to the British Cabinet's Communal decision, he himself was ''wedded to the whole of that Agreement'' and they could hold his life ''as hostage for its due fulfilment'' (p. 145). By a happy chance, Gandhiji got an opportunity to demonstrate his total commitment to the cause by pledging himself to another fast practically as soon as the fast in the jail had ended. K. Kelappan, a fellow-worker in South India in the cause of Harijan uplift, had embarked on a fast, simultaneously with Gandhiji's, to get the famous temple at Guruvayur thrown open to the Harijans. Discovering a moral flaw in his action from the point of view of the ethics of satyagraha, Gandhiji advised him to suspend the fast and give three months' notice to the Temple authorities and added: ''God helping, I shall bear my share of the burden'' (p. 162).

The Government, not realizing the seriousness of Gandhiji's intention to pursue the reform which his fast had initiated, stopped the special facilities in regard to visitors and correspondence which they had permitted him during the fast week. Gandhiji was very much upset. ''I must confess'', he said in a letter to the Jail Superintendent, ''that I was wholly unprepared for this very sudden and rude reminder that I was but a prisoner . . . I had hoped that at least during the convalescent period I would be saved all unnecessary shock to my nerves'' (p. 152). After waiting for more than three weeks for the Government to clarify its policy, Gandhiji wrote again threatening a gradual fast if he was not given reasonable facilities for carrying on Harijan work. ''I can have no interest in life'', he wrote to the Inspector-General

of Prisons, "if I cannot prosecute, without let or hindrance, work for which the fast was undertaken and suspended" (p. 289). Again he declared, "I cannot live and not work for the removal of untouchability" (p. 322). The Government handsomely admitted that "they had not before fully appreciated" Gandhiji's programme of work and removed "all restrictions on visitors, correspondence and publicity in regard to matters . . . strictly limited to the removal of untouchability" (footnote 1, pp. 336-7).

Gandhiji utilized the freedom granted to him by starting a vigorous campaign of public education through correspondence and a series of statements on untouchability. In the very first of these statements he attacked the religious foundation of the practice by redefining "Hindu dharma". While the orthodox regarded untouchability as an integral part of Hinduism and therefore Gandhiji "as a renegade" who had imbibed "notions from Christianity and Islam", he claimed himself to be a sanatanist. Sanatana dharma, according to him, was "based upon the Vedas and the writings that followed them", but the Vedas were, he argued, "as indefinable as God and Hinduism". Hinduism was an ever-growing faith, each generation of seers adding to the "original treasures according to their lights". And "then arose a great and loftly-minded man, the composer of the *Gita*. He gave to the Hindu world a synthesis of Hindu religion at once deeply philosophical and yet easily to be understood by any unsophisticated seeker". "Whatever is contrary to its main theme", Gandhiji declared, "I reject as un-Hindu." As regards the charge of having come under the influence of other faiths, Gandhiji boldly asserted that his study of other scriptures had "broadened my outlook and therefore my Hinduism". "I take pride in calling myself a Hindu," he added, "because I find the term broad enough not merely to tolerate but to assimilate the teachings of prophets from all the four corners of the earth." He had approached the masses, he said, with this enlightened "message of the *Gita* burnt into my life", and they had listened to him "not for any political wisdom or for eloquence, but because they have instinctively recognized me as one of them, as one belonging to their faith". And he was convinced, therefore, that "I could not be wrong in claiming to belong to sanatan dharma, and if God wills it, He will let me seal that claim with my death" (pp. 344-5).

The attack on untouchability necessarily raised the question of caste reform. Gandhiji took care to keep the two apart, so as to be able to concentrate his efforts on eradication of untouch-

ability. Caste, he said, was a social evil, whereas untouchability was "a soul-destroying sin" (p. 219). He, therefore, made it repeatedly clear that inter-dining and intermarriage were not a part of the movement against untouchability, though, when mixed dinner parties with Harijans did take place, he welcomed them as a healthy sign (pp. 231, 343). Drawing a distinction between caste and varna, Gandhiji said that the latter meant no more than profession and had "nothing to do with inter-dining and intermarriage" (p. 350). Varna so defined, he admitted, had broken down in modern times and there was only one varna, Shudra, left (pp. 350, 389).

Letters written during this period of great stress afford many intimate glimpses into Gandhiji's understanding of himself and his anxiety to be rightly understood by his ever-widening circle of correspondents. His special concern was for the Ashram inmates. Two days before the fast began he wrote, "I am drawing the soul of the Ashram into myself and pouring my soul into the people there." His self-suffering would be a mortification of the self and a curse on the world, he admitted, "if deep in my heart I harbour ill will or anger against anybody" (p. 84). Again and again (pp. 11, 41, 219, 359 and 371) he insisted on the wisdom of discovering and removing one's own faults instead of dwelling on those of others, of meeting anger with patience and doing good in return for evil. He advised a social reformer not to "judge" the Zamorin but to step into his shoes and look at the position "even from his point of view" (p. 337). The religious attitude of identifying oneself with all creation and "selfless service of every living creature" (p. 372) prevented Gandhiji from isolating politics from religion. "Religion to be true", he wrote to a Christian friend, "must pervade every activity of life. And that activity which cannot be pursued without sacrificing religion is an immoral activity to be shunned at all costs. Politics is not only not such an activity but it is an integral part of civic life" (p. 239). Condemning doctrinal rigidity and all talk of "your God and my God", he argued that God was accessible "through billions of openings" to "those who are humble and pure of heart", and that "there was only one God for the wise and the foolish, saints and sinners" (pp. 21, 253). Opposed as much to occultism as to cultism, he declared, "The book of life is open to the simplest minds and it should be so. There is nothing occult in God's plan. . . . Truth has no secrets and Truth is God" (pp. 315-6).

Commending Mirabehn's way of looking upon trees and ani-

mals as friends, he argued that "personal friends and relations are no greater friends than strangers of the human family and bird, beast and plant" (p. 57). He duly reported to Premabehn Kantak the mad joy and later contentment of his cat companion on their reunion (p. 285) and also conveyed through her his greetings and prayers to the plants and flowers who could give us "beauty and fragrance like theirs", their humility and innocence (p. 318). He held that the best commentary on the *Gita* would be putting into practice each verse in it which applies to one's life, interpretating the central core of the scripture as non-attachment (p. 324). To Ramdas he confided how he cultivated non-attachment easily since "everything I did was spontaneous, that is, arose naturally from my devotion to truth. If one is filled with a desire to serve the whole world, one can easily cultivate non-attachment" (p. 373). A good example of such non-attachment is provided by Gandhiji's references to the body. He assured Andrews, "I do not want to kill brother ass. He is in God's safe keeping" (p. 346). Recommending to the ailing son of a friend proper breathing, proper diet, fresh air and a living faith in God (p. 267), he explained: " . . . you should cease to think the body as yours. It is God's. But God has given it to you for the time being to keep it clean and healthy and use it for His service. You are therefore the trustee, not the owner" (p. 349). He wrote to Esther Menon: "Even as a soldier keeps his arms clean and in order so we must keep our arms (God-given bodies) clean and in perfect order" (p. 400).

Gandhiji wanted the Ashram as an institution to "remain equal towards all religions" and its inmates to offer worship to the formless God in the open prayer ground with the horizons "as its walls and the sky as its roof . . ." (p. 209). This congregational prayer, however, was not as important as individual prayer, its indispensable basis. "What you can experience in seclusion is certainly difficult, if not impossible, to experience in a group" (p. 304).

CWMG - C

PREFACE

The contents of this volume (covering the period November 16, 1932 to January 10, 1933) consist for the most part of Gandhiji's letters and statements which were strictly confined to the campaign against untouchability. While explaining to friends the inwardness of his fasts, he carried on with his orthodox opponents a patient dialogue on the true intent of the Shastras and the essence of Hinduism. The plan for the great reform, which was to be brought about without violence and in conformity with Hindu dharma, was set out succinctly in a letter to a fellow-worker: ". . . we must endeavour to bring round orthodoxy to our point of view, if it is at all possible. In any case we may do nothing to hurt anybody's susceptibilities" (p. 312).

The avoidance of politics, however scrupulous, was, he warned all concerned, both voluntary and temporary. In a public statement he declared: " . . . I draw no hard and fast line of demarcation between political, social, religious and other questions. I have always held that they are interdependent and that the solution of one brings nearer the solution of the rest" (p. 4). In an interview to the Press contradicting the story that he was "going spiritual", as Sri Aurobindo had done, and refusing to accept release on certain "terms", he stated, "I don't regard my life as divisible into so many water-tight compartments. It is one organic whole . . ." (p. 37). Not only would he obliterate the distinction between political dharma and social dharma, but he would break down the barriers between the ashramas. When a correspondent argued that the *Gita* doctrine of "oneness and therefore equality of all life" applied only to ascetics who had renounced action, Gandhiji replied: "The main theme of the *Gita* to me is oneness of life. Realization thereof comes through work without attachment. Untouchability as it is practised today seems to me to be utterly contrary to this divine fact of oneness" (pp. 51-2). Meeting the same critic's fear that the campaign against untouchability might "indefinitely postpone the prospect of swaraj which is the common aim of all", Gandhiji refused to "indefinitely postpone realization of oneness", which could only come by incessant striving to obliterate differences, especially man-made and unjustifiable ones. Indeed, he felt that opposition to this urgent and absolutely vital reform was "a painful sign of the decadence of Hinduism" (pp. 220-1).

In a typical letter to Anand Swarup, giving detailed instructions on cleaning lavatories and exposing them to sunlight and converting excreta into manure, Gandhiji dwelt equally lovingly on the identity of Ramanama and *Omkar* and on the concept of truth as "unity of thought, word and deed", the known *satya* in the total *sat*, the sole reality which is Parameshwara (p. 76). For him "God is the sum-total of all life just as the sun is the aggregate of rays" (p. 237).

Gandhiji was averse to disrupting society or using one part of it against another. He was clear "that there should be no forcible opening of any single temple". He was all for educating public opinion and preparing it for the opening of temples to Harijans. As from the orthodox, so from the Harijans, he demanded voluntary co-operation. He was clear that "every reform voluntarily made by Harijans" would hasten the removal of the black mark (p. 148).

To the repeated suggestions, therefore, that it was inexpedient to antagonize the orthodox section and weaken the freedom struggle, he repeatedly answered that his political, religious and social ideas were different branches of the same tree and that he would not, through foolishness or cowardice, "barter away the diamond of dharma for the pebble of political advantage . . . " (p. 63). In the same spirit he answered friends who argued (pp. 62 and 217) that his body belonged to the nation and should not be endangered by fasting for a mere social reform, and asserted that both the body and the nation belonged to God who had imposed these irresistible tasks upon it.

Explaining in a letter to C. F. Andrews his inability to give any undertaking regarding his future course of action, he wrote: " . . . civil disobedience under given circumstances is as much an article of faith with me as removal of untouchability" (p. 158). Not only did he thus refuse to fragment his life or distinguish between politics and religion, he recognized "no difference of degree in matters of moment" and was as ready to give up his life for the sake of "an incorruptible man and a dear comrade" (p. 112) as for a public cause. His intervention on behalf of Appasaheb Patwardhan, who was offering satyagraha for the privilege of being assigned scavenging work in Ratnagiri Jail, was a mode of organic thinking and action far beyond the comprehension of Superintendent E. E. Doyle, who could only interpret the many movements of the Mahatma's integral mind as "*mahseer* wriggles" seeking some excuse to get out of "his so-called 'contemplated fast' " (pp. 428-9).

So far, however, from funking a fast, Gandhiji was eager to use it as his chosen and well-tested instrument for sensing and sharing the *satya*, the simple concrete reality, in any complex situation. He regarded it as the highest form of prayer and an expression of faith which "shakes and awakes the slumbering soul and impels a loving heart to action" (p. 114). His fast was not aimed at the sanatanists, but at the millions who were bound to him by the tie of love (p. 7). It was intended to stir the public conscience and to move to right action the great mass of Hindu humanity (p. 365). As if apologizing for his helplessness, he wrote to his cousin and nephew that his fasts were not undertaken by him of his own free will but seemed to him to come from God (p. 81). Repudiating Khurshed Naoroji's suggestion that his fast was due to disappointment, he declared that for him fasting was a part of prayer, as indispensable as eating, a source of inward joy, a process of penance and purification firmly founded on "faith in mankind, God and oneself" (p. 269).

To meet the objection that the fast due to commence on January 2, 1933 in sympathy with Kelappan's amounted to coercion, Gandhiji claimed that it was based on the assumption that the vast majority of temple-going *savarnas* were in favour of admitting Harijans. To establish this claim he suggested a methodical referendum of *bona-fide* temple-goers within a ten-mile radius. With 55% voting in favour, 9% against, 8% remaining neutral and 27% abstaining (p. 304), the result vindicated Gandhiji's contention. The fast, however, had to be postponed in the face of a legal difficulty which barred the trustees departing from established usage. Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill, introduced in the Madras Legislative Council to remove this obstacle, required the Viceroy's sanction for inclusion in the agenda and this could not be announced before January 15, 1933.

The orthodox opposition to the anti-untouchability movement was based on the claim that the Shastras enjoined untouchability as part of varnashrama dharma, but Gandhiji could not find one such authority supporting untouchability "as it is practised today" (p. 351). Gandhiji's stand was supported by numerous scholars and pundits, some of whom, including Dr. Bhagwandas and Acharya A. B. Dhruva, issued a public statement that untouchability as practised in modern times had no warrant in the Shastras and that in any case any community hitherto considered untouchable could acquire all the privileges of caste Hindus "by clean living and initiation into the Shaiva or Vaishnava worship . . ." (pp. 348-9).

Gandhiji, however, would not confine the debate to this issue. He went further and attacked all fundamentalism, all blind faith in the inerrancy and literal authority of the Shastras. He held the view that Hinduism was sanatana because it was dynamic and that the Shastras were designed not to supersede but to sustain "the universally accepted first principles of morality . . . " (p. 9). They contained ample evidence of their "continuous progress and adaptability to circumstances that arose from time to time". But when Hinduism lost its old vitality and its healthy growth was arrested, Hindu society became "irresponsive to the central call of Hinduism, that is, progressive realization of the unity of all life, not as a philosophical doctrine but as a solid fact of life . . ." (pp. 305-6). Gandhiji felt that by long and continuous effort to live his religion he had gained the fitness and heard the inner call to do penance for reforming Hindu society. He appealed to the sanatanists to share his agony and co-operate with him in removing this evil. He assured them, "I have no other end to serve than to see sanatan dharma revivified and lived in its reality" (p. 361). He repeated this assurance in a private apologia: "Devotion to Krishna is the key-note of my life; and sanatan dharma is my very life-breath" (p. 411). To a critic who suspected communalism in this "fast on behalf of Hinduism", Gandhiji replied: "I am not ashamed of Hinduism or of the Hindu. . . . To me, Hinduism is but one branch from the same parent trunk . . . and if I take care of the Hindu branch on which I am sitting and which sustains me surely I am taking care also of the sister branches. . . . if God gives me the privilege of dying for this Hinduism of my conception, I shall have sufficiently died for the unity of all and even for swaraj" (pp. 71-2).

Some critics considered that the right of admission to temples was not worth fighting for. In Gandhiji's view, however, temple-entry occupied a crucial place in the anti-untouchability movement as the temples were the commonest means of participating in Shaiva or Vaishnava worship. Gandhiji recognized that "village temples were . . . a place of refuge . . . It is difficult to conceive the life of a Hindu villager being regulated without his temple" (p. 154). Replying to the usual non-Hindu objection to idol-worship itself, Gandhiji retorted that mosque-going and church-going were also forms of idol-worship and that it would be both "arrogant and ignorant to look down upon such worship as superstition" (p. 96).

On the proposal that Harijans should undergo a purification ceremony before they could be admitted to temples, his comment was that it was for the caste Hindus "to undergo purification for

having done a violent wrong to the untouchables'' (p. 126).

Gandhiji was well aware both of the limits of reason and the power of faith. There was no need, he told a friend, and it would be a sign of mental lethargy, ''to resort to faith regarding anything that can be grasped by the intellect'' (p. 237). But he advised another friend, who could not understand the ethics of fasting, that in situations out of the ordinary ''too much thinking is to be avoided'' (p. 228). *Mauna*—mental fast—includes abstention from thinking; for thinking helps verbalization and ego-building and crowds out the tacit components of human growth, such as subceptual, creaturely fellow-feeling and creative action, inexplicable and irresistible, transcending conventional dharma and performed in the name and presence of the Lord.

Gandhiji advised Dr. B. C. Roy to step down from the presidentship of the Anti-untouchability Board of Bengal so as to make room for a person to be chosen by representatives of all the groups willing to co-operate in the reform. Dr. Roy followed the advice but felt hurt. On receiving his reply, Gandhiji sent a telegram withdrawing his advice and offering his apology (pp. 201-2). Gandhiji also apologized to G. D. Birla who had suggested the appointment of Dr. Roy as president of the Bengal Board and who too felt unhappy over the incident. When Mr. Birla explained his earlier silence and failure to prevent Gandhiji from writing to Dr. Roy, saying, '' . . . dazzled with your superhuman personality . . . we have almost lost self-confidence in ourselves'' (p. 437), Gandhiji replied that this dazzling presence was a greater embarrassment to him than to his friends and he hated to have any special credit attached to his word (p. 295). The misunderstanding soon cleared up and Gandhiji could write to Dr. Roy: ''I love and accept your correction, and say with you that we are near to each other . . .'' (p. 311).

In letters to the Ashram boys and girls, Gandhiji explained how training in craft was as important as education in letters. Khadi work, carpentry, farm work, tanning, dairy work ''develop your intellect and also some of the bodily senses'' and should, therefore, form ''part of your education'' (p. 226). Encouraging the pupils to keep up their enthusiasm, he assured them: ''Once you learn farming you will find it more interesting than any other work. And when one gets familiar with plants, one feels they are part of one's family'' (p. 335). Significant too are his references to animals, birds and plants as friends (p. 85), to our four-footed kinsfolk (p. 96) and to the companionship and fall from grace of ''our cat family'' (pp. 193, 200 and 258).

In a series of letters to ailing friends (pp. 75, 78, 87, 105, 107 and 226-7), Gandhiji, with charming variations, urged them to accept even sickness as a gift from God and an opportunity for cultivating patience, cheerfulness, gratitude to helpers and the practice of prayer. The detailed letter (p. 253) about the disposal of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta's property is a good example of Gandhiji's personal interest in the welfare of those around him.

Reprimanding Premabehn Kantak who did not want her letters to be shown to the Ashram manager, Gandhiji wrote: "We have no right to think any thoughts which others may not know." "Every human being", he added, "is God's representative on the earth" and is, therefore, entitled to know our thoughts (p. 230). Again he pleaded with her, "If I don't show your shortcomings to you, who else will? So long as the poison of hatred is there in your heart, you must let me drink it" (p. 385). Perhaps the most touching and most prophetic of the letters is what Gandhiji wrote to Vinoba Bhave on New Year's Day: "Your love and faith bring me tears of joy. I may or may not deserve them, but they will bring their reward to you. You will be the instrument of some great service to the people" (p. 332).

CWMG-C

PREFACE

The campaign against untouchability, which had gathered momentum during the preceding two months, suffered a slight set-back during the period covered in this volume (January 11 to March 5, 1933). Not only did the orthodox opponents of the temple-entry movement intensify their attacks on Gandhiji, but the Government also refused to help the reformers in the passage of legislative measures required to withdraw from the practice of untouchability the legal sanction which the British courts, following the English law of Trusts, had conferred on it. Gandhiji was not much disheartened by the Government's attitude, but was deeply pained by the bitterness of the orthodox. His dedication, however, to Truth and to Hinduism which had "never been a rigid faith" and had always "kept abreast of the times" (p. 432) enabled him to rise above personal feelings and perform with patience his chosen task of educating public opinion through a sustained dialogue with the orthodox. Though their deliberate falsehoods shook him and cut him to the marrow (p. 32), he found wonderful refreshment in their abuses which proved that they had at last been "awakened from long lethargy" (p. 309). Counselling a co-worker to deal gently with his critics, he recalled how "at one time many of us shared the same prejudices as orthodox people do today" (p. 237). For educating public opinion Gandhiji started the three weeklies, *Harijan* (English), *Harijan Sevak* (Hindi) and *Harijanbandhu* (Gujarati). The scope of the weeklies, started for Harijan uplift, was to expand till in due course they became the principal organs of Gandhiji's public dialogue with his followers and fellow-workers.

Gandhiji did not rely upon legislation for bringing about the desired reform. He knew that society held together "on the strength not of law but of mutual goodwill" and unless the majority of caste Hindus were converted he saw no use in any law protecting rights which the majority would not be prepared to recognize. If nevertheless he supported the Bills introduced in the Central Legislature by Ranga Iyer and urged the Government to expedite their consideration, it was because the Bills were not intended to affect the "religious customs and usages of the Hindu community", but to free the reformers from the shackles of the law (p. 350). Gandhiji's attitude differed as much from that of Madan Mohan Malaviya, who opposed even enabling

legislation in aid of the reform, as it did from that of Tej Bahadur Sapru, who had no great "horror of compulsion in a matter of this character" (p. 395). Gandhiji was prepared even for a compromise solution in respect of temple-entry so that, in a locality where the majority of caste Hindus voted in favour of admitting Harijans, the dissenting minority could be accommodated in what to them was "a deep religious conviction" (p. 3). He repeatedly made it clear that the reform was to be brought about with the fullest co-operation of the orthodox. For him non-co-operation was a form of friendship and the very act of non-co-operation was a search for co-operation. He wanted his sanatanist friends to read the signs of the times, deliberately destroy untouchability and thus purify Hinduism. "Its destruction merely through its own weakness will leave Hinduism weaker" (p. 197). Gandhiji was pained by the sanatanists' "laziness to understand and act up to the very fundamentals of Hinduism" (p. 183).

Gandhiji had from the beginning kept the movement against untouchability distinct from the general movement for caste reform, however desirable the latter might be in itself. The castes, he said, "retard the material progress of those who are labouring under them" but were "no bar to the spiritual progress" (p. 258). "The four divisions", he added, "all stand on a footing of equality, doing the services respectively assigned to them" (p. 258). He therefore assured the Central Hindu Committee that he had no "desire to destroy the foundations of Hindu caste system, if by that is meant varnashramadharma" (p. 294). He saw no "compulsion from without" in people voluntarily following hereditary occupations and asserted that "the so-called civilized nations" which had not followed the principle of division of duties or varna, "have by no means reached a state which they can at all regard with equanimity and satisfaction" (p. 455). Gandhiji's campaign against untouchability was thus not a mere extension of the social reform movement in the country which had been going on since the days of Raja Ram Mohan Roy; it was essentially a spiritual struggle, a part of the quest for truth in which "we wish to cultivate unity with all living creatures" (p. 288). The service of the Harijans was no "mechanical thing to be arranged, put on a basis, and then left to workers. It is a spiritual act, soul acting upon soul . . . " (p. 157). He invited the sanatanists to join hands with him in fighting the "untruth and impurity" that had crept into Hinduism (p. 171) and had resulted in the doctrine of equality being "systematically and cruelly disregarded

by modern Hindu society'' (p. 292). His sole wish was to purge the minds of the people of the error which was responsible for this hardening of their hearts against their own kith and kin.

The error lay in a wrong conception of the Shastras. According to Gandhiji, ''Shastra does not mean the pronouncements of men of spiritual experience in the past. It means the words of living men today who have had first-hand spiritual experience, that is, who have realized the Brahman. Shastra is something which is daily embodied in somebody's life. . . . Shastra must be immediately capable of realization in experience, it must spring from the living experience of the person who utters it. It is only in this sense that the Veda is eternal. All else is not Veda . . . '' (pp. 348-9). And Gandhiji argued further that there was abundant authority in the old Shastras themselves ''to warrant the summary rejection, as being un-Hindu, of anything or any practice that is manifestly against the fundamental principles of humanity or morality, of ahimsa or *satya*'' (p. 262). Gandhiji did not however wish to impose his interpretation of the Shastras upon others. ''I must let it work its way in the midst of competing interpretations and conceptions'' (p. 8). Disavowing any desire to found a new religion (pp. 31 and 87) he asserted, ''I am a Hindu not merely because I was born in the Hindu fold, but I am one by conviction and choice'' and he invited ''Dr. Ambedkar to shed his bitterness and anger and try to learn the beauties of the faith of his forefathers'' (pp. 306-7). The Hinduism of the *Gita*, the Upanishads and the *Bhagavata* taught us ''that all life is one, and that in the eye of God there is no superior and no inferior''. It was because he wished to find ''light, joy and peace through Hinduism'' that he wanted ''to see it purified'' (p. 171). He believed that this purification would be best brought about by the opening of the temples to Harijans, the one spiritual act which would be an indispensable test of the removal of untouchability and will open the hearts of both caste Hindus and Harijans to receive new light. ''The message of the temples will penetrate every Harijan hut; the message of economic and educational uplift will touch only those to whom it is personally brought. This proposition of mine can easily be understood by those who, like me, believe in temples as an integral part of Hinduism, as churches and mosques are of Christianity and Islam'' (p. 132).

While convinced that the eradication of untouchability was the supreme duty of every Hindu, Gandhiji was equally clear that this religious task could only be accomplished by right means. ''For this reason, it is necessary for those who serve Harijans never

to be angry with their opponents; never to utter lies; but to overcome anger with affection, rudeness with courtesy, falsehood with truth, and violence with non-violence" (p. 427). But the observance of truth, like the practice of non-violence, demanded fearlessness (p. 149). When priests threatened a boycott, Gandhiji advised the reformer to dispense with their services at marriages and other ceremonies. He expected his followers to have "the courage of their conviction, faith in themselves, faith in their cause and faith in a living God" (p. 462).

While this dialogue was proceeding, the possibility of his resuming the fast, suspended in 1932, was never absent from Gandhiji's mind. He however did not wish the threat of a fast to be used to coerce people to open the temples against their convictions. He disapproved of Rajagopalachari's action in hinting at the possibility of a fast by him (Gandhiji) while canvassing support among members of the Central Legislature for Ranga Iyer's Bill; he wanted the public mind to work unfettered by the thought of the fast. "When it does come it will produce its own effect", Gandhiji said, "if it is a spiritual act" (p. 286). He claimed further that he was making an experiment in ahimsa on a scale perhaps unknown in history, and the fast would be a part of that experiment undertaken "in obedience to the call of Truth which is God" (p. 333). As "an expression of intense prayer" (p. 234) it would be an appeal, as was the fast of the preceding September, to those who loved him and had faith in him. Gandhiji was convinced that a vast mass of Hindu opinion was against untouchability and if, to be aroused to action, they needed "the stimulus of a fast on the part of one who has made his life one with them. . . . they shall have it" (p. 131).

In reply to a Christian friend's objection that it would be wrong "to be compelled to act against one's reasoning and instinct through fear of hurting someone whom we love", Gandhiji explained that there was nothing wrong in people doing the right thing under the pressure of love. "In innumerable cases men and women are good, not for the sake of good, but for the sake of love which they owe to others or which they receive from them. . . . Jesus Christ was and still remains one of the greatest among moral coercers of the world" and we praise Him for holding us "tight in His chains" (pp. 228-9). Answering another Christian critic's suggestion that his fast was pure coercion, he said: "It is the implicit and sacred belief of millions of Christians that love of Jesus keeps them from falling and that it does so against themselves. . . . I know that, in my childhood, love of

my parents kept me from sinning, and, even after fifty years of age, love of my children and friends kept me positively from going to perdition, which I would have done most assuredly but for the definite and overwhelming influence of that love. ... there is no prayer without fasting and there is no real fast without prayer. My fast was the prayer of a soul in agony'' (p. 259).

Gandhiji's personal striving through prayer and fasting for self-surrender to a higher power went hand in hand with an intense concern for the welfare of his co-workers, especially those in the Ashram. He had built it up in order to train dedicated workers every one of whom was to preserve his or her own individuality while co-operating voluntarily with others in common tasks. It was a ''strange family'' because in it ''each one makes his or her own choice of the position he or she would occupy'' (p. 69). While dealing in his own way with Premabehn's misunderstanding of the problems of freedom, frankness and discipline, he cautioned Narandas that her individuality was not to be crushed in any manner whatsoever; if ''the individuality of any person in the Ashram is crushed, that would harm the Ashram itself'' (p. 52). In a long letter to Premabehn herself he laid down clear guidance for the conduct of senior inmates in the Ashram. ''In our quest for truth, we wish to cultivate unity with all living creatures. The Ashram, therefore, is an ever-growing family. . . . What would we do to children in our own family? ... If Lakshmi does not observe the rules, the fault is chiefly mine, and then yours. . . . The rule should be, a liberal attitude towards others and strictness towards oneself. . . . The Ashram is the measuring rod by which people can judge me'' (pp. 288-91).

As always, Gandhiji found time, amidst all his preoccupations, to answer the questions of sincere seekers. The higher selfishness of *swadharma* is well set out in a letter to Sriprakasa: '' . . . your first and the last care is to regain your health and not to worry about the future of the family, the country or the world. . . . In a true scheme of life the real advancement of one conduces to the advancement of all'' (p. 299). In the same spirit he assures Ramdas Gandhi: ''An elephant is entitled to consume food which the size of his body requires. Only, he must not waste that food by not giving proportionate service in return'' (p. 418).

A sceptical correspondent was met with the confession: '' . . . I am very stupid. . . sometimes I fancy that God is speaking or acting through me'' (p. 166). But an earnest seeker was given the assurance that the supreme truth could be attained ''by constantly practising it'', by ''perfect accord between thought, speech

and deed'' (p. 464). One's spiritual progress could be as imperceptible and natural as the growth of leaves on a tree (p. 66). For this, however, one has to overcome the ego, reduce the separate self to zero and behave ''like a machine in the hands of the Master Mechanic'' (p. 89).

Describing himself as a *jijnasu* and *mumukshu* (p. 38), Gandhiji claimed also to have the mind of a scientist who looked at all sides of a question and had the sanity and courage to own his mistakes (p. 441). Gandhiji recognized the efficacy of meditation or inner *satsang* (p. 150), and of aesthetic as well as practical experience. The illusion created by poetry that the world is in us has to supplement and correct the *vyavaharik* illusion that we are in the world, so that we can finally realize the truth that ''we ourselves are the world''. It is through study and reflection as well as action that we can ''develop a sense with which we can feel God, and, if we do so, we can know Him also'' (pp. 24-5). Nostalgically recalling his idea of writing about the *Ramayana*, a task for which he found no time, he consoled himself and his friend by saying, ''One who studies *Anasaktiyoga* well can easily get at the secret of the *Ramayana*. . . . while studying the *Ramayana*, you must regard Rama as the Supreme Being and Ravana as the forces opposed to Him'' (p. 236). Thus regarded, Ramanama and Omkar are one, Rama is both a person and a principle, embodying at once the means and the end, the way of dharma and the bliss of *moksha*. The servant of Rama acquires the power to understand and so to influence people and events in the world of Becoming and can honestly say: ''Whatever power I have is Rama's, not mine'' (p. 20). At the same time the lover of Rama is at home in the dimension of Eternity and can witness the shipwrecks and reunions, the tragedies and comedies of earthly life, with a degree of serene detachment, for in ''the *Brahmi* state'' one ''does not suffer at the sight of others' sufferings'' because one ''does not rejoice at the sight of their happiness'' (p. 66).

In a letter to Jawaharlal Nehru Gandhiji described Sardar Patel, his fellow-prisoner, as a ''factory for the inexhaustible supply of mirth'' (p. 310). When Srinivasa Sastri, as a privileged jester in the establishment, exposed his lapses from correct English, Gandhiji not only published these for his readers' delight but announced that Sardar Patel was another specially privileged jester in whose presence ''Gloom hides her fiendish face. . . . He will not spare even my 'saintliness'! It may deceive simple people but never the Sardar or the sanatanists'' (p. 401).

PREFACE

Though outwardly uneventful, the period of one and a half months (March 5 to April 22, 1933) covered in this volume was evidently a time of mounting mental stress for Gandhiji. While the first flush of popular enthusiasm following the fast of September 1932 was waning, the Harijans were showing impatience with the slow pace of the reform movement and the sanatanists had begun to organize their opposition to the temple-entry programme. Going through the correspondence and the interviews with friends and critics, Gandhiji felt himself in the midst of a raging fire (p. 48). The affairs of the Ashram also, combined with the problem of a young American lady for whose moral welfare Gandhiji had come to develop "a mother's anxiety" (p. 365), caused him much concern. "As soon as I have solved one moral problem, I am faced with another" (p. 139), he told Narandas Gandhi. In consequence, though Gandhiji claimed that he was enjoying inner peace in spite of the storm on all sides (p. 99), a crisis seems to have been building up in his mind and relief from it came only with a decision, on the night of April 30, to undertake a three weeks' self-purificatory fast.

Gandhiji discovered to his sorrow that the effects of the fast of September 1932, which he had previously described as "a modern miracle" (*vide* Vol. LI), were temporary. "Hindus had become delirious and done acts which, when they became sober, they undid". In Bengal there was even an agitation for the revision of the Yeravda Pact which was arrived at as a result of that fast (p. 414). The failure of his dialogue with the orthodox was a great disappointment to Gandhiji, for he deeply cherished the basic values for which Hinduism stood and he did not want to see it perish, as he was convinced it certainly would if untouchability lived.

He continued to defend, for instance, varnashrama and temple worship against attacks by radical reformers and criticism from Christian sympathizers. The varna system, Gandhiji claimed, "emphasizes the curbing of material greed so that it can leave greater scope for spiritual development" (p. 349). He maintained that the aim of life was not "rising in the social scale" but service to one's fellow-men and that, therefore, conscious recognition of the law of varna resulted in "contentment and consequent freeing of human energy for the moral uplift". "Its disregard", he added,

"spells unhealthy discontent, greed, cut-throat competition and moral stagnation ending in spiritual suicide" (p. 46). He realized, however, that for the revival of varna dharma in the present age "all must voluntarily accept Shudra dharma" and "earn their bread by their own efforts and through body labour. . . " (pp. 132 and 203). And by this he meant that all should "live by their labour and all become entitled therefore to nothing more than simple maintenance" (p. 25); one should earn one's livelihood through physical labour, and use mental and intellectual ability exclusively for the service of society (pp. 44 and 62).

On the value of temple-worship, Gandhiji fully shared the long-standing, widespread and firmly-held faith of most Hindus. Though himself "a follower of the Advaita doctrine", Gandhiji rightly argued that "that doctrine does not reject belief in temples" (p. 165). If one continues to experience duality, while intellectually grasping *advaita*, one should not worry because it would be in accordance with the truth as one sees it (p. 419). Nor did he see any conflict between *karma* and *bhakti*. "The function of *darshan* is to enable the deed to be done, to steady and purify the soul. Thus, *darshan* is not a substitute for right doing. It is an encouragement for it" (p. 111). Replying to an American critic who had argued that Gandhiji had lost his universal appeal by defending "the faith of temple Hinduism" (p. 49), Gandhiji pointed out that no religion or sect could do "without its house of God". Citing his mother's daily visit to the temple, Gandhiji asserted that "probably her faith was far greater than mine, though I do not visit temples" (p. 50). Temples, mosques and churches are, he explained in another article, "what faith has made them. They are an answer to man's craving somehow to reach the Unseen." Temple-worship, he said, "is a beautiful exercise of faith" and, though it admitted of reform, "will live as long as man lives". "It may be", he gave his personal testimony, "the association of childhood, it may be the fascination that Tulsidas has wrought on me. But the potent fact is there, and as I write these lines, my memory revives the scenes of my childhood when I used daily to visit the Ramji Mandir adjacent to my ancestral home. My Rama then resided there. He saved me from many fears and sins. . . . What was and is true of me is true of millions of Hindus" (p. 112).

Justifying the semantic liberties he took, Gandhiji explained: "One has to think in the search for Truth. The narrow meaning does not satisfy. With contemplation the same meanings of the same words are found satisfying. . . . Tulsidas says that Rama himself is *Om*, Rama himself is the Vedas. . . . He alone is, all else

is illusion." Quoting Tulsidas's own words, "My Rama may be Dasharatha's son but He is also much more: He is *Sachchidananda Purnabrahma*", Gandhiji stressed the essential ambiguity of myth and symbol. "There is no contradiction in this at all. It is the broadening of an idea, expansion of a meaning" (pp. 352-3). Gandhiji thus welcomed and cherished the unesoteric mysticism of sanatana dharma, the growth of awareness from wholeness to wholeness in wholeness, from *satya* to *satya* within *Sat*, the natural piety preserved in the unforgotten language of metaphor and allegory which binds the generations together and makes the child the father of the Man.

Gandhiji also shared the common Hindu faith in fasting as a form of penance and its use as a weapon against the weaknesses of one's own people. He says, "Hindu religious literature is replete with instances of fasting, and thousands of Hindus fast even today on the slightest pretext. It is the one thing that does the least harm. . . . One cannot forbear to do good because sometimes evil is done under its cover" (p. 414).

Accepting thus the basic values and attitudes of Hinduism with its dynamic faith in the *upasana* of names and forms, and the efficacy of myths and human affection in developing the moral sense, Gandhiji claimed that he was not separate from the sanatanists (p. 427) and, therefore, while he would not presume "to pronounce any judgment on Christianity, or for that matter any religion other than my own" (p. 238), he was unsparing in his criticism of what was wrong in the current customs and conduct of his own people. Thus, though he extolled the ideal of Brahminism, he had no hesitation in admitting that "Brahmins . . . are not all true representatives of Brahminism", and he declared that for him "the infallible test of the revival of Brahminism, that is, Hinduism, is the root-and-branch removal of untouchability" (pp. 186-7), which he described as "a great lie" (p. 68) and "a monstrous wrong" (p. 492). And if untouchability remained in spite of all his efforts, it would only prove, Gandhiji said in effect, that it was God's will "that the so-called high-caste Hindus should harden their hearts, that they should refuse to listen to the dictates of reason and justice and that Hinduism should become an extinct religion" (p. 492). These were strong words for Gandhiji, but the passion behind them sprang from his soul's agony. "To live while untouchability lives is like a cup of poison to me", he said, in an article addressed specially to Gujaratis, and added, hinting at the possibility of another fast by him: "I must either helplessly lie on my deathbed or employ whatever strength I have to subjugate the demon

of untouchability" (p. 64). In this difficult and anxious task of the purification of Hinduism, he appealed for world sympathy, for it was "in a way purification of the whole human family" (p. 413).

Gandhiji agreed with an "impatient worker" that "most drastic steps are required to wipe off untouchability", but asserted that "these steps have to be taken against ourselves", that the conversion of the orthodox could be brought about only by the workers' "prayers, fasting and other suffering in their own persons, in other words, by their ever-increasing purity" (p. 417). Admitting the difficulties against which workers engaged in Harijan service had to contend, Gandhiji asked them to have faith in themselves and the cause. An ideal worker who would "satisfy both the Harijans and the sanatanists" must have, Gandhiji insisted, "the highest character, deep humility and great charity". He must have faith that "Truth is life and it propagates itself the moment it has got a habitation in some human personality" (p. 48). Out of such faith "must spring tremendous energy" which would be proof against despair (p. 425).

After nearly four months of intensive propaganda for educating public opinion against the evil of untouchability, Gandhiji now asked the workers to pay more attention to constructive work for the economic, social and educational progress of the Harijans. The most effective propaganda, he said, lay in pure constructive work (p. 207), for the orthodox "cannot but be touched by the silent, effective and dignified selfless work of caste-Hindu volunteers and the consequent rise of the Harijans in the social scale" (p. 264). An all-India body named the Harijan Sevak Sangh (Servants of Untouchables Society), with G. D. Birla as President and with branches in all the provinces, had been established for organizing such work and Gandhiji kept up a regular correspondence with its dedicated secretary, A. V. Thakkar, making detailed suggestions for economical and efficient working of the Sangh. He took interest even in drawing up its constitution and substantially revised a draft prepared by Mahadev Desai (pp. 17-22 and 87-8). Among constructive activities, Gandhiji attached special importance to educational work among Harijans by dedicated teachers and explained in an article in *Harijan* what he expected of such teachers. The test, he admitted, was exacting, but "none too exacting for a willing worker" (p. 187) and went on to describe at some length the experiment he had "tried . . . with complete success, while it lasted" (p. 187) in Champaran in 1917 (*vide* Vol. XIII).

Gandhiji seems to have been considerably exercised over the affairs of the Satyagraha Ashram at Sabarmati during this period.

The Ashram was, as Gandhiji said in a letter to Mirabehn, a novel experiment in the cultivation of truth "in the midst of men and women of different temperaments and subtle temptations" (p. 311), and its daily routine was based on the maxim "to labour is to pray". Gandhiji knew that many followed the routine "mechanically and, therefore, slavishly", but he did not "grumble over the mechanical following" because he was not "without hope that even those who are mechanically following the routine will some day detect the spirit and the beauty behind it" (p. 9). But any failure in the observance of truth pained him deeply. One particular lapse on the part of a young man and a woman who, according to Gandhiji, fell because "they suppressed truth" (p. 311), upset him so much that the incident made him feel his own "spiritual poverty". "Unknown to me", he confessed to Narandas Gandhi, "falsehood, violence, and passion are lurking in me", for falsehood "cannot hide itself from one who scrupulously follows truth, non-violence and *brahmacharya*" (p. 159). Though the work for the removal of untouchability helped Gandhiji to forget all his sorrows, whenever he thought of this particular incident "the wound revives and reminds me that it has not healed" (p. 199). Writing to Mirabehn, Gandhiji said: "I know the language of detachment, I am not practising the art." But he was certain that the tempest in his heart would soon subside, for his life was dedicated to Truth and his faith remained unshaken that "Truth will stand even if the Ashram is reduced to ashes and all my idols are broken to pieces" (p. 175).

Gandhiji found it easier to deal with the friction caused by temperamental differences among the Ashram workers. His numerous letters to them illustrate his commitment to his co-workers as individuals, to whom he conveyed constructive criticism as well as warm regard without compromising his concern for truth. "If I admonish you rather harshly," he assured Premabehn Kantak, "it is because I regard you as my daughter and want to see you perfect" (pp. 387-8). While appealing to Narahari Parikh not to regard himself "as an outsider and disclaim responsibility" (p. 105) for the Ashram, Gandhiji advised Narandas Gandhi to disregard the harsh language of the former's criticism of him and consider his suggestions on merit. This, he said, was the way of non-violence, the swan's manner of accepting the milk of virtues and leaving the water of defects (p. 355). This was the secret of the loyalty which Gandhiji commanded from co-workers of varying temperaments and abilities and of his success in getting out of each the best that he or she could give.

For the lapses in the Ashram Gandhiji accepted responsibility as he, their foot-rule, was "so imperfect and untrue". But he never lost hope, for he was convinced that "we know the fundamental truth we want to reach, we know also the way. . . . we are but very humble instruments. . . . we shall reach the Absolute Truth, if we will faithfully and steadfastly work out the relative truth as each one of us knows it" (p. 372). In private as in public life, in religion as in politics, Gandhiji was a *satyayugakari*, not a *satyayuga-vadi*; he would not use the theoretical best in some possible future to destroy or postpone the concrete good of the actual present.

On truth in translation and relevancy in comment, his advice to Viyogi Hari offers valuable guidance to all journalists: "For purity, simplicity and restraint our translation should read like original writing. . . . All the articles, in short, must be written with a view to solving the current and immediate problems" (p. 4).

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PREFACE

The tide of patriotic fervour and moral idealism which swept the country with the launching of the civil disobedience movement on March 12, 1930, had, after a temporary wave caused by Gandhiji's fast of September 1932 (*vide* Vol. LI), begun rapidly to ebb away, and this volume (April 23 to September 15, 1933) shows Gandhiji searching for a way of quickening the conscience and strengthening the resolve of the people who had to sustain both the religious movement against untouchability and the political struggle against foreign rule. Shocked by increasing evidence of insincerity or moral lapses on the part of workers engaged in Harijan service, Gandhiji attributed their weakness to imperfection in himself (p.132) and undertook a self-purificatory fast of 21 days to make himself, through prayerful communion with God, a worthier instrument of service. On being released from prison at the commencement of the fast, he first suspended and later withdrew mass civil disobedience and replaced it by individual civil disobedience, which he planned to inaugurate on August 1 with a march to Ras, a village in Gujarat, after having first disbanded the Ashram at Sabarmati as an act of sacrifice by him of "that which is nearest and dearest to me" (p. 303). Unwilling to play the undignified "cat-and-mouse game" (p. 425) of arrest and release which followed, Gandhiji decided not to court imprisonment during the unexpired portion of the one-year sentence awarded to him on August 4, but, if left free by the Government, "to devote this period to Harijan service and if possible to such constructive activities as my health may permit" (p. 426).

The decision to undertake a self-purificatory fast came to Gandhiji with dramatic suddenness in the early hours of April 30. "A tempest" had "been raging" in his heart for some days (p. 74) and for three days prior to the decision he had been unable to sleep (p. 76). "The night I got the inspiration", he explained later, "I had a terrible inner struggle. My mind was restless. . . . The burden of my responsibility was crushing me." Then, suddenly, after more than an hour of tossing in the bed ". . . the Voice came upon me. I listened, made certain that it was the Voice, and the struggle ceased" (p. 255). Gandhiji could not clearly explain the precise cause of this painful agitation. Some shocking cases of moral impurity had come to his notice, it is true, but though he admitted that they "must have subconsciously pre-

pared the ground for the fast" he was unable to lay his "finger on any one of those single incidents as having been wholly or principally responsible for this sacrifice" (p. 134). Probably things had become unbearable to him because he realized his helplessness in the face of the extremely slow progress of the anti-untouchability reform. Writing to Jawaharlal Nehru on the day after the fast was announced, he vividly described the pain in his heart. "There is nothing so bad" as the practice of untouchability "in all the world", he said. "And yet I cannot leave religion, and therefore Hinduism. My life would be a burden to me, if Hinduism failed me. . . . Take it away and nothing remains for me." And unable to "tolerate it with untouchability, the high-and-low belief", he applied the "sovereign remedy" of the fast taught by Hinduism itself (p. 96).

Having fixed the date and hour of commencement, Gandhiji sat down to draft the statement which was released a few days later. The fast, he explained, was "against nobody in particular and against everybody who wants to participate in the joy of it". It was "a heart-prayer for the purification of self and associates, for greater vigilance and watchfulness" (p. 74). He had come to realize the magnitude of the evil of untouchability; the fight against it, to be effective, required "inward wealth, inward organization and inward power, in other words, self-purification". But this "can only come by fasting and prayer. We may not approach the God of Truth in the arrogance of strength, but in the meekness of the weak and the helpless" (p. 74). For Gandhiji, the Harijan movement was, no less than the movement for temple reform, a religious movement and "what the reformer should be concerned with is a radical change more in the inward spirit than in the outward form. If the first is changed, the second will take care of itself" (p. 62). Such a movement depended for its success not "on the intellectual or material resources of its sponsors", but solely upon the spiritual resources and the best known method of adding to these resources was fasting (p. 84). Indeed the fast should have come, Gandhiji explained, "at the time of the inauguration of the Harijan movement after the sealing of the Yeravda Pact" as a kind of "preparatory *yajna* (sacrifice)". Having been thus overdue, it had also become "a purificatory *yajna*", a penance. But all this, he admitted, was "argument after the fact. When I felt that I had received a peremptory call, I had no such reasoning in front of me. The call simply came and overpowered me" (p. 133). When appeals were made to Gandhiji by Vallabhbhai Patel, who had tended him for 16

months in jail with "a mother's love" (pp. 159 and 166), by Rajaji and even by General Smuts, to abandon the proposed fast, he could only assert that there was an overpowering force which prevented him from responding (p. 120). Repeating his claim that the fast was prompted by God, Gandhiji said: "His voice has been increasingly audible as years have rolled by. He has never forsaken me even in my darkest hour. He has saved me often against myself and left me not a vestige of independence. The greater the surrender to Him, the greater has been my joy" (p. 121). The decision had the effect of lifting a great weight from Gandhiji's heart. Writing to C. F. Andrews on the day of commencement of the fast, he said: "I stand or seem to stand calm in the midst of the events that would but for the approaching fast have rent me in twain" (p. 150). In the public statement issued on the same day, Gandhiji confessed that whatever the fast "may mean for the cause, it will certainly be my saving. . . . Without it I would, in all probability, have been useless for further service of Harijans, and for that matter, any other service" (p. 156).

The fast, the object of which was self-purification and purification of Hinduism from the filth of untouchability (p. 135), was also a means of developing the spirit of *anasakti*, of non-attachment to the body. Advising Mirabehn against carrying a "load of anxiety" which was "something radically wrong" and "incompatible with a living faith in a living God", he wrote: "As days pass I feel this living presence in every fibre of my vein" (p. 187). But Mirabehn was much upset and so was Devdas, Gandhiji's "youngest son and valued comrade" (p. 120), and for a few days even the fountain of Vallabhbhai's humour "seemed to have dried up" (p. 132). It must have been an agonizing situation for Gandhiji, but he was sustained by his faith in God and in the *Gita* teaching of surrendering the fruits of works to Him.

Though the fast was addressed to nobody in particular, Gandhiji expected "most from the Ashram" (p. 88), for he looked upon it as chiefly his handiwork and loved it in spite of all its shortcomings (p. 33). He was, indeed, painfully aware of frequent tensions among the workers and so many shocking things had happened that he told Narandas Gandhi, "there is little room for being more shocked than I have already been" (p. 126). Narandas himself felt the burden of his responsibility too heavy and wrote to Gandhiji a "heart-rending" letter about it (p. 89). But Gandhiji was determined not to lose heart, "To leave the Ashram or to close it down", he told Narandas, "would be

nothing but cowardice'' (p. 113). He had striven ceaselessly to raise the Ashram inmates to the ethical ideal he had set for them and on this occasion, too, he sent detailed instructions for the purification of the Ashram (pp. 86-91) and hoped that some of the inmates ''will have cultivated sufficient fitness'' to join the chain of indefinite fasts which he visualized as a form of *yajna* for the eradication of untouchability (pp. 90, 143 and 146). The fast, Gandhiji said, was a part of his striving to deserve the love of Ashram workers for him and acquire the strength to carry them forward. ''If I fail in this, I cannot hope to succeed in anything else'' (p. 113).

This strong attachment to the Ashram, however, did not prevent Gandhiji from sacrificing it when political considerations made it necessary to do so. Gandhiji saw that the individual civil disobedience which was to replace the mass movement would be a prolonged struggle and called for much greater sacrifices than the people had hitherto undergone. Being the author of the movement, he felt that he was expected to make the greatest sacrifice and decided, accordingly, to hand over to the Government the Ashram ''for the building of which'', he said in the letter communicating his decision to the Government, ''I and many members have laboured with infinite patience and care all these eighteen years. Every head of cattle and every tree has its history and sacred associations. They are all members of a big family. . . . It will not be without a tear that we shall break up the family and its activities'' (p. 303). The disbandment of the Ashram, Gandhiji thought, should lead to greater effort and greater dedication on the part of the inmates each of whom would now ''constitute a walking Ashram'' (p. 310). The Government refused to take charge of the Ashram and it was handed over to the Harijan Sevak Sangh.

The political circumstances which called for the sacrifice of the Ashram tested Gandhiji's non-attachment as severely as the problems connected with the anti-untouchability movement. His sudden release from jail on the day of commencement of the fast put upon him, ''as a seeker after Truth and a man of honour, a tremendous burden and strain'' (p. 158). He, therefore, assured the Government that he would ''not abuse the release'' and would not take ''a single step secretly or openly in furtherance of civil disobedience'' (p. 159), and also advised the Congress President to suspend the movement for six weeks. This latter step was necessary for the purpose of the fast, too. He had intended the fast to be ''an uninterrupted twenty-one days'

prayer'' (p. 257) and did not wish his brain to be occupied by any thoughts unconnected with Harijan work (p. 158). If the civil disobedience had continued, Gandhiji explained later, he would not have been able to bear calmly reports of arrests, lathi-charges, etc. (p. 265). His conciliatory gesture, however, found no response from the Government. With the help of Ordinance Rule it had cowed down the masses and imposed ''a kind of dead calm'' which, Gandhiji said in a letter to C. F. Andrews, ''even in my bed, isolated though I am from contact with people through the orders of doctors, I can't help sensing'' (p. 197). When, therefore, after an informal conference held in Poona of Congress workers, he sought an interview with the Viceroy, hoping to put up some proposal ''that would have been acceptable both to the Government and the people'' (p. 309), and the request was curtly refused on the ground that ''the civil disobedience movement was ''wholly unconstitutional, that there can be no compromise with it and that Government cannot enter into any negotiations for its withdrawal'' (p. 264), Gandhiji was not prepared for the complete and humiliating surrender which the Government demanded. ''I would rather be reduced to dust than surrender'', he said (p. 265). Satyagraha, he explained, ''may not be given up either because of the weakness of the people taking part in it or . . . the seeming victory of the opponent'' (p. 295). He, therefore, decided to renew the struggle in the revised form of individual civil disobedience with effect from August 1. Though the withdrawal of the mass struggle was an admission of failure, inasmuch as the masses were not able any longer ''to suffer the prolonged torture of the Ordinance Rule'' (p. 296), ''individual civil disobedience'', Gandhiji contended, was ''an invincible force'' (p. 282), It would be confined to individuals who were ''prepared to brave all the risks . . . including uttermost penury and the loss of all their possessions . . . or physical torture . . .'' These men and women ''will represent the national spirit and the nation's determination to win independence . . .'' (pp. 296-7). The decision to replace the mass civil disobedience by individual civil disobedience did not thus ''proceed from a sense of despair, or defeat''; Gandhiji had neither (p. 297). As he had explained in a letter to C. F. Andrews written long before the decision was taken: ''Time does not count . . . there is a certainty of the final triumph of truth, so long as there is some living representative of it.'' And there were, he was sure, many such representatives of truth in India who would ''count no cost too great for the vindication of truth'' (p. 197).

Gandhiji was arrested on the midnight of July 31, taken to Yeravda Central Prison and there served with an order to confine his movements to the Poona City municipal limits and take no part in civil disobedience activities. On his refusing to obey the order, he was re-arrested and sentenced to a year's imprisonment on August 4. His request for the usual facilities to carry on Harijan work from jail was refused on the ground that on this occasion he was a convicted prisoner and not a prisoner of State as before. Gandhiji thereupon went on an indefinite fast with effect from the noon of August 16. He was unconditionally released on the 23rd after his condition had taken a serious turn and was sent to the Sassoon Hospital. For a while there, his life seemed to hang in the balance. He felt that he would not survive for long, that he "could no longer battle with death" and even gave away whatever he had (p. 393). "It has all been like a dream" (p. 370), he told Vallabhbhai Patel in a letter dictated on that day from his sick-bed in "Parnakuti", the Poona residence of Premlila Thackersey, where he was taken after being discharged from the Sassoon Hospital. It took him some time to recover from the feeling of unreality by which he was overwhelmed and to decide on the next step. "I have been used", he said in a brief statement in *Harijan*, "to the most unexpected things in the course of a very long public life," but this was the most unexpected of them all. "How I shall use this life out of prison, I do not know", he confessed. But he was sure of one thing, namely that "Harijan service will be . . . the breath of life for me . . ." (p. 366). For some days Gandhiji felt himself surrounded by darkness and could not clearly see the path of duty before him. At last, after "hard praying and thinking", he decided not to "court imprisonment by offering aggressive civil resistance" up to the period of the termination of his sentence, a self-imposed restraint which was a bitter cup to him (p. 425).

Doubts had begun to grow about the correctness of Gandhiji's policies from two opposite points of view. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, the Liberal leader, felt that the country was losing faith in Gandhiji's political method and "another answer" was taking shape in people's minds. It was that civil disobedience, both mass and individual, should be replaced by a new policy "aiming at constructive national good in legislation, finance and administration". He, therefore, appealed to Gandhiji to retire from the Congress and leave it free to evolve a new programme (Appendix XIII). Gandhiji was not at all averse to the suggestion. "I would",

he said in reply, "gladly retire from the Congress and devote myself to the development of civil disobedience outside the Congress and to Harijan work". But he did not know how to do it. Performance of duty, he said, was always to him "a thing of beauty and a joy for ever. The awful fact, however, has often been to know where duty lies" (p. 382).

From the opposite point of view, Jawaharlal Nehru urged Gandhiji to give a more radical accent to Congress policies and to remove the confusion which his and M. S. Aney's statements on the question of civil disobedience seemed to have produced (Appendix XIV). Gandhiji's reply was unambiguous and firm, in perfect keeping with the bond of affection and mutual understanding which subsisted between them. While agreeing with Jawaharlal that "without a material revision of vested interests the condition of the masses can never be improved" and about the necessity of relating the Indian national movement with "progressive internationalism", he admitted that despite this "agreement between you and me in the enunciation of ideals, there are temperamental differences between us". He, therefore, concerned himself "with the conservation of the means and their progressive use" (p. 427) and justified all his recent decisions from this point of view. And, finally, he assured Jawaharlal that he had no sense of defeat in him and that "the hope in me that this country of ours is fast marching towards its goal is burning as bright as it did in 1920 . . ." (p. 430).

Replying to a correspondent who had pointed out the inconsistencies between Gandhiji's views in 1921 and 1932 on the questions of inter-dining and intermarriage, he offered the famous apologia: " . . . I am not at all concerned with appearing to be consistent. . . . What I am concerned with is my readiness to obey the call of Truth, my God, from moment to moment. . . ." He would therefore advise readers who found two of his statements at variance "to choose the later of the two" (p. 61).

As the aim of the anti-untouchability movement was the purification of Hinduism as a whole, the Harijans had to make their own contributions by clean and pure living and by self-reliance in working out their own salvation (p. 278). While shaking off their sense of helplessness, they should magnify their own faults and "make constant efforts to overcome them" (p. 364).

Chastizing the sanatanists whose behaviour belied their philosophy, Gandhiji had this to say on the self-revealing power of love: "Love is made of innumerable suns. When one small

sun cannot remain hidden, how can love? Does a mother ever have to go about saying that she loves her child? A child who cannot yet speak looks into the eyes of his mother. When their eyes meet we can tell from their looks that they are in communion with something divine'' (p. 171). To social scientists who assert the interpersonal non-communicability of inner experience this may be a hard saying, but Gandhiji and his people, even as a mother and her child, knew how to be ''in communion with something divine'' through mutual rapport at a level deeper than the verbal.

CWMG - C

PREFACE

During the four months (September 16, 1933 to January 15, 1934) covered in this volume, Gandhiji was technically a free man, as he had been unconditionally released on August 23rd. But he considered himself virtually a prisoner during the unexpired portion of the one-year sentence awarded to him on August 4, 1933 and scrupulously refrained from political activities or the furtherance of civil disobedience, while exercising the fullest freedom in conducting his campaign against untouchability and guiding constructive activities in the Ashram and elsewhere. Government and even his political associates could hardly understand his inner compulsion to carry on the struggle against untouchability, which was based on the firm conviction that, in the sense in which slavery was abolished in 1833, untouchability had been abolished in September 1932 at the representative meeting of Hindus in Bombay under the chairmanship of Pandit Malaviyaji and that "one life is being definitely held as hostage for the due fulfilment of the solemn pledge of the Hindus" (p. 89).

This combination of self-imposed discipline and vigorous activity naturally led to a great deal of misunderstanding on the part of both followers and critics. As the leader of the Congress Party he had given a power of attorney to Nehru (p. 382). About A.I.C.C. work, for example, he referred Nariman to Jawaharlal, "my political chief", confessing to the latter, "I stand thoroughly discredited as a religious maniac and predominantly a social worker" (p. 167). Charged with using the Harijan movement to strengthen civil disobedience and also of abandoning civil disobedience for the sake of the Harijan movement, he could only say: " . . . I am between two crossfires. Congressmen accuse me of having damaged the cause of civil disobedience by taking up this whirlwind campaign. Those who suspect me of ulterior motives accuse me of strengthening civil disobedience. . . . It is a peremptory religious call which I am obeying" (p. 346).

Even his absence from the funeral of Vithalbhai Patel was misinterpreted. He pleaded with Mathuradas Trikumji not to put pressure on him to light the funeral pyre: "I can take no interest in the outside activities; mentally I am in jail. I will somehow go through the Harijan tour. I hardly even think about other things" (p. 161). He had again to explain to Manibehn Patel how he was "out of prison only for the sake of Harijans" and

this he said "not only for the benefit of the Government or the world but because that is how I really feel in my heart" (p. 225). Unable to offer civil disobedience, he was "like a bird who had lost its wings" (p. 229). He explained further in a letter to Gordhanbhai Patel, "My differences with Vithalbhai had absolutely nothing to do with my not going there. My present circumstances were the sole reason behind my not going over" (p. 256).

Under a similar inhibition he refused to oblige English friends by roundly condemning the terrorists, an "unorganized, insane and wholly ineffective" party of violence (pp. 84-5), since he could do nothing to control the counter-terrorism of the Government which, according to him, was "much more mischievous in its effect, because it is organized and corrupts a whole people" (p. 34).

The fast had left him very weak and he had to obey the doctors' orders to take rest for six weeks after the crisis of August 23rd. He began however on November 7th his "whirlwind" tour in the Harijan cause which covered Central India, Andhradesha, Tamil Nadu, Mysore and Kerala and which was interrupted by a brief visit to Delhi in December for attending a meeting of the Central Board of the Harijan Sevak Sangh and for discussions with Congress leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru, Abul Kalam Azad and Acharya Kripalani.

Unveiling in Ahmedabad a statue of Sir Chinubhai Madhavlal, Baronet, Gandhiji expressed his cherished hope that "in our country there should be no ill will, no conflict, between the rich and the poor, that both may realize their own dharma and adhere to it" (p.12). It was this same anxiety to avoid conflict and to remind people of their duties rather than their rights that guided his activities and utterances in the Harijan cause. He intended to serve at one and the same time the reformers, the sanatanists and the Harijans (p.145). While he exhorted the Harijan workers to be "incorruptible and selfless" and pointed to caste Hindus their duty to rid themselves of the curse of untouchability, he was equally clear that ultimately the salvation of Harijans would have to come from within (p. 1).

Far from antagonizing any group, he took pains to identify himself with all the classes involved—the orthodox, the reformers, the Harijans and the common people. In dealing with the sanatanists, even with persistent trouble-makers like Pandit Lalnath, he never lost patience or betrayed intolerance. While the genuine popular support for reform was amply proved by the huge enthusiastic crowds and plentiful collections at his innumerable meetings, his sole endeavour was to win the orthodox opponents

over "by gentlest persuasion, by appealing to their reason and to their hearts" (p. 197). And even the diehard pandits, who, enraged by his obvious success, flung all sorts of abuses at him, could hardly resist his appeal to what they as well as the common people valued most highly, if only as a theory, the central message of the Upanishads and the *Ramayana* "that God alone is and no one else and nothing else" (p. 408). Indeed he claimed with justice to have removed much misunderstanding by friendly discussion and to have converted opponents into supporters with the earnest plea: "I have no weapon with me except the one of an appeal to the reason and heart of the people. The reform that I am advocating can only come through a change of heart on the part of millions of Hindus" (p. 474).

"I believe myself to be both a sanatanist and a reformer," he said. "I have tried to gather in me all the goodwill which caste Hindus can have towards Harijans. . . . I am also trying . . . to see with Harijans' eyes and to realize what is going on in their hearts" (p. 216). Whether it was economic progress or social reform, his whole philosophy was "saturated with the Harijan mentality" and he could only think in terms of the millions of villagers, making his happiness dependent upon that of the poorest among them and wanting to live only if they could live (p. 147). He warned the aristocratic students of Rajkumar College, " . . . all your education will be vain if you do not learn the art of feeling one with the poorest in the land" (p. 290). Having lived, eaten and drunk with the labouring poor, he had become a convinced prohibitionist and declared, "I am not a temperance man. I am a prohibition man" (p. 449).

In the movement for purification the Harijans themselves had "to play an honourable and valuable part" (p. 389). To the workers in the cause of reform his advice was to depend less on argument and more on purity and strength of character. He told them bluntly, " . . . if you had no character to achieve or lose, naturally people are not going to put any faith whatsoever in you. You have got to move the masses. You have got to change the hearts of the masses . . . . Masses will not argue." They will listen to leaders who have credentials (p. 362). He reminded students in Madras that by serving Harijans they would be bringing about a double revolution, one in the Harijans' lives and another in their own (p. 363).

Such was his faith in the oneness of truth and in the all-encompassing power of any truth when firmly held and lived by, that the abolition of untouchability, he believed would lead to the

end of all quarrels between classes and communities in India, the differences between Hindus and Mussalmans and between capital and labour (p. 300). The movement for the removal of untouchability was essentially religious and humanitarian and must therefore have repercussions on all other aspects of life, for religion governed all departments of life (p. 383). Thus though the reform had no political motives behind it, it would certainly have political consequences. "A duty religiously performed", he said, "carries with it many other important consequences. 'Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and everything else will be added unto you' is to my mind a scientific truth" (p. 325). And he declared at a public meeting in Nagpur that his whole life was governed by religion. Even his politics were derived from his religion (p. 205).

He was clear, however, that his Hinduism, like his nationalism, was "not exclusive or inconsistent with the interest of any portion of humanity" (p. 330). Indeed, through his work for Harijans he was trying to serve all communities. "They are branches of one big family. I have found in the Hindu branch a disease which, if not removed in time, will spread through the whole family and destroy it" (p. 282). Every religion, according to him, had to be nourished and sustained by the continuing *tapas* of its votaries (p. 62). All scriptures pronounce from the housetops "that religion can only be defended by *tapascharya*" (p. 466). Speaking in Calicut about "this black spot of untouchability" and recalling Bishop Heber's line, "only man is vile", he warns his co-religionists that even Hinduism cannot "escape the impending doom, if we, Hindus, prove unworthy representatives of the priceless treasures that the *rishis* have left for us" (pp. 490-1).

He had learnt to search for truth not in books, but in human hearts, in concrete situations, and he had also learnt to recognize it as it could be seen in human hearts and to respect the freedom of everyone. "No one," he said, "has a right to coerce others to act according to his own view of truth" (p. 216). He wanted complete freedom of thought and action for women (p. 439). His message to the women members of the Ashram was: "Irrespective of the resolution or promise made or given at the time of the march to Ras, let all the women think again independently and take a fresh decision. . . . Nobody should persuade anybody else to adopt a particular course. Everyone should decide for herself. It is their religious duty to do so. Each should act according to her capacity and her inclination. It is an accident that I am out of prison" (p. 495). In the same spirit he wrote to Manilal and Sushila Gandhi: "I shall not live for ever. You should

try to swim with your own strength. That is the right thing to do. . . . Instead of seeking the protection of an imperfect father, seek that of the Father of all, of Omnipotent God. That will make you strong. This is the only lesson I wish to teach you" (pp. 218-9). After having clearly stated for the benefit of a foreign disciple his views on inter-marriages between persons of different religions or cultures, he adds the caution, " . . . I would not be guilty of enslaving your reason or your heart. Imperfect as I am, I would not have you to become a partner in my errors" (p. 236). It was this sense of liability to error and of identity with all mankind, sinners as well as saints, which made Ramanama for him the most effective remedy both for divisive pride and weakness of will in well-doing. The Name, he said, "is not for the blameless and the healthy, but for people like us who are sinful and full of disease" (p. 37). How humility is essential for spiritual progress, he explains in a talk to votaries who should "be humble and live as particles of dust, be ciphers" (p. 67).

His detachment from political moves and anxiety to encourage freedom in others comes out frequently in his correspondence. He writes to Jawaharlal Nehru that it will do no good to have an A.I.C.C. meeting, "but," he adds, "that does not mean that it will deeply hurt me if such a meeting was held" (p. 30). Writing to Malaviyaji he deprecates the convening of A.I.C.C. meetings which end in desultory discussion and ill-thought-out resolutions (p. 96). He was all for a definite policy and a programme to be prosecuted unflinchingly. He felt that "hopeless inactivity is the worst of all and should be discountenanced" (p. 168). Recognizing therefore that the formation of a Swaraj Party had become necessary to ensure the political survival of those Congressmen who would not or could not take part in the civil disobedience movement, he wrote to K. M. Munshi: "Just as you thought it proper to consult me, I would advise you to consult Jawaharlal too" (p. 459). He hinted to Jawaharlal that his attacks on the Hindu Sabha "might have been less fierce" (p. 291). He wrote to G. D. Birla approving of his article on Jawaharlal, who "is a very straightforward man and corrects his error. . . . ultimately he is bound to follow the path of Truth" (p. 104).

In a letter to Prabhavati he lays it down that "Jayaprakash can remain in the present fight only if he is thus prepared to embrace poverty. This is a soldier's dharma." The other dharma, that towards one's family, "is in conflict with the good of society as a whole" when "it becomes an absolute dharma". This is

a conflict which is unavoidable today. "It is the aim of satyagraha to remedy this situation. But anybody who does not understand satyagraha and still follows it fails in both dharmas . . ." (p. 266.) In a well-ordered society a good citizen should not be called upon to make radical sacrifices, but where such sacrifices are demanded by unsettled conditions no one can offer satyagraha while still discharging responsibilities to his family. This is made clear in a further letter: ". . . it was not morally wrong to do one's duty towards one's own family, but . . . if one wished to follow the path of service, one must renounce such private duties" (p. 323). The same lesson is repeated to Jawaharlal Nehru: "In the final heat only those will be able to stand who have no property and nowhere to rest their heads on" (p. 291).

Convinced that "man is an animal created to discover his *atman*, and as *atman* all men are one" (p. 48) and that the final goal of all religions is to realize the essential oneness of the spirit which pervades all lives and appears in many forms (p. 305), he would use the doctrine of rebirth as an incentive to individual moral effort towards a better future for all mankind, not as a means of pusillanimous escape from the call of dharma. The argument about rebirth should be applied to oneself only. To be indifferent to the sufferings of others and "to tell them to 'pay for the sins' of their previous birth is to turn God . . . into a demon" (p. 248). After fifty years devoted to finding out what the law of karma should be, he had come to the conclusion that "to apply it to everybody else but ourselves is to distort it altogether; . . . If we were to apply the law of karma . . . towards ourselves, you would find the land here and elsewhere transformed" (p. 472).

Gandhiji, while a prisoner in Yeravda jail in 1932, had selected 42 verses from the *Bhagavad Gita* for Ramdas, his son and fellow-prisoner. To this he gave the title *Gita Praveshika*. Ramdas liked these simple and devotional verses and others felt it would prove helpful to Harijan workers and should be published. Before deciding if the collection was worthy of publication, Gandhiji consulted Vinoba, Kakasaheb and Balkrishna Bhave, who were all in prison at the time and who were all devoted students of the *Gita*. These three inmates of the Ashram held a consultation among themselves and advised Gandhiji, with a view to increasing its utility, to omit three of the verses and to add four new ones. The collection thus revised was presented to men and women workers as well as to other lovers of the *Gita* as

an introduction or *Praveshika*. But Gandhiji added the warning: ". . . merely memorizing or knowing the meaning of the *Praveshika* or [even] the whole of the *Gita* is not going to help realize the *atman*. The *Gita* is to be put into practice" (p. 74). It is simple *bhakti* and *shraddha* in service that he stresses again in the charming discourses on the *Gita* which he wrote to Kasturba (pp. 398, 417).

Acknowledging his lack of scholarship in Sanskrit, he wrote to Mahadev Desai: "You should go on with your translation taking such help as my translations can give to bring out my thought but not always following my translation. . . . Ignore the notes where they are useless. Give your own where they are necessary. . . . Re-write and add notes where necessary. . . . Then when the whole result comes into my hands, I shall work on it and make such changes as I may deem fit in order to bring out my meaning. . . . We must then bring out a revised version of the Gujarati and publish your translation in English" (p. 265). It was this English translation which was published in 1946 under the title *The Gospel of Selfless Action* or *The Gita According to Gandhi*.

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PREFACE

During the period of four months (January 16 to May 17, 1934) covered in this volume, Gandhiji continued the tour which he had begun on November 7 of the preceding year and which had already taken him over the larger part of the Central Provinces and Andhra. The present volume covers the tour of Malabar, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Coorg, before the stricken Bihar called him.

Firmly holding to the resolve to remain politically inactive till August, when his incarceration but for his premature discharge should have ended, he bent all his untiring energy to the cause of eradication of untouchability from the face of India. Describing the movement as one of "reformation and purification of Hinduism" (p. 11), he called upon the *savarna* Hindus "to purify themselves by fraternizing with Harijans" (p. 106) and to remove those disabilities—social, moral and economic—under which they laboured. His programme was "to provide for them schools, hostels, medical aid, facilities for water—generally to do everything that would put them on a par with others" (p. 42). Although he was "a Hindu revolutionary appearing on the scene and revolutionizing Hinduism" (p. 43), he had not started the campaign against untouchability out of any narrow concern for the survival of Hinduism. Speaking at Alleppey he said: ". . . I am wholly indifferent whether Hindu religion is strengthened or weakened or perishes . . . I have so much faith in the correctness of the position I have taken up that, if my taking up that position results in weakening Hinduism, I cannot help it and I must not care" (p. 17).

At meeting after meeting, often as many as five in a day, Gandhiji carried on the campaign. And as the movement gathered momentum, an awakening could be noticed. Recruits came forward for the cause, donations to the Harijan purse swelled. In Tamil Nadu alone the collections amounted to well over a lakh of rupees (p. 189), and it began to appear as if the edifice of untouchability was already crumbling. The change in the attitude of *savarna* Hindus was "phenomenal and even beyond expectations" (p. 84). "I think", Gandhiji noted, "that the velocity with which the Hindus are responding to the call for repentance is satisfactory" (p. 339).

But in the process Gandhiji aroused the wrath of the orthodox. They challenged Gandhiji to debates with Shankaracharyas and others. They held black-flag demonstrations, staged incidents at meetings and, at places, such as Jashidih and Buxar in Bihar, even offered physical violence to Gandhiji and his entourage. Gandhiji "felt sorry and humiliated to find sanatana dharma so vulgarly and violently represented" (p. 459) and implored the guilty demonstrators "to repent of their behaviour in the sanctuary of their hearts" and to desist from such behaviour, while he advised his co-workers to "win them over by your patience, gentleness and personal purity" (p. 437).

As for public debates with the sanatanists, Gandhiji refused to be drawn into them (p. 91). But he clung to his position that untouchability, as practised, could not have the authority of the Shastras behind it. He said: "If I discovered that. . . Vedas, Upanishads, *Bhagavad Gita*, *smritis*, etc., clearly showed that they claimed divine authority for untouchability . . . then nothing on this earth would hold me to Hinduism . . . . The very thought that the *rishis* . . . could ever conceive of any such thing as untouchability . . . must be repugnant to every intelligent person. But prejudices and superstitions die hard. They cloud the reason, befog the intellect and harden the heart. And so you find learned men defending untouchability" (p. 7).

An important issue in the anti-untouchability movement was that of temple-entry. But to Gandhiji temple-entry in itself was of no consequence. The acid test was "of a change of heart on the part of the caste Hindus" (p. 189). He did not, therefore, want to force the pace here. He said: "Temple-entry is a question purely for the caste Hindus to solve. If caste Hindus say as a body that Harijans shall not enter the temples, I shall say it will be unfortunate . . . but, so long as that opinion persists, no Harijan will enter any temple" (p. 161). But such a state of affairs could not last. He said: ". . . I know that public opinion is rising fast in favour of opening temples to Harijans, and I would like you to persevere in formulating public opinion till it becomes so irresistible that, pandits and trustees of temples notwithstanding, temples will be opened to Harijans" (p. 192).

Gandhiji's views on any legislative action in this matter were equally categorical. Referring to the Temple-entry Disabilities Removal Bill, then before the Central Legislative Assembly, he wrote: ". . . I for one would not desire to see it carried by a mixed majority vote. All that I contend is that Hindus who have faith in temples have the right and owe it as a duty to enforce

their opinion . . . . And if there is a legal hindrance, . . . it can only be, and therefore should be, removed by law'' (p. 335).

On January 15 calamity struck Bihar in the shape of an earthquake of devastating intensity. As Gandhiji later described its effect, ''. . . nearly 25,000 died in the twinkling of an eye . . . . Tens of thousands of people are living homeless and clothless. . . . Palaces have been desolated, and thousands of homes are nothing but a mass of debris'' (p. 111). Gandhiji's reaction, which he first expressed at one of his meetings, was: ''You may call me superstitious if you like; but a man like me cannot but believe that this earthquake is a divine chastisement sent by God for our sins. . . . nothing but divine will can explain such a calamity'' (p.44). Elsewhere he said: ''For me there is a vital connection between the Bihar calamity and the untouchability campaign. The Bihar calamity is a sudden and accidental reminder of what we are and what God is . . .'' (pp. 45-6). At meeting after meeting he reiterated this belief, (pp. 51, 54, 60, 87, 101, 318, 351 and 392) even as he appealed for donations for the victims of the disaster. He could not say why God chose to mete out the punishment in that particular way. As he wrote in *Harijan*: ''I am not God. Therefore I have but a limited knowledge of His purpose. . . . It is an ennobling thing for me to guess that the Bihar disturbance is due to the sin of untouchability. It makes me humble, it spurs me to greater effort . . .'' (p.87).

Gandhiji's thus associating ''ethical principles with cosmic phenomena'' (p. 503) provoked strong criticism in some quarters. Rabindranath Tagore expressed his pain and surprise in a statement saying he was ''profoundly hurt'' that such words coming from Gandhiji's mouth might ''emphasize the elements of unreason'' in the minds of his countrymen—''unreason, which is a fundamental source of all the blind powers that drive us against freedom and self-respect'' (p. 504). Gandhiji was unrepentant. Answering the Poet he said: ''. . . I cannot help myself. I do believe that superphysical consequences flow from physical events. How they do so, I do not know'' (p. 95). He did not by this mean ''that we can with certainty attribute a particular calamity to a particular human action. . . . All that I mean to say is that every visitation of Nature does and should mean to us Nature's call to introspection, repentance and self-purification'' (p. 318). Answering a science student he made the same point: ''The golden rule is for each one of us to regard them as punishment for one's individual and social sins. It is pride and ignorance if one says, 'This happened because of your sins'; but it is humility, it is wisdom, if one

says, 'It happened because of my sins.' . . . My job is over if I could convince the reader that the earthquake is the result of our sins" (p. 392).

Gandhiji was in Bihar from March 12 to April 9 and then again from April 22 to May 5. Here, along with his little band of co-workers, some of them inmates of the Ashram, he toured the parts most affected. The accent in his speeches was on "the all-important question of alleviating human suffering" (p. 290). At the meeting of the Central Relief Committee he exhorted the workers to sink all differences and co-operate with all persons and institutions engaged in relief work, including the Government. "The author of non-co-operation as I am," he said, "I have recommended co-operation in the task before us without the slightest hesitation" (p. 288). Calling upon workers to forget the name of the Congress for the time being, he said: "The hungry will eat and the thirsty will drink from whatever hands they get it. Let them receive help from all. We must co-operate with Government in our work of relief" (p. 336).

But even as he was organizing the work of relief, asking for huts to be built here, wells to be dug there, he had not forgotten his great crusade against untouchability. "I would like you to remember", he said in a message to the afflicted Bihar, "that the quake of untouchability is much worse than that of Mother Earth" (p. 266). God had made no distinction in His destruction between the high and the low (p. 337), so how could they? "Nature utters its warning to us in a voice of thunder. It flashes it before our eyes in letters of flame. But seeing, we see not, and hearing, we do not understand" (p. 342).

The period is marked by two important decisions which Gandhiji announced during his sojourn in Bihar, and which created not a little commotion among political workers. These were: (1) that he, and he alone, might resort to civil resistance over questions bearing upon the struggle for freedom, and (2) that those among Congressmen who had faith in the Council-entry programme should be free to pursue that programme.

Of course Congressmen not resorting to satyagraha would not mean that the Congress was to give up the satyagraha programme. That might be suicidal. ". . . the Congress", Gandhiji said, "has no organization at all today. It is in a state of anarchy. Hence, this is the only way if the light of the Congress is to continue to shine" (p. 305). All that he advised was that those who wished to resort to satyagraha should do so, during his lifetime, only under his direction. He said: "I feel that the masses have

not received the full message of satyagraha owing to its adulteration in the process of transmission. It has become clear to me that spiritual instruments suffer in their potency when their use is taught through non-spiritual media'' (p. 349). And again: ''. . . the indifferent civil resistance of many, grand as it has been in its results, has not touched the hearts of either the 'terrorists' or the rulers as a class'' (p. 350).

The situation in the country bore out Gandhiji's words. In September the previous year a District Magistrate had been assassinated in Midnapore. The reprisals that followed had ''dazed'' Gandhiji. In a letter he wrote: ''The measures the Government have adopted to crush the spirit of the people defy description'' (p. 77). Writing to Nehru he said the same thing, adding: ''The measures appear to be worse than the Punjab measures of 1919'' (p. 30). On April 8, shots were fired at Sir John Anderson, Governor of Bengal, and the incident provoked still more severe repression by the Government. The people's acquiescence in this exercise of brute strength pained Gandhiji more than the severity of the measures themselves. ''Our cowardice'', he said in a letter to Rabindranath Tagore, ''chokes me'' (p. 29).

As for giving his approval to the Council-entry programme and the revival of the Swarajya Party, it appeared that Gandhiji could have done nothing else. There had always existed in the Congress ''a body of men who believe in Council-entry and who will do nothing else if they cannot have that programme'' (p. 388). He had noted, too, ''the paralysis of the intelligentsia'' (p. 388), and how personal aspirations and ambitions were playing their part, even though ability was limited (p. 425) and thought it better that they should have their way rather than they ''should be made sullen, discontented and utterly inactive'' (p. 338). This did not mean that Gandhiji was revising his views on the utility of the legislatures in the existing state. They remained, as he said, what they were in 1920 (p. 353). The democracy of his conception, he said, ''can be moulded outside, not inside the legislatures. . . . I want to have legislatures that will follow the wishes of the people'' (p. 396). For the present, therefore, he was only asking people to recognize the fact that ''a parliamentary party is as inevitable as a khaddar party or prohibition party'' (p. 389).

Of course what the Swarajists would have preferred was for Gandhiji to agree to the Congress giving up the programme of civil resistance altogether, or, if he insisted on offering civil resistance in his own person, for him not to do so in the name of the Congress. They did not want to disown him. All they wanted

was that he should release the Congress from it, which was "unable to bear the burden" (p. 450). But Gandhiji was firm. "I cannot suspend it in my own person," said he, "nor can the Congress. The Congress dare not suspend it, because thousands of persons have ruined themselves in this movement" (p. 451).

The volume contains the usual quota of letters, written at such free moments as Gandhiji got in the course of his tightly-scheduled and crowded engagements or very early in the morning, a good many between the hours of two and three, when, doubtless, the addressees slept! These letters contain advice, guidance or enquiry as to the problems of the persons concerned, domestic or relating to their work and on questions of public importance. He advises K. M. Munshi that astrologers "ought to be shunned" (p. 268). With regard to Vithalbhai Patel's will, over which there was dispute, Gandhiji wrote to Vallabhbhai Patel: "My own attitude is that, if Bose gets the money we shouldn't mind" (p. 356). He said the same thing also to Dahyabhai Patel (p. 358). To Vallabhbhai Patel he writes about a co-worker: "Bhansali has got his lips stitched up. He mixes flour and water and drinks the liquid with a straw. He says he got a tailor to stitch up his lips" (p. 155). He does not spare himself either. To Bhagwanji Pandya he says: "I feel ashamed of my letter. . . . It is sheer violence to write letters in such bad handwriting. . . . Some unconnected sentences . . . have crept in. . . . Your letter will have served its purpose if it makes me more alert" (p. 428).

The weekly letters to Kasturba, who was in jail, give detailed news of his movements and how, where and how occupied the various members of the family and co-workers are. She had been reluctant to go to jail and would have preferred to accompany Gandhiji on his tour to look after his needs. For Gandhiji, however, the claims of dharma took priority over those of love or personal attachment, and through these letters and the discourses on the *Gita* which follow some of them he probably wished to steady her on what he considered to be the path of duty. Summarizing the essence of religious living in one of the discourses, he says: "We should, therefore, always wish the world's good all the hours of the day whether in jail or outside, and do whatever service may fall to our lot in order to advance it" (p. 120). Gandhiji also suggests to Kasturba the practice of Ramanama as an unfailing means of spiritual support, explaining to her the meaning of the Hindu faith in the power of a holy name. "Tulsidas has said that the name Rama is more powerful than Rama himself. . . . the man called Rama who lived in the past was subject

to limitations . . . but the attributes of God signified by Ramanama have no limit'' (p. 197). He grows almost lyrical while recommending Ramanama to an audience in Gumia. Ramanama, he says, was ''familiar to the very animals and birds, the very trees and stones of Hindustan through many thousand years. . . . You must learn to repeat the blessed name of Rama with such sweetness and such devotion that the birds will pause in their singing to listen to you — the very trees will bend their leaves towards you, stirred by the divine melody of that Name'' (p. 446).

The deep attachment to Hinduism which these sentiments betoken did not affect Gandhiji's belief that all religions are true. ''Religion'', he said, ''is one tree with many branches. As branches you may say religions are many; as tree Religion is one'' (p. 17). In another speech he explained: ''God has made Nature so that we are one in many''. ''But'', he added, ''so long as there are different faiths and we belong to one faith, there are special obligations attached to that faith'' (p. 11). Gandhiji's attitude in this matter is fully illustrated in the advice he gave to a German lady, who seems to have expressed a desire to become a Hindu: ''You do not need to be a Hindu but a true Jewess. If Judaism does not satisfy you, no other faith will give you satisfaction for any length of time'' (p. 278).

The violent attempts by sanatanists at Buxar and Jashidih to obstruct Gandhiji's tour made him decide to finish the rest of it on foot. The idea of a walking tour seems to have had a strong attraction for his mind, partly because he could thereby ''demonstrate'' to the sanatanists ''that the movement is essentially religious in conception and execution'', and partly because of his faith that ''if my message comes from the heart, it will travel faster on foot than by rail or motor'' (p. 466). In a letter to Mathuradas Trikumji, Gandhiji expressed his faith in a vivid metaphor: ''Dharma does not use even a bullock-cart. He may only limp, but ever goes forward in his journey'' (p. 495). In another context he stated his ''conviction'' that no religion ''can be sustained by brute strength. . . . Religion is a mighty tree which derives all its sap from the moral height of those who profess that religion'' (p. 218).

CWMG - C

PREFACE

This volume covers the period of four months from mid-May to mid-September 1934. A week earlier, on May 8, Gandhiji had converted his Orissa tour into a walking pilgrimage and, after an interruption of two days, on May 17 and 18, to attend a meeting of the A.I.C.C. at Patna, he completed it on June 8. Resuming the tour by rail a few days later, Gandhiji visited Poona, Ahmedabad, Ajmer, Karachi, Calcutta, Kanpur and Lucknow and concluded it at Banaras on August 2, having covered during the nine months of the tour on behalf of Harijans over 12,000 miles (of which 156 miles on foot) and collected about ten lakhs of rupees. Throughout the tour, Gandhiji was confronted at many places by sanatanists with black-flag demonstrations and on June 25, at Poona, a bomb was thrown on what the assailant believed was the car carrying him. Pandit Lalnath, leader of the sanatanist demonstrations, while addressing a meeting at Ajmer on July 5 received a lathi blow which Gandhiji presumed must have been delivered by a 'reformer' and in atonement for which, therefore, he immediately announced a seven-day fast after the end of the tour. Reaching Wardha on August 5, Gandhiji commenced the fast on August 8 and completed it on August 14. On August 23, the controversial Temple-entry Bill, which had been opposed in the Central Assembly by several members and also by the Government, both on principle and on the ground that the measure was impracticable, came to an inglorious end as its mover, Ranga Iyer, withdrew the Bill, to the great jubilation of the sanatanists.

The end of the tour coincided with the end of the period of voluntary abstention by Gandhiji from active politics following his sentence of one year's imprisonment on August 4, 1933. In the mean time, however, the Congress Working Committee had met at Wardha on June 12 after a lapse of 30 months and without its President, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and important members like Jawaharlal Nehru and Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan who were still in jail. It met again in Bombay on June 17 and 18 and passed a resolution on the Communal Award neither accepting it nor rejecting it. Gandhiji attended both the meetings. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and M. S. Aney had demanded outright rejection of the Award, and an attempt was, therefore, made at yet another meeting of the Committee at Banaras during Gandhiji's short stay there to

iron out the difference between them and the other members, Sardar Patel, who had by then been released, presiding over the meeting. The Committee could not abandon its fundamental attitude of non-acceptance and non-rejection and, in consequence, the two dissidents resigned from the Congress.

Gandhiji's large-hearted tolerance of different points of view enabled him to encourage deviants from the mainstream of the Congress, like parliamentarians and Socialists, and even guide them, with friendly criticism in the case of the Socialists, in the pursuit of their *swadharma*. Moving at the Patna A.I.C.C. meeting the resolution on Council-entry, a programme in which he had scant faith, he said: "The parliamentary work must be left to those who are so inclined. . . . In its own place, it will be useful. But the Congress will commit suicide if its attention is solely devoted to legislative work. Swaraj will never come that way. Swaraj can only come through an all-round consciousness of the masses" (p. 11). His own future plan was a "continuation of the Harijan work and the rest of the constructive programme . . ." (p. 285). Though he had helped to bring into being the Congress Parliamentary Board, as a "concession to hard facts" (p. 173), he repeatedly insisted "that it is the least part of the national programme. It will be useless, in terms of swaraj, without the backing of the constructive programme, not one on mere paper but in solid substantial India-wide work" (p. 285).

While welcoming the rise of the Socialist Party in the Congress, he frankly pointed out the defects which he noted in its programme, its disregard of Indian conditions and its assumption of inevitable "antagonism between the classes and the masses or between the labourers and the capitalists, such that they can never work for mutual good" (p. 75). If labourers should know their rights and how to assert them, he also held that every right implied a corresponding duty and the Socialist manifesto, therefore, should emphasize performance of duty and show what that duty was (p. 76). Being convinced that capitalists and landlords were not averse to progressively sharing their riches with the masses, he said: "Let us who live in glass houses not throw stones. . . . We ourselves have not completely shed the habits of living that we say the capitalists are notorious for. The idea of class war does not appeal to me. In India class war is not only not inevitable but it is avoidable if we have understood the message of non-violence" (p. 218). Even while deprecating blind acceptance of imported "catchwords and seductive slogans" (p. 219), he recognized the restless search for truth that

filled the soul of the West and said, "I value that spirit. Let us study our Eastern institutions in that spirit of scientific inquiry and we shall evolve a truer socialism and a truer communism than the world has yet dreamed of. It is surely wrong to presume that Western socialism or communism is the last word on the question of mass poverty" (p. 219). He refused to subscribe to the belief of Western socialists and communists "in the essential selfishness of human nature". He declared his faith that man in any station "can respond to the call of spirit in him and can rise superior to the passions that he owns in common with the brute and therefore superior to selfishness and violence which belong to brute nature and not to the immortal spirit of man" (p. 248). He therefore pleaded for a socialism or communism based on non-violence and on harmonious co-operation of labour and capital and landlord and tenant. He wrote to Narendra Deva: ". . . your enunciation of the socialist object frightens me. . . . The implications of all the three principles . . . make an intoxicating programme. I fear all intoxicants" (p. 274). He suggested that the Socialists should present the country with "practical socialism in keeping with Indian conditions instead of scientific socialism as your programme has been called" (p. 275). Finally, in a letter to Jawaharlal Nehru, who breathed angry contempt for bullock-cart socialism, Gandhiji took full responsibility for the Working Committee's resolution and added: "Of course here comes in the difference of our emphasis on the method or the means which to me are just as important as the goal and in a sense more important in that we have some control over them whereas we have none over the goal if we lose control over the means" (p. 318).

Speaking to khadi workers, Gandhiji dissented from Adam Smith who considered the human element a disturbing factor in the study of economic phenomena and argued: ". . . it is this 'human element' on which the entire economics of khadi rests; and human selfishness, Adam Smith's 'pure economic motive', constitutes the 'disturbing factor' that has got to be overcome. . . . Debasing of quality, adulteration, pandering to the baser tastes of humanity, are current staple in commercialized production; they have no place in khadi, nor has the principle of highest profit and lowest wages any place in khadi." The spinner is "not a machine. . . . the art in khadi appeals first to the heart and then to the eye" (pp. 353-4). In a discussion with Dodd he claimed for the spinning-wheel only the merit of producing additional wealth by utilizing the idle hours of the nation. It was never meant to

displace existing employment. "Give me a thing", he said, "which would increase the daily income of the millions of our impoverished people more than the spinning-wheel, and I should gladly give up the spinning-wheel" (p. 401).

But the Congress intelligentsia did not share Gandhiji's faith in the khadi programme, with its concomitants, and, watching with growing concern the differences in outlook and method between them and him, he seriously considered the advisability of his leaving the Congress. In the letters to Vallabhbhai Patel we can trace his mental agony over the question. He felt that he seemed "to be obstructing the growth of the Congress". He could think of no way of fighting the rot, except by leaving it. "My doing so will rid it of hypocrisy" (p. 329). Little by little he came to the rueful conclusion "that the best interests of the Congress and the nation will be served by my completely severing all official or physical connection with the Congress, including the original membership. . . . I feel that my remaining in it any longer is likely to do more harm than good. . . . A tree is no more hurt by a ripe fruit falling from it than would the Congress be by my going out of it. Indeed the fruit will be dead weight, if it did not fall when it was fully ripe. . . . I feel that I am a dead weight on the Congress now" (pp. 403-4). He felt with poignant clarity the inability of the intelligentsia who wanted to lead the Congress to understand the needs of the masses with whom he had identified himself. His reason, he said, "takes me in a direction just the opposite of what many of the most intellectual Congressmen would gladly and enthusiastically take, if they were not hampered by their unexampled loyalty to me". He could not exploit their loyalty and devotion and the leaders who disapproved of his method would not outvote him and compel his retirement. He therefore came to the conclusion that the "only way I can requite such loyalty was by voluntary retirement" (p. 405).

Whether it was the movement against untouchability or the struggle for political freedom or economic equality, Gandhiji was concerned not only with prompt decisive action, but also with preservation of wholeness in persons and society. He clung to the faith that life was a single indivisible whole and that spiritual *sadhana* was not an escape from its demands, but ever deeper involvement in it. Writing to Premabehn Kantak, he distinguishes between speaking of and fulfilling the Congress programme and says: "The real worshippers of Shri Krishna are not those who shout 'Krishna, Krishna', but those who do His work. Our hunger is not appeased if we keep shouting 'bread,

bread'. It is appeased by eating bread'' (p. 392). In a letter to Dilip Kumar Roy, a follower of Sri Aurobindo, he explains with due modesty and in a tentative spirit his idea of karmayoga. ''I do not believe that my present activity is less conducive to self-realization or merger in the Divine than abstention would be. Sannyasa is not cessation of all physical activity. It means to me cessation of all activity, mental or physical, that is selfish. If I could be convinced that cessation is the better way for me, I should adopt it at once'' (p. 195). Disinterested activity was conducive to spiritual growth precisely because it helped to integrate life, which could not be divided into watertight compartments, some spiritual and others secular. ''Politics, religion, social reform, economic uplift, all these form parts of a whole'' (p. 172).

What made an activity spiritual was the tendency to preserve personal and social integrity, to bring people together rather than create conflicts. Gandhiji's social and political models were organic, not mechanical, and the forces he sought to develop and mobilize were *sattvik*, not *rajasik*. Passionately devoted as he was to the movement against untouchability, he would not bring it about by wrong means or by forsaking ''gentleness, moderation and humility'' (p. 132). Addressing a public meeting in Banaras he said: ''. . . religion is not a subject to be understood by the intellect but one that is accepted by the heart. . . . I neither wish to force anyone nor do I wish to quarrel with anyone. None should be afraid of me. I can do no harm nor evil to sanatana dharma. I am also a follower of the same sanatana dharma that you profess'' (p. 268).

In thus accepting by the heart a given situation as also the need to change it and to change it through common consent, he found the most valuable support from women, who ''were spiritually superior to men'' (p. 123) and who had greater capacity for sacrifice, suffering and patience and thus were more able and willing to safeguard religion (p. 113). A mother was inclined to shower special affection on a dull, stupid and crippled child (p. 114). Women were more ready to accept his plea: ''Sinners we are all to a greater or less extent, and every one of our spiritual books—*Gita*, *Bhagavata*, and Tulsi *Ramayana*—declares in no uncertain terms that whoever seeks refuge in Him, whoever takes His name, shall be free from sin. That covenant is for all mankind'' (p. 278). Indeed the *Gita* was not only his Mother, but the universal Mother (pp. 271-2). Assuming this mother-like role of serving the untouchables without disrupting society, Gandhiji described the predicament of the reformer thus: ''Dr. Ambedkar

is . . . an intelligent . . . lawyer . . . . The magnitude of his sacrifice is great. . . . He leads a simple life. . . . But what is the condition of even a man like him in our society today? . . . Whose shame is this? How can one who has been put to such treatment be won over? At the same time we have to touch the heart of Shankaracharya. Those two are poles apart. How can they be brought together? We stand between these two. . . . we have to win over both of them with our sacrifice and tolerance'' (p. 166-7).

With Gandhiji sacrifice often meant taking on himself vicarious responsibility for the lapses of his close associates. His well-tried method for communicating to vast masses of people the redemptive agony of his mother-heart was a fast. As he wrote to Vallabhbhai Patel (p. 168) and said again more emphatically to the Sind journalists: ''The only language they understand is the language of the heart, and fasting when it is utterly unselfish is the language of the heart'' (p. 171). The statement of July 10, 1934, described the proposed fast as the least penance owed to Pandit Lalnath and those sanatanists whom he represented and also a warning to his own supporters in the movement ''that they must approach it with clean hands and hearts free from untruth and violence in thought, word and deed'' (pp. 159-60). In a statement issued on August 6, a day before the fast, Gandhiji widened the appeal of the fast to cover Congressmen and spoke out against the acrimony and corruption in Congress elections, and said: ''Though my fast has nothing to do with these unclean methods, how I wish Congress workers will detect my anguish in the words I have written and lighten it during the purification week by resorting to self-introspection and resolving to make the Congress an organization in keeping with its creed . . .'' (pp. 297-8). This same call for ''the purification of many'', the warning against the two enemies, untruth and impurity, formed the main theme of the speech at the prayer meeting on the commencement of the fast. In an interview to the Press, he again stressed ''the prime necessity of achieving internal purity'' not only for Harijan workers but for the Congress, a powerful national organization, which would ''perish unless it is sustained by the internal purity of those who compose that organization'' (p. 316).

Gandhiji's letters to Jawaharlal Nehru are marked by complete candour, as was only natural between a senior and a junior colleague who understood each other perfectly and shouldered a common responsibility. When Jawaharlal was released by the Government owing to Kamala Nehru's illness, Gandhiji advised him not to make any political pronouncement, adding, ''If my

argument appeals to your reason, you will announce your self-restraint in a fitting manner'' (p. 303). On certain remarks of Jawaharlal Nehru on the trust for Anand Bhawan, Gandhiji said: ''Your attitude betrays anger. . . . I would ask you not to take this matter so personally as you have done. . . . Let the nation be the custodian of Father's memory and you only as one of the nation'' (p. 319). With persons with whom he enjoyed a sense of mutual belonging, he recognized an occasional right to demand obedience without carrying conviction. For example, he wrote to Narandas Gandhi: ''You should follow my advice only if it appeals to your reason, or when I ask you to follow my instructions even if they do not appeal to your reason'' (p. 378).

In a misunderstanding that arose in the Tyabji family when Raihana, ''the strange mystic'', misunderstood ''the loving prejudices'' of her parents, he reminded the girl, ''Remember that you will not be you but for the training they gave you and the affection with which they have surrounded you . . .'' (pp. 410-1). At the same time he wrote to the father, Abbas Tyabji, ''. . . I would either let her have her way ungrudgingly and joyously or give her a separate house and maintenance and let her have her way'' (p. 437). The same faith in the wisdom of each individual following his or her own path of growth prompted Gandhiji to advise Margarete Spiegel: ''You should strive to be good according to the gifts God has given you. No two persons are alike in the world'' (p. 53). Explaining how we are continually growing, he said in a letter to Premabehn Kantak: ''Every day is one's birthday. We are born every day and we die every day and are born again'' (p. 268).

CWMG - C

PREFACE

The chain of events which had started with Gandhiji's fast of September 1932 (Vol. LI) culminated, in the period covered in this volume (September 16 to December 15, 1934), in his retiring from active leadership of the Indian National Congress and setting up, under the auspices of the Congress, the All-India Village Industries Association to work for "the economic, moral and hygienic uplift" (p. 304) of the rural population. Gandhiji's intention to retire was announced in a Press statement issued on September 17 but the final decision was postponed, at the suggestion of some members of the Working Committee and the Parliamentary Board, till after the ensuing session of the Congress in October. In the statement Gandhiji also announced a series of amendments to the Congress constitution which he intended to propose at the session. Congressmen's reactions to them in the intervening period would, he thought, enable him to test the accuracy or otherwise of his impression that he was "a hindrance rather than a help to the natural growth of the Congress, that . . . the Congress had degenerated into an organization dominated by my one personality and that in it there was no free play of reason" (p. 4). The suggested amendments were not well received and in a second statement (pp. 174-84) issued on October 15, therefore, Gandhiji announced his final decision to retire immediately after the closing of the session, which was scheduled to start on October 23. His action, Gandhiji was at pains to emphasize later, was not prompted by any feeling of disgust (p. 261). He shared "no feeling of defeat", he told the Subjects Committee. "I go with your blessing in search of greater power to discover means whereby I can give you the faith that is in me" (pp. 228-9).

The "growing and vital difference of outlook between many Congressmen" and himself (p. 4), which Gandhiji set out in detail in the statement of September 17, related both to the content of swaraj and the means of achieving it. It sprang from a basic difference in their conceptions of politics. Whereas the vast majority of Congressmen were interested only in winning political freedom for the country, for Gandhiji politics meant the whole "science of citizenship" and included "advancement of humanity along all lines, social, moral, economic", and not only 'political' in the conventional sense of the word. It had been his "earnest endea-

vour to restore the meaning of politics to its root'' and hence the main thrust of the Congress programme had been ''progressively social, moral and economic'' (p. 264). It included eradication of untouchability, promotion of Hindu-Muslim unity, total prohibition, hand-spinning with khadi and ''cent per cent swadeshi in the sense of the revival of village industries'' and general reorganization of seven lakhs of villages, and these, Gandhiji said, ''ought to give all satisfaction that one's love of one's country may demand'' (p. 9). He had not insisted on the carrying out of this wider programme as ''a condition precedent to launching out any civil disobedience'' because, he explained, he had been ''overborne by the argument that the nation would take up these things in the course of civil disobedience.'' That expectation had not been realized (p. 267). Congressmen had shown little enthusiasm even for hand-spinning and khadi, which Gandhiji had put in the forefront of the programme. The spinning-wheel was, according to Gandhiji, ''an emblem of human dignity and equality'' as well as ''the nation's second lung''. Likewise, the khadi clause in the Congress constitution represented a ''living link between the Congress and the millions whom it has . . . sought to represent . . . .'' But hand-spinning ''by the Congress intelligentsia'' had ''all but disappeared'' and ''a substantial majority of Congressmen'' had ''no living faith'' in the khadi clause (pp. 4-5).

The difference between Gandhiji and Congressmen in regard to means was equally fundamental. Gandhiji believed that ''means and end are convertible terms and that, therefore, where the means are various and even contradictory the end must be different and even contradictory''. Congressmen, on the other hand, believed ''that end justifies means whatever they may be'' (p. 9). This difference of approach was reflected in the attitude towards non-violence. As Gandhiji put it: ''After 14 years of trial it still remains a policy with the majority of Congressmen whereas it is a fundamental creed with me'' (p. 6). Because of this lack of faith on Congressmen's part in non-violence as a creed, the civil disobedience movement had failed to make any impact either on the Government or on the terrorists. ''If we were non-violent through and through'', Gandhiji argued, ''our non-violence would have been self-evident'' (p. 7).

These differences of outlook prevented Congressmen from appreciating the correctness of the steps Gandhiji had taken in the political field since his fast of September 1932. Whereas for Gandhiji the movement against untouchability was ''a deeply religious and moral issue'', many Congressmen thought that ''it

was a profound error'' for him ''to have disturbed the course of the civil resistance struggle by taking up the question in the manner and at the time'' he did (p. 6). Similarly, many Congressmen disapproved of the suspension, first, of mass civil disobedience in July 1933 (Vol. LV) and then of individual civil disobedience in April 1934 (Vol. LVII), and some of Gandhiji's best colleagues felt oppressed by the support he gave to the formation of a Parliamentary Party within the Congress (p. 5). Gandhiji had found it ''increasingly difficult . . . to carry the reason of fellow Congressmen'' with him on those issues, and their ''voting without an intelligent belief in these resolutions'' oppressed Gandhiji as much as it oppressed the Congressmen themselves. ''They and I must be free from this oppression'', he said, ''if we are all to grow in pursuit of what we believe to be the common goal'' (p. 7). Gandhiji claimed to be ''a born democrat'' and it was, therefore, ''a humiliating revelation'' to him that many ''despaired of resisting'' him. Similarly, though he had fundamental differences with the Socialists in regard to their programme, he would not, he said, ''by reason of the moral pressure I may be able to exert suppress the spread'' of their ideas or ''interfere with the free expression of those ideas however distasteful some of them may be to me'' (p. 6).

Instead of remaining in the Congress and fighting from within for his ideas, Gandhiji chose ''the path of surrender'' as being ''in conformity with ahimsa'' (p. 57), as he had done once before in 1925 when he had handed over control of the Congress to Motilal Nehru and the Swarajya Party led by him (Vol. XXVIII). Out of the Congress, he could carry on his experiment in ''non-violence as a means of achieving the right thing including freedom'' in ''complete detachment'' and with ''absolute freedom of action.'' Only through non-violence could he conduct his search for truth, which was the supreme concern of his life. '' 'Satya', in truth, is my God'', he declared, and the freedom of India as of the whole world was included in that search for God in the form of Truth (p. 8).

The fight against untouchability which started in September 1932 was but a part of this search for truth (p. 44), a search which he could not suspend ''for anything in this world or another'' (p. 8). And now, the Harijan tour he had recently concluded had revealed to him that ''the campaign against untouchability'' implied ''ever so much more than the eradication of ceremonial untouchability of those who are labelled untouchables.'' For the city-dweller, the villages had become untouchable (p. 414). Cities had ''developed out of ruin to villages'' and could not ''escape their responsibility for the growing pauperism of the dumb

millions . . .'' (p 179). City-dwellers must now ''render unto the villagers what is due to them'' (p. 410). Their ''involuntary and voluntary idleness made them a perpetual prey of exploiters . . .'' and it made no difference to them whether ''the exploiter was from outside or from the Indian cities. . . .'' In either case, Gandhiji said, ''they would have no swaraj'' (p. 408). Gandhiji, therefore, felt the necessity of setting up ''a body that would make an honest attempt to return to the villagers what had ''been cruelly and thoughtlessly snatched away from them by the city-dwellers'' (p. 355). Having, accordingly, persuaded the Congress at its annual session to authorize the formation of the All-India Village Industries Association as ''part of the activities of the Congress'' (p. 220), Gandhiji used all his superb organizing ability to start it working and spread through it a new conception of swaraj for the millions. From now on, this vision of an economically and morally regenerated rural India (to which he had given tentative expression in *Hind Swaraj*) claimed more and more of Gandhiji's attention and energy, as he strove till the last day of his life to make it a practical reality.

Gandhiji knew well enough that the rejuvenation ''of villages in the face of the current fashion of highly developed mechanization and centralization is no easy job'' (p. 386). Even some of those who were deeply attached to him could not share his faith. V.S. Srinivasa Sastri spoke for many of them when, in reply to a letter from Gandhiji seeking his co-operation ''at some point of my many activities'' (p. 362), he wrote: ''. . . you appear to be opening the first campaign of an endless and quixotic war against modern civilization . . . you would, if you could, turn it back on the course it has pursued for several millennia'' (p. 363). In a letter to M. Visvesvarayya, the distinguished engineer-Diwan of the former State of Mysore who was an ardent advocate of mechanization, Gandhiji wrote: ''We are too many and we have so many idle hours at our disposal that it would be suicidal to make use of mechanical power and allow human power to run to waste'' (p. 388). With the insight of a genius, Gandhiji thus raised the central issue in the debate over the economic development of an over-populated country like India: labour-intensive *versus* capital-intensive plans of development. Gandhiji was no dogmatist, however, and did not rule out heavy industries altogether. In another letter to Visvesvarayya, he admitted that ''the heavy industries cannot be organized without power-driven machinery'', and added: ''I can have no quarrel with such use of machinery'' (p. 435). At a meeting of the Subjects Committee during the Con-

gress session he put the matter in a nutshell: "We do want machines but do not wish to become their slaves. We should make the machine our slave. 'Our slave' means slave not of the rich but of the poor" (p. 225).

At the heart of the economic problem lay a fundamental moral issue, the individual in relation to his economic activity. Gandhiji refused to share the assumption of "the economic man" which was the first premise of all orthodox economic theory. "The aim of our khadi organizations", he told a group of khadi workers, "is to attain not merely *preya* but *shreya* for the people", not merely material comfort but moral well-being. The economics of khadi, he said, was based on the benevolence "which is inherent in human nature" and recognized the fact that the spinner "is not a lifeless machine but a human being." "Her yarn must be dear to us, for it has been sanctified by her honest labour. A mill product . . . cannot bring us this spiritual satisfaction" (pp. 205-6). Gandhiji interpreted the ancient Indian ideal of the varna system in terms of such a society devoted to the pursuit of *shreya.* "Fulfilment of the law", Gandhiji contended, "would make life livable, would spread peace and content, end all clashes and conflicts, put an end to starvation and pauperization, solve the problem of population and even end disease and suffering" (p. 64). Of all the four classes, the Shudra who obeyed this law and performed "body-labour in a spirit of service and duty" was, according to Gandhiji, "worthy of the world's homage"; he was "lord of all" because he was "the greatest servant" (p. 66). A willing and dutiful observance of the system, Gandhiji asserted, would be "true socialism". It was "equality of the spirit, without which no other equality is possible" (p. 67). "Under such dispensation," he says, "all property will he held by its respective holders in trust for the community" (p. 66). This idea of trusteeship was, henceforward, to become a recurring theme in Gandhiji's writings and utterances on the subject of the economic reconstruction of India. It was based on his faith in human nature and its capacity for moral growth. Trusteeship might be a legal fiction, Gandhiji told Nirmal Kumar Bose, but "if people meditate over it constantly and try to act up to it, then life on earth would be governed far more by love than it is at present" (p. 318). While the Socialists, according to Nirmal Kumar Bose, believed that "men live more by habit than by will", Gandhiji held that, though "man actually lives by habit", "it is better for him to live by the exercise of will" and that "men are capable of developing their will to an extent that will reduce exploitation to a

minimum." Concentration of power in the hands of the State would destroy this moral potential of man. "I look upon an increase of the power of the State with the greatest fear," Gandhiji said, "because although while apparently doing good by minimizing exploitation, it does the greatest harm to mankind by destroying individuality, which lies at the root of all progress" (p. 319). State ownership was objectionable, in Gandhiji's eyes, "on the ground of violence" also, for, he argued, "if the State suppressed capitalism by violence, it will be caught in the coils of violence itself. . . . The individual has a soul, but as the State is a soulless machine, it can never be weaned from violence to which it owes its very existence" (p. 318).

Gandhiji's faith in the possibility of moral growth in man rested, in the last analysis, on his faith in the power of truth and non-violence. As he said to Nirmal Kumar Bose, "Every expression of truth has in it the seeds of propagation, even as the sun cannot hide its light" (p. 320). And along with truth, non-violence was "the activest force in the world" (p. 42). Truth, he told a correspondent, "is always beautiful." It was the whole of art. "Art divorced from truth is no art, and beauty divorced from truth is utter ugliness" (p. 328). In human relationships, too, Gandhiji valued truth above everything else. Writing to an inmate of the Ashram, he says: "I regard untruth to be a greater sin than sexual immorality" (p. 59). To V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, he wrote: "Your truthfulness is far more precious for me than your mere co-operation in my activities" (p. 362). On a deeper level in his own life, Gandhiji's concern for truthfulness permitted spontaneous growth in his views and ideas, unfettered by artificial consistency. "I am a votary of truth", he says in the introduction to *Varnavyavastha*, "and I must say what I feel and think at a given moment on the question, without regard to what I may have said before on it. . . . I . . . follow to the best of my ability what seems to be the truth at a given time" (pp. 61-2). Gandhiji's faith in non-violence is seen at its best in his reactions to the withdrawal of the Temple-entry Bill in the Legislative Assembly by its mover. The sanatanists were jubilant. "We must not mind their joy", Gandhiji advised the reformers. "Only yesterday we were what they are today." Quoting from Æ's *Interpreters* a passage on the "magical transforming power" of both love and hate, he said: "Love is the only thing that can transform the sanatanists." And "let us realize", he added, "that in their victory lies their defeat; in our humiliation lies our victory" (p. 164). Commenting on the hard-heartedness of "the fanatic Hindus" in a

village in Gujarat in their treatment of Harijans, Gandhiji asks: "How to overcome such utter ignorance? Ahimsa seems defeated and love seems to dry up." But he reminds the readers, ahimsa "is true ahimsa only if it keeps shining even in the midst of darkness all around. The remedy for *himsa* is ahimsa, for hatred love and for untruth truth, as the remedy for cold is sunshine" (p. 69).

Gandhiji was exercising similar forbearance in the political sphere, too. On his advice, civil disobedience had been suspended and the Congress had resolved, "in furtherance of the spirit of non-violence, to submit to repressive laws" in so far as it was "humanly possible to do so" (p. 436). But the repression went on unabated. Gandhiji was determined "to live down these irritations . . ." That appeared to him "just now the best form of resistance . . ." (pp. 275-6). His "power of endurance", however, Gandhiji told an English friend, "is being tested beyond my capacity" (p. 436). The Government had refused to let him visit the Frontier Province, though he had assured the Viceroy that his only "object . . . is to be with its people, to know them at first hand and to understand how far the teaching of non-violence by Khan Saheb Abdul Ghaffar Khan has permeated his followers" (p. 348). He endeavoured "to avoid every occasion for civil disobedience of authority, in so far as it is humanly possible to do so." "If suspicion of my motive is the cause of refusal," he said, "I shall try to disarm the suspicion" (p. 443). In this struggle to exercise the utmost patience in face of the calculated affronts of the Government, Gandhiji's ahimsa seems to be attaining a new capacity which was to assume almost superhuman proportion in a few years when he was called upon to swallow the poison of communal strife.

Among the letters in this volume are some to Harilal and one to Ramdas, which reveal the father's heart in Gandhiji. After more than twenty years of estrangement from him, Harilal had returned and was promising to turn over a new leaf in his life. Gandhiji was greatly pleased. "If", he wrote to Harilal, "there has really been a change of heart in you such as you describe, . . . I will . . . completely forget your past" (p. 27). "If the change . . . endures," he said in another letter, "a painful episode in my life would end and I would be extremely happy in this the last stage of my life." "I can't stop thinking about you all the time", Gandhiji confessed. "Maybe, father's love doesn't fall away from even a devotee of Mother *Gita*, or perhaps the *Gita* teaches that I should be thus concerned with you." But, as always,

for Gandhiji the dictates of dharma came before the ties of affection and love. "I wish to help you as much as I can", he told Harilal, "consistently with my dharma" (pp. 187-8). He was so much exercised over the problem that one day he woke up at 2.30 and, he told Harilal, "started thinking about my dharma towards you." "Let there be this understanding between you and me", he said. "If at any time you break your word to me or if it is proved that you have deceived me, I should fast for at least seven days" (pp. 110-1). In the letter to Ramdas, Gandhiji explains how his love for Kasturba and for the sons had been a protecting force in his striving for purity of mind. "I know", he said, "that I have never withheld my soul from you brothers. I strove to remain pure for your sakes even when I did not do that for anybody else." Referring to the deficiency in their formal education, which was an "unavoidable" result of "the new experiments" Gandhiji "had embarked upon", he confessed: ". . . in the measure that you feel discontented on that account, I also feel unhappy. If you and your brothers did not feel the deficiency, I would count myself blessed as a father" (p. 145).

The volume offers numerous illustrations of the exacting standards in public and private life that Gandhiji held up for co-workers. Acting on the principle that a "mistake must be rectified when it is realized" (p. 420), Gandhiji had advised Kaka Kalelkar to resign as Trustee of the Gujarat Vidyapith for having stated in a letter to the Collector of Ahmedabad, without consulting the other Trustees before writing the letter, that the Trustees of the Vidyapith desired to gift the books in the Vidyapith library to the Ahmedabad Municipality. Kalelkar's resignation led to serious misunderstanding among many co-workers and was attributed to Vallabhbhai's opposition to him; Kakasaheb even decided to leave Gujarat. Gandhiji, however, felt that "since Vallabhbhai's name has been connected with Kaka's desire to leave Gujarat and his good name has suffered, it has become all the more Kaka's duty not to leave Gujarat" (p. 60). He was also very much distressed when he heard that Jamnalal Bajaj was thinking of buying a cloth mill and wrote to him an urgent letter dissuading him from such a course. "If you wish to earn more money", he said, "so that you may spend it for public good, we shall do without such contribution" (p. 85). He was happy to observe, Gandhiji said in a second letter, that Mrs. Bajaj and the children were upset by "the fear of that tiger" and was glad to hear that Jamnalal had "saved" himself "from the unhappy business of buying a mill" (p. 131). To another co-worker Gandhiji wrote: "You know

how particular I am about prompt attention to all matters referring to account-keeping" (p. 45). "A trustee", he advised S. Ganesan, "has to take the role of a miser in regard to his trust" (p. 314). Criticizing "a notice in praise of khadi" which appeared in a newspaper for "its clumsy and inadequate presentation" of the case for khadi, Gandhiji said: ". . . this comes from want of exactness due to inadequate appreciation of truth" (pp. 127 and 129). Advising Premabehn Kantak not to widen the field of her work and to see that it struck deep root, Gandhiji complained that we were "content to sow and reap grass" in the field of service as on the land. If they avoided this mistake, he suggested, "the fruit-trees which grow will give shade and generation after generation will eat the fruits" (p. 132).

Consistently with his ideal that if "men and women can never live together without getting disturbed by sex attractions, their *brahmacharya* is not *brahmacharya*", Gandhiji saw no harm in men helping in running women's institutions. "There must be some men who have something of the woman too in them" (p. 57). Freedom of association between boys and girls was, Gandhiji told another correspondent, "implied in our experiment" which was based on the truth "that the *atman* is its own friend or enemy." This experiment in freedom of association between men and women in the field of public service was part of Gandhiji's search for truth, and he was confident that if "we . . . don't give up our worship of truth, it will be well with us in the end" (p. 59). He was fully aware of the difficulties of the search. The "expedition in search of God or Truth", he said in another context, "is infinitely more than numberless Himalayan expeditions", but, for that very reason, "much more interesting" (p. 44).

Writing to a follower of Sri Aurobindo, Gandhiji suggests that Sri Aurobindo's path and his own might appear different but were not really so, and asks: "How innumerable are the lines which lead from the circumference of a circle to its centre?" (p. 75)

CWMG - C

PREFACE

Two days before the present volume (December 16, 1934 to April 24, 1935) opens, the formation had been announced at Wardha of the All-India Village Industries Association, with J. C. Kumarappa as Organizer and Secretary. This was done in pursuance of a resolution passed by the Congress at its Bombay session held in late October. The same session set the seal on Gandhiji's long-deliberated decision to leave the Congress, for the reasons enumerated in the preceding volume.

The two events are interrelated and mark a development in Gandhiji's leadership of the national struggle that appeared to be wholly logical, even inevitable, at that juncture. The country had been placed under a reign of repressive laws, which Gandhiji thought had seldom been "equalled in British Indian history". Justifying this assessment, Gandhiji said: "I have a vivid memory of Jallianwala Bagh. I have read Kaye and Malleson's volumes on the Sepoy Revolt, as it has been called, of 1857. . . . Then, it was the naked sword. The repression represents the gloved fist, but deadlier on that account" (pp. 49-50). "The policy has now been definitely adopted," he noted, "of never conceding to the popular demand. . . . They are now doing what they have never dared before. They have evolved a new philosophy" (pp. 377-8). The country was in no condition to offer resistance to this all-out repression. Political spirits were low and the mood was one of defeatism, if not of despair. But Gandhiji did not lose hope. Writing to Mrs. Lindsay, he said, "We have very difficult times here in every way," but he knew "that winter must be followed by summer" (p. 51). Gandhiji's hope sprang from his faith in ahimsa. "There is no limit," he wrote to Premabehn Kantak, "to the power of ahimsa, as there is none to that of the votary of ahimsa" (p. 387). But his ahimsa, Gandhiji felt, was on trial. "If I have it in me," he wrote to Agatha Harrison, "it must be self-luminous even as the sun" (p. 277). He had, therefore, as he explained to an English correspondent, retired from the Congress because, among other reasons, he wanted "to impose silence upon myself . . . about the political measures of the Government" and "to explore the yet hidden possibilities of non-violence" (p. 50). The village reconstruction programme which Gandhiji had undertaken through the All-India Village Indus-

tries Association was planned in this mood. It had been, he explained, "deliberately made non-political and autonomous" and had "no further aim than that of bringing about the economic, physical and moral betterment of the villagers" (p. 18).

The programme was to take up and develop "as many industries as are necessary for the moral and material growth of village life" (p. 103). They included spinning and weaving, tanning, oil-pressing, soap-making, bee-keeping, hand-husking of rice and hand-grinding of wheat, *gur*-making, paper-making, and so on. As was his wont, Gandhiji did not rest content with laying down a general outline of the programme for the A.I.V.I.A., but went into the minutest detail in planning its execution. He called upon everyone engaged in village uplift work to "examine all the articles of food, clothing and other things that he uses from day to day and replace foreign makes or city makes by those produced by the villagers in their homes or fields with the simple inexpensive tools they can easily handle and mend" (p. 109). The aim here was not, as some well-meaning critics feared, to flood India with cottage-made goods that would have no buyers. As Gandhiji said: "This is no programme of preparing shoddy goods in the villages and forcing them on unwilling buyers. There is to be no competition, foredoomed to failure, with foreign or swadeshi corresponding articles. The villagers are to be their own buyers. They will primarily consume what they produce. For they are ninety per cent of the population" (p. 415). What was thus intended was to free the villages from dependence on cities and from the tyranny of centralized production, thus fostering economic autarky that would provide a reliable infra-structure for swaraj. For Gandhiji was not at all sure that "a vast country like India, with her millions of people . . . can afford to have large-scale industries . . . Large-scale, centralized industries in India . . . must mean starvation of millions . . ." (p. 104).

Gandhiji did not confine himself only to the economic well-being of the rural population. The programme also "aimed at promoting the health and vigour of the villagers" (p. 268). As he went to work, therefore, a host of ancillary questions, not raised before very definitively, immediately became important to him. In the matter of food-stuffs, for instance, it had long been suspected that mill-produced or mill-processed articles, especially polished rice, fine-ground flour and crystal sugar, were injurious to health. Gandhiji took upon himself the task of proving that the suspicion was justified. In the case of rice espe-

cially, Gandhiji was very particular. He invited medical men, biochemists and scientific workers to investigate and report on what happened to rice when it was processed and polished in the mills. Their verdict was that, in polishing, rice lost vitamin B and protein along with the pericarp. Gandhiji, in a series of articles in *Harijan*, discussed the matter, advocating the husking of rice by grinding it in wooden querns, so as to make sure that the entire grain was left intact including the pericarp. When the difficulty was raised that such rice was difficult to digest, he pointed out that that was so because it was more nutritious. He also suggested a way of cooking rice, based on his experience as a "practised cook"—soaking it for at least three hours and then putting it into boiling water, the cooking to continue till it became one solid mass (pp. 178, 231, 258, 275 and 311).

The next item he took up for analysis was milk: the question being whether cow's milk was in any way different from buffalo's milk from the point of view of nutrition. He prepared a questionnaire and sent it for opinion to medical experts. Summing up their opinion, Gandhiji said: " . . . the opinions . . . of eminent medical men and dairy experts sufficiently prove the superiority of cow's milk over buffalo's" (p. 250). Similarly, in the case of *gur* the verdict was that it was 33 per cent more nutritious than sugar (p. 33). In addition to unpolished rice, hand-ground wheat and *gur*, Gandhiji suggested inclusion in the menu of uncooked green leaves of certain vegetables and even wrote a separate article on the subject (pp. 229-30).

Gandhiji also laid great stress on village sanitation. He elaborated methods for the disposal of human excreta. Citing Poore and Fowler, he recommended the digging of trenches "six inches wide and a foot deep" (p. 299), which would serve as lavatories. In this way, he asserted, human faeces could be turned into rich manure for the soil. He quoted Brultini to the effect that "nitrogen derived from the 282,000 residents of Delhi is sufficient to fertilize a minimum of 10,000 and a maximum of 95,000 acres" (p. 303). "If we all become scavengers," he said, "we would know how to treat ourselves and how to turn what today is poison into rich food for plant life" (p. 303). To set an example he, along with his closest co-workers, took up the task of cleaning up Sindi, a village near Wardha (p. 301).

The possibilities inherent in a successful implementation of such a comprehensive scheme of economic and social reorganization were immense. As Gandhiji put it: " . . . it will give

hope to the millions of villagers; it will turn the city-dwellers, who are today their exploiters, into real helpers and servants; it will establish a living link between the intelligentsia and the illiterate masses; it will be instrumental in abolishing all distinctions between man and man, and it will turn the villagers from being mere creators of raw produce, which they have practically become, into self-sustained units . . .'' (p. 17). For obvious reasons, the programme did not please the Government. It saw in it nothing but subversive possibilities and promptly issued a confidential circular instructing authorities everywhere to keep a watch on the work of the A.I.V.I.A. At the same time it proposed allotment of one crore rupees to the provinces ''for the economic development and improvement of the rural areas in order to forestall Congress activities''. Said Gandhiji: ''I should be very glad if the Government were to take the wind out of my sails. Much of the work that I propose doing is what Government ought to do. Let Government do whatever they can do, only let not anything be superimposed on the people'' (p. 72).

Some well-meaning friends and critics, too, considered Gandhiji's attempt to revitalize India's village life as quixotic. Evidently in their estimation laws of economics were not subject to human wishes. Gandhiji did not agree. He said: ''The principles of economics are not, like the principles of mathematics . . . immutable, and for all times and climes. . . . A country which produces no food-stuffs and produces only minerals must have different economics from that which produces food-stuffs but has no mineral resources. . . . India was once the land of gold. . . . even now we can regain that proud position'' (pp. 255-6). Then again Gandhiji did not share the view that the laws of economics were amoral. He said: ''Economic laws like many others appear to be of two kinds, good and bad. Good laws should be good for all'' (p. 30). Similarly when Srinivasa Sastri chided Gandhiji for trying, if he could, to turn civilization ''back on the course it has pursued for some millennia'', Gandhiji wrote back: ''If I could do it, I would most assuredly destroy or radically change much that goes under the name of modern civilization. . . . But the attempt to revive and encourage the remunerative village industries is not part of such an attempt . . .'' (pp. 54-5). Gandhiji's aim just then was ''to change the mentality of the people . . . to turn their mind in favour of indigenous industries'' (p. 56), and he knew that even this limited aim required prolonged and

patient effort. But, as he said in another context, "The history of man and woman is still in the making. What are a thousand or even a million years in the limitless cycle of time?" (p. 94)

Then there were some workers who took exception to the way in which the columns of *Harijan* were being occupied with the development of the village industries scheme, instead of being exclusively devoted to the anti-untouchability campaign. Gandhiji's explanation was: "Any problem connected with the welfare of villages as a whole must be intimately related to the Harijans, who represent over a sixth part of India's population. If villages get good rice and flour, Harijans will benefit by the change as much as the rest of the population. But there is a special sense in which Harijans will benefit. Tanning and the whole of the raw hide work is their monopoly, and economically this will occupy perhaps the best part of the new scheme" (p. 15).

Apart from the practical benefits to the masses, the programme offered to the workers an opportunity of escaping from the inertia and ennui into which they had fallen. Gandhiji was inviting them to become converted to the religion of humanity in whose pursuit, as he declared in his brief contribution to Radhakrishnan's *Contemporary Indian Philosophy*, " . . . one has to lose oneself in continuous and continuing service of all life." "Realization of Truth," he added, "is impossible without a complete merging of oneself in and identification with this limitless ocean of life." For him, personally, such social service was a spiritual necessity; there was "no happiness on earth beyond or apart from it" (p. 106). For Gandhiji, it would seem, this necessity arose from no abstract metaphysical ideas about God and one's duty to God, but from his living concern for the lot of the poor and the downtrodden, which allowed him no rest, though he had had no rest for several years. "How can one have rest," he asked, "with a raging fire within?" (p. 46)

Gandhiji's views on all social, political and economic questions had their root in his view of the moral nature of man and he was uncompromising in his opposition to any institution or practice which seemed to him to deny that nature. This is particularly evident in his attitude on the question of birth-control, which was now becoming an important subject of public discussion. Gandhiji was frank and forthright in his expression of opposition to the use of contraceptives. He feared that, as their use spread, "Men and women will be living for sex

alone.'' Under well-regulated conditions, he believed, self-control was possible for ordinary men and women. ''Contraceptives,'' he said, ''are really for the educated people,'' whom he called the ''sick'' of humanity because ''their food and drink and the exceedingly artificial life that they are leading have made them weak-willed and slaves to their passions'' (pp. 67-8). Man did not live by the same law as the other animals did. ''The lion in his majesty,'' as Gandhiji vividly put it, ''is a noble creature and he has a perfect right to eat me up, but I have none to develop paws and pounce upon you.'' But man was easily tempted to choose the downward path and live like the brute, especially when that path was ''presented to him in a beautiful garb'', as he believed was being done by the advocates of contraceptives. Gandhiji did not accept the argument, either, that the use of contraceptives was necessary for the protection of woman on the ground that she was the victim of man's sexual aggression. ''There is no *poor* woman,'' he said. ''Poor woman is mightier than man . . . '' (pp. 95-6). ''She should,'' therefore, ''realize her majesty and train herself to say 'No' when she means it'' (p. 67). While Gandhiji's views on village-oriented economy have won gradual recognition from professional economists, the moral foundation of those views has not been fully appreciated and his views on birth-control, therefore, which rest on the same foundation, have found few supporters.

During the entire period covered in this volume, except for a month spent in Delhi, Gandhiji remained at Wardha and for a month he was observing silence, during which time he attended to correspondence. This was voluminous. Of the 643 items reproduced here, no less than 434 are letters. These were written at all hours, to all kinds of people and dealt with all kinds of problems. They were written on hand-made paper, in village-made ink and with a reed pen, as Gandhiji sometimes let the addressees know (pp. 9, 14, 30 and 82). Those addressed to his closest co-workers and relatives provided guidance and advice. To Manilal Gandhi he said: ''One should learn non-violent language for criticism. You or anyone else writing it could have expressed the same thing in a sweet language'' (p. 265). And to Amrit Kaur: ''It is a thousand times better to be deceived for having trusted than to be able to boast of never having been deceived by having been strict and suspicious'' (p. 358). To some others he repeated his opinions on social questions. He told one correspondent: ''I am

for the abolition of all castes as they exist today. . . . but I am not in favour of abolition of varnashramadharma which to me is the antithesis of caste'' (p. 138). Expounding his idea of prayer to Premabehn Kantak, to whom he wrote at length, he said: ''If a drop of water separated from the sea may not pray to the sea, to whom else may it pray? But does the sea have to do anything to answer the prayer? Prayer is the anguished cry of one who cannot bear separation. The embodied soul cannot help uttering such a cry'' (p. 164).

Commenting on his seeming inactivity, he assured a correspondent, ''I am wide awake even when I am asleep. My sleep is *not* a forgetting, it is a renovating'' (p. 403).

How Gandhiji, like a good *advaitin*, regarded *jnana* as the ultimate value and *karma* as the means to its realization, is clearly seen in his dictum on rebirth: ''For a belief in rebirth, it is necessary to believe in the existence of 'I'. If I do not exist and God alone exists, then who is to be reborn and how? This realization itself is rebirth, isn't it? The possibility of rebirth is there only as long as the 'I' exists. When you truly believe . . . that 'God alone exists', then there is no rebirth for you. The man who becomes one with God is liberated'' (p. 159). On the human plane, however, Gandhiji did accept the duality of good and evil. ''Do you believe in the sun? And if you do, don't you think you must believe in the shadow?''—he asked Mrs. Edith Howe Martyn who had argued that ''the divine and the devilish . . . were much more allied than people imagined'' (p. 96).

CWMG - C

PREFACE

The period covered in this volume (April 25 to September 30, 1935) was a time of lull in the political field. Apart from the Congress Party's efforts in the Central Legislative Assembly to register nationalist opposition to Government measures, there was little public activity. Jawaharlal Nehru was in jail and there had never been "within living memory such unbending attitude on the part of the Government" (p. 21). The suspension of civil disobedience also had contributed to a sense of "despair and depression everywhere" (p. 88). On September 3, however, in response to an urgent appeal by Gandhiji the Government unconditionally released Jawaharlal to enable him to join Kamala Nehru who lay seriously ill in a German sanatorium. This gesture Gandhiji recognized gratefully in a letter to Agatha Harrison " as the one bright spot on the black and mournful surface" (p. 429).

Gandhiji himself had remained unaffected by the surrounding atmosphere of gloom and devoted all his time to village work. He was convinced that, if "we have real love, i.e., ahimsa in us, all will be well" (p. 21). He attached far more importance to developing internal strength than to fighting the Government merely on the political plane. He, therefore, saw no reason for despair when there was "the whole of the constructive programme of work to do" (p. 89). This work was "so taxing and so baffling" that he would if he could "stop all writing and simply bury myself in a village and there work away . . . [in] perfect silence" (p. 369). "The work of the Village Industries Association" had been "going on steadily" for the past several months, but there was "nothing heroic to report" (p. 85). It required dedicated workers, workers who would not run away from difficulties but would face them boldly. "The greatest shortcoming in us all," Gandhiji complained to a coworker, "is the lack of the Kshatriya spirit. We lose heart much too soon" (p. 450).

A particularly difficult condition which Gandhiji laid down for the village workers was that they should earn their livelihood in villages by their own labour. "Return to the villages," he explained, "means a definite voluntary recognition of the duty of bread labour and all it connotes." It was Gandhiji's faith that obedience to "the law of bread labour will bring about a

silent revolution in the structure of society'' by ''substituting the struggle for existence by the struggle for mutual service,'' by replacing the ''law of the brute'' by ''the law of man'' (p. 212). To a worker who had argued that engaging in bread labour would leave the volunteers no time for other useful service to the villagers, Gandhiji replied: ''Intelligent bread labour is any day the highest form of social service. For what can be better than that a man should by his personal labour add to the useful wealth of the country?'' '' 'Being' is 'doing','' he explained. By ''living right all along the line'' workers can ''infect their surroundings whose limit may in course of time be the whole of India and then the Universe''. ''In this service,'' therefore, ''the welfare of one is the welfare of all.'' From a practical point of view also, Gandhiji assured the worker that, as the volunteers acquired proficiency in their work, they would be able to earn their livelihood in much less time than they needed in the beginning and would have energy set free for other service (pp. 126-7).

As the programme of the All-India Village Industries Association began to take shape, Gandhiji came up against the problem of fixing a standard living wage for every class of village artisans. For years he had presented it as an ideal that all labour should be treated as of equal worth and paid for accordingly. He, therefore, urged that the time had come for the All-India Spinners' Association ''to equalize . . . the prices of all labour regulated by it'' (p. 233). Philanthropic institutions, like the A.I.S.A. and the A.I.V.I. A., ''may not follow the commercial maxim of buying in the cheapest market and selling in the dearest.'' The aim of the A.I.V.I.A. was ''not to produce village articles as cheap as possible''; it was ''to provide the workless villagers with work at a living wage''. It sought ''to substitute false and non-human economics by the true and human''. If the payment of a living wage to every artisan appeared impracticable, it must be the Association's ''endeavour to make it practicable''. ''Truth,'' Gandhiji asserted, ''is ever practicable.'' It was only a question of educating public opinion (pp. 250-1). To make the proposal practicable, the workers had themselves first to realize that ''they are but humble units in a vast family of artisans and labourers who are semi-starved or underfed'' (p. 286). Likewise, Gandhiji appealed to the buying public to ''remember that they are the unnamed members of that great trust,'' namely, the A.I.S.A., ''and that the spinners are their wards'' (p. 324). To a socialist friend who was sceptical of the village industries

programme and advocated large-scale industrialization, Gandhiji repeated the reply which he had been giving from the very beginning: "Dead machinery must not be pitted against the millions of living machines represented by the villagers . . ." (p. 416). He was not against machinery as such. He would, he said, "prize every invention of science made for the benefit of all". He even conceded that "heavy machinery for work of public utility which cannot be undertaken by human labour" had "its inevitable place" provided it was "owned by the State and used entirely for the benefit of the people" (p. 187).

For India as a free nation Gandhiji pleaded for a common language which would erect no wall between the masses and the classes and, therefore, advocated the use of Hindi, as spoken by the common people in the North, as the language of inter-provincial intercourse. The question became a living issue after the session of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan at Indore from April 20 to 23 over which Gandhiji himself had presided (Vol. LX). The session had passed what Gandhiji described as "Two Good Resolutions", one of them giving a wide definition of Hindi so as to include "the language written in the Urdu script but understood both by Mussalmans and Hindus". This resolution was designed to show "that Hindi does not supplant the provincial languages, that it supplements them" (p. 31).

Holding that there is no such thing as conversion from one faith to another, Gandhiji emphatically declares, "I could no more think of asking a Christian or a Mussalman or a Parsi or a Jew to change his faith than I would think of changing my own. . . . it takes all my resources in trying to bring my practice to the level of my faith and in preaching the same to my co-religionists . . ." (p. 457). The application of the general doctrine of swadeshi and *svadharma* suggested that everyone's religion is "good enough" for him (p. 456). Gandhiji would, therefore, have the great and rich Christian missions "confine their activities to humanitarian service without the ulterior motive of converting India or at least her unsophisticated villagers to Christianity, and destroying their social superstructure . . . " (p. 458).

The completion of Gandhiji's Borsad visit almost coincided with the occurrence of the Quetta earthquake. The devastation was widespread and formidable. In one sweep some 50,000 persons were buried alive. The appalling tragedy stunned Gandhiji. He could not rush to the people's help as he had done earlier when a similar calamity had struck Bihar in 1934,

because now people like him and Patel were not allowed to enter the area for relief work. He valued Amrit Kaur's service of the poor and wrote to her: "Your letter brought tears to my eyes. God will certainly bless service so conscientiously and selflessly rendered" (p. 156). Gandhiji recognized that there were occasions when practical relief was not enough or possible, when the appalling disaster was a reminder, a call to prayer, to humility, self-purification and inward search (p. 138). Physical calamities were a divine chastisement alike for individuals and for nations and should bring "a sensible man down on his knees" (p. 161). But he hastened to add that true "prayer is not a prelude to inaction. It is a spur to ceaseless, selfless action" (p. 162). He recognized, however, "that the best human endeavour is of no effect if it has not God's blessing behind it" (p. 138).

As in rendering service, so also in living up to one's ideals, Gandhiji recognized the limitations of human effort. He confessed his "fear of snakes, scorpions, lions, tigers, plague-stricken rats and fleas . . ." But life, he said, "is an aspiration. Its mission is to strive after perfection which is self-realization. The ideal must not be lowered because of our weaknesses or imperfections." While, therefore, he permitted and encouraged the wholesale destruction of rats and fleas in plague-stricken Borsad, he reiterated his belief in absolute ahimsa, in the sacredness and kinship of all life. Accepting this contradiction between belief and action, Gandhiji strove to lessen the circle of destruction and promote that of life and love. "Every failure brings me nearer the realization" (pp. 190-1).

This determination neither to compromise nor abandon his ideal stood in the way of Gandhiji's unreserved acceptance of Harilal and approval of his desire to remarry. The prodigal had returned to Gandhiji in August 1934 and given hope of reforming himself. He now wished to remarry. Gandhiji's reaction was: "I feel that if he marries, it will not be proper for me to let him stay with me. I may accept his marriage, but I can't welcome or like it" (p. 37). And when he further began to suspect that Harilal had not reformed himself after all, he made it clear to Narandas Gandhi that the "bond of blood-relationship . . . shouldn't make us violate moral principles. . . . the more intimate the blood-relationship, the stricter should our attitude be. Only thus can we do pure justice" (pp. 206-7). The brief reconciliation between father and son had thus a tragic end. When Harilal disappeared once again, Gandhiji suppressed all his feelings as a father which had made him rejoice at his return

a year earlier and told Narandas: "Leave him to his fate" (p. 242).

Gandhiji's inability to tolerate the lapses and failures of those nearest him is also evident in these remarks to Kantilal Gandhi, Harilal's son: "Is it your fault or mine that you could not recognize the love behind my harsh words? As a votary of ahimsa, I should believe it to be mine, but as a father I would say it was yours" (p. 35). The practice of the ahimsa of his ideal was thus a constant struggle for Gandhiji. "It is not that I do not get angry," he told a questioner. "I do not give vent to anger. I cultivate the quality of patience as angerlessness, and generally speaking I succeed" (p. 45). In the sphere of public life, Gandhiji seems to have succeeded in cultivating patience almost perfectly, for it must have been from his own experience that he advised Professor N. R. Malkani, Secretary of the Harijan Sevak Sangh, "to keep your peace and good humour in the midst of disappointments, censures from the multitude of employers. . . . to bear . . . lashes . . . and still say 'Thank you, Sir' (p. 327).

One decision which Gandhiji took during the period of this volume related to his ideal of a perfect *brahmachari*. Indian tradition frowns on physical contact between a man and any woman other than his wife. But Gandhiji did not, as he said, "believe in a *brahmacharya* which ever requires a wall of protection" and, therefore, saw nothing wrong in his practice of walking with his hands on the shoulders of grown-up girls. But the discovery of a youth in the Ashram who had been taking indefensible liberties with the person of a girl who was under his influence set him thinking and, after careful deliberation, he renounced his practice lest it should be used by anybody as an example in defence of his conduct. "Every act of mine," Gandhiji wrote, explaining his decision, "is scrutinized by thousands of men and women, as I am conducting an experiment requiring ceaseless vigilance. I must avoid doing things which may require a reasoned defence" (p. 437). This was a subject which was to exercise Gandhiji more seriously in future.

Gandhiji's synthesis of *jnana* and *karma* was so highly original that it often baffled men who were accustomed to the dichotomous, either-or way of thinking. To a Vedantin who tried to corner him on the problem of evil in the world, he gave what he called a villager's answer: "If there is good there must also be evil, just as where there is light there is also darkness . . ." Human language, however, was not God's and, therefore: "Before God there is nothing good, nothing evil." Even the Vedanta's

explanation of the world being *maya* "is a babbling of imperfect humanity. . . . I am not going to bother my head about it. . . . I am content with the doing of the task in front of me. I do not worry about the why and wherefore of things." This attitude of mind rested on the faith, which again Gandhiji called "a villager's explanation," that "God is always with the doer of good" (pp. 392-3). But faith, Gandhiji told a correspondent, "is not a thing to grasp, it is a state to grow to. And growth comes from within" (p. 28).

CWMG - C

PREFACE

With the passing of the Government of India Act of 1935 in July, the country was confronted with a new political reality and during the eight months (October 1935 to May 1936) covered by this volume the Congress and the League were debating whether or not to accept the provincial autonomy granted under the Act. Both finally decided to reject it. Gandhiji took no part in this debate, for his heart was in the villages (p. 345), and he continued to devote his time and energy to the village reconstruction programme which he had taken up after his retirement from the Congress in October 1934. It was quite taxing work, and Gandhiji felt obliged to cut down his correspondence in order to avoid a breakdown (p. 24). A breakdown, however, did occur, on December 7, and Gandhiji was prevailed upon to have "perfect rest in bed, attending to no correspondence, writing nothing, dictating nothing" (p. 169). In May of the next year, Gandhiji went for a fortnight's rest to the Nandi Hills in Mysore where, on the very day of his arrival, May 11, he received news of the sudden death of Dr. M. A. Ansari. It was "a stunning blow" (p. 389) to Gandhiji, for whom the association with the late doctor had been "infinitely more than a political friendship" (p. 392). "Few deaths," he wrote to Dr. Zakir Husain, "leave me disconsolate as this has done" (p. 390).

Though Gandhiji kept himself aloof from day-to-day politics and indeed declared that one must forget the political goal in order to realize it (p. 93), he continued to advise and guide the Congress leaders whenever necessary. With Jawaharlal Nehru, particularly, he had developed a relationship of mutual love despite differences which was to play an important part in shaping the course of events in the coming years. Nehru represented the radical temper in the Congress and was impatient with Gandhiji's approach to both political and economic issues (p. 392), but, as Gandhiji told Agatha Harrison, though "the gulf between us as to the outlook upon life has undoubtedly widened, we have never been so near each other in hearts as we perhaps are today" (p. 354). This bond between them was strengthened by Gandhiji's recognition, in the true Vaishnava spirit, of the significance of all sincere roles in the Divine play that is human history. "After all," Gandhiji wrote to Nehru, commenting on the difference of outlook between them after reading Nehru's autobiography in

manuscript, "we are helpless actors in the mighty flow of events, we have to act according to our lights allowing or expecting the events to correct us where we err" (p. 172). Gandhiji knew, moreover, that though Jawaharlal was "extreme in his presentation of his methods," he was "sober in action" (p. 353). He therefore judged that, in the changed political circumstances of the country, Nehru would be best able to provide the necessary leadership and urged him to accept the Presidentship of the Congress. "I am sure," Gandhiji wrote to him on receiving his consent, "that it would solve many difficulties and it is the rightest thing that could have happened for the country" (p. 6).

Developments in the international field, too, may have played a part in changing Gandhiji's relationship to Nehru. The Abyssinian war had broken out, and Nehru alone among the Congress leaders was equipped to grasp the bearing of the international forces on the Indian struggle. Gandhiji was quick to realize this, and he confessed to Jawaharlal: "You have undoubtedly a much greater grasp of the situation than any one of us has, certainly than I can ever hope to have. Therefore you may be able to evolve a dignified formula for national self-expression in speech as well as in action" (pp. 39-40). Whether or not under Nehru's influence, Gandhiji also came to see more clearly the significance of India's non-violent experiment in the context of world events. Nehru saw India's struggle in relation to contemporary world events in terms of modern political values; Gandhiji saw it in terms of his more fundamental creed of non-violence. "Non-violence to be a creed," he wrote in an article inspired by the Abyssinian war, "has to be all-pervasive." He could not, therefore, "be indifferent about the war that Italy is now waging against Abyssinia" and, though conscious of "the very grave and glaring limitation" of his own hold over India, he described non-violence as "The Greatest Force" and explained how it could be effectively employed by Abyssinia against Italy and what Great Britain or India could do to demonstrate its power. About India particularly, though he knew that "at no time in her ancient history . . . has it had complete non-violence in action pervading the whole land" and that, in the present, too, her non-violence was "that of the weak", it was his "unshakable belief that her destiny is to deliver the message of non-violence to mankind", for she had "an unbroken tradition of non-violence from times immemorial" (pp. 28-30).

Gandhiji's faith in non-violence rested on his faith in human nature. "Not to believe in the possibility of permanent peace,"

he said in a message to an American journal, "is to disbelieve the godliness of human nature." He could say, from his own experience, that "the primary virtues of mankind are possible of cultivation by the meanest of the human species" (pp. 175-6). But non-violence, Gandhiji explained to a Negro deputation from America, was not a passive attitude of mind but the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, seeking which "everything else shall be added unto you" (p. 201). It was "the greatest and the activest force in the world", a "self-acting" force; it was love in the full Pauline sense of *I Corinthians*, 13. He himself, Gandhiji admitted in all humility, "was a poor specimen" of the practice of such all-embracing ahimsa, but his faith in the principle was boundless (pp. 199-201).

Gandhiji had taken up the village reconstruction programme as "a concrete expression of truth and non-violence" (p. 225), and his numerous discussions with the workers on the manner and spirit of its implementation reported in this volume make clear his central vision of man as a moral and spiritual being which inspired the programme. By "introducing the right kind of diet and making the sanitation of your village tolerably good," Gandhiji told a group of village workers, "you will have rendered human bodies worthy of becoming temples of God and efficient tools for doing a good day's work." (p. 59). Having realized the intimate relation between body labour and the moral quality of living, Gandhiji would, if he could, "make physical labour compulsory for everybody", ensuring also "that a doctor or a lawyer should take the same wages as a labourer" (p. 219). Gandhiji knew the *Gita's* definition of yoga as "skill in work" and could deeply appreciate the beauty and joy of such work. Describing his impressions of the Village Industries Exhibition at Lucknow during the Congress session there in April, he spoke of the Exhibition as "a feast for your eyes and ears, a spiritual feast capable of purifying the senses," and explained why: "Well, from that hunger-stricken, impoverished land of skeletons," Orissa, "have come men who have wrought miracles in bone and horn and silver." "Go and see," Gandhiji urged the audience, "how the soul of man even in an impoverished body can breathe life into lifeless horns and metal" (p. 323).

Gandhiji's attitude to the labour-capital problem was also conditioned by this conviction of the moral worth of labour. The problem, according to him, was "not to set class against class, but to educate labour to a sense of its dignity. . . . The moment labour recognizes its own dignity, money will find its rightful place, i.e.,

it will be held in trust for labour'' (p. 47). In economic matters, too, moral considerations were equally important. ''The law of demand and supply,'' he declared, ''is not a human law, it is a devilish law . . . True economics must follow ethics'' (p. 241). No matter what the public reaction was, Gandhiji asked the All-India Spinners' Association Council, ''once for all'' to ''dismiss the thought of competing with futile soul-killing economics'' and not to think of reducing the prices in order to meet the competition of Japanese goods (p. 31). In a discussion with G. D. Birla, Gandhiji warned the industrialist ''that if India becomes industrialized, we shall need a Nadirshah to find out other worlds to exploit'', since the search for markets would involve India in a competition with other industrial powers. ''My head,'' Gandhiji said, ''reels to think of these rivalries.'' ''No,'' he declared with some passion, ''I am clear that whilst this machine age aims at converting men into machines, I am aiming at reinstating man-turned-machine to his original estate.'' He knew, with the certainty of a prophet, ''that all the other things that seem to challenge my faith are doomed'' (p. 145).

It was because of this moral aim, behind the village reconstruction programme, of ''reinstating'' man ''to his original estate'' that Gandhiji gave priority to that programme over the political struggle for freedom. ''Our present policy,'' he told a group of college professors and students, ''is to leave all politics or politico-economics alone'' (p. 130). Quoting Thoreau's famous maxim that 'that government is the best which governs the least', Gandhiji argued that ''a nation that runs its affairs smoothly and effectively without much State interference is truly democratic'' and that where ''such a condition is absent the form of Government is democratic in name.'' This required intelligent regulation of their own lives by the people, and therefore the more important reform was the reform of thought. Such was ''the potency of thought'' that ''as a man thinks so does he become.'' ''In this realm of thought,'' Gandhiji pointed out, ''political power does not come into play at all.'' Man ''can be independent as soon as he wills it.'' Why should not the people, waiting for leaders to bring about great changes, not ''clear their own doors and environments of dirt and filth?'', Gandhiji asked. This was true swaraj—self-rule—and he who was ''not ready for small reforms'' brought about in this manner ''will never be ready for great reforms.'' That is why, Gandhiji explained, it ''has become a matter of absorbing interest to me to find out how best to clean our latrines, how best to save our people from the heinous sin of fouling

Mother Earth every morning'' (pp. 92-3).

An educative programme of this nature required workers with the highest spirit of dedication. If they were drawn from cities, they had to ''develop village mentality and learn the art of living after the manner of villagers'' (p. 319). The worker would be ''a pattern of virtue and work before the villagers'', doing eight hours' productive work and giving two hours to voluntary service of the villagers (p. 132). He should get accustomed to food which would be ''nourishing and yet within the means of an average villager'' (p. 57). Gandhiji wanted the workers to apply this ideal to members of their families, too, saying: ''any ideal which is right for us is also right for our children''—a principle which he had followed in his own life—though he did make allowance for human weakness (p. 217).

Gandhiji was confronted, during the period of this volume, by the problem of religious conversion in three different forms, and in each case he reacted from the same basic position, viz., that religion is a matter of inner growth for the individual and not merely an outward form. At a meeting of the Bombay Presidency Depressed Classes Conference on October 14, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar threw a ''bomb-shell in the midst of Hindu society'' (p. 280) by advising the Harijans to choose ''any religion which gives you equality of status and treatment.'' Religion, Gandhiji commented, ''is not like a house or a cloak which can be changed at will. It is more an integral part of one's self than one's body.'' Gandhiji, therefore, urged Dr. Ambedkar, if he had any faith in God, ''to assuage his wrath and reconsider the position and examine his ancestral religion on its own merits and not through the weakness of its faithless followers'' (p. 37). And while he accepted the reality of the Harijans' grievances and warned the *savarna* Hindus that Hinduism would perish if they failed to do ''elementary justice'' to the Harijans, Gandhiji pleaded with ''enlightened Harijans for their own sakes not to seek material betterment under threat of conversion'' (p. 281). However, this is exactly what Gandhiji's eldest son Harilal did. On or about May 14, he embraced Islam at Bombay, taking the name Abdulla. He had met Gandhiji at Nagpur on April 26 and told him ''that he would do anything whatever to satisfy his greed.'' It was this rather than his acceptance of Islam which pained Gandhiji. He had, Gandhiji wrote to Ramdas, ''ceased to belong to any faith and now he has taken on the label of Islam. That does not make him a follower of the faith, though,'' Gandhiji added, ''we should indeed feel satisfied

if he truly practises in his life what is best in Islam'' (pp. 461-2). Gandhiji himself was often urged by Christian friends to embrace Christianity as the only true religion. Commenting on a letter from one such friend Gandhiji replied that he accepted Jesus as ''a great world-teacher among others'', but not as ''the only begotten son of God.'' ''He affects my life,'' Gandhiji asserted, ''no less because I regard him as one among the many begotten sons of God.'' For Gandhiji the *Gita* had become ''the key to the scriptures of the world'' and, unravelling with its help their ''deepest mysteries'', he had found that all the great teachers of the world had said, though in different words, ''verily, verily, I say unto you, not everyone that sayeth unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter the Kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven shall enter the Kingdom'' (pp. 333-4).

On December 3 and 4 Gandhiji had long discussions with Mrs. Margaret Sanger, a well-known advocate of artificial birth-control. In these, as reported by Mahadev Desai, he ''poured his whole being'' and ''revealed himself inside out, giving Mrs. Sanger an intimate glimpse of his own private life.'' Gandhiji made his position clear—with his philosophy of life that sought ''self-realization through self-control,'' he could not recommend the remedy of birth-control (p. 156). Gandhiji shared Mrs. Sanger's aim that women should be emancipated, having himself tried all his life ''to show them they were not slaves either to their husbands or parents, not only in the political field but in the domestic as well'' (p. 157), but he did not ''endorse'' the ''contention'' that ''sex expression without desire for children is a need of the soul'' (p. 159). He agreed with a correspondent that ''man is undoubtedly an artist and a creator'', that he ''must have beauty, and therefore colour'' but held that man's ''artistic and creative nature at its best taught him to see art in self-restraint and ugliness in uncreative union.'' Art, for Gandhiji, was not a matter of imagination only but of living. Not only did his ''eye for art'' teach ''man to seek enjoyment in usefulness,'' but, Gandhiji held, at ''a later stage he learnt further that there was neither beauty nor joy in living for its own sake but that he must live to serve his fellow-creatures and through them his Maker'' (pp. 310-1). This idea, that a life of service and sacrifice is a life full of the joy of self-fulfilment, is a recurring theme in Gandhiji's thought.

The two months' breakdown in Gandhiji's health beginning from December 7 was psychologically a very painful experience for him, for it not only revealed, as he confessed in an article in

Harijan, "Nothing without Grace", "vital defects in my following out of the interpretation of the *Gita* as I have understood it", but also occasioned an involuntary violation of *brahmacharya*. The central teaching of the *Gita*, according to Gandhiji, was non-attachment, but he discovered that the innumerable problems which he was called upon to solve had not "left my body or mind untouched." "I verily believe," Gandhiji declared, "that one who literally follows the prescription of the eternal Mother need never grow old in mind. Such a one's body will wither in due course like leaves of a healthy tree, leaving the mind as young and as fresh as ever." The truth of this, Gandhiji believed, was exemplified by "Bhishma delivering his marvellous discourse to Yudhishthira though he was on his death-bed" (p. 211). The other "mental disturbance" which he experienced during the illness made Gandhiji "disgusted" with himself (p. 212). He had been striving for years, as he explained to Premabehn Kantak, "to attain to Shukadeva's condition", to "become a eunuch" (p. 429) in the manner of those who have, in the famous words of Jesus, "made themselves eunuchs for the Kingdom of heaven's sake", and he knew that a "mind that is once hooked to the Star of stars becomes incorruptible", but the experience during the illness revealed to him how far he was from such a condition and the discovery humbled him. After that experience Gandhiji "broke loose . . . from the rigid rest that was imposed" upon him and resumed active work (p. 212).

At the Gandhi Seva Sangh meetings in February-March it was proposed that a committee for Gandhian thought be formed. When the matter was brought to his knowledge, Gandhiji made it clear that the committee's work, if it was formed at all, "should only be one of collecting my thoughts and beliefs", for he had conceived no such thing as Gandhism in the sense of a systematic body of doctrines which could be codified. His way was that of living growth and not of abstract thinking. "Without any elaborate scheme," Gandhiji explained, "I have simply tried in my own way to apply the eternal principles of truth and non-violence to our daily life and problems. Like a child I did whatever occurred to me on the spur of the moment during the course of events", and it was later that he "realized that what" he "was doing were experiments in truth" (pp. 223-4).

Gandhiji had been dreaming of going and settling in a village. "Well, I am at last in Segaon," he wrote to Amrit Kaur on May 1. "We came yesterday. The night was glorious" (p. 358).

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PREFACE

The present volume (June 1—November 2, 1936) marks a further stage in Gandhiji's village uplift programme. After his return from Nandi Hill in Mysore where he had gone for a short rest, Gandhiji went and settled in Segaon, a small village near Wardha with a population of barely 600, in order to live amongst the poor and "show them how to live" (p. 417) by personal example and service rather than by preaching (p. 347). He had gone there with the "resolve not to desert it in the hour of danger to life or limb" (p. 297) and remained true to his word. Except for the first two weeks in June and the last week in October, when he had to go out to meet commitments made earlier, Gandhiji remained, throughout the period covered in this volume, in Segaon, combating age-old ignorance, disease and superstition and doing what he could to make the place livable. This *sadhana*, as Gandhiji described it (p. 295), took its toll and he came under an attack of malaria which forced him to seek admission to a hospital in Wardha.

Gandhiji's physical retreat to a village coincided with a deepening crisis in Europe where, with the outbreak of civil war in Spain in July, the stage was being set for World War II. In India, too, a Socialist Party with a programme of economic reconstruction through class struggle had been formed in the Congress, and now Jawaharlal, who had taken over as President of the Indian National Congress in the preceding April, started vigorously advocating a similar programme. Gandhiji agreed with the broad aims of Nehru's policy. "His enunciation of scientific socialism," Gandhiji told two foreign visitors, "does not jar on me. I have been living the life since 1906 that he would have all India to live" (p. 207). But with his own understanding of the realities of the Indian situation and his firm faith in a village-oriented economy, Gandhiji could not endorse all that Nehru seemed to be advocating. "My difficulty," Gandhiji explained in a letter to Nehru, "is not about the remote future. . . . If the present is well taken care of, the future will take care of itself" (p. 180). These differences of outlook between Gandhiji and Jawaharlal, however, did not diminish their mutual affection. A report that he had complained that Nehru's programme had ruined his life-work, Gandhiji described as "a lie, an absolute lie" (p. 207). Scouting another suggestion that he and Nehru

were rivals, he commented: "If we are, we are rivals in making love to each other in the pursuit of the common goal" (p. 165).

Like Gandhiji, some of Jawaharlal's colleagues in the Working Committee, too, did not share his ideas about socialism and they sent in their resignations. Their action led to a minor crisis in national politics which was resolved only through Gandhiji's intervention. While, on the one hand, he persuaded the Working Committee members who had resigned to withdraw their resignations, he also wrote to Jawaharlal Nehru pointing out to him, with the frankness of mutual love and confidence, how these colleagues dreaded him because of his irritability and impatience of them. "They have chafed under your rebukes and magisterial manner and . . . your arrogation of what has appeared to them your infallibility and superior knowledge." They could not, therefore, "speak out" to him "freely and fearlessly," as Gandhiji advised them to do (pp. 144-5).

An important subject on which Jawaharlal's pronouncements had created what Gandhiji described as "A False Alarm" was the place of khadi in national economy. Nehru believed that "khadi was an important item in our present programme and must be encouraged", but he "did not think that it could finally solve our poverty problem." He was in "favour of big industry", though he agreed that "even with the increase of industrialization there would be considerable room for the development of cottage industries in India" (p. 16). Gandhiji believed, as against this, that "khadi must hold the field for any length of time that we can think of". It was true that khadi could not compete with mill-manufactured cloth, for, as Gandhiji pointed out, in "the open market a more organized industry will always be able to drive out a less organized one . . ." But the human cost of the displacement of manual labour by power-driven machinery must also be taken into account. As Gandhiji put it: "No Chengis Khan could devise a more ingenious or more profitable method of destroying these villages." The villagers were "fast losing the will to work, to think and even to live. It is a living death that they are living" (pp. 77-8). Gandhiji, therefore, was "building up a new economics" through khadi and the village industries. "Conditions," he said, "differ from country to country. . . . the rich and the poor have their own economics" (p. 95).

Another problem of the present which Gandhiji "concentrated upon" was that of eradication of untouchability. It was essentially a religious problem but had, since Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald's Communal Award against which Gandhiji had fasted in September

1932 (*vide* Vol. LI), acquired a political colour. Leaders of the different religions in India had started competing with one another "for enticing Harijans into their fold" and there were attempts by Ambedkar and others to detach Harijans from the rest of the Hindus through mass conversion to another faith. Some Hindu leaders like Dr. Moonje were willing to countenance this provided the conversion was to Sikhism. Gandhiji deplored this bargaining for the transfer of Harijans "as if they were chattel". Who are we, he asked, "the self-constituted leaders, to barter away the religious freedom of Harijans?" "By looking at it in terms of politics or economics," he explained, "they reduce the religious values, whereas the proper thing would be to estimate politics and every other thing in terms of religion" (pp. 234-5).

From a purely religious point of view, Gandhiji recognized Ambedkar's threefold indictment of Hinduism in regard to the practice of untouchability—"inhuman conduct itself, the unabashed justification for it on the part of the perpetrators, and the subsequent discovery that the justification was warranted by their scriptures" (p. 135). Gandhiji himself had been saying for a long time that if untouchability lived Hinduism would perish, and further that "it ought to perish if this blot on humanity is not removed" (p. 50). Gandhiji knew, however, that untouchability was no part of Hinduism. Refusing to accept as authentic the texts which Ambedkar had quoted, Gandhiji said: "The scriptures properly so called can only be concerned with eternal verities. Nothing can be accepted as the word of God which cannot be tested by reason or is [not] capable of being spiritually experienced." Religion, Gandhiji said, does not live by learning. "It lives in the experiences of its saints and seers, in their lives and sayings." "A religion has to be judged not by its worst specimens but by the best it might have produced. For that and that alone can be used as the standard to aspire to, if not to improve upon" (pp. 153-4).

While defining the essence of Hinduism as consisting of truth and ahimsa, Gandhiji also recognized the need for living symbols embodying human ideals. He was quite sure that "if a man does not believe in Rama and Krishna as God he is not a Hindu". Gandhiji himself worshipped "the living Rama and Krishna, the incarnation of all that is True and Good and Perfect", "who exist today, who have existed for all time, who know my innermost thoughts and who continually correct me" (p. 45). For Gandhiji, therefore, temple-worship was not a superstition. There was, he said, something "holy and true about the faith that takes millions

to the temples'' (p. 39). From Gandhiji's point of view, temple-entry was thus an essential aspect of the movement against untouchability. He did not agree with those who believed that the ''Harijan problem is in the last analysis an economic problem . . .'' For him it was essentially a problem ''of the eradication of a disease in Hinduism'' (p. 44). And it would be cured only when all the temples had been thrown open to the Harijans.

Service of the Harijans and of the poor was for Gandhiji part of his search for God. Speaking at a labourer's meeting he said: ''There is only one joy for me and that is to get a glimpse of God. This will be possible when I become one with the poor. I can be one with the whole world if I can merge myself in the poor people of a poor country'' (p. 406). ''Man's ultimate aim,'' Gandhiji told Maurice Frydman, a Polish engineer, ''is the realization of God, and all his activities, social, political, religious, have to be guided by the ultimate aim of the vision of God . . . the only way to find God is to see Him in His creation and be one with it.'' ''This,'' Gandhiji added, ''can only be done by service of all'', which meant service of one's countrymen who were one's ''nearest neighbours'' (p. 240). As he explained to a sadhu, ''We can but serve that part of God's creation which is nearest and best known to us'' (p. 233). For such total dedication to service it was necessary to realize that ''all souls are one. Plurality . . . is only an illusion . . . the responsibility of the misconduct of anyone falls on all of us'' (p. 117).

It was in pursuit of this desire to become one with the poor that Gandhiji had gone to settle in Segaon, a typical Indian village ''with no post-office, no store for food-stuffs of quality, no medical comforts and difficult of access in the rainy season'' (p. 69). To Frydman's doubt whether it was necessary for self-advance to identify oneself with such ''discomfort and squalor'', Gandhiji replied that a ''certain degree of physical harmony and comfort'' might be necessary, but that the ''satisfaction of one's physical needs, even the intellectual needs, of one's narrow self, must meet at a certain point a dead stop, before it degenerates into physical and intellectual voluptuousness'' and hinders a man ''in his service of humanity, on which all his energies should be concentrated'' (pp. 240-1).

Service of the poor undertaken as a spiritual discipline required careful attention to details and facts. For any reform the ''most important thing'' was ''a complete picture of the facts''. Workers, Gandhiji said, ''should not exaggerate facts'' (p. 118). We ''approach eternal verities,'' he wrote to a correspondent,

"only by tackling details in terms thereof . . . whatever glimpses I may have of truth I owe principally, if not entirely, to attention to the minutest details, always keeping the supreme objective" of truth and ahimsa and service "in view" (p. 126). In Mirabehn Gandhiji had found such an ideal worker. The hut she had built for herself in Segaon was "really and truly," he said, "HER hut," "planned and built by herself." It was not merely a hut, it was a poem. Gandhiji shed "tears of joy" as he "saw the villager's mentality about everything in it" (p. 152). He urged workers in the cause of Harijan service to approach their work in a similar spirit of dedication. They should go to the Harijans, themselves become "Harijans in every sense of the term", i. e., serve them, share their joys and sorrows (p. 50) and work as they worked, setting out "every morning like the Bhangis with brooms, spades and baskets" to "do the sweeping, remove the night-soil and bury it" (p. 162). Moral purity was equally important. "However accomplished a man," Gandhiji wrote to A. V. Thakkar, "if he is immoral the splashes from the mud of his immorality are bound to stain public life" (p. 289). When they had enough such "selfless, spiritually-minded" workers, then alone would the change of heart necessary for removal of untouchability come (p. 181).

To a correspondent who doubted the value of belief in God "if we do not feel His presence in our midst", Gandhiji gave the reply of the Upanishads: "We must ever fail to perceive Him through the senses, because He is beyond them. We can feel Him, if we will but withdraw ourselves from the senses." "The divine music," he added, "is incessantly going on within ourselves, but the loud senses drown the delicate music . . ." (pp. 57-8). He himself, Gandhiji explained to a girl correspondent, experienced "every moment the presence of the *atman*" and therefore occasionally caught "the echoes" of that "music". With effort, he told her, she, too, could hear it if she wished, but it was not "the music that another can help one hear" (p. 139). Gandhiji believed with similar conviction of direct experience that "love is the source and end of life." "If love was not the law of life," he replied to a *Statesman* writer, "life would not have persisted in the midst of death." And when the practice of the law became universal, "God will reign on earth as He does in Heaven." It was true that both earth and heaven were within us, but, said Gandhiji, "We know the earth, we are strangers to the Heaven within us", and if it was possible for some to realize it, it must be possible for all to do so. This law of

love, which was the true "Science of Life", could not be proved by argument. "It shall be proved," Gandhiji said, "by persons living it in their lives in utter disregard of consequences to themselves" (pp. 320-1).

Presiding over the Gujarati Literary Conference, Gandhiji reminded men of letters of their duty to the masses. He thought of "Segaon and its folk", and couldn't "help saying that our literature is a miserable affair." He wanted "art and literature that can speak to the millions" (p. 416). Protesting against the flood of cheap erotic literature, he suggested to the writers: ". . . before you put your pens to paper keep your mother before your eyes. If you do that the literature which will flow from your pen will be like the rain which nurtures the thirsty mother earth" (p. 421). Writing, according to Gandhiji, was not only a matter of skill. It had to be sincere. To a correspondent who had sent some articles for publication in *Harijan* he wrote: " . . . the simplest writings of earnest persons are effective when brilliant writings of mere clever people fall flat. Words seem to take the vitality of their writers or speakers" (p. 177).

In May Gandhiji had lost his dear friend, Dr. M. A. Ansari. Soon after that loss came the death, on June 9, of another Muslim friend, Abbas Tyabji, who was, Gandhiji wrote, "no ordinary Mussalman. . . . He was a servant of India because he was a servant of humanity. He believed in God as *Daridra-narayana*" (p. 76). Another personal sorrow which tried Gandhiji about this time was the conversion to Islam of his eldest son Harilal. Gandhiji was not pained by the conversion itself. If it had been "from the heart and free from any worldly considerations," he wrote, "I should have no quarrel. For I believe Islam to be as true a religion as my own." Gandhiji was hurt, and deeply, by the public rejoicing over the incident by a section of the Muslims. "I sense," he said, "no religious spirit behind this demonstration" (pp. 5 and 7). The public letter to the Muslims in which Gandhiji explained this was written, he told a Polish visitor, "with my pen dipped in my heart's blood" (p. 48), and he also wrote to a Muslim friend, asking him to "study this phenomenon . . . for the sake of religion and this unhappy land" (p. 23).

In the course of a discussion with a group of Christian missionaries, Gandhiji put his attitude to conversion in a nutshell: "Because you adore your mother, you cannot wish that all the rest were your mother's children" (p. 91).

PREFACE

During the period (November 3, 1936 to March 14, 1937) that the present volume covers, the country saw two public events of note: the throwing open of temples to Harijans in Travancore and the Faizpur session of the Congress, the first to be held in a village. The former moved Gandhiji profoundly. He welcomed the Maharaja's proclamation as an act whereby the "sins of the past ages" had "been obliterated by literally a stroke of the pen" (p. 242). At the Congress session, on the other hand, Gandhiji's interest was confined to the khadi and village industries exhibition and he took little part in the general proceedings though the session was of considerable political significance inasmuch as the theme of its deliberations was the Government of India Act of 1935 which was about to be brought into force. He had, since October 1934, become increasingly absorbed in village reconstruction work, and had now settled in Segaon where he did not "meet anyone" and did not "read newspapers much" (p. 50).

Gandhiji's indifference to political problems did not mean that he had turned his back on the fight for freedom. It was, he asserted, "a fight to the finish", but it was a non-violent fight and civil disobedience was not the only process of non-violence. "In the garden of non-violence there are many plants" (p. 385), Gandhiji explained, and he was then nurturing the plant of economic, moral and social regeneration of India's villages. Political independence, which for Gandhiji meant "sovereignty of the people based on pure moral authority", was linked with "economic independence" achieved through "the economic uplift of every individual, male and female, by his or her own conscious effort" (pp. 191-2). The edifice of such *poorna* swaraj required for its building the participation of the masses on the widest scale possible; the parliamentary programme, which the Congress had taken up, would undoubtedly help, but Gandhiji saw that its usefulness was limited, what with the franchise being extremely restricted, with no more than $3\frac{1}{2}$ out of 35 crores voting. He had therefore turned to the $31\frac{1}{2}$ crores in the villages, educating them, infusing in them the consciousness of their numerical strength till there would be no need left for either civil disobedience or violence (p. 195). It was to be "a kind of practical adult education to be put to use as it progresses". The villagers

were to be "taught to know what they should want and how to obtain it in the shape of sanitation and hygiene, improvement of material conditions and social relations" (p. 71). Drawing a picture of an ideal village, Gandhiji pointed out that almost "the whole of the programme . . . can be worked out . . . without Government assistance" if the villagers could be persuaded "to help themselves" through "mutual co-operation" and to "contribute voluntary labour for the common good" (p. 217).

Gandhiji invited in this task of village regeneration the co-operation of all, particularly the middle-class people, for it was they, he charged, who had "betrayed their trust and bartered away the economic independence of India for a mess of pottage" (p. 193), allowing the cities to become "foreign markets" and "drain the villages dry by dumping cheap and shoddy goods from foreign lands" (p. 118). He urged them "to take the message of the wheel" and all that it stood for "to the villagers and induce them to shed their laziness", for, he warned, it "would be a terrible thing if laziness replaces industry and despair triumphs over hope" (p. 193). Gandhiji welcomed even foreign assistance of the right kind. In one thing, he used to tell American visitors, "I do not mind being a beggar. I would beg of you your scientific talent. You can ask your engineers and agricultural experts to place their services at our disposal" (p. 99). It was not only science as mechanical skill that Gandhiji valued; he urged the khadi workers to cultivate the scientific approach and method in tackling their problems, to pursue the programme "in a deliberate, wise, methodical manner and in a scientific spirit, taking nothing for granted, testing every proposition, checking facts and figures, undaunted by defeats, unelated by petty successes, never satisfied till the goal is reached". This impersonal method of science, however, was to be combined with deep personal involvement and missionary dedication, for if khadi was a science it was also a romance and gave workers like Maganlal Gandhi and Richard Gregg "all the joy and pleasure derivable from any fascinating theme". "A science to be science," Gandhiji explained, "must afford the fullest scope for satisfying the hunger of body, mind and soul", and he illustrated how "fascinating" the subject of khadi could be by framing a large number of questions which every khadi worker must study (pp. 248-51).

Gandhiji knew, of course, that his village reconstruction programme was "a stupendous task." The villagers suffered from "hopeless unwillingness . . . to better their lot". There were

villages, smaller and more illiterate even than Segaon, where the people, Gandhiji explained to some visitors, "hug their ignorance and dirt as they do their untouchability" (pp. 71 and 218). But there was no need to lose heart. "Patient effort will show," Gandhiji reassured a young man who was somewhat discouraged, "that villagers are not very different from city-dwellers and that they will respond to kindliness and attention" (p. 388). In some respects, Gandhiji believed, they were even better, more Indian at heart, than the city-dwellers. He asked a group of foreigners on a visit to Segaon "to ignore big cities" if they would see "the heart of India". The "big cities here," he told them, "are but poor editions of your big cities." Deep in the interior, where people were "untouched by post and telegraphs", they would see "a kind of culture which," Gandhiji said, "you miss in the West", a natural spirituality which was "an inherited culture" and therefore as "unconscious of itself" as the activities of breathing and seeing when one is in full health (pp. 116-7).

This essential humanity of the Indian villager could be awakened into activity only by public workers of exceptional purity of character. Gandhiji could not "appreciate, much less adopt", the view that the "character of a public worker . . . is his own private concern" (p. 11). A worker aspiring to serve the villagers should regard himself as a Khudai Khidmatgar (servant of God), should go and stay in a village "like a true villager" and participate in the villagers' "daily toil". He should overcome the attraction of the material comforts and intellectual pursuits available in cities and be content with what the "poor villagers could provide", tuning his mind "to the reception of permanent values" embodied in the works of saints who "wrote and spoke for the masses". He should be prepared to do scavenging, should "master the science of sanitation" and educate the Bhangi in the same, clothing him thereby "with the dignity and respect due to him" as "a Brahmin *par excellence*". Such a worker would, by his very presence, make the village "more livable and lovable" (pp. 173, 407, 388 and 86-7).

Economic resurgence of the villages necessarily brought in the question of socialism, then being hotly debated in the country. Gandhiji's position was quite unequivocal. "All land belongs to Gopal," he quoted, and added "Gopal . . . means the State, i.e., the people. . . . Land and all property is his who will work it" (p. 192). "Unfortunately," he added, "the workers are or have been kept ignorant of this simple fact" (p. 192). Gandhiji

reiterated this basically socialist position in his award as one of the arbitrators in the Ahmedabad labour dispute. Workmen, he said, should be regarded as equal owners with the share-holders. "Why should a million rupees put together," he asked, "be more than a million men or women put together?" Gandhiji therefore ruled in his award that workers' wages may not be reduced to ensure a minimum of profits (pp. 363-4). Talking to an Egyptian visitor he explicitly stated that he would welcome communism if it "came without any violence". "For then," he said, "no property would be held by anybody except on behalf of the people and for the people" (p. 312). Communism meant in the last analysis "a classless society", and that was, Gandhiji told a Roman Catholic priest, "an ideal . . . worth striving for" (p. 423). It was known that on this question of economic policy Jawaharlal Nehru and Gandhiji differed, but it was, as Gandhiji explained, a "difference . . . of emphasis". Jawaharlal believed in industrialization; Gandhiji had "grave doubts about its usefulness for India". Jawaharlal, moreover, believed in the inevitability of class conflict, though, as Gandhiji said, "he would avoid it if he could." Gandhiji saw no such necessity. He expected "to convert the zamindars and other capitalists by non-violent methods", for, he argued, "if the toilers intelligently combine, they will become an irresistible power" (p. 73).

The difference between Gandhiji on the one hand and Nehru and the socialists on the other was rooted in the fact that for Gandhiji non-violence was an absolute value. He even went to the extent of arguing in a hypothetical case that "one may not . . . try to wean dependents and relations from their career of theft and murder through compulsion" (p. 331). Gandhiji's ahimsa embraced non-human life too. "The chief value of Hinduism," according to him, lay "in holding the actual belief that all life (not only human beings, but all sentient beings) is one" (p. 141), and therefore, though "in the present state of modern ignorance" Gandhiji did countenance campaigns of killing rats, fleas, mosquitoes, etc., he believed as "a fundamental truth of life" that "all God's creatures have the right to live as much as we have". It was, he explained, "man's habit of killing man on the slightest pretext" that "has darkened his reason" and permitted him to take "liberties with other life" (p. 215). Gandhiji had in mind such all-embracing ahimsa when he explained to an American visitor that, when "properly understood and used", it was "an intensely active force". Being an invisible force, it might not seem to work for a while, but in

fact it was "the greatest force at the disposal of mankind" and the effects of ahimsa like the Buddha's, Gandhiji said, "persist" and "grow with age". The more such ahimsa is practised "the more effective and inexhaustible it becomes, and ultimately the whole world stands agape and exclaims, 'a miracle has happened' ". Though Gandhiji's experiments had thus deepened his faith in non-violence, he did not make any claim that he had fully understood its nature. " . . . I must warn you," he told the visitor, "against carrying the impression with you that mine is the final word on non-violence. . . . I am but a humble seeker of truth" (pp. 221-2 and 225).

Gandhiji's ahimsa was no mere formal creed but derived its power from the strength of his love for fellow human beings. That love made him especially sensitive to the plight of the untouchables. He felt, he said, "deeply humiliated" by the sight of the Pulayas and Pariahs of Travancore (p. 237) and could not understand how the Hindus, "custodians of a great religion", had been "guilty of a crime which," he said, "constitutes our greatest shame." "Had I not been," Gandhiji confessed, "a believer in the inscrutable ways of Providence, a sensitive man like me would have been a raving maniac" (pp. 38-40). When Dr. B. R. Ambedkar proclaimed that the untouchables would leave the Hindu fold, Gandhiji was greatly distressed to see followers of other religions entering into a rivalry with one another to pull this suffering community away from its parent society. Were the Harijans, he asked, "all bricks that they could be moved from one structure to another?" (p. 18). The Harijan masses, he said, were "intertwined with the other Hindus" (p. 46). It therefore hurt him "to find Christian bodies vying with the Muslims and Sikhs in trying to add to the numbers of their fold." It was, he said, "an ugly performance and a travesty of religion. . . . What the missionaries are doing today does not show spirituality" (pp. 35 and 38). He charged them with dangling "earthly paradises" in front of the Harijans and making "promises to them which they can never keep" (p. 18). Criticized by a friend for "violence in words" in this remark, Gandhiji replied: "I regard myself as a friend of the missionaries. I enjoy happy relations with many of them. . . . But if non-violence of thought is to be evolved in individuals or societies or nations, truth has to be told, however harsh or unpopular it may appear to be for the moment" (pp. 152-3). And the truth as it appeared to Gandhiji was that the "American and British money which has been voted for missionary societies has done

more harm than good. You cannot serve God and mammon both. And my fear is that mammon has been sent to serve India and God has remained behind . . .'' (pp. 39-40). The missionaries, Gandhiji explained to some Christian visitors, ''unconsciously . . . do harm to themselves and so to us. . . . They present a Christianity of their belief but not the message of Jesus as I understand it.'' ''It is,'' he said, a ''tragedy that such a thing should happen in the human family'' (p. 98).

Gandhiji's objection was not merely to the motives and methods of the missionaries, but to the very idea of conversion, which he said was ''the deadliest poison that ever sapped the fountain of truth'' (p. 203). ''Why,'' he asked, ''should a Christian want to convert a Hindu to Christianity and vice versa?'' What mattered was a person's morals and ''insistence on a particular form or repetition of a credo,'' Gandhiji argued, ''may be a potent cause of violent quarrels leading to bloodshed and ending in utter disbelief in religion, i.e., God Himself'' (p. 327). The orthodox Christian position, Gandhiji told a Polish professor of philosophy, was ''arrogant'' (p. 203). For Gandhiji the text that ''Jesus is the only begotten son of God'' was not literally true and he could not ''ascribe exclusive divinity to Jesus''. He explained: ''If a man is spiritually miles ahead of us we may say that he is in a special sense the son of God, though we are all children of God. We repudiate the relationship in our lives whereas his life is a witness to that relationship'' (pp. 397-8). Therefore the correct position was, according to Gandhiji, to accept ''all religions as equal, for all have the same root and the same laws of growth'' (p. 203). They were ''beautiful flowers from the same garden'' or ''branches of the same majestic tree'' and therefore ''equally true, though being received and interpreted through human instruments'' they were also ''equally imperfect'' (p. 326). Gandhiji considered it ''no business'' of his ''to criticize the scriptures of other faiths or to point out their defects''. But it was and should be, he added, ''my privilege to proclaim and practise the truths that there may be in them''. Similarly Gandhiji argued that ''when non-Hindu critics set about criticizing Hinduism and cataloguing its faults, they only blazon their own ignorance of Hinduism and their incapacity to regard it from the Hindu viewpoint'' (p. 332). The right method was to preach through one's life. ''The rose,'' as Gandhiji put it, ''does not say 'Come and smell me' '' (p. 37). ''Your whole life,'' he said, ''is more eloquent than your lips. . . . The moment there is a spiritual expression in life, the surroundings

will readily respond." "When there is no medium between me and my Lord," Gandhiji said, evidently describing beautiful moments of his own experience, "and I simply become a willing vessel for his influences to flow into it, then I overflow as the water of the Ganges at its source. There is no desire to speak when one lives the truth" (pp. 100-1).

When on the Deepavali day the temples in Travancore were thrown open to Harijans by a proclamation of the Maharaja, Gandhiji called the event "a miracle" (p. 27), "the beginning of the process of purification of Hinduism" (p. 244), and he accepted an invitation to visit the State. His nine days' itinerary from January 12 to 21 took him to many towns and villages at each of which he addressed vast assemblages of *savarna* and *avarna* Hindus on the significance of the epoch-making Proclamation, the audiences listening to him in hushed silence. "I have looked upon this Proclamation," Gandhiji said at Trivandrum, "as a pure religious act. I have regarded this visit to Travancore in the spirit of a pilgrimage, and I am going to these temples as an untouchable suddenly made touchable. . . . you will not be satisfied until you have lifted up your brothers and sisters . . . to heights which you have attained yourselves. True spiritual regeneration must include economic uplift and the removal of ignorance and everything that goes to retard human progress" (p. 239).

The most moving moments of the tour for Gandhiji were his visits to the temples. He had, as he said, "mentally and voluntarily become an untouchable and therefore shunned the temples which were barred against fellow untouchables" (pp. 245-6). But now that the bar was removed and he was free to visit the temples, he felt "fascinated" (p. 280). As he entered the first temple, the great Padmanabha temple at Trivandrum, curiosity gave way, Gandhiji said afterwards, "to the incoming of something that was to fill the void of years" and, as they "reached the great central image", he felt that it was all "like a day-dream" (p. 246). He could not, he confessed, restrain his joy at the sight of the "beaming faces" of multitudes who accompanied him, as he went from temple to temple, and mingled together "without the slightest distinction" (p. 257). Gandhiji was aware of the shortcomings of temples (p. 33), but this new experience humbled him and he refused, he said, "to look at it with the eye of a critic" (p. 280). The "scoffers" and "sceptics" might describe religious sentiments of veneration of the images as "figments of imagination", but imagination was

"a powerful factor in life". To the devotees, therefore, the temples were "an integral part" of their lives, "visible symbols of God's power and authority" where "we have to renew our vows of loyalty to God, renew our renunciation and dedication from day to day" (pp. 304-5). They were, as the priest in the Padmanabha temple made him realize, "so many bridges between the Unseen, Invisible and Indefinable God and ourselves who are infinitesimal drops in the Infinite Ocean". Human beings, Gandhiji said, were not all philosophers and were therefore "not satisfied with contemplating the Invisible God. . . . we want something which we can touch, something which we can see, something before which we can kneel down" (p. 238).

Gandhiji based his opposition to untouchability, as he explained in one of his speeches in Travancore, "on the Hindu Shastras and nothing else", having to the best of his ability followed "the tenets of Hinduism for an unbroken period of fifty years" (p. 278). Untouchability, he said, was a "weedy growth upon Hinduism" which "threatened to smother" its "finest flowers" (p. 244), and the most precious of those flowers which Gandhiji had discovered and the truth and beauty of which he proclaimed at meeting after meeting was the first verse of the *Ishopanishad*. Gandhiji translated it thus: "All this that we see in this great Universe is pervaded by God. Renounce it and enjoy it." Or, "Enjoy what He gives you." "Do not covet anybody's wealth or possession" (p. 259). This was "the distilled wisdom of all the sages that lived" (p. 294), "the bedrock of Hinduism without which Hinduism is nothing and with which Hinduism need not be anything else." There was nothing, he said, "so satisfying and beautiful in all the scriptures of the world as this *mantra*" (p. 307). Even the *Gita* was but "a commentary on this *mantra*" (p. 259). If "all the Upanishads and all the other scriptures happened all of a sudden to be reduced to ashes" but only this *mantra* "were left intact in the memory of Hindus, Hinduism," Gandhiji said, "would live for ever" (p. 259). The *Smritis* and Puranas "were all produced or inspired in response to the want of those times" and did not "always express eternal verities". "The eternal verity," Gandhiji said, was "summed up" in this one verse (p. 277). It meant that "to be truly, deliberately and consciously Hindus, we have got to . . . renounce everything, even our body, and all that we hold near and dear to us, and dedicate it at the feet of God" (p. 296), and the wealth of another that the *mantra* enjoined one not to covet did not mean only "money and riches".

"One man's wealth is scholarship," Gandhiji explained to a correspondent, "another's is physical health while that of a third is sacrifice. One should not feel envious of any of these things" (p. 382). Socialism, even communism, Gandhiji said, was "explicit" in this *mantra* (p. 385). It satisfied "the cravings of the socialist and the communist, of the philosopher and the economist", for it at once supplied a grand metaphysical basis for renunciation and an ethical and economic principle of conduct which, if acted upon, would make one "a wise citizen of the world, living at peace with all that lives" (pp. 259-60).

The detachment prescribed by the *Gita* had been Gandhiji's life-long ideal; he believed it to be "absolutely necessary for perfect peace and for the vision of both the little self and the greatest Self", but he admitted that it was "the hardest thing to achieve" (pp. 347-8). The volume contains numerous illustrations of how hard Gandhiji found it to be. He advised Mirabehn, who seems to have complained to him about the behaviour of some of the inmates of the Segaon home: "We do not become impatient over ravings of maniacs. For we treat them as diseases to be tolerated till they are remedied" (pp. 228-9). But Gandhiji's own reaction to a letter from one of those workers was: "Yesterday I laughed at your letter but I could not forget it and now it hurts" (p. 377). Having, in another instance, performed the "painful duty" of commenting in *Harijan* on a former co-worker's letter, Gandhiji said: "May he detect in this writing the anguish of a parent who has suddenly lost an obedient son and repent of the wound he has inflicted on me" (p. 148). Towards his son Harilal Gandhiji found the *Gita's* detachment still harder to cultivate. Harilal had embraced Islam in the preceding May (*vide* Vols. LXII and LXIII) and was now reconverted to Hinduism. Gandhiji's comment was: "I do not remember anything about Harilal. . . . In my eyes Harilal's conversion is meaningless" (p. 26). He could not, nonetheless, help inquiring of a co-worker after him: "I do wish to know . . . what he said on the occasion, where it was and what happened there . . ." (pp. 51-2). And having heard that Kantilal, Harilal's son, had been to see his father and seen there such a tragic sight that he "could not control" his "tears and wept and came away", Gandhiji wrote to the son: "How will you help me by keeping unhappiness from me? I must learn to endure unhappiness and get used to it" (p. 52). He looked upon this suffering as punishment for his "share" in Harilal's "sins". It was not a punishment inflicted by somebody

else. "I am being punished by my own conscience," he said (p. 80). Well and truly could he claim: "Seeing others as oneself is not only a scriptural statement; it has been woven into my life" (p. 56).

Gandhiji believed that whenever a lapse occurred, public confession was "the first step towards purification". "Why should God's creation," he asked, "not see the faults which God sees?" "Those whose failings come to light" should really "be regarded as blessed". Even from a practical point of view, public confession secures one the protection of co-workers against repetition of the error, such protection being in fact "God's protection". "This is," Gandhiji explained, "what is meant by Rama being the strength of the weak" (pp. 130-1). In religious matters, Gandhiji's effort was to reconcile the claims of Reason and Faith. He believed in Faith only "in things where Reason has no place, e. g., the existence of God". "No argument can move me from that faith," he affirmed. Like "that little girl" of Wordsworth's poem "who repeated against all reason 'yet we are seven'," Gandhiji said, he would "like to repeat, on being baffled in argument by a very superior intellect, 'Yet there is God' " (p. 75). One who believes in God, Gandhiji warned a correspondent, should be independent of the spirits with whom "spiritualists" tried to communicate. These spirits were "blind guides leading the blind" and contact with them was "a hindrance between God and ourselves" (p. 6).

Gandhiji looked upon his role as "that of a scavenger both literally and spiritually". "I know," he said, "the outward art of cleaning the streets, commodes and latrines, and I am endeavouring . . . to clean my inside also, so that I may become a faithful interpreter of the truth as I may see it" (p. 256). In this striving Gandhiji's greatest support had been Ramanama. "What I learnt in my childhood," he told a visitor, "has become a huge thing in my firmament. It is a sun that has brightened my darkest hour" (p. 74). To another visitor's question, "What affords you the greatest hope and satisfaction?", Gandhiji replied: "Faith in myself born of faith in God" (p. 39).

PREFACE

During the period (March 15 to July 31, 1937) covered by this volume, much of Gandhiji's energy was taken up with the question of office-acceptance by the Congress, following the general elections held under the Government of India Act of 1935. While the Congress was committed to "wrecking" the Act, it was in two minds whether it could best be done from outside or by assuming administrative responsibility in the provinces as provided in the first part of the Act. The extension of the franchise to some 35 million people had offered an opportunity for mass contact which the Congress had fully utilized. Jawaharlal Nehru, on whom, as President of the Congress, fell the lion's share in the party's election campaign, had travelled 50,000 miles by train, plane, car, cart, boat and so on, and addressed over 10 million people. As a result the Congress had secured absolute majorities in six out of the eleven provinces. The question which the party had now to face was whether to accept office in these provinces. Nehru had all along vehemently opposed such a course. He wanted the "slave constitution" to "go, lock, stock and barrel, and leave the field clear for our Constituent Assembly". On the other hand an influential section of the Congress leadership, like many of India's friends in Britain, pressed for acceptance. Anxious to avoid a split within the Congress and hoping for "the creation, by means consistent with the Congress creed of non-violence, of a situation that would transfer all power to the people," Gandhiji was inclined to support the acceptance of offices and to work them "so as to strengthen the Congress which has been shown predominantly to represent mass opinion" (p. 37).

Significantly the volume opens with a cabled assurance to Agatha Harrison: "Whatever happens breach between us impossible" (p. 1). In the Working Committee and A. I. C. C. meetings in Delhi, there were "little storms" which made Gandhiji unhappy (p. 7). But ultimately in order to reconcile conflicting points of view and also to test the British Government's real intentions, it was resolved that the Congress legislature parties in the six majority provinces could form Ministries provided "the Leader . . . is satisfied and is able to state publicly that . . . the Governor will not use his special powers of interference or set aside the advice of Ministers" (p. 4). On March 22 Gandhiji reported to Amrit Kaur: " . . . all has ended well . . . Jawaharlal rose to the highest height when

he apologized to the Committee for his speech before the Convention. The apology has brought him nearer to the Committee than anything else he has done during these anxious days" (p. 15). And on the 27th he cabled from Madras to Agatha Harrison: "Obstinacy refusing assurances will surely result deadlock. Breach Congress ranks impossible" (p. 26).

The British Government, however, rejected the demand for assurances and, once more breaking "to the heart what it has promised to the ear" (p. 38), hastily installed in office, in the six Congress majority provinces, "toy ministries" (p. 55) which could carry on interim administrations for six months without legislative support.

The controversy that developed over the demand for "assurances" covered many issues, political and constitutional —like mutual courtesy, the avoidance of deadlocks, safeguards for minorities, difference between dismissal and resignation, and so on —and it served to educate public opinion in both countries. Gandhiji, intervening occasionally in the debate and functioning as a "mediator" between the Congress and the Government, displayed all his skill and patience in creating a climate in which Indian opinion would not stand on prestige and the British Government could be "converted under moral pressure" (p. 83). While he had no set schemes and responded to the situation as it arose (p. 87), he pleaded with Nehru, "You must bear with me till my understanding becomes clear or your fears are dispelled" (p. 55) and firmly told Rajagopalachari, "I want a sign from them before I take office, and I regard that sign as indispensable" (p. 292). During the Working Committee meetings in Allahabad at the end of April, "there was no wrangling" but the discussions were "a strain" (p. 164). Little by little a new situation emerged. Both sides reinterpreted and toned down their earlier statements, the Viceroy made a conciliatory speech on June 21 and in the Working Committee meeting held in Wardha in the first week of July a resolution was passed permitting office-acceptance without insisting on a formal assurance.

Gandhiji's laconic telegram (p. 374) conveying this momentous decision to Amrit Kaur was followed a few days later by a glowing tribute to Nehru: "Jawaharlal was more than good throughout. His innate nobility asserted itself every time a difficulty cropped up. He is truly a warrior *sans peur et sans reproche*. The more I see him, the more I love him" (p. 380). Recalling the events of these three months, Gandhiji, writing to G. D. Birla, likened his condition to that of "a woman in labour" who "cannot

give expression to all the turmoil taking place within her,'' and concluded: '' . . . whatever Jawaharlal said and did in the Working Committee was marvellous. Even otherwise he held a high place in my esteem but now he has risen still higher. The beauty of it is that it is so in spite of our continuing difference of opinion'' (p. 418).

The interim Ministries promptly resigned on July 8 and shortly thereafter Congress Ministries assumed office in the Central Provinces, Madras, Bihar, Bombay, United Provinces and Orissa, to be followed later by the North West Frontier Province and Assam.

To many workers in the Gandhi Seva Sangh, Gandhiji's active interest in conventional politics was bewildering and seemed in fact to spell the end of non-co-operation. In his intimate talks at Hudli with these constructive workers he made clear the difference in function as well as the right relationship between the Congress which represented ''the millions'' and the Sangh whose members ''represent only themselves'' or ''truth and non-violence'' (p. 88). His desire was that, independently of him, ''the Sangh should always grow like a tree''. For they should worship his ideals, not him, and remove his name from the name of the Sangh and perhaps even cremate all his writings with his body (pp. 89-90). In the apparent change in his attitude, from opposition to support of Council-entry, there was, he said, no loss of principle. ''I am a worshipper of truth and I am also a servant of the people. I am affected by the atmosphere.'' Even while non-co-operating he ''was in reality a co-operator''. Co-operation had always been his religion and he would die for it provided he ''got it with honour''. And now they were going into the legislatures ''not to give but to take co-operation'' (pp. 99-100). There was a world of difference between 1930 and 1937 and Gandhiji ''never made a fetish of foolish consistency'' (p. 422).

Granting that the Councils programme was ''full of temptations'' and might often awaken ''the brute in man'' (pp. 117-8), he would still support parliamentary democracy and also insist on the pursuit of truth and non-violence in its practice (p. 118). Asserting that truth and non-violence could be organized and could become ''our collective dharma'', he claimed, ''if there is anything special about me, it is only this, that I am organizing truth and non-violence. . . . Remember that truth and non-violence are not for hermits. These eternal principles apply in courts, legislatures and other spheres of human endeavour'' (pp. 125-6).

Referring to his differences with Jawaharlal Nehru, he said: ''He mistrusts the human race a little. He says we would not

be able to do anything there," i. e., wreck the constitution through non-violence. "He therefore places his faith in class struggle. . . . I say capital is insentient, but the capitalist is not so. It is possible to change his heart. He says this has never happened before" (p. 119). Rajendra Babu, Vallabhbhai, Rajaji and others were for accepting office and using it as a means to gain swaraj, while Jawaharlal was against it. And yet they all worked together as it was a necessity. "We have to work with patriots holding views different from our own. Therefore we have to work in a spirit of co-operation and compromise" (p. 120).

For the Sangh itself there was only one programme—the constructive programme — and swaraj depended only upon that. Hence if the constructive programme could be promoted through the legislatures, Gandhiji asked, why should they not use these bodies while also working outside? The legislatures were the representatives of three crores of voters and constructive workers should "come into close contact" with them and "take from them as much as they can" (p. 122). If, in order to make this contact effective, some members of the Gandhi Seva Sangh had to enter legislatures, it became the clear duty of the Sangh to make provision for it (p. 182).

No sooner had the Congress Ministries assumed office than Gandhiji threw open the columns of *Harijan* for the "political education" of the new rulers and started a series of articles on their duties and responsibilities. In a personal letter to Jawaharlal Nehru he almost apologized for wanting, and sought his permission for continuing, "to interfere with your handling of the whole situation", but he felt that it was his "duty to write" (p. 395). Through these *Harijan* articles he advised the Ministers to preserve "rigorous simplicity" in their style of living and also to introduce it in the administration (p. 407). They had a vast opportunity now of achieving the Congress objectives if only they were "honest, selfless, industrious, vigilant and solicitous for the true welfare of the starving millions" (p. 432). He pleaded not only for prohibition as a means of "adult education", but also for higher taxation of the wealthy. Defining education as "an all-round drawing out of the best of the child and the man—body, mind and spirit", he argued that the "highest development of the mind and the soul" could be achieved by learning a handicraft not "mechanically" but "scientifically" (p. 450).

"Language acquires lucidity in the course of work. . . . harmony of thought, word and deed is the sign of truth. But ideas advance and language is left behind." Tracing his

inability to carry conviction to the vagueness of his language and this to the vagueness of his ideas, Gandhiji said: "When I meditate after giving thought to a matter my language becomes clearer and clearer" (pp. 124-5). In a long letter to Jawaharlal Nehru dealing with weighty and delicate matters, the concluding paragraph ran: "Your calling khadi the 'livery of freedom' will live as long as we speak the English language in India. . . . For me it is not merely poetry but it enunciates a great truth whose full significance we have yet to grasp" (p. 446).

Being thus well aware of the poetic as well as the mathematical use of language, Gandhiji spoke with singular authority on Vaishnava dharma, which was his chief spiritual concern as well as his chosen means for removing evil without hurting human beings. In his search for irenic, not polemic, solutions to intractable problems, he turned to truth and Hinduism, for to him religion, truth and Hinduism were "interchangeable terms" (p. 136). A discovery he had made in South Africa was the efficacy of silent, selfless service as a spiritual *sadhana* leading to the ineffable joy of shared being. This presumably was what he meant when he said, "During that battle I saw God face to face many times, so many times that even if I were a dunce I should not forget it" (p. 128). Gandhiji did not need either the prophecies or the miracles to establish Jesus's greatness as a teacher. "Nothing can be more miraculous than the three years of his ministry" (p. 82) and in this ministry Jesus preached "not a new religion, but a new life" (p. 296). "Living the life of the spirit" (p. 297), one simply spreads the perfume of one's presence without presuming to meet others' spiritual needs. "If the rose needs no agent, much less does the Gospel of Christ need any agent" (p. 80).

The source of such selfless service and spontaneous influence was the inner light which shines in every human heart. "The sun of hope dwells not outside but within oneself. Search for it there, and you will surely find it" (p. 264). One had to create in one's heart the true forest where one made friends with trees, leaves, birds and animals, learnt fearlessness and gathered knowledge to help one's neighbours (pp. 309-10).

Condemning all judging, he wrote to Mirabehn: "We must not make a fetish of our vegetarianism and be intolerant. Let us not attribute more virtue to vegetarianism than it can carry" (p. 404). He wanted individuals and groups alike "to turn the searchlight inward" (p. 318) and discover their own shortcomings and to look out only for virtues in others (pp. 186 and 206). He

therefore refused to judge Christianity as a religion; but he could not concede the missionaries' duty, which often became a right, to "convert" others (pp. 47-8). "Presentation, with a view to conversion, of a faith other than one's own, can only necessarily be through an appeal to the intellect or the stomach or both." Such conversions were for convenience only and had no spiritual value (p. 298). For him the core of Christ's teaching was the "morality of grace" taught in the Sermon on the Mount. He felt that this morality could be practised by surrender to God and would, if practised, lead to self-transcendence and social growth. He must have felt too that ardent Christians in Europe and America had enough work to do to satisfy the spiritual needs of their own people. The Travancore pilgrimage had confirmed his faith in the power of the Hindu gods to stir the hearts of the Hindus, including Harijans, and so to satisfy their spiritual needs. Hence his emphatic endorsement of Hara Dayal Nag's dictum: "If the temple untouchability is not destroyed, the temples have to be; and if temples go, with them must disappear Hinduism as we know it" (p. 180).

In order to end the cruelty of *gwalas* whose sole motive was private profit, Gandhiji suggested milk supply becoming the monopoly of a municipality "even as the postal stamp is the monopoly of the State" (p. 320).

In dealing with the Nariman episode Gandhiji made it clear that a public worker had no claim to anything (p. 412), but he added that, if the charge against Vallabhbhai was proved, he would sever his "public connection" with the latter (p. 413).

A letter (p. 427) shows that contrary to a generally-held belief, an agreement between the Congress and the Muslim League in U. P. was opposed, not by Nehru, but by Purushottamdas Tandon.

CWMG-C

PREFACE

During the period August 1, 1937, to March 31, 1938, covered in this volume, Gandhiji was in poor health. He suffered from high blood-pressure and needed "prolonged mental rest", which he hoped to have during his projected visit to the Frontier Province in November (p. 208), but he had a breakdown in Calcutta in the last week of October and had to remain there up to November 17. From December 6, 1937, to January 7, 1938, Gandhiji rested on the Juhu beach in Bombay. Writing to Amrit Kaur on January 9, he reported: "The B. P. goes down to the ideal figure but jumps up on the slightest pretext. I dare not talk or even listen to any serious conversation" (p. 331). His health improved in Segaon and he was able to attend the annual session of the Congress in February, but when, during the meeting of the Gandhi Seva Sangh at Delang in Orissa in the last week of March, he learnt that Kasturba and two other Ashram inmates had visited the famous Puri temple which was not open to Harijans, he was so upset that the blood-pressure shot up once again to an alarming level (pp. 452-3).

Gandhiji attributed his blood-pressure to his failure to live up to the teaching of the *Gita*. "My non-attachment," he explained to Ramdas Gandhi, "is less than what is meant by the *Gita*; I am full of feeling. I am always pained by anybody's suffering." One must learn to remain non-attached without ceasing to be affected by others' sufferings, and Gandhiji had not, he confessed, "mastered that art" (p. 322). To a question by Rajagopalachari why he should "put so much passion in all your talk", Gandhiji gave the same reply: "Because I have yet to learn the lesson of the *Gita* to be passionless" (p. 329). Though his love, as he told Verrier Elwin, could stand many trials (p. 64), it also made him suffer, as when an Ashram inmate who had become as a daughter to Gandhiji temporarily lost self-control and left "in a huff"; his reaction to her behaviour made him doubt the reality of his ahimsa (pp. 115 and 116). Replying to Dadabhai Naoroji's granddaughter who had been a valued co-worker for many years, Gandhiji wrote: "You may forget me, disown me, I simply cannot forget you, what shall I do?" (p. 210). He cried out with the same love to his devoted secretaries Mahadev Desai and Pyarelal when, under pressure of momentary feelings, the latter left him (p. 307) and the former threatened to

do so. " . . . I will tolerate thousands of mistakes," Gandhiji wrote to Mahadev Desai, "but I can never part with you. Even death at the hands of a *bhakta* is preferable to salvation at the hands of those who have no love for one" (p. 455).

Despite the illness and mental tension, Gandhiji continued to guide the Congress and the country. Office-acceptance under the Government of India Act of 1935 was an experiment in co-operation with the British. As Gandhiji explained to a visitor: "Many feel that any form of co-operation is a mistake. Others disagree, feeling that perhaps our objectives can best be achieved by giving ground now and then" (p. 128). Though the Act of 1935 was intended "to perpetuate British rule", Gandhiji felt that it was "at the same time a bold experiment of wooing the masses to the British side, and, failing that, a resignation to their will to reject British domination." The Congress could defeat the British intention by implementing, through both official and popular action, the constructive programme which it had adopted since 1920. It was a programme of "organized national non-violence" and Gandhiji believed that successful implementation of this programme would make the Congress irresistible and it would be "able to have its way all along the line" (pp. 104-5).

This programme of a moral and social revolution through democratic means required patient education of the public and Gandhiji set about the task through his articles in *Harijan*. Ministerships, Gandhiji stressed, were not prizes but "avenues to service" and had "to be held lightly, not tightly" (p. 16). Gandhiji expected the Congress to rule "not through the police backed by the military but through its moral authority based upon the greatest goodwill of the people" won through "the service of the people whom it seeks to represent in every one of its actions" (p. 62). And he expected the same public spirit from the critics of the Ministers. While he asserted that "it is not only a right, but a duty for any Congressman to openly criticize acts of Congress officials . . .", he also insisted that the "criticism has got to be courteous and well-informed" (pp. 155-6). "Healthy, well-informed, balanced criticism is the ozone of public life," Gandhiji said (p. 292). Gandhiji's advice to the Ministers not to rule through the police did not mean however that they should tolerate violence. "Civil liberty is not criminal liberty," Gandhiji stated emphatically. The warning was necessary because it seemed "to be assumed by some persons that" in the Congress provinces at least "individuals can say and do what they like." "Non-violence in politics," he said,

"is a new weapon in the process of evolution. Its vast possibilities are yet unexplored." Gandhiji wanted that the Congress Ministers should undertake such exploration, but if need be they should not hesitate to take police action against violent activities though only after consulting the Provincial Congress Committee or the Congress Working Committee (pp. 268-9).

In the programme of reform and reconstruction through legislation, Gandhiji gave the highest importance to education and prohibition. The two were linked as the excise revenue from liquor was then used to meet the expenditure on education. Gandhiji thought it "shameful and humiliating" that "unless we got the drink revenue, our children would be starved of their education." But the solution to this "educational puzzle", as Gandhiji called it, came to him "like a flash". It lay in freeing the children "from the incubus of learning their subjects in a foreign tongue" and in teaching them "to use their hands and feet profitably". The first reform would enable the children to go through the whole course up to the matriculation standard in seven years instead of eleven and the second would make education self-supporting by training the pupils in a productive craft (pp. 59, 118 and 192-3).

The child at the age of 14, Gandhiji argued, after finishing a seven years' course should be discharged as an earning unit. The scheme might not be completely self-supporting for the first few years, but Gandhiji believed that the total income and expenditure for all the seven years could be balanced at the end (pp. 137 and 151). Not only was self-supporting education an economic necessity for India's villages, but it could also be "the spearhead of a silent social revolution", providing "a healthy and moral basis of relationship between the city and the village" and placing "the destiny of the masses, as it were, in their own hands" (pp. 169-70). The divorce of education from manual training had taught the people to regard manual work as something inferior. The new education would correct this by promoting "inventive skill" and giving the craftsmen an independent status (pp. 138-9).

Apart from such practical considerations, however, Gandhiji's new education was based on his conception of the all-round development of the child through the exercise of his physical faculties. The whole training, he claimed, would be "natural, responsive, and therefore the quickest and the cheapest in the land" (pp. 80-1). The craft-training would not be mere mechanical work, but would be used "for drawing out the minds of boys and girls in all departments of knowledge" (p. 193), for training the pupil's "mind, his body, his handwriting, his artistic sense, and so on" (p. 138).

Gandhiji explained that what he had written about education was his personal contribution to the discussion on the subject and not the official policy of the Congress. He added, however, that he felt "most strongly about the vast injury that the existing system of education has done to the youth of the country and to the languages and general culture of India" (p. 80). His new system was intended to make the pupils the "true representatives of our culture, our civilization, of the true genius of our nation" (p. 266).

Gandhiji hailed the resolution of the Congress Working Committee calling for total prohibition in the Congress provinces within three years as "The Greatest Act" and appealed for "the sympathy and support not only of all the parties in India including the Europeans but the best mind of the whole world" in what he believed to be "perhaps the greatest moral movement of the century" (p. 82). Gandhiji, however, admitted that total prohibition could not be brought about by mere State effort. Legislation was only the first, though indispensable, step. It would have to be accompanied by an educative campaign in which Gandhiji appealed for the co-operation of teachers, doctors and others. To the standard argument that prohibition by legislation was impracticable because there was bound to be illicit distillation and secret drinking, Gandhiji replied: "Thieving will abide till doomsday. Must it therefore be licensed?" So long as the State, he argued, "not only permits but provides facilities for the addict to satisfy his craving, the reformer has little chance of success" (pp. 161-2).

Gandhiji's constructive approach to politics had to contend against the "turbulent wind" (p. 213) of agitations which had begun to blow right from the start of provincial autonomy. A virulent controversy had broken out in Bombay over the election of the Leader of the Congress legislature party and though Gandhiji offered to examine the charges levelled by K. F. Nariman against Vallabhbhai Patel and assured the former that "if I feel convinced that you have been unjustly dealt with by the Sardar, I shall unhesitatingly say so and do everything humanly possible to undo the mischief" (p. 1), the campaign continued unabated and caused Gandhiji "deep distress" (p. 39). After the allegation was inquired into by Gandhiji and Advocate D. N. Bahadurji, and Patel was exonerated, Nariman issued, on Gandhiji's advice, a public statement accepting the verdict and expressing his regret and Gandhiji hoped that the public and the Press of Bombay would "forget the past bitter and unseemly controversy that had robbed the public activity in Bombay of its usual zest" (p. 248).

But Nariman recanted the statement (p. 274) and the reconciliation for which Gandhiji laboured for four months could not be brought about.

After the Congress Ministries started functioning, they also, particularly the Madras Ministry led by C. Rajagopalachari, came under powerful attack from a section of Congressmen. Commenting in *Harijan* on the A. I. C. C. meeting criticizing the ministries, Gandhiji said, "the resolution . . . and still more the speeches, were wide of the mark." The critics, he added, had "departed from truth and non-violence." Another resolution on alleged repression in the Mysore State, Gandhiji characterized as much more "offensive" (pp. 292-3). Differences over such issues led to a crisis in the Congress Working Committee and Gandhiji advised Vallabhbhai Patel and the other members of the Committee to resign, leaving Jawaharlal Nehru, who was the President, free to select a new Committee of his own choice. The discussions were so exhausting that Gandhiji felt he could "barely keep" himself "alive" and got an attack of unusually high blood-pressure the same day (pp. 285-6 and 287). There were other symptoms, too, of violence in the air. There was trouble in a settlement of so-called "criminal" tribes near Sholapur and labour unrest in Ahmedabad and Kanpur. Gandhiji called these "Storm Signals" and wondered whether they were signs of weakness of Congress control resulting from lack of faith in "truth and non-violence, in sustained work and discipline" and "in the efficacy of the fourfold constructive programme", and he warned Congressmen that if they lacked "that political faith in the means, office-acceptance may prove to be a trap" (pp. 300-2).

While the Congress was struggling with the problems of discipline within its ranks, there appeared on the horizon another and a more menacing "storm signal". Presiding over the annual session of the Muslim League at Lucknow, M. A. Jinnah made a speech on October 15 which appeared to Gandhiji to be "a declaration of war". Replying to Gandhiji's letter "written . . . out of an anguished heart" (p. 257), Jinnah said his speech was "purely in self-defence" (p. 470), but his later pronouncements confirmed Gandhiji's first impression. "In your speeches I miss the old nationalist," Gandhiji wrote to him, and asked him "on bended knees to be what I had thought you were" (p. 350). This appeal to his heart provoked Jinnah to reply back: "Evidently, you are not acquainted with what is going on in the Congress Press—the amount of vilification, misrepresentation and falsehood that is daily spread about me . . ." (pp. 479-80). This growing spirit of violence and distrust resulted in an outbreak of

communal riots in Allahabad in March and the Government had to call out the military to quell them. Gandhiji felt ashamed that Congress Ministers should have had to do so and told co-workers, "I feel as if the Congress had lost and the British had won" (p. 410). Writing in *Harijan* under the caption "Our Failure", he asked Congressmen to face the "naked truth" that the Congress had "not yet become fit to substitute the British authority." It had not yet developed non-violence of the strong and the powerful and had not therefore made good the claim that it represented the whole of India. The Congress, Gandhiji advised, "should be able to put forth a non-violent army of volunteers numbering not a few thousands but lacs" who would, in times of peace, "be constantly engaged in constructive activities that make riots impossible" and would be "ready to cope with any emergency", risking their lives "to still the frenzy of mobs" (pp. 405-7). He poured out his heart again on the subject at the Gandhi Seva Sangh meetings in the last week of March and urged co-workers to consider how to preserve communal peace through non-violence.

Another problem which now weighed on Gandhiji's mind was that of political prisoners or detenus held for acts of violence. Gandhiji strove to generate an atmosphere of trust which would facilitate the release of all the prisoners and therefore appealed to the Andamans prisoners who had gone on hunger-strike from July 24 to give up the strike and give him an assurance that they no longer believed in terrorist methods. He also appealed to the public to hold no demonstrations when the prisoners were released (pp. 75, 101-2 and 304). On the assurance being given by the prisoners (p. 90), Gandhiji made their cause his own and during his visit to the prisoners in Alipur Jail gave them his word that he wanted to see them discharged before he died (p. 281). After long negotiations with the Bengal Government which in his then weak state of health were quite taxing, Gandhiji was able to persuade the Ministers to make a public announcement of progressive release of all the prisoners (pp. 303-5 and 472-3). Displaying a similar spirit of conciliation when a political crisis developed in Bihar and the U. P. over the release of prisoners as recommended by the Ministers and the latter resigned, Gandhiji brought about a peaceful solution after all the parties "had ample time for considering the situation" (pp. 384-5).

Gandhiji's love embraced the lower creation, too. Writing in *Harijan* in support of anti-vivisection societies in the West, he argued that alleviation of human suffering could never be "an end in itself justifying adoption of inhumanities involved in

vivisection.'' The human family must not sacrifice tenderness, for ''tenderness for others and other life,'' Gandhiji held, ''itself promotes alleviation in that it makes pain bearable'' (p. 140).

''I don't know where my ship is drifting,'' Gandhiji wrote to a correspondent after his illness in Calcutta. ''The Captain is God. . . . I am not worrying. It is bound to disappear some day. If so, why keep count of the days?'' (p. 298).

To a question how it was possible to be tolerant of people's faults even when they were quite evident, Gandhiji replied: ''I see countless faults in me every day and yet there is no limit to my tolerance of myself. . . . That is why I learnt to be tolerant of others in spite of seeing their faults'' (p. 179). This was ''tolerance'' springing from natural self-love developed through filial affection and the extension of the family attitude of mutual devotion to an ever-widening circle. And in a similar vein he wrote to Amrit Kaur: ''We must tolerate our neighbours' mannerisms, if we would love them as we would have them to love us. Who is there without his or her mannerisms, then let him or her throw the first stone. Are you? Do you know any? I know none including my poor or big self'' (p. 174).

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PREFACE

In the period covered by the present volume (April 1 to October 14, 1938) there was a heightening of the turmoil that had been building up in the country ever since the Congress took office in the provinces. There was a spurt in peasant marches and demonstrations, strikes and picketing and similar agitational activities. The States' subjects were pressing harder for responsible government and facing repression and reprisals. In the N.W.F.P., too, there was unrest, which the Frontier policy pursued by the British Government only increased, and communal riots were breaking out at many places in North India. The situation was made worse by the weakening of the Congress from within (p. 47), thanks to "the corruption and selfishness among Congressmen" and "petty bickerings", and Gandhiji wondered whether they were not "breaking up by the sheer weight of our own folly or worse" (p. 85).

All this was the cause of much distress to Gandhiji. And an occurrence of a personal nature, an involuntary discharge in waking state, turned the distress into despondency bordering on despair. The mood persisted from the middle of April to the end of June and so affected Gandhiji that his confidence in himself was shaken. He felt himself in "a Slough of Despond" and did not consider himself fit for political negotiations or any other public service (pp. 37, 38, 56 and 66). The experience was such a deep psychological shock to Gandhiji because of the paramount importance that he attached to *brahmacharya*. He had, he explained in an article in *Harijan*, "looked upon woman never as an object for satisfaction of sexual desire but always with the veneration due to my own mother," did not share the common prejudice against woman "as the source of all evil and temptation" and did not therefore follow the traditional restrictions against contact with them (p. 197), did not even feel "any embarrassment in being seen naked by a woman" (p. 117). When, therefore, he discovered a serious flaw in his *brahmacharya*, he felt, as he told Mirabehn, "as if I was hurled by God from an imaginary paradise where I had no right to be in my uncleanliness" and appealed to his "many children" to give him "a lifting hand and pull me out of the well of despair" (p. 61). Acting on her suggestion (p. 79), Gandhiji stopped from June 2, as an experiment, the personal services from women members of the

Ashram requiring physical contact with them, but the experiment showed that such contact had "not done any harm to his practice of *brahmacharya*" (p. 363) and was abandoned in September (p. 355).

Gandhiji's striving for *brahmacharya* was a part of his dedication to service through ahimsa. He was, he wrote to Amrit Kaur, "wringing my soul for adequate purity, to enable me [to] render greater service" to women "and through them to the whole of humanity". Ahimsa demanded all this (p. 156). *Brahmacharya* for Gandhiji meant "complete control over all the senses" and over thought, too, for he believed that "the vitality that is responsible for the creation of life . . . is continuously and even unconsciously dissipated by evil, or even rambling, disorderly, unwanted thoughts" and that "perfectly controlled thought is itself power of the highest potency and can become self-acting," i.e., would make his non-violence "contagious and infectious" (pp. 195-7). Gandhiji discovered that he had not acquired such control and therefore asked: "Where am I, where is my place, and how can a person subject to passion represent non-violence and truth?" (p. 58). He did not lose faith, however. Perhaps it was to be a new birth, and if so, "it must be preceded by adequate travail" (p. 69). He, therefore, even rejoiced in the pain that sometimes accompanied the labour of his search and was confident that "God who has never forsaken me is not going to do so now" (p. 73). By July 15, Gandhiji could write to Amrit Kaur: "My misery is superficial if there is any yet left. My peace cannot be permanently taken away by anything or anybody" (p. 171). This recovery was probably due to Gandhiji's practice of the *Bhagavad Gita's* teaching of non-attachment. Nothing seemed to worry him, he wrote to Mirabehn, though there were enough things to worry about (p. 391). And again to Amrit Kaur: " . . . the old devil in the shape of animal passion is at me. When he assails me, I do feel worried. But the thing will wear away. . . . It worries without disturbing me or making me morose. I seek the presence of God" (p. 416). Accepting the limitations of the human condition Gandhiji practised non-attachment even in cultivating non-attachment. " . . . I am not completely free from attachment," he wrote to a co-worker. "I aspire to be so in this life. But I will not feel sorry if I fail" (p. 287).

The volume opens with Gandhiji in Calcutta, where he had gone to try and secure the release of political prisoners and detenus who filled the jails in Calcutta, Howrah, Midnapore, Alipore,

Chittagong, Hijli and other places. For Gandhiji the release of political prisoners was "a God-sent mission" (p. 89) in the later years of his life and he declared: "They nobly responded to my call for an assurance of non-violence. I will keep my faith" (p. 397). He found the task Herculean and even his patience of a Job "was on the point of being exhausted", but he returned from Calcutta with "a ray of hope" (p. 16). After protracted correspondence between Gandhiji and the Home Minister Nazimuddin, the Government of Bengal issued a communique on the question on October 3, 1938, and though Gandhiji "gratefully" recognized that they had endeavoured to make an approach to his proposals the communique was a "severe disappointment" to him (p. 395).

Then there was the question of land reforms. Impatient spirits in the Congress were inciting the peasants to violence. In Andhra a Congress Committee openly invited the ryots of a zemindari to take possession of the land. Violence was similarly being preached to the peasants in the U.P., in prose and verse, in words of blood and thunder (p. 352), and peasant marches and demonstrations were being organized on a large scale. Gandhiji's own position was that the zemindari system "should be mended, and if it cannot be mended, it would end itself", and would "die a natural death". The "mending process" might seem very long, but, Gandhiji held, "Seemingly the longest process is often the shortest" (pp. 22-3). He endorsed the socialist theory of possession, but favoured redistribution of land by "equitable legislation" rather than by "bloody revolution" for, he argued, "It must be clear to every sane man that the act of confiscation will never last" (p. 352).

The general atmosphere in the country, however, was not favourable to such peaceful action through legislation. There were reports of growing insubordination, indiscipline and even open violence among Congressmen (p. 286), and Gandhiji was flooded with letters giving lurid accounts of the corruption that had come to characterize the functioning of the Congress at various levels (pp. 371-3 and 430-1). Critics of Congress ministries, too, indulged in "unthinkable falsehoods" and "patent inventions" (p. 353) and Gandhiji was forced to remark that "this is not civil liberty; it is criminal licence" (p. 353). A resolution which he drafted for the A.I.C.C. warned "the public that civil liberty does not cover acts of or incitement to violence or promulgation of palpable falsehoods" and stated that "the Congress will . . . support measures that may be undertaken by the Congress

Governments for the defence of life and property" (p. 368). Gandhiji warned Congressmen as well. It looked as if they had not been "able to digest the power that has come to the Congress" and, writing during the indefinite silence which he was observing and which, he said, had given him indescribable peace and enabled him "to commune with Nature", he appealed to them to listen to "the voice of silence" and preserve "the purity of the organization". "Democracy of the West," he explained, was "only so called", and if India was "to evolve the true type, there would be no compromise with violence or untruth" (pp. 303-6).

The most glaring instance of indiscipline in the Congress was provided by what came to be termed as the C. P. Ministerial crisis. There were so many allegations of malpractices on the part of Ministers that the Congress Parliamentary Board had to investigate matters and try to put things right. But the Premier Dr. N. B. Khare, in a bid to assert his independence of the Board, acted on his own and without waiting for the decision of the Congress Working Committee which was meeting soon submitted his resignation and that of some of the other Ministers, thus inviting the interference of the Governor who dismissed the Ministers who had refused to resign. The Working Committee censured Dr. Khare and held him unworthy of any position of responsibility in the Congress. Defending the action of the Committee, which was condemned by its critics as undemocratic, Gandhiji pointed out that the Congress was a democratic organization in its internal functioning but in the struggle against the British it was like an army and as such "it ceases to be democratic" (p. 225). The action against Dr. N. B. Khare served to establish the principle that though constitutionally the provinces were autonomous, their government must be subject to the control and supervision of an all-India political party without which provincial autonomy would result in political fragmentation of the country. The foundations were thus laid for a political system for free India which reconciled the claims of provincial autonomy with the need for a strong all-India political authority.

The formation of popular ministries in the provinces had given added impetus to the movement of States' people for responsible government. As Gandhiji noted: "The people of the States have begun to see a new vision of liberty. What seemed to them to be a distant goal now appears to be an event to be realized almost in no time" (pp. 348-9). This ferment gave rise

to situations of confrontation with the Rulers in many States like Mysore, Travancore, Kashmir, Jaipur, Talcher, Dhenkanal, Hyderabad and Rajkot, and the Congress, very much against its declared policy, had to become involved. The Mysore Dewan, Mirza Ismail, was "willing to listen to the advice and suggestions of friends" (p. 53) and after an initial conflict which resulted in firing on a mob by the State police, killing 32 persons and injuring 48 others, a settlement was arrived at through the mediation of Vallabhbhai Patel and J. B. Kripalani (pp. 87-8). This partial success in Mysore, however, stiffened other States against popular movements for responsible government and there was "terrible repression", with police firings, in Travancore (pp. 302-3 and 311).

The Congress policy, under Gandhiji's advice, had remained "one of friendliness to the States in the hope that they will recognize the signs of the times . . ." (p. 88). This policy of non-intervention but guidance from outside adopted at Haripura Congress (February 1938) respected the constitutional barrier between British India and the States as a political fact, and the recognition of that fact, according to Gandhiji, helped "the natural relationship" between the two parts to work itself out. "That is," he said, "the way of satyagraha or the way of non-resistance to evil." As in nature cure "the physician allows the poison to work itself out by setting in motion all the natural forces and letting them have full play", so by its resolution of non-interference "the Congress put the States people on their mettle, in other words set in motion the natural forces, i.e., the powers latent in the people themselves". But the condition of their success, Gandhiji warned, was "strictest observance of truth and non-violence" (pp. 157-8). He was aware that this could not be expected from "the rank and file", but then, he asserted, "Satyagraha cannot be launched by the rank and file. It has to be launched by responsible persons who are versed in the law of satyagraha" (p. 45). Gandhiji warned the States, too, that if they persisted in their obstinacy they would court "certain destruction" (p. 350).

After Jinnah's "declaration of war" (Vol. LXVI, p. 257) on the Congress the communal situation had been rapidly deteriorating. Communal riots were becoming frequent and it was clear that something had to be done to mend matters. There was a prolonged exchange of correspondence first between Nehru and Jinnah and then between Gandhiji and Jinnah, culminating in two meetings between Gandhiji and the League leader, the first on April 28 and the second on May 20. The talks were "cordial but not hopeful, yet not without hope" (p. 90). Jinnah, Gandhiji wrote to Amrit

Kaur, was a "tough customer" and he wondered whether "a unilateral undertaking" would "not be in the prevailing atmosphere a better mode of handling the situation" (p. 92).

In the North-West Frontier Province the situation continued to be troubled. Even after the assumption of office by the Congress under Dr. Khan Saheb there had been no let-up in the raids by Waziri tribesmen from across the frontier. So bad was the situation that Gandhiji had to make two visits to the area, a short one in May and then a longer one in October-November. Gandhiji told the Pathans that Islam believed not in "the brotherhood of Mussalmans only but. . . universal brotherhood" (p. 64) while complimenting the Khudai Khidmatgars on their discipline, cautioned them that "unless the discipline is rooted in non-violence the discipline might prove a source of infinite mischief" (p. 68).

In September came the European crisis and the Munich agreement and with that Gandhiji "plunged into the European waters" (p. 417). He called the agreement "peace without honour" and, moved by the plight of the Czechs "to the point of physical and mental distress", addressed a direct appeal to them in the columns of *Harijan* under the caption "If I Were a Czech". Pointing out that democracies would always be at a disadvantage in fighting dictators who glorified "organized murder", he advised the Czechs to free Britain and France from the obligation to defend their country and offer instead non-violent resistance. "Unarmed men, women and children," Gandhiji said, "offering non-violent resistance without any bitterness in them will be a novel experience", to Hitler "and his likes" who had hitherto "built upon their invariable experience that men yield to force" (pp. 404-5). Gandhiji refused to think that such heroism was beyond human nature and asserted: "Human nature will only find itself when it fully realizes that to be human it has to cease to be beastly or brutal" (p. 414).

The differences between Jawaharlal Nehru and Gandhiji seemed to have widened to the point of hurting him and making him feel "positively lonely". His regard for Jawaharlal became deeper for the latter's revolt, but that, Gandhiji said, only intensified "the grief of loneliness" (p. 47). The Madras Premier C. Rajagopalachari was closer to Gandhiji in his faith in the parliamentary experiment. Defending him against his critics, Gandhiji wrote: "I have boundless faith in his wisdom, his uprightness, and his unsurpassed ability as a parliamentarian among Congressmen at least. . . . I see nothing wrong in a satyagrahi winning victories without bluster, without wrangling but by conversion, by carrying conviction. . . . The greater the peaceful penetration, the greater the virtue of satyagraha" (p. 324).

Mahadev Desai was showing signs of overwork and Gandhiji was so concerned that he admonished him severely. "Don't you know," he asked, "that if you were to be disabled, I would be a bird without wings?" Curtailing work because of Mahadev's illness would be, he said, "like a stab in my heart" (p. 338). Gandhiji was so worried that even his sleep was disturbed. "Dreams are unusual for me," he wrote to Desai. "But for the last six or seven days, I have had numerous dreams and all concerning you. . . . When will these fancies about you stop?" (p. 367). What Gandhiji had feared did happen and Mahadev Desai fell very ill. Appealing to the readers to "overlook the gaps. . . in the editing of *Harijan*," Gandhiji explained: ". . . whilst I am alive *Harijan* can only be continued so long as I am able to write or Mahadev or Pyarelal can interpret me from week to week" (p. 358).

In the midst of the raging violence and all the "hatred and bitterness" that he saw around him (p. 393), Gandhiji's faith in God remained unshaken and undimmed. Answering a question he said: ". . . I am surer of His existence than of the fact that you and I are sitting in this room. . . . I may live without air and water but not without Him. You may pluck out my eyes, but that cannot kill me. You may chop off my nose, but that will not kill me. But blast my belief in God and I am dead" (p. 74). This faith in God was kept alive by Gandhiji's love of human goodness. Writing to Mahadev Desai about a Danish visitor he said: "The Danish engineer has captivated my heart. One does not come across many such frank faces" (p. 183). And again in a second letter on the same day: "The friend from Denmark seemed to me to be an excellent man. . . . his face is still before my eyes . . ." (p. 187).

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PREFACE

The opening of the present volume (October 15, 1938 to February 28, 1939) finds Gandhiji in the North-West Frontier Province, where he had gone on October 6 and stayed on till November 9 as a guest of Abdul Ghaffar Khan. Gandhiji found the sojourn restful, for the climate of the place was excellent and "the peace beyond description" (p. 22). He travelled extensively, meeting the Khudai Khidmatgars and talking to them as well as to the local population. To the Hindus, who were exposed to the frequent raids of Waziri tribesmen from across the border, he conceded the right of self-defence. "You must develop a sense of co-operation. In no case should you be guilty of cowardice," he said, "I do not want to see a single coward in India." But he offered the non-violent approach, the active practice of unilateral love, as the better alternative. "You are a community of traders. Don't leave out of your traffic that noblest and most precious merchandise, viz, love. Give to the tribesmen all the love that you are capable of, and you will have theirs in return" (p. 57). Though the Congress Ministry led by Dr. Khan Saheb had little control over the police and none over the military, he had hopes of evolving a plan under which the Khudai Khidmatgars could influence even the tribesmen with the "sweet fragrance" of their non-violence and might provide a permanent solution of the Frontier question.

In the talks to the Khudai Khidmatgars the emphasis was on non-violence and service. "A small body of determined spirits fired by an unquenchable faith in their mission can alter the course of history. It has happened before and it may again happen if the non-violence of Khudai Khidmatgars is unalloyed gold, not mere glittering tinsel" (p. 81). To be truly servants of God the Khudai Khidmatgars must accept non-violence as a living faith, for "We become godlike to the extent we realize non-violence . . . . Non-violence is like radium in its action. Even a tiny grain of true non-violence acts in a silent, subtle, unseen way and leavens the whole society" (p. 29). How were the Khudai Khidmatgars to serve God? By serving His creation, said Gandhiji. "To relieve the distress of the unemployed by providing them work, to tend the sick, to wean people from their insanitary habits, to educate them in cleanliness and healthy

living should be the job of a Khudai Khidmatgar'' (p. 43). ''For God took and needed no personal service. He served His creatures without demanding any service for Himself in return. . . . Therefore servants of God were to be known by the service they rendered to His creatures'' (p. 117).

But while Gandhiji exhorted the Red Shirts and the people to cultivate the strength that came from non-violence and meet the menace of the raids, he squarely blamed the policy pursued by the British for the raids continuing. He said: ''Continuation of the raids is in my opinion a proof of British failure in this part of India. Their Frontier policy has cost the country crores of rupees and thousands of lives have been sacrificed . . . life and property are not secure in most parts of the province'' (pp. 55-6).

The volume witnesses also an intensification of the struggle of the States' people for responsible government. Attributing this awakening to the time spirit rather than the influence of the Congress, Gandhiji invited the Princes and their advisers to recognize the people's demand as legitimate and added: ''There is no halfway house between total extinction of the States and the Princes making their people responsible for the administration of their States and themselves becoming trustees for the people, taking an earned commission for their labours . . . And if the Princes believe that the good of the people is also their good, they would gratefully seek and accept the Congress assistance'' (pp. 151-3). He further reminded the ruling chiefs that ''if they are straight and if they have their people really at their back, they have nothing to fear from the Residents. Indeed they should realize that the Paramount Power resides not in Simla, not in Whitehall, but in their people'' (p. 275).

The upsurge was particularly active in Travancore, Rajkot, Jaipur, Hyderabad and certain states of Orissa. The Rulers everywhere, instead of welcoming this mass awakening amongst their people and making them participants in the ordering of the States' affairs, sought to crush it and, what is more, were encouraged in their ways by the Paramount Power. Thus, following the assassination of a British Political Agent, Ranpur, a small Orissa State, became, as Gandhiji noted, ''a howling wilderness''. He added: ''The people, both innocent and guilty, are in hiding. They have deserted their homes in order to escape repression. . . . The technique of frightfulness is no doubt being applied and the whole of India has to be helpless witness to it'' (pp. 301-2).

In State after State—Limbdi, Rajkot, Dhenkanal—it was the same story of ''fiendish cruelty exercised by the State myrmidons

under the shadow of the police supplied by the Paramount Power'' (p. 152). There was, on occasion, even firing by police, resulting in many deaths. No less than 26,000 out of a population of 75,000 had to leave Talcher and take shelter in British Orissa.

In Rajkot, where the movement for responsible government was guided by Vallabhbhai Patel, a settlement was arrived at with the Thakore Saheb, which the latter did not respect. Imprisonments and harassment of the detenus in jail and ''organized goondaism by Regency Police'' (p. 366) continued. Kasturba felt impelled to join the satyagraha. She could not be ''unconcerned in a struggle in which so many reliable co-workers are involved,'' wrote Gandhiji. ''Satyagraha is a struggle in which the oldest and the weakest in body may take part, if they have stout hearts'' (p. 387). There was no abatement of the repression and Gandhiji found it necessary himself to pay a visit to Rajkot ''as a messenger of peace'', and the volume ends with Gandhiji hoping, vainly as he was soon to find out, ''that there will be an honourable settlement'' (p. 466).

In Travancore the repression was systematic and ruthless. There were large-scale arrests, indiscriminate firing, confiscation of property and gagging of newspapers. Gandhiji advised the State Congress leaders to concentrate on the demand for responsible government, thus inviting from the Christians the charge that he was partial to the Hindu Dewan. Gandhiji said: ''My conscience is quite clear . . . I have been against the mixing up of the struggle for responsible government with the charges against the Dewan . . . if they insisted on responsible government, there was no meaning in proceeding with the charges. It would divide the country's attention . . . '' (p. 288). The satyagraha in the state remained suspended, under Gandhiji's advice, during the period of this volume. In Jaipur the Praja Mandal was banned. Gandhiji wrote to the Viceroy: ''Can a State suppress free speech, meetings and the like and expect the Paramount Power to help it in doing so, if the afflicted people carry on a non-violent agitation for the natural freedom to which every human being in a decent society is entitled?'' (p. 331).

While suppression of the popular movement was the general rule, instances were not lacking of enlightened Princes here and there going half way to meet the legitimate aspirations of their people. In Ramdurg, Jamkhandi, Miraj and Aundh, people secured liberal concessions from their Princes and in such cases Gandhi impressed upon the States People's organizations to be restrained in their demands. Commenting on the literacy

qualification for the franchise (proposed in the Aundh constitution) Gandhiji argued that the vote should be regarded as a privilege and should therefore carry some qualification and that this condition for the franchise would help the spread of literacy (p. 292). When there were reports that the Ramdurg Praja Sangh wanted to "terrorize the Ruler into making further concessions" (p. 455) Gandhiji did not approve. He said: "It may be that the claim is intrinsically sound. But they cannot enforce it by rowdyism and threats . . . The representative Congressmen in Karnatak have to stand by the Ramdurg Chief and see that the settlement is honoured by the people even though in battling with them they should lose their lives" (p. 456).

The period was also marked by a further sharpening of the conflict in the industrial as well as agrarian spheres. There were strikes and lock-outs and kisan marches and demonstrations were becoming a common feature, frequently with Congressmen leading them. There was violence in the air. Gandhiji noted: "Bihar ministers live in perpetual dread of kisan risings and kisan marches. Only two days ago I had a wire from Khandesh of a contemplated march to the Collector's bungalow by kisans headed by a well-known Congress worker" (p. 321). Gandhiji saw in this the sign of internal decay and warned: "Out of the present condition of the Congress I see nothing but anarchy and red ruin in front of the country. Shall we face the harsh truth at Tripuri?" (p. 321)

Things however did not go quite as Gandhiji had hoped and, with the election of Subhas Bose as president, the Congress leadership passed into the hands of sections that did not wholly "approve of the principles and policy" for which Gandhiji stood. Gandhiji "rejoiced" in the defeat and called upon the "minority" to give themselves up to the real work of the Congress which was the constructive programme with khadi as its centre. Jawaharlal Nehru had called khadi "the livery of freedom" and Gandhiji said: "To wear khadi is to me to wear freedom. . . . Freedom is never dear at any price. It is the breath of life. What would a man not pay for living?" Khadi alone provided "dignified labour to the millions who are otherwise idle for nearly four months in the year . . . if millions live in compulsory idleness, they must die spiritually, mentally and physically" (p. 174). Again he said, "To those who are hungry and unemployed, God can dare reveal Himself only as work and wages and the assurance of food" (p. 447). The constructive programme was an instrument of permanent value, whereas civil

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disobedience was limited in scope and "required suspension as the occasion demanded" (p. 200). Constructive work was "the permanent arm" of the Swaraj Movement; civil disobedience was remedial and therefore in its nature temporary. Suspension of civil disobedience doubled the importance of the constructive programme (pp. 243-4).

He assured some Christian missionaries that there was nothing passive about his non-violence which was, in fact, "the activest force in the world" (p. 202). Again he told Lord Lothian: "Constitutional or democratic government is a distant dream so long as non-violence is not recognized as a living force, an inviolable creed, not a mere policy" (p. 390).

Gandhiji also continued to voice his concern at Japan's depredations in China and Hitlerite Germany's persecution of the Jews. But his sympathy and admiration for the Jews did not "blind" him to the requirements of justice. He said: "The cry for the national home for the Jews does not make much appeal to me. . . . Why should they not, like other peoples of the earth, make that country their home where they are born and where they earn their livelihood? . . . Palestine belongs to the Arabs in the same sense that England belongs to the English or France to the French. It is wrong and inhuman to impose the Jews on the Arabs . . . it would be a crime against humanity to reduce the proud Arabs so that Palestine can be restored to the Jews . . ." (p. 137). From the chosen race, whose gifts he extolled, he expected nothing less than exemplary non-violence (pp. 137-41).

To meet Nazi tyranny, too, he advised the Jews to resort to non-violence. "I am convinced," he said, "That if someone with courage and vision can arise among them to lead them in non-violent action, the winter of their despair can in the twinkling of an eye be turned into the summer of hope" (p. 140). Non-violent people would know no fear and would neither submit nor cringe to the dictator nor bear any grudge against him; they would only pity him (p. 252). To critics who argued that such non-violence was attainable only by very few highly developed individuals his answer was: "Given proper training and proper generalship non-violence can be practised by masses of mankind" (p. 192). He similarly advised the Chinese that while they should resist aggression they should not hate the Japanese but love them. He said: "It is not enough to love them by remembering their virtues" (p. 269). Gandhiji was convinced that the world's problems could be solved only through love and non-violence—which was "the law of our life—individual, social, political, national

and international'' (p. 390). He realized that just then violence everywhere had the upper hand but he was undaunted, his faith being ''brightest in the midst of impenetrable darkness'' (p. 391).

Gandhiji was certain the world would take to the way of non-violence only when India developed this quality, but his own impurity, in his humility he thought, was probably the chief stumbling-block in the way of that hope being fulfilled. He wrote in a letter: ''My word has lost its power as it appears to me. . . . However I push on in faith. I must detach myself from the results of my thought, word or deed. I am not going to judge myself and condemn me to inactivity because I cannot get rid of the impurity in spite of incessant effort'' (p. 49). His great yearning was ''to reach the condition of Shukadevji'' (p. 250). His way of getting rid of impurity was the way of silence and prayer to which he gave himself up more and more. He told a Christian missionary: ''Nowadays I go into silence at prayer time every evening and break it for visitors at 2 o'clock. . . . It has now become both a physical and spiritual necessity for me'' (p. 173).

He also clarified his ideas on the subject of machine production. Asked if he was against large-scale production he said: ''I never said that. The belief is one of the many superstitions about me. . . . What I am against is large-scale production of things villagers can produce without difficulty'' (p. 258). Similarly ''the proper function of cities is to serve as clearing houses for village products'' (p. 259).

About prayer: ''Prayer is an intense longing to have communion with our Maker. It is an effort not of the intellect but of the heart'' (p. 100). Gandhiji's estimate of his own spiritual status was truly modest. In a letter to an admirer (p. 40), he said, ''I am an aspirant while they (Ramana Maharshi and Sri Aurobindo) are known to be, and perhaps are, realized souls.'' In fact he claimed that when God guides one, one should not, need not, indeed cannot, think (p. 461). On this account of the thought-free state, Ramana Maharshi's comment (p. 489) concludes with the assertion, ''Gandhiji's *Satya* is only the Self''. His belief in the manifestation of God in deed rather than in thought, word, vision or a person, comes out clearly in the conversation with Dr. Mott (p. 171). After describing the creative experience at Maritzburg railway station, Gandhiji declared, ''I have seen and believe that God never appears to you in person, but in action which can only account for your deliverance in your darkest hour.''

PREFACE

This volume which covers the period of four and a half months from March 1 to July 15, 1939, deals with two main questions: the popular demand for reforms in princely States and the crisis in the Congress leadership arising from Subhas Bose's impatience and Gandhiji's own conviction that the Congress had first to be strengthened and purified "so as to make it an effective vehicle for launching nation-wide satyagraha" (p. 361). The Paramount Power as well as the Princes, who had shown some readiness to join the Federation, had to be told gently but clearly that autocratic rule could not survive in the States side by side with responsible government in the provinces.

Gandhiji's personal involvement in States politics came in the wake of the movement for reforms in Rajkot, a tiny Kathiawar principality where Karamchand Gandhi had once served as Dewan and both Mohandas and Kasturba had spent their early years. The agitation led by Vallabhbhai Patel had come to an apparently successful end when the Thakore Saheb agreed to constitute a Committee of ten members, seven to be recommended by Vallabhbhai Patel and three others—officials—to be nominated by the Ruler himself. But the Thakore did not honour the agreement and, contending that he was not bound by Vallabhbhai's recommendations, without reference to him nominated four persons of his own choice to the Committee on the pretext of giving representation to the minorities, namely, Muslims, Bhayats and Harijans. The breach of agreement aroused widespread resentment and civil disobedience resulted in the imprisonment of Kasturba and Manibehn Patel. Hearing reports of repression and ill-treatment of prisoners, Gandhiji left for Rajkot on February 25 to plead with the Thakore Saheb to repair the breach of faith (Vol. LXVIII). He asked Vallabhbhai Patel to suspend civil disobedience while he himself set out on this "mission of peace".

Soon after his arrival in Rajkot on February 28, Gandhiji visited the jails and discovered for himself the severity of the repressive measures adopted by the State authorities. Realizing that "the basest human passions would be let loose if" he "allowed civil resistance to go on from day to day" (p. 34), he was impelled by an "inner urge that brooked no denial" (p. 11) to go on an indefinite fast after sending an ultimatum to the Thakore (pp. 2-5).

The Prince's answer, which arrived minutes after the fast began on March 3, only added "fuel to the fire" (p. 14). The fast having begun, Gandhiji "passed into his haven of unperturbed calm and slept peacefully and long in the afternoon," as reported by Pyarelal. But the resolve which gave him "indescribable peace and spiritual exultation" (p. 31) had a contrary effect on his co-workers and friends. Rabindranath Tagore, Rajagopalachari, Andrews, Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Amrit Kaur and Mirabehn were among those who pleaded with him to have mercy upon himself and give up the fast. The following morning Gandhiji dictated a letter to E. C. Gibson, the Resident, requesting him to transmit a message to the Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, calling for "immediate intervention . . . so as to induce fulfilment of the promise made by the Thakore Saheb" (p. 22). The Viceroy's reply, received on the morning of March 7, suggested that the Chief Justice of India, Sir Maurice Gwyer, be requested to interpret the terms of the Thakore Saheb's letter to Vallabhbhai Patel "about the manner in which the Committee should be composed" (p. 445). To Gandhiji this seemed to "provide a basis for breaking the fast" (p. 32), which he actually did at 2 p.m. on March 7, after assuring himself of the Thakore Saheb's "immediate order for the release of prisoners" (p. 33).

Gandhiji dictated a long statement attributing the "good ending" to the prayers of millions but regarding the Viceroy "politically speaking . . . responsible for the settlement" (p. 33). Taking temporary leave of Rajkot, he advised the people to do their duty as citizens and assured them that in people's swaraj rights came, when needed, for better performance of duty (p. 52). He wanted every man and woman to get trained on these lines in order to achieve responsible government while he would meet the Viceroy and help to remove the "air of unreality about the freedom to come" (p. 66). Gandhiji returned to Rajkot on April 9, after a three-week stay in Delhi, morally fortified by Maurice Gwyer's Award upholding the stand taken by him that the Thakore was bound to appoint the seven nominees recommended by Vallabhbhai Patel. The Viceroy had further "undertaken to be responsible for the actions of the Thakore" and assured Gandhiji that he would "implement that promise to the full" (p. 115).

But the Thakore and his adviser Virawala had other plans and created endless difficulties by refusing to co-operate with Gandhiji in accommodating the representatives of the Muslims, the Bhayats and the Depressed Classes which he, the Thakore, had previously announced in violation of the Notification of December 26, 1938.

Gandhiji suggested enlargement of the Committee from ten to fourteen provided Vallabhbhai's nominees were raised from seven to eight so as to give them a bare majority of one (p. 124). The Ruler rejected the suggestion. Gandhiji then offered to include three of the four representatives of Muslims and Bhayats in Vallabhbhai's list provided they agreed to work as a team with the other nominees of Vallabhbhai. This offer also was rejected and Gandhiji was charged with breach of promise by both the Muslims and the Bhayats, (pp. 137-9 and 169). A hostile demonstration by the Bhayats at his prayer meeting on April 16 caused Gandhiji intense pain. On April 20, in the course of an interview with Gibson, Gandhiji made a "sporting offer", which he later confessed was "born of despair" as he was tired of "fighting unseen forces in Rajkot" (p. 158). The offer was that the Rajkot Rajakiya Praja Parishad should withdraw altogether from the proposed Committee and the Thakore should nominate all the members, but if the constitution framed by this Committee was not in terms of the Notification, the seven nominees of Vallabhbhai Patel could submit a dissenting report for final decision by the Chief Justice of India. Gandhiji did not even consult his colleagues before committing himself. There seemed to be no way out of the "hopeless unreality of the situation" (p. 159).

The Thakore rejected even this offer. Speaking to the Parishad workers before his departure for Brindaban (Bihar), where the Gandhi Seva Sangh was to meet, Gandhiji confessed his defeat and attributed it to moral failings, after "holding a silent court of enquiry within" (p. 163). He had discovered in Virawala extreme contempt for the Parishad people. But genuine satyagraha based on perfect non-violence "should never excite contempt in the opponent even when it fails to command regard or respect" (p. 165). He therefore urged them to "drain to the last the bitter cup of personal indignities and humiliations" (p. 166), and tell Virawala that they would relieve Gandhiji as well as the Viceroy of all responsibility and would rely on him to implement the Notification of December 26, 1938.

On the train to Bombay on April 24, Gandhiji issued a statement recalling how Virawala had met his "sporting offer" with the retort, "But if you are not satisfied . . . you want to have the report and dissent examined by the Hon. the Chief Justice . . . Why not trust His Highness and his adviser through and through?" These words suddenly illumined to Gandhiji his "imperfect handling of ahimsa" (p. 170) and so he told Virawala, "I am defeated. May you win" (p. 171).

Returning to Rajkot from the Gandhi Seva Sangh meetings at Brindaban, Gandhiji explained to co-workers the new light he had perceived and said, "My legal position was correct. But ahimsa does not go by legal rights. . . . I must be content to plod on with infinite patience. It is no mango trick . . . I am resolved to try and exhaust every resource of satyagraha to convert Durbar Virawala" (pp. 256-7). He had realized that it was his moral weakness that had prompted him to appeal to the Paramount Power and seek "adventitious aid" unbecoming of a true satyagrahi, and, therefore, wished to renounce the Award (p. 267). He took the "momentous decision" at six o'clock on the evening of May 17. Writing in *Harijan*, Gandhiji apologized to the Viceroy and Sir Maurice Gwyer for having in his weakness thrust on them a needless burden. He admitted that "in common with my co-workers, I have harboured evil thoughts " about Virawala, and further declared: "Let it be said to my discredit that I have been guilty of playing what may be called a double game. . . . Only trust can beget trust. . . . My faith in the sovereign efficacy of ahimsa burns brighter for my confession and repentance" (pp. 270-1).

Gandhiji felt that he owed it to Virawala to remove the offence of securing the Award over his head and he was ready to do "anything short of sacrificing my sense of self-respect or honour." Soon the opportunity for such atonement came to him in the form of an invitation to attend a Durbar at the Rajkot palace. He accepted it because "he who atones for sins never calculates; he pours out the whole essence of his contrite heart". By attending the Durbar Gandhiji had only obeyed the Biblical injunction: "Whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain" (p. 287). However, the morality of grace which Gandhiji taught and tried himself to practise did not supersede the ordinary morality of one's station and its duties. His renunciation, he thought, "should act as a double spur to the Viceregal duty of seeing that the Rajkot Notification was carried out," and he declared his belief that "the most spiritual act is the most practical in the true sense of the term" (p. 376).

To friends who complained that he was disturbing national life without notice by going to Rajkot instead of attending the momentous Congress session at Tripuri, Gandhiji's answer was that Tripuri was a preparation but Rajkot was a skirmish (p. 118) and that in Tripuri there were "leaders as courageous, as self-sacrificing and as devoted" as himself (p. 36). But these leaders were divided against one another and a grave crisis erupted at Tripuri over the issue of the future direction of Congress policy. Since Subhas

Bose's election as Congress President had been widely interpreted to mean rejection of the policy hitherto followed by the Congress under Gandhiji's guidance, Pandit G. B. Pant moved a resolution expressing confidence in the old Working Committee and calling on the President to form a new Working Committee "in accordance with Gandhiji's wishes". But the differences between Bose on the one hand and the other members of the old Committee and Gandhiji on the other were so wide that Gandhiji saw no possibility of bridging them and he, therefore, advised Bose to form his own Working Committee and seek approval of the A. I. C. C. for his programme, and, if it was not accepted, to resign (pp. 96-7). Bose resigned at the A. I. C. C. meeting at Calcutta on April 29, 1939, and on May 3 formed a new group called the Forward Bloc.

The difference between Gandhiji and Bose related to Bose's insistence on giving six months' ultimatum to the British Government and starting mass action after its expiry. Gandhiji saw no atmosphere in the country for non-violent mass action (pp. 97, 126 and 279) and felt that "any mass movement . . . undertaken at the present moment in the name of non-violence . . . will bring discredit on the Congress" and "spell disaster for the Congress struggle for independence . . ."(p. 390). He even pleaded guilty "to being over-confident and hasty in launching previous civil disobedience campaigns" (p. 102) and felt that he had made "unlawful compromises" with himself in having been "satisfied with mere abstention from physical violence" (p. 314). Gandhiji's attitude to the States' people's struggle was marked by similar caution. In Travancore, Jaipur, Mewar and other States, Gandhiji advised suspension of civil disobedience because the workers had been lax in observing "the unexciting rules of preparation", in going through the necessary stages of plodding (pp. 102-3). Another very important reason was the need to avoid "brutalization of human nature" (p. 323) and also popular violence, no matter how caused or by whom instigated. To this general policy of suspending civil disobedience there were two provisos. First the "reign of law" had to replace, however gradually, the "reign of a person or persons, however well-meaning they may be" (p. 324). To enable this gradual transfer of power by peaceful means and by consent, the States' people could lower their immediate demands, not out of weakness, but only so as really to hasten their progress to their goal. "Civil liberty consistent with the observance of non-violence is the first step towards swaraj. It is the breath of political and social life. It is the foundation of freedom. There is no room there for dilution or compromise. It is the water of life. I have never heard of water

being diluted'' (p. 356). Secondly in order to create the atmosphere of non-violence (p. 217), the one thing needful was persistence in the constructive programme. Every satyagrahi should ''keep a regular diary and account for every minute of his time in terms of constructive service'' (p. 8). People could be knit together in a common bond only by silent service (p. 75).

At the meeting of the Gandhi Seva Sangh, Gandhiji spoke out his mind frankly on many vexed problems. Rajkot, which was still very much of a problem, was proving for him ''the wonderful laboratory of pure non-violence'' (p. 193). Between Bose and himself the differences of opinion were not personal at all, but great and fundamental, as they related to the resources and the training in discipline and non-violence needed for the struggle (p. 210). The differences between himself and Jawaharlal were not so significant; anyhow their hearts were one. ''Without him I feel myself crippled. He also feels more or less the same way'' (p. 211). On tolerance in politics, he said, ''Let us look upon the faults of our colleagues . . . as bits of straw or dust particles and get on with them; let us see our own faults as mountains'' (p. 194). Again, we should look with equal eye on moderates and radicals, seeing our dharma with our eyes and their dharma with theirs. ''We must emphasize the points on which there is agreement. We should not stress the points of difference'' (p. 212). As for the spread of Gandhian thought, it could not be done through books but only ''through being lived''. A living example would be more valuable than a million books. ''Intellectual growth of a satyagrahi depends on his following his principles. . . . There should be unity between mind and heart. When the mind and heart are united, we become unconquerable. The mind acquires the power to solve all questions'' (p. 199). Gandhiji emphasized that the path of satyagraha was closed to those who lacked the inner strength of faith in God or faith in the *atman* (pp. 226-7). No one really lacked this faith. ''For everyone has faith in himself and that multiplied to the NTH degree is God'' (p. 88).

When the celebrated Meenakshi Temple was formally thrown open to Harijans on July 8 and the news reached Gandhiji in Abbottabad, he welcomed the event and lauded the reform as even more significant than the famous Travancore Proclamation of 1936, as the change in Madurai had been ''brought about by the popular will and reflected a decided conversion of the temple-goers'' (p. 422).

Satyagraha was the active pursuit of irenic ends by non-violent means. Non-co-operation, Gandhiji told Agatha Harrison, was only a method of meeting the opponent in order to convert him

and secure his co-operation consistently with truth and justice. The technique sought to liquidate antagonism but not the antagonist himself (p. 41). Gandhiji was ever ready to concede that "there may be a different way and a better way than mine of doing a thing" (p. 256). He said: "There is always a saving clause about all my advice. No one need follow it unless it appeals to his head and heart. No one who has honestly the inner call need be deterred from obeying it because of my advice" (p. 401). The best should not become an enemy of the good and non-violence of courage. The last thing he wanted was that our people should be turned into cowards. He would far rather that people "died bravely dealing a blow and receiving a blow than died in abject terror" (p. 313). Cowardice was far worse than violence and he urged "every believer in ahimsa to see that cowardice is not propagated in the name of non-violence" (p. 316). Speaking about the unfailing power of ahimsa, Gandhiji said: ". . . there are chords in every human heart. If we only know how to strike the right chord, we bring out the music" (p. 257).

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PREFACE

The constitutional experiment which, under Gandhiji's advice, the Congress had begun in July 1937 came to an abrupt end during the period of this volume (July 16 to November 30, 1939). With the outbreak of World War II, the national leadership was faced with the tragic dilemma of having to help the British in a war for the preservation of their Empire or, by refusing co-operation, appear to be helping the Fascist Powers. Gandhiji saw the conflict in the larger moral perspective. As the European crisis was deepening, he had, in a letter addressed to Hitler (which, however, was not forwarded by the British Government in India), appealed to him to prevent "a war which may reduce humanity to the savage state" (p. 21), and when the war broke out he was filled with "horror". Convinced that non-violence was the only force that could save humanity, he resolved to play his part. "We are both actors in and spectators of the drama", he said, and took the stand that his guidance, whether of the Working Committee or the Government, should have "the deliberate purpose of taking either or both along the path of non-violence, be the step ever so imperceptible" (pp. 204-5).

Gandhiji's first public reaction to the catastrophe expressed the depth of his human concern. After his interview with the Viceroy on September 4, he said in a Press statement: ". . . as I was picturing before him the Houses of Parliament and the Westminster Abbey and their possible destruction, I broke down. . . . I am not therefore just now thinking of India's deliverance. It will come, but what will it be worth if England and France fall, or if they come out victorious over Germany ruined and humbled?" (p. 162).

This larger human concern determined Gandhiji's view of the policy the Congress should adopt. He had come to the conclusion that Hitler was responsible for the war (p. 170). Though he had fought the British Government in India for twenty years, his sympathies were now wholly with the Allies, as he recognized that the war was one "between such democracy as the West has evolved and totalitarianism as it is typified in Herr Hitler" (p. 204). He therefore advised the Congress to give unconditional moral support to the British (pp. 175 and 311). Such support, Gandhiji explained to a British pacifist, "will lift the Allied cause

to a high moral plane and the Congress influence will be effectively used in the cause of peace." It would be the special business of the Congress "to see that, if the war is fought to a finish, no humiliation is heaped upon the vanquished" (pp. 257-8). That was the role he had conceived for the Congress. But the Congress would acquire such moral authority only if it adopted non-violence as its creed and policy, discarding violence even for defending the country against external aggression. "For India to enter into the race for armaments," Gandhiji argued, "is to court suicide. With the loss of India to non-violence the last hope of the world will be gone" (p. 245).

The Congress, however, as a political organization claiming to represent the whole country, could not subscribe to non-violence as a creed, nor could it accept Gandhiji's suggestion of unconditional moral support to the British. There were many leaders in the country who did not favour such a course because they distrusted British professions about fighting for democracy. The Congress Working Committee, therefore, after prolonged discussions lasting over four days, passed on September 14 a resolution drafted by Jawaharlal Nehru declaring their intention not to "associate themselves or offer any co-operation in a war which is conducted on imperialist lines and which is meant to consolidate imperialism in India and elsewhere" and inviting the British Government to declare their war aims and to state how they "are going to apply to India and to be given effect to in the present" (p. 412). In reply, the Viceroy merely reiterated the British Government's intention to help India "attain its due place among our Dominions", promised some modifications in the Government of India Act of 1935 after "consultation with representatives of the several communities, parties and interests, in India, and with the Indian Princes," and offered to set up "a consultative group, representative of all major political parties in British India and of the Indian Princes" (pp. 416,417 and 418). Gandhiji characterized the declaration as "profoundly disappointing" (p. 267). The subsequent debates in the two Houses of Parliament and Sir Samuel Hoare's speech in the House of Commons convinced him of "the prudence of the course adopted by the Working Committee" (p. 311) in asking for a declaration of the British Government's war aims.

The British approach to the Indian problem was concerned mainly with the protection of certain sectional interests, British and Indian, rather than with evolving a constitutional set-up which would allow free play to the influence of the masses in

creating a truly democratic, just and unified society in India. The Working Committee resolution of September 14 had asked for the establishment of "full democracy in India" and the exercise by the Indian people of "the right of self-determination by framing their own constitution through a Constituent Assembly without external interference" (p. 411). The demand was summarized by Lord Zetland, the Secretary of State for India, to mean "that His Majesty's Government will raise no opposition to her future form of Government being determined, without their intervention, by a Constituent Assembly called upon the widest possible basis of franchise and by agreement in regard to communal representation". Lord Zetland stated emphatically that the British Government found it "impossible to accept this position" and explained that "the long standing British connection with India has left His Majesty's Government with obligations towards her which it is impossible for them to shed" (p. 431). These obligations related to the Princes, the European commercial interests and the minorities. In regard to the Princes, the Working Committee resolution had pertinently pointed out that the Princes, despite their "professions in favour of democracy abroad", were averse to "the introduction of democracy within their own States in which today undiluted autocracy reigns supreme" (p. 411). Here was an obligation to the people which the Paramount Power had never cared to persuade or encourage the Princes to fulfil. Gandhiji also pointed out that "Great Britain's position as the self-constituted guardian of democracy is compromised so long as it has more than 500 autocrats as its allies" (p. 228). The European commercial interests were "an imposition protected by the British bayonet", and Gandhiji declared that "a free India will claim to examine every European interest on its merit, and that which conflicts with the national interest will go by the board" (p. 317).

Well aware of the weakness of their case in regard to the Princes and the European interests, British spokesmen chose to play up the minorities' problem though, as admitted by Lord Zetland, the Constituent Assembly demanded by the Congress was to be summoned "by agreement in regard to communal representation" (p. 431). In vain did Gandhiji plead that "there can only be political parties and no majority or minority communities", that the "cry of the tyranny of the majority is a fictitious cry", for "Hinduism is an elastic, indefinable term, and Hindus are not a homogeneous whole like Muslims and Christians." And in any case Hindu majority was only "a paper majority . . . ineffective because

. . . weak in the military sense.'' The ''so-called minorities' fear,'' Gandhiji argued with surprising insight into the reality of the Indian situation, ''has some bottom only so long as the weak majority has the backing of the British bayonets to enable it to play at democracy'' (pp. 259, 260 and 261). Sir Samuel Hoare's division of India into ''Congress India and non-Congress India'' therefore meant in effect division into ''armed India and unarmed India'' and a declaration that ''India's battle for freedom cannot be won till unarmed India has come to terms with armed India including. . . the British Government'' (p. 318). The real question, which British spokesmen were evading, was ''whether it is right for Britain to plead these rivalries in defence of holding India under subjection'' (p. 259). ''Is it right,'' Gandhiji asked, ''to invite people to say whether they want freedom or not? Should a slave be consulted as to the desirability of his freedom?'' (p. 280) In other words, what was wanted was ''a declaration of Britain's intention regarding her Indian policy irrespective of India's wishes'' (p. 337). But such a decision, as Gandhiji had pointed out in his Press statement on the Working Committee resolution of September 14, ''required . . . a mental revolution on the part of British statesmen'' (p. 176). That is, as Gandhiji put it later in another statement, ''If imperialism is dead, there must be a clear break with the past. Language suited to the new era has to be used'' (p. 336).

But British statesmen were not yet ready for such a ''mental revolution'', with tragic consequences for the peace and well-being of the sub-continent. Thus by their own action or inaction the British Government had made it impossible for the Congress to co-operate with them in the prosecution of the war. And yet Gandhiji held strongly that the Congress ''must not embarrass them in its prosecution'' (p. 316). He believed in the Viceroy Lord Linlithgow's sincerity. He believed he had developed with him a friendship that would ''bear the strain of differences of opinion that may arise among us'' (p. 293). Gandhiji would not therefore contemplate civil disobedience as long as the Viceroy was exploring the possibilities of a settlement (p. 337). He was convinced that both the Viceroy and the Secretary of State were in error, but, believing in their honesty, he wanted to ''give them time to collect themselves'' and meanwhile, he suggested, ''we must do real propaganda by way of educating the public both here and abroad'' (p. 389). Other reasons for Gandhiji's unwillingness to launch civil disobedience were the opposition of the Muslim League and the ''indiscipline and disunity in Congress ranks'' (p. 337). The Muslim League looked upon the Congress

as an enemy of the Muslims and Congressmen lacked the strength of true non-violence to be able to disarm their opposition. Their non-violence against the British was in "effect violence in suspension or inactive violence". And violence was "resorted to by rival Congressmen at Congress meetings" and the "gross indiscipline and fraud practised at Congress elections" were also "illustrations of Congress violence" (p. 265). Gandhiji was so sensitive to this atmosphere of violence that he felt he "was walking on a mine" (p. 374). He feared that civil disobedience in such an atmosphere would lead to "Hindu-Muslim riots" (p. 315). Stressing the dangers of hasty action he said, "I am painfully conscious of the fact that India is not yet ready for non-violent civil disobedience on a mass scale. If, therefore, I cannot persuade the Congress to await the time when non-violent action is possible, I have no desire to live to see a dog-fight between the two communities. I know for certain that if I cannot discover a method of non-violent action or inaction to the satisfaction of the Congress and there is no communal adjustment, nothing on earth can prevent an outbreak of violence resulting for the time being in anarchy and red ruin" (p. 364). "I do not desire anarchy in the country", Gandhiji had said. "Independence will never come through it" (p. 316). The only "way to disarm this communal suspicion," Gandhiji believed, was "not to offer civil disobedience in terms of swaraj" (p. 323).

All Congress leaders did not share Gandhiji's fears. Subhas Bose had since the beginning of the year been advocating mass action at the earliest opportunity, and the differences between him and Gandhiji on this question had led to Bose's resignation as Congress President in May (Vol. LXIX). Subsequent events had forced the Working Committee to take action against Bose for what it considered to be a "deliberate and flagrant breach of discipline" (p. 85), but there was a large measure of sympathy for him and his line of approach in Congress ranks (pp. 150-1). The differences became irreconcilable after the outbreak of the war. "Your way is not mine," Gandhiji wrote to Bose. "For the time being you are my lost sheep. Some day I shall find you returning to the fold, if I am right and my love is pure" (p. 374). Differences were developing between Gandhiji and Jawaharlal Nehru, too, and Gandhiji was not sure, either, that he carried the other members of the Working Committee with him. On October 26, he wrote to Nehru: "I feel that I must not lead if I cannot carry you all with me. . . . you should take full charge and lead the country, leaving me free to voice my opinion. But if you all

thought that I should observe complete silence, I should, I hope, find no difficulty in complying'' (p. 297). Then a week later, after a personal talk, he wrote again to Jawaharlal: ''At this critical time in our history there should be no misunderstanding between us and, if possible, there should be one mind'' (p. 328).

In ruling out civil disobedience, Gandhiji did not rule out all action. Non-co-operation had already begun with the resignation of the Congress Ministries (p. 328). And he had no doubt ''that the Congress will find means other than civil disobedience, within its self-imposed limits, of dealing with the crisis'' (p. 343). But he did not know what those means would be. ''I have no ready-made concrete plan,'' he had said earlier. ''More will be revealed to me from day to day, as all my plans always have been. . . . I must act in obedience to 'the still small voice' '' (pp. 205 and 206). Recalling how he knew nothing of the Dandi March till the moment it was decided upon, he said, ''God has rarely made me repeat history and He may not do so this time'' (p. 375).

Though Gandhiji obeyed the ''still small voice'' and claimed to ''have the experience of listening, not merely of trying to listen,'' he humbly confessed to members of the Oxford Group that he was ''still far away from God'' and perhaps not ''altogether free from self-deception''. He had indeed tried his ''very best to make India listen to the way of God'' but, though he had some success, he was ''far away from the goal'' (pp. 195-6). Prayer was the means of such listening. By prayer, Gandhiji explained to Dr. Charles Fabri, he wanted to evoke within him the Divinity that is in ''everyone and everything''. ''You are not going to know the meaning of God or prayer,'' he said, ''unless you reduce yourself to cipher. . . . It is in these moments that we have a glimpse of God, a vision of Him who is guiding every one of our steps in life'' (pp. 26-9).

Commenting on the charge in certain quarters that his *brahmacharya* was ''a cloak to hide his sensuality'', Gandhiji explained how the vow of *brahmacharya* which he took in 1906 ''irresistibly drew'' him ''to woman as the mother of man'', ''too sacred for sexual love'', and he discovered, when he invited Indian women in South Africa to join the struggle, that he ''was specially fitted to serve womankind''. In India, too, he found himself ''one with . . . women'' and the ''easy access'' he had ''to their hearts was an agreeable revelation'' to him (pp. 313, 314 and 315). Gandhiji was convinced that woman was ''the embodiment of sacrifice and therefore non-violence'' and he felt that her being

dragged down for purposes of violent war was "no credit to modern civilization", and that violence so ill became woman that "presently she will rebel against the violation of her fundamental nature" (p. 381).

Modern civilization in fact violated not merely woman's nature but human nature itself, because it was based on exploitation which was the essence of violence (p. 296). Gandhiji held that the real India was not military but peace-loving and that it was easier to train millions in the "white art of non-violence" than in the "black art of violence" (p. 202). Non-violence was not a cloistered virtue confined only to the *rishi* and the cave-dweller. It was capable of being practised by the millions. He pleaded with friends as well as critics that they should read *Hind Swaraj* with his eyes and see how India could be kept non-violent by being rural-minded (p. 296). In an article on the "unbridgeable gulf" that seemed to divide his ideal of "walking to one's duty" (p. 202) and his unabashed use of trains and cars, Gandhiji maintained that *Hind Swaraj* was not "an attempt to go back to the so-called ignorant dark ages" but "to see beauty in voluntary simplicity, poverty and slowness. The modern rage for variety . . . for multiplicity of wants . . . deadens the inner being in us" (p. 242). No ideal, he conceded, could be realized in full, but he claimed that pleasure lies in making the effort, not in its fulfilment. "For, in our progress towards the goal we ever see more and more enchanting scenery" (p. 241). This was the secret and the meaning of Gandhiji's *karmayoga*.

Charged with inconsistency between his co-operation with the British during the first World War and his present attitude, Gandhiji explained, "My aim is not to be consistent with my previous statement on a given question, but to be consistent with truth as it may present itself to me at a given moment. The result has been that I have grown from truth to truth" (p. 203). The *karmayogi* responds in thought and action to the limited *satya*, the actual need of the present moment, while his loyalty to abstract Truth and absolute non-violence as the ultimate ideals is never forsaken. For practical purposes Gandhiji used the terms ahimsa and courage as interchangeable. "Cowardice and ahimsa," he said, "do not go together any more than water and fire" (p. 296). And hence his noble inconsistency in the famous tribute: "If Poland has that measure of uttermost bravery and an equal measure of selflessness, history will forget that she defended herself with violence. Her violence will be counted almost as non-violence" (p. 181).

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PREFACE

The debate over the Congress demand for a declaration of Britain's war aims continued during the period of this volume (December 1, 1939 to April 15, 1940) and Gandhiji, believing in the sincerity of British leaders, went on "wooing them", as he said, while "wooing" the Indian people at the same time "to build up their power". "I am preparing for a fight, if it must come," he explained, "but I am trying my level best to stave it off" (p. 84). On January 10, 1940, the Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, in Bombay made a seemingly conciliatory speech in which he declared that the British Government's "objective for India" was "full Dominion Status . . . of the Statute of Westminster variety . . ." (p. 433). The speech prompted Gandhiji to suggest a meeting between them (p. 107), which took place on February 5. The meeting, however, brought out "the vital difference between the Congress demand and the Viceregal offer", for the latter contemplated "the final determination of India's destiny by the British Government" whereas the Congress insisted on India's right "to determine her own constitution and her status" (pp. 186-7). The Secretary of State, Lord Zetland's interview to *The Sunday Times* on February 11, 1940, put upon the nationalists the burden "of solving the minorities question and the like" and wiped out the conciliatory effect of the Viceroy's speech. This, in Gandhiji's words, amounted to "a declaration of war" against the nationalists who were "out to destroy the empire spirit" (p. 216). At its annual session at Ramgarh on March 20 the Congress declared that Great Britain was "carrying on the war fundamentally for imperialist ends and for the preservation and strengthening of her Empire" and that, therefore, the Congress could not "in any way, directly or indirectly, be party to the war. . . ." The resolution also stated that "India's constitution must be based on independence, democracy and national unity" and repudiated "attempts to divide India or to split up her nationhood." (pp. 440-1). Three days later, on March 23, 1940, the annual session of the Muslim League at Lahore passed a resolution demanding that "geographically contiguous units" in the north-western and eastern zones of India should be grouped to constitute "independent States", (p. 444). The deadlock was now complete.

Lord Linlithgow had in his speech of January 10 referred to the difficulties arising out of "the insistent claims of the

minorities", particularly the Muslims and the Scheduled Castes, and to the guarantees given to them in the past which, he had said, "must be honoured" (p. 434). In a letter to him dated January 14, Gandhiji gently remonstrated with him for this reference, and expressed serious doubts about its implications, especially "the reference to the scheduled castes" (p. 107). In a private interview on January 12 to K. M. Munshi, Lord Linlithgow had explained: "I have not merely to speak to a public in India, I have also a public in England. That public is an important factor both from your point of view and my point of view. And it has a feeling that the Hindus as a community are against British interests" (p. 436). Gandhiji fully understood this guiding motive of British policy in India. In a trenchant rejoinder to Lord Zetland's observation on the need for "escape from the tyranny of phrases and a descent from idealism", Gandhiji suggested, with a touch of impatience unusual with him, that it was Lord Zetland "who refuses to face realities and is wandering in a forest of unrealities", though of course Gandhiji could not "accuse him of idealism" (p. 216).

The reality of British rule in India, as Gandhiji and nationalist India saw it, was that the Empire had been built on four pillars—"the European interest, the Army, the Princes and the Communal Divisions", the last three "to subserve the first" (p. 210). Thus all the problems which according to British spokesmen stood in the way of India's freedom were of Britain's own making and Gandhiji believed that once "the British Government are sure that they can no longer hold India, all the difficulties . . . will vanish like darkness before dawn" (p. 323). He was convinced that the war would ultimately be decided on moral issues (p. 25) and, "as a friend of Britain bound by many personal ties", he was anxious "that she should come out victorious not because of her superiority in the use of arms but because of her will to be just all along the line" (p. 7). Gandhiji therefore wanted Great Britain to make "a mighty effort" and decide to abandon "her immoral hold on India" (p. 193). "I do not wish Britain to win right or wrong", he told an English reporter, and explained: "If India were wrong, India must perish. I have often said that Hinduism will perish if Hinduism allows the practice of untouchability to remain." He would even "go so far as to pray for India's destruction if she went wrong, even as Stead prayed for England's defeat in the Boer War" (pp. 84-5). Gandhiji could not, therefore, conscientiously pray for the success of British arms if it meant a further lease of life to India's subjection to foreign

domination. "I write this last sentence with a heavy heart," he added (p. 211).

With this clear understanding of the character of British imperialism, Gandhiji's attitude to the question of Dominion Status also had changed, probably through the influence of Jawaharlal Nehru. He had once said in 1930 that he would be satisfied with the "substance of independence" and later told H.S.L. Polak in 1937 that "if Dominion Status with the right to secede was offered", he would accept it. But, he explained, "experience since gained and maturer reflection" had led him "to think that Dominion Status even of the Statute of Westminster variety cannot suit India's case", for Dominion Status had "associations which show that it is applicable to the whites only and does not exclude the exploitation of non-European races." "India," he said, "which is among the exploited nations, will be a misfit as a fellow-exploiter with, say, South Africa" (pp. 23 and 315-6). However, Gandhiji seems to have been hopeful of the transformation of the British Empire, for if India gained her freedom through "an honourable understanding between the two countries" he envisaged an "alliance with Great Britain and the Dominions" (p. 145). And that is why, probably, he pleaded guilty to Subhas Bose's charge that he was "eager to have a compromise with Britain" if it could be had with honour (p. 114).

There seemed, however, no prospect of freedom coming to India through any such honourable understanding with Great Britain. British leaders had made unity among Indian leaders one of the pre-conditions of any constitutional advance, and the Muslim League leaders seemed uncompromisingly opposed to the Congress demand for a Constituent Assembly. The Constituent Assembly had been suggested, Gandhiji explained, "to draw up the charter of independence" and "as a means to obviate all clash of communal and class interest" (p. 63). Safeguards for the protection of minorities, he assured them, would be framed by their own representatives (p. 83); they would, he said, practically "dictate" or "determine" their own safeguards (pp. 330 and 366). But the Muslim League leaders did not seem interested in solving the communal problem through argument and persuasion. Jinnah called for the observance of December 22 "as a day of deliverance and thanks giving" when the "vast Muslim population" would be "made to recite before God" the gravest allegations against the Congress as if they were proved. Those allegations had been placed before the Viceroy and the Governors, but without waiting for their verdict Jinnah had "taken upon his

shoulders'', as Gandhiji explained, ''the tremendous responsibility of being both the accuser and the judge'' (pp. 18-9). Gandhiji pleaded for not merely justice but generosity to the Muslims, but Jinnah seemed to have made up his mind to have no settlement within the framework of united India. When Gandhiji congratulated him ''on forming pacts with parties . . . opposed to the Congress policies and politics'' and thereby ''lifting the Muslim League out of the communal rut and giving it a national character'' (p. 109), he promptly repudiated the meaning put upon his action by Gandhiji and argued, as the latter put it, that India was a ''continent'' made up of ''nations counted according to their religions'' (p. 133). This view of India logically led to the demand for partition.

Gandhiji was deeply hurt. The ''two nations'' theory, he said, was ''an untruth''. ''The vast majority of Muslims of India,'' he argued, ''are converts to Islam or are descendants of converts. They did not become a separate nation as soon as they became converts.'' ''Hindus and Muslims of India are not two nations,'' he asserted. ''Those whom God has made one, man will never be able to divide.'' ''And is Islam such an exclusive religion,'' Gandhiji asked, ''as Quaid-e-Azam would have it? Is there nothing common between Islam and Hinduism or any other religion? Or is Islam merely an enemy of Hinduism?'' Jinnah had said that the ''misconception of one Indian nation . . . is the cause of most of our troubles and will lead India to destruction if we fail to revise our notions in time''. Gandhiji warned that ''those who think like him are rendering no service to Islam; they are misinterpreting the message inherent in the very word Islam''. This warning, Gandhiji said, was a duty because he had faithfully served the Muslims of India in their hour of need and because Hindu-Muslim unity had been and was his life's mission (pp. 388-90). Gandhiji, therefore, could ''never be a willing party to the vivisection'' of India, for it would mean, he said, ''the undoing of centuries of work done by numberless Hindus and Muslims to live together as one nation.'' His whole soul rebelled against the idea that Hinduism and Islam represented two antagonistic creeds and cultures. The ''God of the Koran,'' he said, ''is also the God of the *Gita*'' and ''we are all, no matter by what name designated, children of the same God.'' But though Gandhiji was thus opposed to the demand for partition, as a man of nonviolence he could not, he said, forcibly resist it if the Muslims really insisted upon it (p. 412). Nor could the Congress forcibly resist ''the express will of the Muslims of India'' (p. 345). ''If

the vast majority of Indian Muslims feel that they are not one nation with their Hindu and other brethren, who will be able to resist them?'' Gandhiji asked (p. 372). Repudiating Liaquat Ali Khan's suggestion that Gandhiji's aim was ''the imposition of Hindu culture on all and sundry'', Gandhiji said: ''I claim to represent all the cultures, for my religion, whatever it may be called, demands the fulfilment of all cultures. I am at home wherever I go, for I regard all religions with the same respect as my own'' (p. 413).

Though Gandhiji was uncompromising in his demand for the right of self-determination for the people of India and felt that it was ''better for India, England and the world that a helpless sub-continent runs the greatest risk for coming into its own than that in its sickness it becomes a dead weight to itself and the world'' (p. 317), he resisted pressure from impatient Congressmen for immediate starting of civil disobedience (pp. 11, 51, 70-1, 201, 305-6 and 384). ''Without real non-violence there would be perfect anarchy'' and he would not ''undertake a fight that must end in anarchy and red ruin'' (p. 117). In order to create the requisite atmosphere of non-violence in the country, Gandhiji urged Congressmen to carry out the triple programme of khadi, communal unity and removal of untouchability, which he described as ''non-violence in action'' (p. 51). ''The power of non-violent resistance,'' Gandhiji believed, ''can only come from honest working of the constructive programme'', for ''non-violence cannot be sustained unless it is linked to conscious body-labour and finds expression in our daily contact with our neighbours'' (p. 132). The ''revival of the charkha and all it means'' was, according to Gandhiji, ''a mighty effort at co-operation and adult education of the correct type'', a ''visible expression of non-violence'' (pp. 410-1), and he would not, therefore, ''embark on direct action'' unless he had positive proof ''of successful khadi work all over India'' (p. 29).

The charkha had become for Gandhiji part of the ''programme of love'' which he had first enunciated in *Hind Swaraj* in 1909. With real insight into the condition of contemporary Europe he argued that it could be presumed that ''its cities, its monster factories and huge armaments are so intimately interrelated that the one cannot exist without the other''. The ''erstwhile village republic of India,'' Gandhiji believed, was ''the nearest approach to civilization based upon non-violence. . . .'' Though that non-violence was not of Gandhiji's

"definition and conception", "the germ was there" and it was from that germ that he had developed his "technique of non-violence" (p. 95). It was therefore Gandhiji's conviction that "a country whose culture is based on non-violence will find it necessary to have every home as much self-contained as possible" (p. 4). This preference for cottage industries had an aesthetic reason too. Gandhiji saw man as "the most exquisite machine" and wanted "every man and woman . . . to realize what art and skill" were "hidden in their heads and hands" (p. 232). Only by "correlating the intellect with the hand", so that the villagers might "know the joy of work", could they be lifted from "the estate of the brute to the estate of man" (p. 336). Gandhiji, however, explained, in reply to a question by Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia, that his programme for a "social order of the future" did not exclude "electricity, ship-building, iron works, machine-making and the like", but that "order of dependence" would "be reversed" and industrialization would "subserve the villages and their crafts" (p. 130).

Gandhiji's idea of a just and democratic society differed fundamentally from that of Western socialists; he did "not share the socialist belief that centralization of the necessaries of life will conduce to the common welfare when the centralized industries are planned and owned by the State." Though he recognized that their motive was the same as his, namely, "the greatest welfare of the whole society and the abolition of the hideous inequalities", Gandhiji believed that "this end can be achieved only when non-violence is accepted by the best mind of the world as the basis on which a just social order is to be constructed." He was certain that "the coming into power of the proletariat through violence" was "bound to fail in the end", and warned that "those who play upon the passions of the masses injure them and the country's cause" (p. 130). Gandhiji believed not only that non-violence, purity, etc., "are not virtues to be cultivated in caves but to be practised in the midst of society" (p. 14), but also that "a predominantly non-violent society" was possible (p. 226). His "concept of non-violence", Gandhiji said, was "universal", it belonged "to the millions". Truth and non-violence, he asserted, "could become the policy of a group, a community, a nation" (p. 264). Even a State could be administered on a non-violent basis if the vast majority of the people were non-violent. Such application of non-violence "to large masses of mankind" was "a new experiment in the history of the world", and Gandhiji claimed

that if he succeeded and India evolved non-violently, "we shall represent the truest democracy in the world" (p. 398). He was, however, humble enough to recognize the possibility of his failure. Quoting a critic's view that he had only "succeeded in teaching disruptive disobedience" and that he had "signally failed in teaching people the very difficult art of non-violence", Gandhiji said: "I am but a poor mortal. I believe in my experiment and in my uttermost sincerity. But it may be that the only fitting epitaph after my death will be: 'He tried but signally failed' " (p. 403).

Gandhiji advised the Gandhi Seva Sangh to devote itself to research in the field of non-violence "to link the spinning-wheel and related activities with non-violence and ultimately with God" (pp. 243, 263 and 265). Gandhiji's was a poet's vision of true ahimsa which grew and unfolded itself gradually with practice and experience. "Ahimsa in theory," he said, "no one knows. It is as indefinable as God. But in its working we get glimpses of it as we have glimpses of the Almighty in His working amongst and through us." The members had the "laborious task" of discovering like scientists the meaning of ahimsa in relation to the constructive programme (p. 294). He himself was only experimenting and with "great patience . . . discovering and developing the science of satyagraha." In the course of the search he was "acquiring new knowledge and new light every day", "seeing ever new miracles of non-violence", having "a new vision" and experiencing "a new joy" (pp. 252 and 264). It gave him "ineffable joy", Gandhiji wrote in *Harijan*, "to make experiments proving that love is the supreme and only law of life" (p. 408).

Gandhiji knew from experience that genuine ahimsa was not a mechanical thing. It must be felt in the heart. "There must be within you," he said, "an upwelling of love and pity towards the wrongdoer" (p. 225). Only "the nectar" of such love could "destroy the poison of hate" (p. 284). But Gandhiji also knew from experience how difficult it was to cultivate such ahimsa. He himself, he confessed, was "full of *himsa*", in that he was "liable to anger". He had yet to attain perfect *brahmacharya*, when one should but think a thing and it would happen and one would not have to argue (p. 99). Even so, Gandhiji knew that he had made progress. In his former campaigns he had travelled through the length and breadth of India and "had to speak and argue day in and day out". But now, he was confident, "if a fight has to come,

you may be sure that I shall lead it from Segaon." Such Gandhiji believed to be the power of non-violent thought (pp. 99-100).

To an Englishman who contended that satyagraha "only works with civilized people who are gentlemen"—an argument which was often advanced in Gandhiji's lifetime and has been advanced since—Gandhiji replied that real satyagraha was not such "sob-stuff" and that the partition separating the civilized from the uncivilized was very thin. "Both act almost alike when their passions are roused" (p. 202).

Replying to an English correspondent who had said that he hated and feared "the present outlook on life of the Nazis", Gandhiji reiterated his faith in human nature and said: "I fancy I see the distinction between you and me. You, as a Westerner, cannot subordinate reason to faith. I, as an Indian, cannot subordinate faith to reason even if I will" (pp. 37-8). To another Englishman who had appealed to Gandhiji to "give a clarion call to the whole world, pointing to another way than the senseless gamble and destruction of war", Gandhiji humbly replied: "But who am I? I have no strength save what God gives me. . . . We neither know Him nor His Law save through the glass darkly. But the faint glimpse of the Law is sufficient to fill me with joy, hope and faith in the future" (pp. 9 and 11). That Law governed everything and the free will that man enjoyed, Gandhiji told a Christian missionary, was "less than that of a passenger on a crowded deck." He however appreciated that little freedom, having imbibed "the central teaching of the *Gita*" that man was "the maker of his own destiny" and could progress towards full freedom by doing his duty without attachment to the fruits of action (p. 321).

Paying a loving tribute to C. F. Andrews who died in Calcutta on April 4, Gandhiji said: " . . . Charlie Andrews was one of the greatest and best of Englishmen. And because he was a good son of England he became also a son of India. And he did it all for the sake of humanity and for his Lord and Master Jesus Christ" (p. 394).

PREFACE

The period covered by the volume (April 16 to September 11, 1940) more or less coincided with the Nazi conquest of the countries of Northern and Western Europe: Denmark, Norway, the Low countries and France, followed by non-stop bombing of the British Isles, causing widespread destruction of life and property. There was a wave of sympathy in India for the nations that had been robbed of their liberty. Earlier, Indian leaders had expressed solidarity with the Spanish and the Chinese republics. And now there was "hardly an Indian", as Gandhiji observed, "who does not feel the same sympathy for Norway and Denmark who lost their freedom overnight" (p. 30).

This widespread sympathy for the Western democracies, however, could not be translated into action, although, under the threat of a Nazi victory in Europe, the Congress made one more effort to establish a basis of co-operation with the British Government. Failing to obtain from Britain the assurances it had asked for at the outbreak of the war regarding India's future status, it had declared at the annual session at Ramgarh in March its intention to resort to civil disobedience as soon as Gandhiji was satisfied that the Congress organization was fit enough for the purpose (Vol. LXXI, Appendix VI). Reversing that decision, it now offered, though doing so meant parting of the ways with Gandhiji, "to throw in its full weight in the efforts for the effective organization of the Defence of the country" if Britain made an "unequivocal declaration" acknowledging India's complete independence and, as an immediate step, agreed to constitute a provisional national government at the Centre (Appendix IV) The Viceroy's statement in reply, made on August 8 (Appendix VII), stressed, as previous official pronouncements had done, "the due fulfilment of the obligations which Great Britain's long connection with India has imposed upon her" and refused to transfer the responsibility "for the peace and welfare of India to any system of Government whose authority is directly denied by large and powerful elements in India's national life" (p. 473). The statement, the Congress Working Committee charged, confirmed "the prevailing feeling that the British authority has been continually operating so as to create, maintain and aggravate differences in India's national life" (p. 475). The Government also seems to have embarked at the same time on a policy of

repression to crush the Congress, which, Gandhiji felt and publicly stated, might leave him no option but to adopt "some form of effective satyagraha" (p. 340). "I must not have it said of me," Gandhiji wrote to the Viceroy, "that for a false morality I allowed the Congress to be crushed without a struggle" (p. 446).

The moral consideration had indeed been Gandhiji's guiding principle from the beginning. Talking to a *New York Times* correspondent, he repeated what he had said after his interview with the Viceroy on September 4, 1939, and asked, "Of what value is freedom to India if Britain and France fail?" If these powers failed, he told the correspondent, "the history of the world will be written in a manner no one can foresee" (pp. 10-1). And though Gandhiji supported the Congress demand and argued that it was "the duty of the Congress to prosecute the demand for independence", and even that "active pursuance of non-violence and truth and the prosecution of its goal of complete independence without abatement and without delay" would be the "Congress contribution to the cause of the Allies", he was careful to assure his critics that he would "do nothing wilfully to embarrass Britain" (p. 81). He had, he said, "no desire whatsoever to embarrass the British, especially at a time when it is a question of life and death with them" (p. 20). "I do not wish ill to Britain. I shall grieve if Britain goes down" (p. 30). Gandhiji told Ram Manohar Lohia, who had pleaded for immediate civil disobedience, that any step towards direct action was bound to cause the British embarrassment. He would, therefore, "wait till the heat of the battle in the heart of the Allied countries" had subsided "and the future is clearer than it is." "We do not seek our independence," said he, "out of Britain's ruin. That is not the way of non-violence" (p. 104). He was also hopeful, it seems, that good sense might still prevail among British statesmen and was reluctant to criticize a speech of Lord Zetland's publicly (p. 21). The first message of L. S. Amery, the new Secretary of State, even impressed him as "good" (p. 182). Gandhiji recognized, however, that a struggle might become inevitable, and he was praying, he said, "for a mode of application which will be effective and still not embarrassing" to the British "in the sense of violent outbreaks throughout the country" (p. 65).

The conditions in the country certainly seemed far from favourable for a non-violent struggle. Besides agrarian and industrial unrest as expressed in strikes and demonstrations in cities and peasant marches and stopping of trains, on which Gandhiji

found it necessary to comment (p. 19), there was also a growing sense of insecurity, even panic, among sections of the population—especially in cities—and Gandhiji had to appeal to city-dwellers resolutely to stick to their posts and "steel the hearts of the timid against the temptation to flee from fancied or real danger" (p. 224). The situation was made worse by the posture adopted by the Muslim League and its demand for partition. On April 19 alone, it was claimed by the League leadership, they had organized more than 10,000 meetings all over the country in support of their demand, and in the Punjab bands of Khaksars, armed with *belchas* and using mosques as hide-outs, were terrorizing the Hindu population in defiance of the Unionist administration and the police. Gandhiji feared that the Government would allow these forces "to complicate the situation" and was therefore anxious not "to irritate the Muslims" by starting civil disobedience (p. 6). "Civil disobedience in the face of the lawlessness that prevails in the country," he wrote, "will easily pass for the same unless it is beyond doubt recognized as something different in kind from the prevailing brand" (p. 19). It was the easiest thing for anybody to defy the law and go to jail. But, Gandhiji repeated, "even though it may cause nausea, that prison-going without the backing of honest constructive effort and goodwill in the heart for the wrongdoer is violence and therefore forbidden in satyagraha" (p. 105).

Hindu-Muslim unity was an important item in the constructive programme which Gandhiji had prescribed as preparation for civil disobedience (p. 81), but the Muslim League's demand for partition, Gandhiji felt, had put "an end to all efforts for unity for the time being" (p. 66). He had called the demand "an untruth", and though he recognized that "if the eight crores of Muslims desire it no power on earth could prevent it", he declared that it could not come by "honourable agreement", for at the bottom of the cry for partition was "the belief that Islam is an exclusive brotherhood, and anti-Hindu". "Religion binds man to God and man to man," Gandhiji pleaded and asked, "Does Islam bind Muslim only to Muslim and antagonize the Hindu? Was the message of the Prophet peace only for and between Muslims and war against Hindus and non-Muslims? Are eight crores of Muslims to be fed with this which I can only describe as poison?" Those who instilled "this poison into the Muslim mind" and created an atmosphere of war between Hindus and Muslims were "rendering the greatest disservice to Islam" (pp. 27-8). India he argued, "is a big country, a big nation composed of different

cultures, which are tending to blend with one another, each complementing the rest" (p. 27). "Indian Muslims," he declared, were his "blood-brothers and will remain so, though they may disown me ever so much" (p. 133).

With the worsening of the war situation, these domestic problems receded into the background. Gandhiji's reaction to the bloodshed in Europe was one of deep personal distress. "Frightful things are happening in the West," he wrote to Mirabehn on May 28 (p. 111), and two days later to another English friend, " . . . events have happened which leave me dumb" (p. 115). At a meeting of the Congress Working Committee he confessed, "The terrible things that are going on in Europe fill me with anguish" (p. 237). So moved was he that on May 26 he wrote to the Viceroy suggesting whether it was not "time to sue for peace for the sake of suffering humanity" so that "this mad slaughter" might stop, and even offered "to go to Germany or anywhere required to plead for peace . . . for the good of mankind" (pp. 100-1). To Sir Samuel Hoare's plea for understanding, Gandhiji replied: "My incessant prayer is that peace may take the place of strife" (p. 172). The only true way of combating Hitlerism, Gandhiji argued, was that of non-violent resistance, under which "only those would have been killed who had trained themselves to be killed . . . without killing anyone and without bearing malice towards anybody." If the Czechs, the Poles, the Norwegians, the French and the English had followed that way, "Europe would have added several inches to its moral stature . . . it is the moral worth that will count. All else is dross" (pp. 187-8).

Gandhiji offered similar advice to the British. He admired them for their courage and determination and knew that "Britain will die hard and heroically even if she has to" (p. 135). But after the fall of France when the threat of Nazi invasion of Britain was believed imminent and the British were beginning to be harassed in the skies and on the seas, he addressed a public appeal "To Every Briton" pleading "for cessation of hostilities", arguing that after the war, "whichever way it ends, there will be no democracy left to represent democracy." The war had "descended upon mankind as a curse . . . brutalizing man on a scale hitherto unknown." The British could win it only by becoming more ruthless than the Nazis and no cause, however just, Gandhiji asserted, "can warrant the indiscriminate slaughter that is going on minute by minute." He presented them with "a nobler and a braver way, worthy of the bravest soldier", which was "to fight Nazism without arms". He himself

had been fighting imperialism by the non-violent method and assured them: "Whatever the ultimate fate of my country, my love for you remains, and will remain, undiminished" (pp. 229-31). The British Government replied that they appreciated Gandhiji's motives, but could not consider the policy he advocated, "since in common with the whole empire" they were "firmly resolved to prosecute the war to a victorious conclusion" (p. 232).

His appeal to the nations of Europe, Gandhiji said, was meant for India, too, and he urged the country to declare its "changeless faith in non-violence of the strong and say we do not seek to defend our liberty with the force of arms but we will defend it with the force of non-violence" (pp. 188-9). The Congress Working Committee was in session when the appeal was drafted and, after five days of deliberation, from June 17 to 21, it reiterated the country's strict adherence "to the principle of non-violence in their struggle for independence" but declared their inability "to go the full length with Gandhiji", recognizing, however, that "he should be free to pursue his great ideal in his own way." Gandhiji was both happy and unhappy at this "absolution", as he called it. Propagation of non-violence, he explained, was the mission of his life, and he felt that "now was the time for me to prove my faith before God and man." He was therefore happy that he had been able "to bear the strain of the break" and was "given the strength to stand alone". But he was also unhappy because, he said, "my word seemed to lose the power to carry with me those whom it was my proud privilege to carry all these many years which seem like yesterday" (pp. 194-5). While Gandhiji was convinced that only true non-violence could "save the world from self-destruction" and that it was for India to deliver this message to the world (p. 196), the Working Committee "were of opinion that, . . . India has not the strength to exercise ahimsa against the invasion of a foreign foe" (p. 250). The opposition was led by C. Rajagopalachari, who argued: "Ours is a political organization not working for non-violence but for the political ideal . . . in competition with other political parties." (p. 237). Rajagopalachari was able to win over the majority of the Working Committee to his side, "his greatest prize" being Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, and Gandhiji, recognizing that if his own stand was not acceptable, Rajagopalachari's was the only real alternative, advised that the latter's resolution offering active participation in the war effort, passed by a majority vote, should be enforced (p. 256). To critics who argued that the kind of non-violence

expected by him was beyond the capacity of human nature, Gandhiji replied: "I am an irrepressible optimist. No scientist starts his experiments with a faint heart. I belong to the tribe of Columbus and Stevenson who hoped against hope in the face of heaviest odds. The days of miracles are not gone. They will abide so long as God abides" (p. 161). Even from a historical point of view, Gandhiji asserted that man was steadily progressing towards ahimsa, had from being a cannibal and a hunter in the remote past "founded villages and towns, and from member of a family" become "member of a community and a nation". He must, therefore, progress still further. Indeed ahimsa was man's true nature. "Man as animal is violent, but as spirit is non-violent. The moment he awakes to the spirit within he cannot remain violent" (p. 350). Like his faith in trusteeship, Gandhiji's faith in the ultimate triumph of non-violence rested on his belief in the capacity of human nature for change. Amazing discoveries in the field of violence were being made, but, he maintained, "far more undreamt of and seemingly impossible discoveries will be made in the field of non-violence" (p. 400). Gandhiji therefore did not share the belief that "non-violent action may have no effect on Hitler or the Germans whom he has turned into so many robots." Non-violent action, "if it is adequate", must influence them, for, Gandhiji believed, no man could be turned into a permanent machine. In ahimsa, he said, "it is not the votary who acts in his own strength. Strength comes from God" (p. 361). His experience in organizing non-violent action for half a century filled Gandhiji with hope for the future. The experiment, he said, had now entered upon "a most interesting, though at the same time a most difficult stage". He was, he said, "sailing on uncharted waters" and had "to take soundings every half hour". But the difficulty only braced him for the struggle (p. 357).

Sevagram which was "a laboratory" for ahimsa and satyagraha (p. 211) threw up occasionally difficult human problems. On May 24, owing to "certain irritations, big and small", Gandhiji entered upon a period of indefinite silence, announcing that he did not want "to insist on anything any more" and, beyond expressing his views on essential matters, would not argue (p. 91). The theft of a letter and a pen, suspected to be by an inmate of the Ashram, shocked him so much that he announced his intention of going on an indefinite fast. That untruth, violence and stealing should survive in his presence proved to him that he was "a wholly incompetent person" (p. 124).

Gandhiji suspected a particular member but even the fact that such a suspicion should arise in his mind filled him with pain (p. 150). "Love never suspects. Faults cannot remain hidden to love" (p. 151). To perfect his ahimsa, Gandhiji sometimes felt like "taking shelter in flight, not to seek cloistered peace, but in the stillness of utter isolation to know myself, to see where I stand, to catch more effectively the faint whispering of the 'still small voice within' " (p. 211). In the matter of non-violence, Gandhiji said, "I must rely most upon my thought to carry my message to the farthest limits of the universe." But thought had potency only when "crystallized by a pure life and charged with prayerful concentration". The purer the life, the greater the potency of thought. "That is the power which every human being has to aspire to and with due effort can attain. The voice of Silence has never been denied" (p. 223).

Would he welcome a benevolent dictatorship to ensure justice to the poor?—Gandhiji was asked. He wrote: "I cannot accept benevolent or any other dictatorship. Neither will the rich vanish nor will the poor be protected. Some rich men will certainly be killed out and some poor men will be spoon-fed. . . . The real remedy is non-violent democracy, otherwise spelt true education of all" (p. 136). A non-violent social order, to Gandhiji, was a distinct possibility and a goal to be worked for, since ahimsa was "definitely an attribute of society". "To convince people of this truth," he said, "is at once my effort and my experiment" (p. 400).

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PREFACE

This volume opens with the resolution passed by the A.I.C.C. at Bombay declaring that the Government's policy of suppressing free expression of public opinion against India's participation in the war was "imposing upon the Congress a struggle for the preservation of the honour and the elementary rights of the people" and requesting Gandhiji to guide it in the action to be taken (p. 2). Before embarking on any action, Gandhiji sought an interview with the Viceroy and met him at Simla on September 27. "The Viceroy was all courtesy, but he was unbending," Gandhiji said (p. 75). On October 17 Vinoba Bhave offered civil disobedience as the first satyagrahi and was arrested on the 21st. Jawaharlal Nehru, who was to be the second satyagrahi, was arrested on the 31st before he could formally offer disobedience and was sentenced to four years' imprisonment. This provocative action, despite the assurance in the A.I.C.C. resolution that the Congress had no intention "to extend non-violent resistance . . . beyond what is required for the preservation of the liberties of the people" (p. 2), forced Gandhiji to extend the scope of the civil disobedience to include members of the Working Committee, the A.I.C.C. and the Central and Provincial Legislatures (p. 163), and after the arrest of the Congress President Maulana Abul Kalam Azad on January 3, 1941, it was further extended and all representative Congressmen from members of the village committees to those of the provincial Committees were expected to be in jail. The ultimate idea was "for every Congressman to act on his own and be his own president but nobody else's", this being Gandhiji's concept of "a completely non-violent institution or society" (p. 282).

The civil disobedience was restricted to the single issue of freedom of speech, "the right to preach against war as war or participation in the present war" (p. 106). For the Congress leaders it was primarily a political issue. The British Government having rejected the Congress offer of conditional co-operation (*vide* Vol. LXXI), the Congress insisted on the people's right to refuse to participate in a war "for saving imperialism" into which they had been dragged without their consent. The British Government claimed that the help they got from the country was voluntary, but, as C. Rajagopalachari pointed out,

the claim could be justified only if the right to preach non-participation was respected (p. 57). Gandhiji had repeatedly stated that he would do nothing to embarrass the British Government, but "this self-imposed restraint", he explained in the Bombay resolution, could not "be taken to the extent of self-extinction" (p. 2). "Freedom of speech and pen," Gandhiji argued at the A.I.C.C. meeting, "is the foundation of swaraj. If the foundation-stone is in danger, you have to exert the whole of your might in order to defend that single stone" (p. 21). The British Government might get such help as it could from the Princes, the zamindars and the rich, but, Gandhiji pleaded, "let our voice also be heard." The Government would then be able to claim with honour that they were playing the game in India (p. 19).

However, for Gandhiji much more was involved than the political issue. Repelled by the "indecent savagery . . . being perpetrated by the warring nations of Europe", he demanded freedom of "propagating non-violence as a substitute for war" (pp. 34-5). Liberty and democracy, he asserted, "become unholy when their hands are dyed red with innocent blood", for, he asked, "What difference does it make to the dead, the orphans and the homeless whether the mad destruction is wrought under the name of totalitarianism or the holy name of liberty and democracy?" He felt confident that God had made him "the instrument of showing the better way" (p. 53). "Who knows," he wrote in *Harijan* announcing the plan for individual civil disobedience by Vinoba Bhave, "that I shall not be an instrument for bringing about peace not only between Britain and India but also between the warring nations of the earth" (p. 107). Hitlerism, Gandhiji was convinced, could not be defeated except by the method of non-violence (p. 209). He held to his faith "in the possibility of the most debased human nature to respond to non-violence" (p. 321), and acting on that faith Gandhiji even addressed an open letter to Hitler (which, like Gandhiji's previous letter to him of July 23, 1939, was suppressed by the Government of India), appealing to him "in the name of humanity to stop the war" and agree to refer the matters of dispute to an international tribunal of joint choice. The appeal was made, as Gandhiji said, on behalf of "the millions of Europeans whose dumb cry for peace" he heard, for his ears were "attuned to hearing the dumb millions" (p. 255). Gandhiji was convinced that in acting out his faith in non-violence, he was serving India, Britain and humanity. He

declared, "I do not wish well to India at the expense of Britain as I do not wish well to Britain at the expense of Germany. Hitlers will come and go. Those who believe that when the Fuhrer dies or is defeated his spirit will die, err grievously. What matters is how we react to such a spirit, violently or non-violently. If we react violently, we feed that evil spirit. If we act non-violently, we sterilize it" (p. 324).

For Gandhiji, therefore, the national movement for political freedom was a moral movement of world significance for demonstrating the power of non-violence, and he tried to carry the Congress with him on this question. In June-July the Congress had released Gandhiji from its leadership on the issue of renouncing violence even for the defence of the country (*vide* Vol. LXXII), but a compromise was now reached and he persuaded the A.I.C.C. to declare in the Bombay resolution its belief "in the policy and practice of non-violence not only in the struggle for swaraj but also in so far as this may be possible of application in free India". What he demanded for the Congress was therefore "the fullest freedom to pursue its policy based on non-violence" and "to grow in non-violence" (pp. 2 and 323). Gandhiji himself was growing in his understanding of non-violence. He had now a deeper insight into the nature of satyagraha, which, he said, "is independent of Press advertisement" and, if real, "carries with it its own momentum . . . thought deliberately thought and controlled is a power greater than speech or writing . . ." (pp. 125-6). To Jawaharlal Nehru also he wrote, "Whilst I would make use of every legitimate method of seeking publicity for our programme, my reliance is on regulated thought producing its own effect", and wanted to be "allowed to go" his "way in demonstrating the power of non-violence when it is unadulterated" (p. 127).

The contemplated struggle was to be an expression of such unadulterated non-violence. Gandhiji did not know what form it would take. There was "impenetrable darkness" before him, he told the A.I.C.C. meeting, "regarding the future course of action" and he would do "better and clearer thinking in Sevagram" where, he said, he had built up an atmosphere for his growth (pp. 20-1). In any case, he told the meeting, there was to be no mass civil disobedience, for he "would not be guilty of embarrassing the British people or the British Government when their very existence hung in the balance" (p. 15). Even after some direct action seemed to have become inevitable following the failure of his meeting with the Viceroy, Gandhiji

advised intending satyagrahis to remember that there was "to be no civil disobedience, direct or indirect", and told them: "Any breach of this will weaken the cause because it will unnerve your general who is susceptible to the slightest indiscipline" (p. 74). He wished, he told a correspondent, "to demonstrate on this occasion total ahimsa" as he had "visualized it" and did not, therefore, "intend to send more than two or three persons" to jail (pp. 134-5). Writing to the Viceroy also he explained that he "was taking extraordinary precautions to ensure non-violence, and . . . to that end . . . was restricting the movement to the fewest possible typical individuals" (p. 138).

To start with, Gandhiji decided on Vinoba Bhave as the only satyagrahi for the time being, and the latter was so to conduct his disobedience "as to exclude others directly or indirectly". The idea was, Gandhiji explained, "to make all action as strictly non-violent as is humanly possible". Even one man's non-violent action might be enough, for "while the effect of a given violent action can be reduced to mathematical terms, that of non-violent action defies all calculation . . ." (p. 103). Vinoba was a Sanskrit scholar who had joined the Ashram at Ahmedabad almost at its inception and remained faithful to its ideals, taking part in every menial activity of the Ashram from cooking to scavenging. He had shared Gandhiji's passionate belief in communal unity and he had also taken active part in every item of the constructive programmes sponsored by Gandhiji from time to time. He was, therefore, fit to be the first soldier of what Gandhiji believed might be "the last civil disobedience" he would conduct and which he wanted "to be as flawless" as it could be (p. 105). Vinoba fully justified Gandhiji's expectation. His addresses were from "the highest plane" and his implementation of Gandhiji's instructions was "an education in courteous and non-violent conduct" (p. 115).

Gandhiji provided similar education in his dealings with the Government and the Viceroy. Not only did he refrain from offering civil disobedience himself, for his imprisonment might "cause greater embarrassment to the authorities than anything else the Congress can do" (p. 106), but he also maintained the friendliest tone in his correspondence with the Viceroy. He publicly stated that the Viceroy and he had become friends never to be parted however great their differences (p. 78). The Viceroy seems to have shared this sentiment and greatly regretted, as he said, the conflict of views between Gandhiji and the Government (pp. 73 and 456). Thanks to this personal relationship

with the Viceroy, when the Government advised the *Harijan* weeklies, along with other publications, not to publish any report of Vinoba's speeches or of the progress of civil disobedience without previous reference to the Chief Press Adviser, Gandhiji accepted the Viceroy's "verdict", and suspended the publication of the weeklies instead of disregarding the advice and inviting prosecution, describing his self-restraint as an "object-lesson . . . in satyagraha" (pp. 124-5, 139 and 140). And likewise, when the Government refused clearance to Gandhiji's open letter to Hitler, he co-operated with the Government, though under protest, in preventing its publication as "an earnest" of his "desire not to embarrass authority" (p. 287). The Government, too, Gandhiji admitted to G. D. Birla, was on the whole "fighting in a gentlemanly way" (p. 245).

When, after Nehru's arrest, it was decided to extend the scope of civil disobedience, Gandhiji gave detailed instructions to satyagrahis in order to keep the movement on the highest level and prevent it "from lapsing into mass civil disobedience". He himself was to finalize the selection of satyagrahis. Every satyagrahi was to inform the District Magistrate of the time, place and manner of his satyagraha. Meetings and demonstrations in cities were to be avoided, and even in villages, the recommended method was for the satyagrahi to repeat a standard slogan to passers-by as he walked on in a particular direction until he was arrested. The slogan was: "It is wrong to help the British war effort with men or money. The only worthy effort is to resist all war with non-violent resistance" (p. 157). Gandhiji had always attached the highest importance to constructive work as an essential aspect of satyagraha and now, with the civil disobedience part of it kept to the minimum required by the situation, it acquired even greater importance than before. Gandhiji, therefore, invited the "full-hearted co-operation" of the whole country in the movement through "ceaseless prosecution of the constructive programme" which meant, in essence, "an increasing sense of justice in every walk of life". "Unless rock-bottom justice and equality pervade society," he urged, there could be "no non-violent atmosphere" (p. 105). Civil resistance could be "effective only when it was backed by constructive effort on a mass scale" and such work, therefore, was "obligatory on all who belong to a non-violent organization" (p. 388). For the satyagrahi, constructive work was "what arms are for the violent men" (p. 36). The Independence Day pledge was, therefore, amended and a paragraph was added calling

upon all Indians, Congressmen or others. "to concentrate with redoubled zeal on the constructive programme" (p. 279).

Among the letters in this volume is one to Subhas Chandra Bose who had suggested his Forward Bloc joining the civil disobedience. In view of the policy differences between Gandhiji and Bose, that was not possible, but meanwhile, said Gandhiji, "let us love one another, remaining members of the same family that we are" (p. 264). A difference of view had developed with Purushottamdas Tandon over the policy of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan which had abandoned Gandhiji's line on the question of Hindi-Urdu. Gandhiji explained his dilemma to Tandon: "If I stay in the Sammelan, I become a partner in retrogression. If I leave, I may probably become the root cause of dissension" (p. 274). A Muslim research scholar of Aligarh University had objected to Gandhiji's citing the Koran in support of non-violence on the ground of his being a non-Muslim. "It will be an evil day," Gandhiji replied, "if the reading and interpreting of religious books are to be confined only to those who wear particular religious labels" (p. 51). To Sir Reginald Maxwell, Home Member in the Viceroy's Executive Council, who had suggested that Gandhiji should "address a manifesto to the people of India stating his own position . . . and then be quiet", Gandhiji replied: ". . . the only way satyagraha works is by a continuous discovery of truth and action based on it." He was not, Gandhiji added, a preacher, but was "essentially a man of action and a reformer carrying on an experiment never before tried in the political field" (p. 208). It was as a man of action that Gandhiji wrote to another correspondent: "Unregulated sentiment is waste like unharnessed steam" (p. 426). Putting up with the temper of other people was not always a virtue in Gandhiji's view. If as a result of it one's "fearlessness goes on increasing, it is ahimsa, otherwise it is cowardice" (p. 392).

Describing his own daily experience, Gandhiji wrote to a correspondent: "When Ramanama becomes as natural as breathing, it does not obstruct but helps other work, just as the tune of the *tambura* sustains other tunes" (p. 251).

PREFACE

The individual civil disobedience launched in October 1940 with Vinoba Bhave as the first satyagrahi (*vide* Vol. LXXIII) continued to run its silent course during the period of this volume (April 16 to October 10, 1941). All important Congress leaders were in jail and censorship saw to it that newspapers did not report the progress of the struggle or reproduce Gandhiji's statements. When on June 22, Hitler attacked Russia, what had till then seemed a struggle between Imperialism and Fascism for world domination acquired a new ideological dimension. The British Government, in an attempt to give the appearance of national support to the war, announced on July 21 expansion of the Viceroy's Executive Council to include some more Indian members and the formation of a National Defence Council. Gandhiji did not consider that the step affected the Congress stand or met the Congress demand to any extent (p. 181) and Prime Minister Churchill's statement in the House of Commons on September 9 excluding India from the application of the Atlantic Charter, jointly announced by him and President Roosevelt on August 14, confirmed the Indian leaders' doubts about British intentions. Gandhiji refused to comment on Churchill's statement, saying, "... my silence is much more eloquent than any words that I may utter" (p. 315).

Though the civil disobedience had made very little outward impression and the Secretary of State Amery even claimed that it had fallen flat (p. 15), Gandhiji was fully satisfied with its progress (p. 296). He had not, he said in a statement to *The Times of India*, expected a "sudden miracle" from the movement and had not intended it to "create an appreciable impression upon the war effort ". It was conceived to be, he explained, "a silent declaration of unquenchable faith in the power of non-violence" even in the midst of the "terrible" and "baffling" circumstances which faced the world and was also "a moral, and from that standpoint a grand, protest against the conduct of the war in the name of a free people." In keeping with this intention, he was taking "extraordinary precaution ... to keep the movement within limits and absolutely innocuous" (pp. 2-3). He was keen on quality and not quantity, Gandhiji told a Congress worker, and expected prospective satyagrahis to keep a log-book of their daily activities in furtherance of the constructive programme.

Permission to offer satyagraha was to be granted only to deserving persons after an examination of their diaries (p. 62). He was, Gandhiji explained in another Press statement, in no hurry to fill the jails. The virtue of the movement lay "in the people learning through the restricted civil disobedience the necessity of discipline, suffering and self-sacrifice", for every true example of satyagraha, he believed, "acts as a leaven working itself in the mass mind". Gandhiji therefore warned Congressmen to expect increasing stiffness on his part in enforcing the condition about the constructive programme which he held to be "the foundation for civil disobedience" (p. 150).

Gandhiji's chief consideration in this vigilance in the conduct of the satyagraha was to reduce "embarrassment to the minimum" whilst the British, as he said, were "engaged in a deadly life-and-death war" (p. 149) and he therefore ruled out intensification of the struggle "during the pendency of the war". For Gandhiji this policy of non-embarrassment was a logical consequence of his non-violence and he did not expect the British Government to reciprocate his chivalrous stand and concede the right of freedom of speech (p. 296). Even so, he was greatly pained by Amery's pronouncements which, he felt, betrayed "callousness" and "contemptuous disregard of the situation" as it existed in India and which lacked "the elementary grace to acknowledge the studied moderation of the Congress . . ." (pp. 13 and 15). "The Secretary of State," he complained to Agatha Harrison, "never speaks but to irritate almost everybody" (p. 132) and he felt sad to think that the distress through which Great Britain was passing had "not sobered Mr. Amery even to the extent of respecting cold fact" (p. 17). Gandhiji's sympathy for the British as fellow human beings was still as fresh as in the beginning and he wrote to Mirabehn: "War news continues to be sensational. The news about the destruction in England is heart-rending. The Houses of Parliament, the Abbey, the Cathedral seemed to be immortal." But he now felt, "Nevertheless pride rules the English will" and wondered, "Is it still bravery?" (p. 80). And writing to another correspondent Gandhiji admitted the virtues of the British people but also referred to "their intoxication of power, highhandedness and blatant lies, seen here in India", which, he said, showed "that their civilization is rooted in selfishness and love of pleasure" (p. 80).

Gandhiji seems to have felt a similar conflict of mind in regard to Russia. He refused to express any opinion on the situation arising out of Hitler's attack on the Soviet Union, for, as he explained to a correspondent, "As long as I am not able

to do something with all my heart, it is my nature to keep silent." In international affairs he relied for guidance on Jawaharlal Nehru whose policy, he said, "has been the policy of the Congress", and since he was in prison Gandhiji's mind did not work. He had admired Lenin, but Lenin's Russia, Gandhiji said, "was no more" (p. 169) and though he recognized the worth of what Russia had done he did not "understand what is now going on" (p. 339). "Once it took help from Germany," Gandhiji explained his difficulty to a third correspondent, "and now from England." It was his faith that out of the prevailing violence non-violence would be born if there were some truly non-violent people. "I believe we are such people," he said, though he could not say how ahimsa would be born (pp. 336-7). He had full faith, Gandhiji told an interviewer, "in a Divine Power guiding the destinies of India and of the world" and it was that living faith, he added, "that sustains me in the present crisis" (p. 297). It was out of this sense of mission that Gandhiji had appealed to friends, in his statement to *The Times of India*, not to ask him "at this supreme moment in the life of the world and my own life, to deny a faith that has sustained me for nearly half a century" (p. 4).

Gandhiji's faith in ahimsa was going to be put to the severest test by a new development in the Indian political scene which began to emerge during the period of this volume. Communal riots broke out in quick succession in Dacca, Ahmedabad, Bombay and Bihar in March, April and May of the year. These riots, Gandhiji wrote to Agatha Harrison, had no resemblance to riots in the past but were "a rehearsal for civil war" (p. 132) or, as he described them in a Press statement, "a miniature civil war" (p. 113). He was convinced that they were "intended to intimidate the Congress" (p. 319), though he also recorded his "shame and sorrow" at "the cool, calculated and unprovoked murder of a Muslim family including an infant girl, three years old" (p. 108). Gandhiji was deeply pained and distressed by the arson, loot and killing of innocent people including children and by the thousands of people fleeing from their homes. "We have proved ourselves barbarians and cowards in these places," he wrote (p. 26). He believed that it was "the inherent right and the bounden duty of a man to defend honour non-violently if he knows how, otherwise violently" (p. 298) and urged, "nobody shall be a coward" (p.103). For Congressmen, however, Gandhiji insisted on the strictest adherence to non-violence. He saw in the riots the failure of Congress non-violence as a positive force and asked Congressmen

to "examine the contents of their non-violence" (p. 27). "Let us learn from the British people," he urged, "the art of recklessly losing life and property. . . . We shall never learn the art of mutual forbearance and toleration till some of us, though perfectly innocent, have staggered Indian humanity by losing our lives" (p. 28).

Gandhiji advised those who favoured violent resistance to leave the Congress "and shape their conduct just as they think fit and guide others accordingly". If the majority of Congressmen held that violent resistance in riots was not inconsistent with the Congress creed, they should openly declare their opinion and guide the people (p. 74). To Bhulabhai Desai, leader of the Congress Party in the Central Legislative Assembly, who held such an interpretation of the Congress creed, Gandhiji wrote: "You should come out openly with your view and try to cultivate public opinion in accordance with it. This is an age of action. All of us will be judged by our actions." To Bhulabhai's son Dhirubhai, also a Congress worker, Gandhiji gave the same advice: "Now it is going to be a time for real action, when half-hearted people will prove a burden" (pp. 133-4). K. M. Munshi, a leading Congressman of Bombay, doubted the practicability and efficacy of non-violence in riots and accepted Gandhiji's advice to leave the Congress. Justifying his advice, Gandhiji explained that, when there was conflict between thought and action, remaining a Congressman would drag a person down. "For the spring of non-violent action was non-violent thought. If the latter was absent, the former had subjectively little or no value" (p. 113). Gandhiji sympathized with Munshi's "agony", but reassured him that it would take him forward. In his impatience, however, Munshi had in a public speech in Benares suggested seeking foreign help "in order to protect India's nationalism and unity". "The fight about Pakistan," Gandhiji reasoned with him, "is a fight between two brothers", and one could get reconciled to one brother being defeated at the hands of the other, but either of them winning with the help of a foreign power would enslave both (pp. 312-3).

So exercised was Gandhiji by the spreading communal fury that for a while his mind was full of only that one thought (p. 83). He appealed to the rival parties both advocates and opponents of Pakistan, to cultivate tolerance for each other's views and to agree to "settle all our differences through negotiation and peaceful effort including arbitration" (pp. 36-7). And in any case he wanted them "to avoid the use of the law of the

jungle'' (p. 105) and eschew ''goondaism for enforcing claims'' (p. 193). Gandhiji was convinced that ultimately truth and non-violence would triumph (p. 99) and people would gradually regain their sanity (p. 103), and would themselves ''decide these questions and bypass us all'' (p. 319). It was the presence of the third party, the British Government, that stood in the way of such a process. The Government, Gandhiji feared, would allow the people to kill one another and intervene only when their own control was in danger (pp. 26-7). ''Let them withdraw from India,'' Gandhiji suggested, and promised ''that the Congress and the League and all other parties will find it to their interest to come together and devise a home-made solution for the Government of India. It may not be scientific; it may not be after any Western pattern; but it will be durable'' (p. 14). Gandhiji felt the urgency of the problem so deeply that he thought of going on a tour of the affected parts. ''We must find some way of reconciliation,'' he wrote to Vallabhbhai Patel, but such a way could be found only by opening one's heart to a higher influence. Trusting in that Higher Power, Gandhiji was neither ''panicky nor worried'', and yet not unconcerned. ''I observe things,'' he said, ''and try to remain engrossed in my duty'' (pp. 39-40).

Among the things which claimed Gandhiji's daily attention were some Ashram problems which seem to have considerably taxed his patience. One worker from Bengal whose domestic relations do not seem to have been happy and who seemed likely to Gandhiji ''to take mental sannyasa and sever his connection with the family'' was advised by him to go to Dacca and work for restoration of communal harmony (pp. 17-8). The experiment proved ''disastrous'', for the worker sought ''notoriety and not service'' and Gandhiji suggested to him that he would ''serve the nation by bearing the family burden'' (pp. 29 and 41). ''You must now come down to mother earth and do as other men do—labour to earn an honest cowrie and subsist on it,'' wrote Gandhiji (p. 127). Another worker, who could not ''tolerate in others the freedom'' that he wanted for himself (p. 158), suffered from ''the letter-writing mania'' (p. 19) and wrote one ''terrible'' letter which, Gandhiji said, showed ''the limit of mental confusion'' (p. 57). To another ''painful'' letter from him Gandhiji replied, ''. . . perhaps your good lies in your leaving'', and suggested that he should go either to Pondicherry or to Shri Ramana Ashram (p. 126). Gandhiji's final advice to him was: ''You will be calm only when you stop thinking altogether and devote yourself exclusively and ceaselessly to work'' (p. 188).

So numerous were the problems that Gandhiji confessed to Kishorelal Mashruwala: "I have experienced such disappointments regarding the Ashram that I have lost all interest in embarking on new ventures" (p. 55). Gandhiji did not, however, agree with Mirabehn's suggestion to disband the Ashram. The Ashram's growth, Gandhiji said, "had been spontaneous, and the destruction or the reshaping will have to be likewise." He had set up homes and disbanded them time and again in the past. "All came in their due course," he wrote. "Heaven only knows where I am to be flung again. No, my safety lies in praying and waiting. 'Lead Thou me on'." To Gandhiji's Vaishnava mind, the world was inseparable from oneself and one should, therefore, learn to accept its imperfections and work with them (p. 54). "No one can be unworthy of living in an institution," Gandhiji wrote to another worker. "The world itself is an institution. Can anybody stay outside it?" The family also was an institution and in between the world and the family there were other institutions or sub-institutions like the Ashram and one had to live and grow harmoniously through one's roles in all those imperfect institutions (p. 156).

Man progressed from imperfection to perfection. "You should understand," Gandhiji wrote to a worker, "that all of us in the Ashram are imperfect; even then we try to be good" (p. 385). If one sincerely followed the light as one saw it, one "will discover the truth by and by" (p. 49). Even limited non-violence, when it is "honestly worked . . . automatically expands" (p. 233). The practice of non-violence "seemed more difficult than of truth", for "the fruits of untruth were more indetectable than those of violence" (p. 114). It was Gandhiji's faith that "thought is more effective than speech and writing". If his thoughts were pure, "they must be having their effect" (p. 117). For purity of mind the best means was Ramanama and "when the mind is not reciting Ramanama or doing His work, then the Devil takes possession of it" for "Nature abhors a vacuum" (p. 306).

"Whatever I do," wrote Gandhiji to a correspondent, "is spontaneous and natural to me" and no "appreciation is . . . needed for doing what is natural . . ." (p. 133). For a similar reason Gandhiji urged another correspondent: "But please don't expect my co-operation in anything to perpetuate the memory of anything done by me. If the things I do have no vitality in them, let them perish" (p. 170).

Writing to Amrit Kaur about Rabindranath Tagore who died on August 7, Gandhiji said: "He was a rare combination of goodness and genius" (p. 226).

PREFACE

During the period covered by this volume (October 11, 1941 to March 31, 1942) the individual civil disobedience movement, which had been going on for a year, was suspended, Gandhiji's request to the Congress to be relieved of his "responsibility" was accepted, and the British Government in London sent Sir Stafford Cripps to India on a one-man mission to negotiate with the Indian leaders and secure India's whole-hearted co-operation in the war.

The change in the Congress policy as well as the apparent change in Prime Minister Churchill's stand took place under the pressure of external circumstances. Gandhiji's relinquishment of "responsibility" was the result of a clearer understanding, on his part, of the need for preserving the unity of political India, while keeping alive the embers of the freedom struggle and asserting the elementary right of speaking against war and violence. Several Congress leaders had from the beginning had reservations about the Bombay A.I.C.C. resolution of September 16, 1940 (*vide* Volume LXXIII, pp. 1-3) which had authorized the launching of the struggle under Gandhiji's leadership. Some of these leaders came out of jail "with their doubts confirmed" (p. 55). Their position was strengthened by international developments following the outbreak of hostilities, in December 1941, between Japan and the U.S.A. The Congress Working Committee which met at Bardoli in the last week of December 1941 reiterated the Bombay Resolution and declared once again that "only a free and independent India can be in a position to undertake the defence of the country on a national basis" (p. 452). But it laid down no specific programme of action, while accepting Gandhiji's request for relief from the responsibility of leadership (pp. 450-2). At the A.I.C.C. meeting at Wardha in the middle of January, Gandhiji himself recommended the Working Committee's resolution, withdrawing in effect the power of attorney granted to him, and appealed to the members not even to divide the house on the question (pp. 219-29). Then, as the Japanese armies were over-running Burma, the despatch of the Cripps Mission was announced on March 11 and Sir Stafford arrived in New Delhi on March 23, 1941.

Though Gandhiji was opposed to all wars as such he had no desire to obstruct the British war effort. The civil disobedience

movement was thus largely symbolic and limited in scope, being confined to a few selected individuals, as well as in its purpose, which was to assert the elementary right of non-violent free speech, "the right to speak against participation in this war or all war" (p. 60). The programme, however, did not inspire much faith in some of the Congress leaders and they gave expression to their dissatisfaction with the progress of the struggle. Answering their criticism (pp. 55-62) Gandhiji said that any feverish activity would only promote violence and therefore retard the steady march of quiet, non-violent action and that a mass movement would amount to "naked embarrassment" and a "betrayal of non-violence". It would also mean, in the absence of communal harmony, "an invitation to civil war" (p. 56). Gandhiji conceded that the struggle had yielded no tangible political gain, yet he was fully satisfied with its progress. For in ahimsa there was no room for "sudden miracles". Ahimsa worked in the same mysterious way as other processes of nature. He said: "We watch the sky every day but we see no miracles there. But those who have an eye for it are spellbound with the spectacle. They see new miracles every moment" (p. 8). Gandhiji's faith in the power of ahimsa sprang from his faith in the perfectability of human nature. His experience had convinced him that ahimsa "can change human nature and sooner than men like Churchill and Hitler can" (p. 45).

Thus though it might seem, in the absence of some spectacular show in the shape of a parliamentary programme or mass civil disobedience, that there was no life left in the Congress, Gandhiji felt that things were "going according to plan". The plan was for everyone "to carry on the thirteenfold constructive programme and some select few to offer C. D. in addition" (pp. 60-1). Only a few could go to jail, but "all must work the constructive programme", which would support the chosen satyagrahis as the civilian population supported the army during an armed conflict (p. 57).

Besides these ethical and political considerations, Gandhiji's personal feelings for the British also restrained him from mass action which would obstruct the Government's war effort. Though he used to argue that, from the Indian point of view, there was no difference between Imperialism and Nazism and that Hitlerism was only "a superfine copy of Imperialism" (pp. 72 and 37), he loved the British and admired some aspects of their character. From the very beginning, therefore, he had felt great personal sympathy for the British and had expressed it in his first reaction after the outbreak of the war (*vide* Vol. LXX, pp. 161-2). Recalling

that experience, he wrote to a British correspondent, who had lost his son in the war, "I remain the same true friend of the British that I always have been, whether fighting or co-operating" (p. 122). In a similar spirit he wrote to Agatha Harrison, "I did shed a silent tear when I read about the damage done to the Houses of Parliament, the Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's" (p. 38). Paying a compliment to the courage of the British, Gandhiji advised the people as the war danger came nearer after the entry of Japan: "If we have learnt nothing worth from the contact with the British, let us at least learn their calmness in the face of misfortunes" (p. 325).

Some of the Congress leaders, like C. Rajagopalachari, S. Satyamurti and Asaf Ali, went a step further than Gandhiji on the question of non-embarrassment, favoured the abandonment of even the restricted civil disobedience and advocated resumption of ministerial office on suitable political terms. Satyamurti and Asaf Ali met Gandhiji after their release from jail, but he held out no hope of change of policy (pp. 14, 27 and 30). He even stated publicly, when he observed a move to press the Government to release satyagrahi prisoners, that "there will be on the part of the Congress neither appreciation of nor response to any such gesture by the Government" and that the discharged satyagrahis "will have to be invited to re-offer civil disobedience . . ." (p. 92). The release of Nehru, Azad and other political prisoners was announced on December 3. Gandhiji again stated that it could not "evoke a single responsive or appreciative chord" in him, for he saw no change of policy on the part of the British Government. "Mr. Amery's pronouncements," he said, "do not soothe the festering sore, but are like sprinkling chillies on it." He was therefore confident that, if the Government expected that the leaders would have changed their opinions while in jail, it would soon be disillusioned (p. 131).

Events following the attack on Pearl Harbour (on December 7) brought about a marked change in the war situation. The Congress Working Committee, which met at Bardoli from December 23 to 30, found itself unable to go along with Gandhiji in refusing co-operation in the war effort in any circumstances on the ground of non-violence. Gandhiji pleaded earnestly with the Committee, arguing that he would be committing moral suicide if he abandoned the faith of a lifetime which he had persuaded the Congress also to accept for twenty years as a policy (pp. 188-9). But in the course of the discussions in the Committee he discovered, as he said in his official letter to the Congress President Maulana

Abul Kalam Azad on the last day of the meeting, that the other members of the Committee did not share his interpretation of the Bombay Resolution of September 1940. Gandhiji had interpreted it "to mean that the Congress was to refuse participation in the present or all wars on the ground principally of non-violence", but on re-reading the resolution he found that its letter could not bear the interpretation he had put upon it. The resolution "contemplated material association with Britain ... as a price for guaranteed independence of India". But he himself was convinced that only non-violence could "save India and the world from self-extinction", and he wished to continue his mission whether he was "alone or assisted by an organization or individuals" and he accordingly gave up leadership of the Congress struggle in terms of the Bombay Resolution (pp. 189-90). India, Gandhiji believed, had a message for the world and under his leadership the Congress had for twenty years demonstrated the possibilities of non-violence. He would not, therefore, "be guilty of selling that heritage even for the independence of India because it would not be real independence" (p. 191).

Though Gandhiji thus dissociated himself from the resolution adopted by the Working Committee, which implied that "the door is not barred altogether against Congress participation" in the war (p. 191), yet at the A.I.C.C. meeting in the middle of January he pleaded with the members to accept it unanimously. He had, he explained, seen "the climate in the country and the criticism of our Congress in the world" and he would, as an exponent of ahimsa, persuade the meeting to accept the resolution "deliberately and whole-heartedly". The Congress did not know its own mind, he said, but he knew that the attitude of the Congress was reflected in the resolution, and he wanted the members courageously to follow their judgment regardless of what he himself thought. "I do not want it to be said," Gandhiji insisted, "that in order to retain my leadership you bade good-bye to your senses because you had no courage to give me up. I do not covet leadership by undermining anyone's manhood....This is not the way I work." It was a fraudulent way, Gandhiji said, and he was not going to cheat the Congress after fifty years of national service (pp. 222-3). The decision not to divide the house, Gandhiji explained later to a meeting of Congress workers, indicated his growth or evolution in his own non-violence (p. 248). Among the leaders who opposed Gandhiji's stand was Jawaharlal Nehru and an impression had gained ground that he and Gandhiji had

been estranged. This was baseless, Gandhiji said. Jawaharlal had been resisting him all the time, but there could be no division between them. On the contrary, he had always said that Jawaharlal would be his successor. "He says whatever is uppermost in his mind," Gandhiji explained, "but he always does what I want. When I am gone he will do what I am doing now.... Ultimately, he will have to speak my language." And even if that did not happen, Gandhiji added, "I would at least die with this faith" (p. 224).

Apart from the question of non-violence, most Congressmen did not appreciate the importance Gandhiji attached to the constructive programme. For him it was not merely a matter of achieving some desired improvements, which probably could be done more efficiently through Government machinery, but it meant building up "the structure of swaraj", that is, preparing for the non-violent society of his conception in free India. Swaraj based on non-violence, he explained, would be "a fulfilment of the constructive programme" and, therefore, if there was no living faith in it on the part of Congressmen, the "whole theme of corporate non-violence", as he had conceived it, would fall to pieces (p. 137). Gandhiji had given a brief outline of the activities he had in mind (*vide* Vol. LXXII, pp. 378-81) before the individual civil disobedience was launched, and he now published a fuller brochure (pp. 146-66), entitled *Constructive Programme: Its Meaning and Place*, explaining it as the "construction of *poorna* swaraj or complete independence by truthful and non-violent means." Swaraj through violence, Gandhiji held, would mean ascendancy of those who made "the most effective use of violence", not equality, economic or otherwise. If, on the other hand, the programme he offered "could be successfully worked out", it would result in the swaraj they wanted in which "the independence of every unit, be it the humblest of the nation, without distinction of race, colour or creed" would be assured (pp. 146-7). If Congressmen had no faith in this programme, Gandhiji told them, he must be rejected as their leader, as his handling of civil disobedience without the constructive programme would be "like a paralysed hand attempting to lift a spoon" (p. 166).

Of all these items Hindu-Muslim unity had become an urgent problem because of the Muslim League demand for partition. The demand was the logical outcome of separate electorates which "presupposed mutual distrust and conflict of interests" and "tended to perpetuate differences and deepen the distrust" (p. 237). Gandhiji wanted every Congressman to identify himself with all

classes of people and go out of his way to "cultivate personal friendship with persons representing faiths other than his own" (p. 147). He made a similar appeal in his Silver Jubilee speech at the Benares Hindu University: "I would like you to go out to invite Mussalmans to come here, and not to mind if they reject your advances. You are the representatives of a great civilization" which "regards ahimsa as the supreme dharma. . . . Our civilization has absorbed, like the holy Ganga, many streams from outside, and it is my prayer that the Hindu University . . . may invite and absorb all that is best in other cultures and nurse hostility towards none" (p. 245).

In his Ashram prayers Gandhiji had attempted such blending of religions. A *mantra* chanted by a Japanese inmate and the *al Fateha* recited by Raihana Tyabji were included in the Ashram worship. To "an ardent Hindu friend" who reproached him for this, Gandhiji replied, "I am confident that my Hinduism and that of the other Ashram Hindus has grown thereby" (pp. 280-2). He responded with openness of heart to the teaching of Jesus Christ and protested against the exclusiveness of orthodox Christians. "Is all the grandeur of His teaching and of His doctrine," Gandhiji asked, "to be forbidden" to him because he did not accept Jesus as the only "begotten son" of God? Jesus, according to Gandhiji, belonged "not solely to Christianity, but to the entire world . . ." (pp. 69-70).

A trend in communal relations which deeply pained Gandhiji was the frequent publication of writings which appeared to him "to be distortions of truth and vilification of the Congress and Congressmen and Hindus". He publicly drew Jinnah's attention to "a virulent attack on Hinduism" in one of the weeklies and appealed "for a juster estimate of men and things in papers representing the policy and programme of the Muslim League" (pp. 377-8). Jinnah's "unexpected defence", Gandhiji wrote, "of an article designed to wound deep susceptibilities makes ominous reading" (p. 412).

In the midst of the raging fire of violence in other parts of the world and signs of growing tensions in India, Gandhiji was sustained by the hope of a new order at the end of the war. He had visions "that the end of this war will mean also the end of the rule of capital. I see coming the day of the rule of the poor, whether that rule be through force of arms or of non-violence" (p. 259). Out of "this holocaust", Gandhiji wrote in *Harijan*, "must arise a new order for which the exploited millions of toilers have so long thirsted. The prayers of peace-lovers cannot go in

vain. Satyagraha is itself an unmistakable mute prayer of an agonized soul'' (p. 305). Commenting on an article by Dr. Maude Royden of the Guildhouse, London, Gandhiji expressed his deep religious conviction: ''There is no cause whatsoever for despondency . . .'' The anti-war effort was ''bound to succeed sooner rather than later, if man is to live as man and not become a two-footed brute'' (pp. 395-6). He consoled Agatha Harrison, saying: ''Let prayer of the heart be our sole and sure refuge. . . . not a blade moves but by His will. He allows this slaughter. We do not know why. But if we keep our hands, head and heart stainless let us believe that in His own good time, He will use us to stop this apparently senseless mutual slaughter'' (p. 39).

On February 11, one of his closest co-workers, Jamnalal Bajaj, passed away suddenly. Never before, Gandhiji wrote, ''have I felt so forlorn except when Maganlal was snatched away from me fourteen years ago'' (p. 323).

Though a karmayogi *par excellence*, Gandhiji knew the limitations of action. The thoughts of a person ''whose intellect is clear and whose aspirations are pure'', he wrote to Vinoba Bhave's brother, ''have a power not to be found in his actions. Just as speech limits thought, so also action limits aspirations'' (pp. 48-9).

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PREFACE

The period covered by the present volume (April 1 to December 17, 1942) marks the most momentous phase of India's struggle for freedom. At no other period in its long history had the national movement been called upon to surmount such formidable problems of morale and organization. As the tempo of the war in the Far East mounted and the defences of the Empire crumbled everywhere, lacking as they did the sympathy and support of the local populations, statesmen in China and the USA—Britain's allies in the war—expressed concern and earnestly pleaded with Britain to make concessions to the national sentiment and come to an understanding with the Congress, so as to ensure India's willing and whole-hearted participation in the war effort. Britain bluntly told both to keep off the subject of India, and at the same time despatched Cripps to Delhi on a mission intended more to satisfy Britain's allies than to meet India's urgent demand.

The worst sufferer was Cripps himself, for he managed to displease not only all the shades of Indian political opinion but also the Viceroy and the Secretary of State. Commenting on his proposal for the Balkanization of India without any real transfer of control over defence, Gandhiji wrote : "I have no doubt about his goodwill . . . . But he should have known that at least the Congress would not look at Dominion Status.... He knew too that the proposal contemplated the splitting of India into three parts each having different ideas of governance. It contemplated Pakistan, and yet not the Pakistan of the Muslim League's conception. And last of all it gave no real control over defence to responsible ministers" (p. 28).

The failure of the Cripps mission widened the breach and precluded further dialogue between the Congress and the British Government. It also exposed the hollowness of the Allied claim that they were fighting the war in order to safeguard democracy in the world. "Both America and Britain," wrote Gandhiji, "lack the moral basis for engaging in this war, unless they put their own houses in order.... They have no right to talk about protecting democracies and protecting civilization and human freedom until the canker of white superiority is destroyed in its entirety" (p. 115).

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Gandhiji and the Congress leadership were forced into a situation where they had not only to mobilize the country for resisting the threatened Japanese invasion, but also, and in order to do this more effectively, to try and wrest for the country freedom from the foreign rule that had become a millstone round its neck. "My firm opinion," Gandhiji told an English friend, "is that the British should leave India now in an orderly manner." Such withdrawal he regarded as a military necessity both for India's and Britain's safety. "Britain cannot defend India, much less herself on Indian soil with any strength. The best thing she can do is to leave India to her fate" (p. 61). The reason, as Gandhiji was to put it in his draft resolution for the AICC, was clear, "There is an eternal conflict between Indian and British interests. It follows that their notions of defence would also differ. The British Government has no trust in India's political parties. The Indian army has been maintained up till now mainly to hold India in subjugation" (p. 63).

There was at the same time the deep-rooted anti-British feeling to consider which had become so pronounced in the country that it was beginning to be expressed in a pro-Japanese attitude. Gandhiji believed that voluntary British withdrawal would turn this hatred into goodwill and enable Indian leaders to arouse the people and organize resistance against the Japanese, help China and Russia more effectively and thus promote world peace. "I am convinced," he wrote further, " . . . that the time has come during the war, not after it, for the British and the Indians to be reconciled to complete separation from each other. That way and that way alone lies the safety of both . . . " (p. 86).

Gandhiji's proposal for "an orderly withdrawal by the British" raised strong doubts and provoked opposition even among some of his close colleagues and he patiently strove to win them over and to educate public opinion in India and abroad. It was also clear that the British could not be made to do the right thing without a struggle. The volume witnesses the unfolding of the pattern of this struggle, inspired and led personally by Gandhiji, till the passing of the famous "Quit India" resolution in August and the ruthless repression and reprisals that followed it.

Organizing such a movement proved an uphill task. To begin with, there were differences of opinion in the leadership which Gandhiji publicly admitted. "I do not mind telling you," he told a journalist, "that there are differences between me and the Working Committee. The whole nation is not with me on the non-violence question" (p. 3). These differences became

more glaring as the Japanese advanced to the borders of India, Vishakhapatnam and Kakinada and then Chittagong had been bombed and landings on the Eastern coast seemed imminent. Nehru, Azad and Rajagopalachari advocated armed resistance, guerilla struggle and even a scorched earth policy under certain circumstances. All this made Gandhiji unhappy. "My line is cut out for me even though I may be alone in my faith. I must follow it unfalteringly, believing the masses will never take to the violent method. They will either remain inert or take to non-violent action. Guerilla warfare can take us nowhere. If it is practised on a large scale, it must lead to disastrous consequences" (p. 52).

He was disinclined to attend the Working Committee meeting at Allahabad at the end of April. ". . . what shall I do by going there? I have the same one thing to offer" (p. 53). He told Vallabhbhai Patel that it was his duty to resign if the Working Committee did not adopt an unambiguous resolution of non-violent non-co-operation. And he added, "You must also oppose the scorched-earth policy and any suggestion to invite foreign troops" (p. 61). At the same time he sent through Mirabehn a draft resolution for the AICC (pp. 63-5) demanding British withdrawal from India, advocating complete non-violent non-co-operation to the Japanese forces, should they attack India, disapproving the scorched earth policy and introduction of foreign soldiers into India and calling upon the people whole-heartedly to take up the constructive programme, "banish communal strife" and "exorcise the demon of untouchability". To Nehru he wrote : "If you do not like my resolution I really cannot insist. The time has come when each of us must choose his own course" (p. 66). Though the AICC did not adopt Gandhiji's resolution as drafted by him, the alternative draft that was passed incorporated all the points he had made, including the one about non-violent non-co-operation against the Japanese "as the British Government has prevented the organization of national defence by the people in any other way" (p. 425).

Then there was the question of communal unity, which Gandhiji asserted was indispensable not only for attainment of independence but also for any successful resistance against Japan. Stressing the need for such unity, Gandhiji said: ". . . with the aggressor at the gates, more than ever unity is vital in India. I desire above all things to see a joint struggle against him and to achieve independence. In the very process of doing this, it is highly likely that we shall have forgotten our quarrels in the

same common goal'' (pp. 25 and 29). But the Muslim League, with its two-nation theory, persisted in its demand for partition. Rajagopalachari was for conceding the demand. Gandhiji would have none of it. He emphatically declared : "I consider the vivisection of India to be a sin. . . . Shri Rajagopalachari would be party in the sin. . . . What is more, I am firmly of opinion that there is no unity whilst the third party is there to prevent it. It created the artificial division and it keeps it up'' (p. 120). And again, ". . .with the third party in possession, no unity—cultural, political or other—is possible. That is why withdrawal is a necessary preliminary to unity'' (p. 228). One notes here a shift from viewing communal disunity as a cause to viewing it as an effect of foreign rule. In any case the two were interrelated and the struggle against the one must at the same time serve as a struggle against the other. "Today," Gandhiji wrote, "we do not even know that the goal of the Congress and the League is one. And you cannot bribe the League to co-operate for independence'' (p. 167).

Gandhiji's stand on the Pakistan demand was as cruelly misrepresented by the Muslim League leaders and Press as his attitude to Japan was by the British Government and the British and American Press. Gandhiji could not accept the Pakistan of Jinnah's conception, a sovereign State which could go to war with the rest of the country or make independent treaties with other nations (p. 315). But he declared that if the Muslims really desired Pakistan they must have it, unless the Hindus wanted to fight, but this, he warned, was the way of suicide to which he would not be a living witness (p. 29). This was interpreted as an invitation to the Hindus to fight (p. 70). Jinnah described the Working Committee resolution as an attempt to blackmail and coerce the British to concede the demand for a Hindu Raj (p. 368), though Maulana Azad, the Congress President, had publicly made the offer that, if the British Government invited the Muslim League to form a provisional government, the Congress would co-operate. Gandhiji went further and said that the Congress would even join the Government formed by the Muslim League and help to run the machinery of the free State. "This is meant in all seriousness and sincerity'' (p. 382) he said. But Jinnah was not to be deflected from his course of total opposition to the national movement for freedom. It seemed to Gandhiji that Jinnah did not want Pakistan by consent. While Gandhiji was prepared to reason with the Muslim League leaders, and to be convinced by them of the necessity of their

demand, Jinnah insisted on Gandhiji meeting him as a Hindu leader on behalf of the Hindus and this, of course, barred the door to any further dialogue between the two leaders. And so Jinnah and the Muslim League stood in isolation from and indeed in opposition to the national movement for freedom.

The situation in the princely States like Travancore, Mysore and Jodhpur added yet another dimension to the problem. High-handedness of the administrators and suppression of the people's liberties in certain States had brought about conditions which could not be "described by any other adjective than lawless" (p. 84). Gandhiji continued to counsel the people to "remain calm and so far as possible not precipitate a clash" (p. 83). He appealed to the Princes to renounce their autocratic powers and become trustees of their subjects (pp. 183-4, 335-7 and 393). At the same time he appealed to the British Government to protect the people from the tyranny of the Princes : "The British Government cannot escape blame and responsibility for every such happening in the States. It is bound by treaty obligations to protect the people of the States from inhumanities such as those going on in Jodhpur . . . " (p. 221).

Law and order appeared to be breaking down all over the country. In Sind, following the arrest of a tribal leader, the Pir of Pagaro, the Hurs had gone on a rampage, plundering, killing and attacking railway stations. The Government was unable to curb them. Gandhiji advised "Congress members to withdraw from the Assembly and Khan Bahadur Allabux and his fellow ministers to resign". He asked them to "form a peace brigade and fearlessly settle down among the Hurs and risk their lives in persuading these erring countrymen to desist from the crimes" (p. 126). Dacoities were on the increase, especially in Gujarat. Gandhiji suggested that the people should defend themselves, with lathis if necessary. But they must get ready (pp. 226-7). When asked what they should do if they were refused permission to organize themselves for self-defence, he unhesitatingly answered : "People have to protect themselves against officials, against dacoits and possibly Japanese. If they do not, they are doomed. Therefore they may not brook any interference with their preparation . . . . What I have in mind is gymnastics, drill, lathi play and the like" (p. 133).

Shortage of food grains in certain areas of Punjab, Rajputana and Bengal had assumed the proportions of famine. Gandhiji appealed for local charity and for avoidance of waste. Government had sent out grain and what stocks were left were

being hoarded by unscrupulous traders. Gandhiji suggested setting up of "grain offices like post offices where people can buy grain like stamps". He appealed to the "mercantile community to take the matter into their own hands and ensure a regular supply of grain to the poor at reasonable rates". He warned: "The matter brooks no delay. Hunger knows no law and bread—or rather grain—riots are sure to break out all over the country if energetic benevolent measures are not taken in time" (pp. 280-1).

Misbehaviour of troops, wherever they were stationed in civilian vicinity, was another irritant. Here again Gandhiji's advice was categorical : "People must everywhere learn to defend themselves against misbehaving individuals, no matter who they are. The question of non-violence and violence does not arise. No doubt the non-violent way is always the best, but where that does not come naturally the violent way is both necessary and honourable. Inaction here is rank cowardice and unmanly" (p. 242).

The sufferings of the people in Bengal were especially acute. First, as Gandhiji noted (p. 33) there were communal riots, then famine and then, to top it, came the threat of invasion and the ruthless measures that followed to evict whole masses of villagers from their homes and lands in the name of military necessity. Even boats and bicycles were not spared. Gandhiji condemned this high-handedness in the strongest terms and advised the people affected to resist it. The authorities were bound to offer equivalent land and buildings and cart the people and their belongings to the places prepared for them. "The people, if they have nowhere to move to, should simply refuse to vacate and suffer the consequences" (p. 242).

Gandhiji and the Congress were similarly concerned with the fate of the hapless Indians, hundreds of thousands of them, trapped in Burma following the Japanese advance and the collapse of British administration in that country. While British evacuees were provided transport and other facilities for their flight, the Indians were left to fend for themselves. Even the vehicles they possessed were sometimes forcibly acquired for the use of the whites. "Hundreds, if not thousands," Gandhiji noted, "on their way from Burma perished without food and drink, and the wretched discrimination stared even these miserable people in the face. One route for the whites, another for the blacks! Provision of food and shelter for the whites, none for the blacks! And discrimination even on their arrival in India! India is being

ground down to dust and humiliated, even before the Japanese advent, not for India's defence—and no one knows for whose defence'' (pp. 195-6). Describing these ''avoidable hardships and blatant discrimination'', Gandhiji said, ''The question is too big to be tackled by any existing organization. It requires a special temporary committee . . . to attend to the orderly and quick evacuation of the eight to nine lacs of men and their disposal after they are on Indian soil'' (p. 55).

The conditions in the country were thus far from propitious for the successful launching of a mass non-violent movement, and yet it was precisely to overcome these conditions that a movement became necessary. ''I always thought,'' said Gandhiji, ''that I would have to wait till the country was ready for a non-violent struggle. But my attitude has undergone a change. I feel that if I continue to wait I might have to wait till doomsday. For the preparation that I have prayed and worked for may never come, and in the meantime I may be enveloped and overwhelmed by the flames of violence that are spreading all around'' (p. 159).

The AICC, as has been noted, had already, in May, passed a resolution asking the British to withdraw from India. As Gandhiji said, ''the first condition of British success is the present undoing of the wrong. It should precede, not follow, victory. The presence of the British in India is an invitation to Japan . . .'' (p. 87). In an appeal ''To Every Briton'' he wrote : ''Britain may . . . be said to be at perpetual war with India which she holds by right of conquest and through an army of occupation. . . . Before the Japanese menace overtakes India, India's homesteads are being occupied by British troops—Indian and non-Indian'' (p. 99). He concluded by appealing for a ''bloodless end of an unnatural domination and for a new era'' (p. 100). To the question to whom the British were to entrust the administration of the country Gandhiji's answer was: '' . . . they have to leave India in God's hands, but in modern parlance to anarchy, and that anarchy may lead to internecine warfare for a time or to unrestrained dacoities. From these a true India will rise . . . '' (p. 105). Indeed, even then it was ''a state of ordered anarchy'' that prevailed in the country and if, as a consequence of British departure, there was lawlessness in India, he would risk it (p. 114). He did fear that ''non-violence alone will not operate . . . . When there is chaos it will be a test for everyone'' (p. 220).

There were still, even after the Allahabad resolution of the Congress, dissenting voices. Of these the chief one was Raja-

gopalachari's. He continued to expound the view that the Congress must conciliate the Muslim League and throw its full weight into the war effort. Gandhiji had to ask for his resignation from the Congress and from the Madras Assembly to which he had been elected on the Congress ticket. This he did, thus adding "to his dignity" (p. 293). Azad, too, had his misgivings. He was not satisfied with Gandhiji's demand or the manner of enforcement (p. 227) and he did not share Gandhiji's view "that any country can defend itself without force of arms" (p. 292). Gandhiji observed in a letter to Nehru : "I find that the two of us have drifted apart. I do not understand him nor does he understand me . . . . Therefore I suggest that the Maulana should relinquish Presidentship . . . . This great struggle cannot be conducted properly without unity and without a President who comes forth with a hundred per cent co-operation" (pp. 293-4). In the end, however, Azad fell into line and continued to serve as President.

In the second week of July, in a draft resolution for the Working Committee, Gandhiji clearly gave notice of his resolve to start a mass movement, should the British not heed the appeal to withdraw. He wrote : "The struggle this time would have to resolve itself into a mass movement on the widest scale possible involving voluntary strikes, voluntary non-co-operation on the part of all those who are in Government employ . . . in any shape or form and it may involve also non-payment of land revenue and taxes" (p. 284). On July 14 the Working Committee, not without some persuasion by Gandhiji, passed the resolution, though in a somewhat changed form, and also authorized Gandhiji to take charge of the movement and lead it.

The British still had an opportunity to enter into negotiations with Gandhiji and heal the breach, but they chose to make use of the resolution to malign the Congress as a pro-Japanese organization and to suppress Gandhiji and the other leaders. The documents now being published by the British government reveal how the ground had been carefully prepared and the plan perfected to arrest Gandhiji and have him transported to some place in British Africa. Amery gave expression to his wish that the Congress should "disintegrate" and the Home Department in Delhi informed him of their plan (a) to avert, (b) to abort and (c) to suppress the movement.

To counter British propaganda Gandhiji wrote to both Chiang Kai-shek and Roosevelt explaining the Congress position vis-a-vis the war against Japan. He assured Chiang: ". . . I shall

take no hasty action. And whatever action I may recommend will be governed by the consideration that it should not injure China, or encourage Japanese aggression in India or China . . . . I am straining every nerve to avoid conflict with British authority. But if, in the vindication of the freedom which has become an immediate desideratum, this becomes inevitable, I shall not hesitate to run any risk however great'' (p. 225). To Roosevelt he wrote : ''. . . I have suggested that, if the Allies think it necessary, they may keep their troops, at their own expense in India . . . for preventing Japanese aggression and defending China'' (p. 265, also pp. 215, 225, 240 and *passim*). These troops would operate in India in accordance with a treaty with the Government of free India, which might also adopt, to help the Allies, ''the military measures they may consider necessary'' (pp. 187, 313 and *passim*).

Gandhiji conceded that this was an ''anomalous position for a free country to be in'' but, he argued, honesty dictated the course (p. 313). ''One thing and only one thing for me,'' he wrote, ''is solid and certain. This unnatural prostration of a great nation—it is neither 'nations' nor 'peoples' —must cease if the victory of the Allies is to be ensured. They lack the moral basis'' (p. 187).

Immediate freedom for India was imperative because, ''if India does not become free now, the hidden discontent will burst forth into a welcome to the Japanese, should they effect a landing. We feel that such an event would be a calamity of the first magnitude. We can avoid it if India gains her freedom'' (p. 331).

Gandhiji clearly dissociated himself from the position of Subhas Bose. He said: ''I do not feel flattered when Subhas Babu says I am right. . . . For there he is attributing pro-Japanese feeling to me. If I were to discover . . . that I was helping the entry of the Japanese in this country, I should not hesitate to retrace my steps. As regards the Japanese, I am certain that we should lay down our lives in order to resist them, as we would to resist the British'' (p. 329).

He took great pains to make it clear that he intended to keep this, his ''biggest movement'' (p. 299) an ''open rebellion of a non-violent character'' (p. 297). ''I want to guard against a sudden outburst of anarchy or a state of things which may be calculated to invite Japanese aggression. . . . I shall take every precaution I can to handle the movement gently, but I would

not hesitate to go to the extremest limit, if I find that no impression is produced on the British Government . . .'' (pp. 298-9). Then if there were to be any violence ''the blame . . . will go to the Government which under the pretext of anarchy . . . goes on consolidating its own anarchy'' (p. 220).

He also would see to it that the British war effort was not directly hampered by the movement. ''Those employed in Government offices, Government factories, railways, post offices, etc., may not participate in the hartal, because our object is to make it clear that we will never tolerate Japanese, Nazi or Fascist invasion, nor British rule. Therefore, we shall not for the present interfere in the above-mentioned Government departments'' (p. 365).

What the Government was doing was precisely to consolidate its ''anarchy''. Strict censorship of the Press was being enforced, all mail passing through post offices was being opened. On May 28 the offices of the Congress at Allahabad had been raided and documents seized. All leading Congressmen were being shadowed and their movements reported. In his instructions to the Ashram inmates on the eve of his departure for Bombay Gandhiji said: ''Those who are in the Ashram should know that anything can befall them. It is possible that Government may even stop the supply of our food. Only those therefore should stay here who are ready to live even on leaves'' (p. 349). As early as July 13 Amery was asking the Viceroy to ''get his blow in first'', and not allow Gandhiji ''time to work up his campaign''.

It was in this atmosphere that the AICC met in Bombay on August 7 and 8 to consider and pass the ''Quit India'' resolution. In Gandhiji's speeches at the session, the dominant note was non-violence. ''I want you,'' he told the members, ''to adopt non-violence as a matter of policy. With me it is a creed, but so far as you are concerned I want you to accept it as policy. As disciplined soldiers you must accept it *in toto* and stick to it when you join the struggle'' (p. 381). In the event of the movement being launched Gandhiji's instructions were: ''Everyone is free to go the fullest length under ahimsa. Complete deadlock by strikes and other non-violent means. Satyagrahis must go out to die, not to live. They must seek and face death. It is only when individuals go out to die that the nation will survive'' (p. 403).

But he let it be known that the mere passing of the resolution did not signal the launching of the movement. He said:

" . . . the actual struggle does not commence this moment. You have only placed all your powers in my hands. I will now wait upon the Viceroy and plead with him for the acceptance of the Congress demand. That process is likely to take two or three weeks" (p. 391).

But the British had no intention to allow any time to Gandhiji. At 5 p.m. on August 9 he and all the top Congress leaders then in Bombay were roused from their beds and carried to places of internment prepared in advance. On the same day similar raids were carried out all over the country. Then began a reign of terror unparalleled in the country's history, followed by more or less spontaneous uprisings of students, factory workers, *kisans* and intelligentsia throughout the length and breadth of the country, with here and there some violent incidents involving destruction of property. British official propaganda blamed Gandhiji for this. Gandhiji disowned responsibility, saying, that if the Government had awaited his "contemplated letter to His Excellency the Viceroy and the result thereafter" the "reported deplorable destruction would have most certainly been avoided. . . . The wholesale arrest of the Congress leaders seems to have made the people wild with rage to the point of losing self-control. I feel that the Government, not the Congress, are responsible for the destruction that has taken place" (p. 414). This letter (September 23, 1942) was deliberately suppressed by Government and not included in the correspondence between Gandhiji and the Viceroy released to the Press (p. 415 *fn*.).

The period also brought a personal tragedy to Gandhiji. Mahadev Desai, Gandhiji's dedicated secretary and closest co-worker, died suddenly on August 15 at the Aga Khan Palace, where he had been interned with Gandhiji. Telegraphing the news to Chimanlal Shah he said: "Mahadev has died yogi's and patriot's death. . . . Cremation taking place front of me. Shall keep ashes" (p. 410). His jailors posted the telegram as a letter!

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PREFACE

This volume (December 17, 1942 to July 31, 1944) contains the *Key to Health*, the correspondence with the Government on Congress responsibility for the disturbances following the arrest of leaders on August 9, 1942, the twenty-one-day fast in early 1943 conceived as an "appeal to the highest Tribunal for justice", the death of Kasturba in February 1944, the release of Gandhiji on medical grounds in May 1944, and his renewed exploration of some basis for agreement between the Government and the Congress which would help the people to overcome their difficulties and participate in the war effort.

The correspondence between Gandhiji and the Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, started on a personal note. During the constitutional experiment of provincial autonomy from 1937 to 1939 Gandhiji had developed a cordial personal relationship with the Viceroy, which seemed to have endured ever since. In a public tribute to the Viceroy's patience and courtesy Gandhiji had declared that the two had become "friends never to be parted" (*vide* Volume LXXIII, pp. 77-8). The massive repression unleashed by the Government to counter the Quit India Resolution therefore came to Gandhiji as a complete surprise. The fact that the Viceroy did not wait for the letter which Gandhiji had declared he would write before starting any action, and the official propaganda launched against him and the Congress leaders pained him to the quick. After pondering over all this for over four months, Gandhiji wrote on the last day of the year "a very personal letter" appealing to the Viceroy as a Christian, a human being and a former friend. "If I have not ceased to be your friend, why did you not, before taking drastic action, send for me, tell me your suspicions and make yourself sure of your facts?" And he pleaded, as with a friend, to convince him of his error (pp. 49-50).

The Viceroy welcomed the frankness of the letter and in his turn was equally "open" and made it clear that he had been "profoundly depressed" by the policy adopted by the Congress and even more so by the silence of Gandhiji and the Congress Working Committee members over the acts of destructive violence which had followed as a natural consequence of that policy. If now Gandhiji had second thoughts and had any positive suggestion

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to make, the Viceroy assured him that he would read with close attention any message received from him (pp. 445-6).

Gandhiji appreciated the conciliatory tone of the letter and deplored the happenings following August 9, but laid the blame for them on the Government. He refused to accept the Viceroy's judgment regarding his own responsibility or that of the Congress for the outbreaks, or to "express any opinion on events which I cannot influence or control, and of which I have but a one-sided account" (pp. 51-2). He, therefore, repeated the request for proof of the Government's charges or, in the alternative, for permission to be placed among the members of the Working Committee to enable him to make any fresh proposals on their behalf. The Viceroy rejected both the requests, and insisted on prior repudiation of the A.I.C.C. resolution of August 8 (p. 53).

This was too much for Gandhiji, who asked with some passion, "Was not the drastic and unwarranted action of the Government responsible for the reported violence? . . . the Government goaded the people to the point of madness." It was the "leonine" violence of the Government, the mass arrests and other repressive measures organized on a gigantic scale which provoked counter-violence by the people. If, therefore, he could not get "soothing balm" for his pain, he would have to resort to "a fast according to capacity" in obedience to "the law prescribed for satyagrahis" (pp. 55-6). The Viceroy replied : "There is evidence that you and your friends expected this policy to lead to violence; and that you were prepared to condone it . . . the violence that ensued formed part of a concerted plan, conceived long before the arrest of Congress leaders." The contemplated fast, he held, was "a form of political blackmail (*himsa*) for which there can be no moral justification" (pp. 447-8).

Gandhiji regarded the Viceroy's letter as "an invitation to fast". Reiterating that he had approached the Viceroy with an open mind for proofs of his error, he replied in brief to the Viceroy's assertions and concluded, "You have left me no loophole for escaping the ordeal I have set before myself. . . . Posterity will judge between you as a representative of an all-powerful Government and me as a humble man who has tried to serve his country and humanity through it" (pp. 58-60).

The fast commenced on February 9, 1943. The Government offered to release Gandhiji "for the purpose and for the duration" of the fast. But he refused the offer, explaining that the fast was not "conceived to be taken as a free man" and therefore, if he was released, there would be no fast. He would survey

the situation *de novo* and decide what should be done. He did not desire to be released under false pretences, he wrote to the Additional Home Secretary, and added, "In spite of all that has been said against me, I hope not to belie the vow of truth and non-violence which alone makes life livable for me" (p. 61). This straightforwardness was wasted on the official mind and Sir Reginald Maxwell bluntly said that the proposed fast amounted "to little more than a demand for release" (p. 88).

The visitors who saw Gandhiji during the fast reported his "unprecedented mental agony" at all these misrepresentations. S.A. Brelvi of *The Bombay Chronicle* wrote : "It distressed him beyond words that of all persons Lord Linlithgow should have so far misunderstood him as to believe that he . . . could ever countenance or condone violence of any kind", and that the Congress leaders were given no opportunity to refute the charges made against them (p. 65). In his last letter to the Viceroy in September 1943, on the eve of the latter's departure from India, Gandhiji wrote : "I hope and pray that God will some day put it into your heart to realize that you, a representative of a great nation, had been led into a grievous error." Lord Linlithgow replied that he was quite unable to accept Gandhiji's interpretation of the events in question and added with cold dignity, "As per the corrective virtues of time and reflection, evidently these are ubiquitous in their operation and wisely to be rejected by no man" (p. 201).

This sad end to a relationship which both men once valued was the inevitable outcome of the conflict between the interests which they defended, the Viceroy being the official spokesman of the empire and Gandhiji the leader of a subject India seeking to end the empire. While the Congress demand was for immediate abdication of British authority, the British Government had no intention of conceding real freedom to India even after the war and was bent on building up an entrenched position for interests which would keep the country for ever subservient to Britain. The new Viceroy, Lord Wavell, a blunt soldier and no subtle diplomat, made this intention clear enough in his first address to the Central Legislature in February 1944. The British people wished and were resolved, he asserted, "to see that in the solution of the constitutional problem full account is taken of the interests of those who have loyally supported us in this war and at all other times — the soldiers who have served the common cause; the people who have worked with us; the Rulers and populations of the States to whom we are pledged; the minorities

who have trusted us to see that they get a fair deal''. Gandhiji realized the danger of this programme for the psychological balkanization of India and commented on the Viceregal pronouncement: ''I regard the situation thus envisaged as hopeless . . . Out of the contemplation of this hopelessness was born the anguished cry of 'Quit India' '' (p. 246).

Such was the Government's displeasure with Gandhiji that it needed much pressure and repeated complaints to secure for the ailing Kasturba private nursing attendance and the services of a naturopath and vaid of her choice. In the grant of facilities for her treatment, ''grace'' was ''sadly lacking'' (p. 220) and Gandhiji even asked for his removal to some other place of detention so as not to remain a ''helpless witness'' of the patient's agony (p. 230). Kasturba passed away on February 22. But the controversy about the facilities, medical and otherwise, given to her during her last illness continued and came up for discussion in the House of Commons and the Central Legislative Assembly.

When Gandhiji himself fell ill, the Viceroy reported to London that ''his further participation in active politics is improbable'' and added that his ''death in custody would intensify feeling against Government''. Accordingly, he ordered Gandhiji's release on May 6, 1944, ''entirely on medical grounds'' (p. 262). Gandhiji was far from happy and felt weak in mind as well as body. But on May 14, he told a friend, ''. . . today I can say that it is well with me for, during the night, I have got back what I had lost for a while — a living faith in God'' (p. 271). And with that faith renewed, Gandhiji broke free ''from the doctors' control'' and to test his inner strength entered on a fortnight's silence (p. 272).

It took Gandhiji some time to study the new situation and to think of a way out of the impasse which the country had got into. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri echoed the sentiments of millions when he wrote to him : ''You have had great wrongs and they cry aloud for redress. But at this moment the future is more important than the past. . . . I would beseech you earnestly to attend to the demands of the world's peace.'' ''Will not the present which I can see mould the future?'', replied Gandhiji (p. 322).

At an informal meeting of Congressmen on June 29 in Poona, Gandhiji described the present as he saw it. ''Dark clouds surround us. The Government is sitting tight. We do not see the way ahead of us. . . . Many people are cursing me.'' And yet he asserted that he himself suffered from no sense of frustration. ''Frustration can spring only from one's own'' sense of

"weakness and loss of faith." And Gandhiji's faith in truth and non-violence was as deep as ever, not only as private virtues but as principles of public conduct. It was his firm conviction that "our success has been mathematically proportionate to the extent to which we have adhered to truth and non-violence" (p. 340). Secrecy, he held, was "a sin and a symptom of violence" and all underground activity was taboo. Such was his advice to co-workers (p. 307).

But Gandhiji saw that secrecy and sabotage had entered the movement on a larger scale than he had thought while in detention. As he told Horace Alexander, "Some of what you tell me I had known already after coming out, and some of it is startling." But he refused to condemn the popular fury which he considered was pardonable whereas "the vindictive and inhuman retribution wholly indefensible". (p. 371). Again in a Press interview he refused to judge popular action by the yardstick of truth and non-violence, unless he could apply the same measure for Government action (p. 405). Indeed he admired the courage and patriotism of those who had, with a full sense of responsibility, organized the deviation from the norms he had laid down. "This struggle has been full of romance and heroism", he wrote to Aruna Asaf Ali, then still underground, and he advised her to surrender, not out of weakness but out of strength, that is, only if she felt that it was the better course, but assured her at the same time, "I will not judge you no matter what you do" (pp. 343-4).

Gandhiji wrote to Balkrishna Bhave: "I learnt one thing, namely, that one must never be hasty in judging the actions of one's co-workers. One should put before the person concerned the other side for consideration and then let him judge himself" (p. 321). Even the content of violence and non-violence, whether as policy or creed, should be judged by every individual worker according to the dictates of his head and heart (p. 307). As he explained to a correspondent, though there must be organized resistance to organized evil, the organizers of satyagraha must not imitate the organizers of evil. He had tried, he said, and "failed hopelessly". He did not know exactly the right way of organizing forces of good against those of evil, but he felt "that it lies through perfection, as far as may be, of individuals". However, he confessed, "I am still groping" (p. 407).

While in jail Gandhiji read whatever literature he could get about Marx and the "great experiment" in Russia. He was impressed by the fact that there also, as in India, "the whole

nation was invited to join in the *yajna*" (p. 277). But he also noted the fundamental difference between the Russian and the Indian experiments. Though the country had advanced towards freedom through other forms of struggle, he still maintained that in India "the progress would have been much greater, if we had shown the non-violent bravery of my conception" (p. 268). He could not understand the "dialectic of history" which transformed an imperialist war into a people's war. After his release Gandhiji entered into correspondence with P.C. Joshi, General Secretary of the Communist Party of India, and invited him to remove his prejudice against the party by patient reasoning (p. 435). But nothing came out of the correspondence.

In a spirit of patient humility Gandhiji had, while still in jail, opened a dialogue with Lord Wavell, the new Viceroy. Describing himself as a friend and servant of humanity, including the British, he explained how the formula "Quit India" was "charged with the friendliest feeling for Britain in terms of the whole of humanity". And as a friend of the British and an upholder of the Allies' war aims, he called for "a searching of hearts in British high places" (p. 233).

After his release Gandhiji saw the necessity of revising the Congress policy in the light of the changed circumstances, but he saw "no way of giving co-operation in the continuing degradation of the people" (p. 337). He was urged by many in India and abroad "to make some decisive contribution to the general good". But he was disinclined to take any step on his own and wrote to the Viceroy requesting permission to see the members of the Working Committee detained in Ahmednagar. As expected, the request was turned down and he was asked instead to propose "a definite and constructive policy . . . for the furtherance of India's welfare" (p. 317).

This Gandhiji did in an interview to Stuart Gelder, correspondent of the *News Chronicle*. He said that he had no intention of offering civil disobedience then and "would be satisfied with a national government in full control of civil administration". He himself, as an all-war resister, would stand aside without obstructing the national government in the war effort, but continuing to exert his individual influence "to keep India peace-minded" and promote brotherhood among all mankind (pp. 349-51).

Gandhiji made this offer to a newspaper correspondent, instead of to the Government, so as to be able to observe public reaction to it before committing himself formally to the proposal.

The reaction was hardly encouraging. While the foreign Press mistook it as a "heavy defeat" for the Congress (p. 403), Indian critics complained that Gandhiji had "betrayed the cause of the country" (p. 384). Gandhiji, however, believed that "one should not be afraid of being misunderstood or of rejection of one's proposal, if it was sound in itself". Famine stalked the land, especially Bengal, and he felt that the situation demanded a popular government in charge of civil administration both at the Centre and in the provinces. Acceptance of such offices, however, would be conditional upon present declaration of complete Indian independence after the war (pp. 350 and 404-5). Gandhiji wrote formally to the Viceroy on July 27 making this concrete proposal and inviting a friendly discussion on its basis (pp. 425-6). The Viceroy informed Gandhiji on August 15 that the proposals were "quite unacceptable to His Majesty's Government" (p. 480).

During the first four months of detention in the Aga Khan Palace Gandhiji re-wrote from memory, in a revised and shortened form, his articles on "General Knowledge about Health" which had appeared 30 years earlier in *Indian Opinion* (Volumes XI and XII). The new version reflects Gandhiji's continuing interest in problems of health, which had developed over the years from concern for physical well-being to the right use of the body for attaining spiritual freedom. The body was the temple of the spirit and an instrument to be dedicated to the service of God's creation. For the body to perform this function, all the senses and the mind had to act in perfect co-ordination, free from all inner tensions (pp. 2-3). The fruit of such mastery of body and mind would be the attainment of perfect *brahmacharya.*

Gandhiji's experiment in the field was continuing and he hoped that, God willing, he might "attain even perfection in this life". While admitting that such an experimental approach was contrary to convention, Gandhiji argued that in order to make progress we have often "to go beyond the limits of common experience" and even challenge "common or commonly held beliefs". What was true of physical things was equally true of things spiritual (pp. 21-2). One who has attained such freedom from self-regarding desires would not only lose the sense of distinction between men and women but would also find his own being in tune with *akash* or ether, the subtlest of the five elements, whose mystery was the mystery of God Himself. To be in tune with this void or emptiness is to lose oneself in infinity. One must so live as to put no "partition between ourselves and the sky", to let the body be in contact with the sky

"without the intervention of houses, roofs and even clothes" (p. 35). One should sleep in the open, except in the rainy season, so that one can feast one's eyes on "the different starry constellations floating" in the sky. He who thus established "contact with the stars as living witnesses to all his thoughts" would "never allow any evil or impurity to enter his mind . . ." (pp. 36-7).

This entrancing vision of a life lived in the sight of the stars was Gandhiji's individual version of the Vaishnava feeling for the holiness of outward beauty as symbol of inner purity. The experience of such harmony between man and nature was a sure foretaste of the ineffable joy at the journey's end. But in his humility, Gandhiji disclaimed being a *rishi* or a seer. "Let me remain what I am—a striving servant of India and, through her, of humanity" (p. 288).

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PREFACE

The chief interest of this volume (August 1 to December 31, 1944) lies in Gandhiji's talks with M. A. Jinnah, held in the hope of solving the communal problem. The talks, summarized in the correspondence between the two leaders, revealed an unbridgeable gulf between the demands of the Muslim League and what the rest of the country could possibly have agreed to.

The widespread sufferings of the people, caused by war shortages, Government inefficiency and the greed of traders, together with the continuing bloodshed of the war, so deeply distressed Gandhiji that for a time he thought of undertaking a fast "to put life into" his "prayer" (p. 225) for truth and compassion to prevail. Friends succeeded in dissuading him from the fast, but the mental strain and continued overwork told upon his strength and brought him to "the end of" his "bodily resources" (p. 293). Accepting C. Rajagopalachari's advice, Gandhiji stopped all public work from December 4 to 31 (p. 371).

Since his release in May, Gandhiji had been trying to allay the Government's suspicion of his motives and intentions. He had categorically stated to Stuart Gelder of the *News Chronicle*, on July 4, that he had no intention of offering civil disobedience then, and would be satisfied with a national government in charge of civil administration. He had also made the offer formally to the Viceroy on July 27 (*vide* Vol. LXXVII, pp. 347-52 and 425-6). The Viceroy's reply to his letter showed once again that the British Government had no intention of parting with power and only despised India's moral support. But the people of India, Gandhiji hoped, would wrest power from the British by "purely moral means" (pp. 39-40).

In a similar conciliatory spirit, Gandhiji made a determined effort to solve the communal problem through negotiations with M. A. Jinnah. On July 17, he asked for a meeting between them, but Jinnah fell ill and the meeting took place on September 9. The talks lasted eighteen days, while the whole country waited in suspense, hoping for the best and fearing the worst. The failure of the talks, announced on September 27, led inexorably to the tragic consequences of the partition.

Gandhiji was guided in the talks by his vision of a non-violent society which, as he wrote to V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, could not "be built except with the free and willing consent of all its component

parts'' (p. 56). ''A believer in non-violence,'' Gandhiji told K. M. Munshi, ''I can maintain the unity of India only if I accept the freedom of every part'' (p. 25). He was, therefore, eager to conciliate Jinnah and win him over ''with trust and love'' (p. 24). ''Neither you nor I can afford to ignore the League,'' Gandhiji afterwards told a nationalist Muslim correspondent. ''We have to win it and other like forces round to our side'' and ''reduce antagonism without sacrificing fundamentals'' (pp. 301-2).

Gandhiji's aim in the talks, therefore, was not to conclude a bilateral agreement with Jinnah which the two would then get implemented through the Congress and the Muslim League. The proposal for talks had aroused the fears of sections of Hindus and Sikhs, particularly in Bengal and the Punjab. Gandhiji therefore assured Shyama Prasad Mookerjee, Working President of the Hindu Mahasabha, that if an agreement was reached between Jinnah and him there would be ''ample time for a calm and dispassionate discussion'' of it in public and, if he was convinced of any flaw in it, he would have no hesitation in correcting the error. Nothing ''could operate,'' he stated, ''without the consent of all sections'' (p. 12). ''The smallest interest,'' he assured the Akali leader Master Tara Singh, ''will have the same weight as the largest'' (p. 29). The talks were thus intended to be the beginning of a search for national consensus in an atmosphere of goodwill created through the purifying effect of non-violence. Jinnah felt no such necessity of a national consensus. He wanted an agreement between Gandhiji and himself as representatives of the two major communities, Hindus and Muslims, which would be binding on the Congress and the Muslim League (pp. 401 to 415). He apparently assumed that the country would then accept the agreement or that it could be imposed with the help of the British. The very first question, therefore, which he raised at the talks was that of Gandhiji's ''representative character''. Gandhiji could only give the assurance that he was ''pledged to use all the influence'' he ''may have with the Congress to ratify'' his agreement with Jinnah (p. 92). Jinnah continued the talks, however, in the hope of being able to persuade Gandhiji to accept the Muslim League demand, as he thought that the endorsement of that demand by Gandhiji, with his ''tremendous influence over Hindu India'', would strengthen his own position in dealing with the other parties (p. 406).

The basis of the Muslim League demand was the theory that Hindus and Muslims were two distinct nations because they professed different religions. This was a test of nationhood

which Gandhiji rejected. India was neither one nation nor two nations in the modern sense of the term. Its nationhood was still in the making, and religion could not be an effective force in that process. Even if the whole of India accepted Islam, Gandhiji doubted whether it would become one nation transcending its separate linguistic identities. "The only real, though awful, test of our nationhood," he pleaded with Jinnah, "arises out of our common political subjection. If you and I throw off this subjection by our combined effort, we shall be born a politically free nation out of our travail." If the people did not prize the freedom so won, then they would again quarrel among themselves and "split up into small groups or nationalities" (p. 101). Gandhiji therefore saw "nothing but ruin for the whole of India" if the basis of the Muslim League's Lahore Resolution was accepted, and, though formally he represented nobody except himself, he pleaded with Jinnah on behalf of "all the inhabitants of India, for I realize in my own person their misery and degradation, which is their common lot, irrespective of class, caste or creed" (p. 103). Gandhiji's plea "for the total welfare" of the Muslims and others had no effect on Jinnah. He replied that acceptance of the Lahore Resolution was "the road which will lead us all to the achievement of freedom and independence not only of the two major nations, Hindus and Muslims, but of the rest of the peoples of India." He even contended that "Hindus will be the greater gainers" by accepting the Lahore Resolution (p. 408).

Having failed to convince Jinnah of the dangerous consequences of the two-nation theory for the future of India, Gandhiji proposed a practical solution of the difficulty on the basis of a formula devised by C. Rajagopalachari and published in July, about the same time as Gandhiji's interview to Stuart Gelder. They could, Gandhiji suggested, agree to differ on the question of "two nations" and yet solve the problem on the basis of self-determination. That would mean that the proposal for separation of Muslim-majority areas would be "specifically placed before and approved by the people in that area" (p. 117). Jinnah vehemently rejected the suggestion. Gandhiji had not understood the real meaning of the word "self-determination" as used by the advocates of Pakistan. They claimed "the right of self-determination" for the Muslims "as a nation and not as a territorial unit". The Muslims were entitled to exercise it as their "inherent right", and it would therefore be "the self-determination of the Mussalmans, and they alone

are entitled to exercise that right" (pp. 410-1). In other words, Jinnah denied the right of non-Muslims to vote in the plebiscite if a plebiscite was held. Moreover, the right of self-determination claimed for the Muslims alone on the ground of their being Muslims was not to be restricted to districts in the North-West and North-East zones in which Muslims were in a clear majority but was to be applied to the provinces as they existed then. If Gandhiji's proposal restricting plebiscite to Muslim-majority districts was accepted, Jinnah argued, "the present boundaries of these provinces would be maimed and mutilated beyond redemption and leave us only with the husk" (pp. 413-4). Jinnah's position meant that the non-Muslim majorities in the western districts of Bengal and the eastern districts of the Punjab, though treated as a separate nation from the Muslims, should be forced to live as non-nationals in Muslim Pakistan. This was the weakest point in Jinnah's case and he had ultimately to accept the partition of Bengal and the Punjab.

Jinnah failed also to see the wisdom of Gandhiji's suggestion, again based on the Rajagopalachari formula, for some joint agency to regulate matters of common interest like Foreign Affairs, Defence and Communications. Without such "recognition of the natural and mutual obligations arising out of physical contiguity", Gandhiji feared there would be "no feeling of security by the people of India" (p. 123). Jinnah argued that it would be for the constitution-making bodies of the new States of Pakistan and Hindustan to deal with such matters as between two independent, sovereign States. He would not consider the possibility of thus limiting the sovereignty of the two States in the very act of establishing them. Gandhiji suggested that the necessary provision could be made in a treaty of separation (pp. 126-7). He attached the utmost importance to this suggestion. If they must separate, he explained in a Press interview after the breakdown of the talks, the separation should be as among members of a family, "within ourselves and not separation in the face of the whole world". Gandhiji had the foresight to see that a demand for such total separation, implying "utterly independent sovereignty" with "nothing in common between the two" States, would mean "war to the knife". It was "not a proposition that resolves itself into a voluntary or friendly solution" (p. 140).

Gandhiji was not disheartened by the failure of the talks. He had faith in the democratic process and suggested that Jinnah and he "must now talk to the public and put our viewpoints

before them". If they did so "dispassionately" and if the Press and the public avoided "partisanship and bitterness", he was hopeful that a solution would emerge at an early date (p. 137). He therefore invited the public "to digest the situation and bring the pressure of their opinion" upon both of them (p. 143). There was, however, an influential body of opinion which felt that the talks had harmed the prospects of Hindu-Muslim agreement. M. R. Jayakar, for instance, believed that Jinnah would use Gandhiji's formula "as a bargaining counter with the British Government and also as the starting point in future negotiations with Indian leaders". Gandhiji gave him freedom to express his view in public, for, he said, "That way only we shall arrive at the truth" (p. 145). He also wrote to some Muslim friends to know their reactions to the talks (p. 152).

The aggravation of the Hindu-Muslim problem was a symptom of a deeper change in the moral climate in the country. At the first meeting of the workers of the All-India Spinners' Association after his release, Gandhiji felt "as though one age had succeeded another, bringing in the process trouble for the whole of India" (p. 62). It had become possible for the Government to suppress even the A.I.S.A. which was a non-political body dedicated to the service of the poor. Gandhiji felt that the failure was their own. The message of the A.I.S.A. "had not taken root in the life of the people". There was something wrong with their method of work. They had organized the production and use of khadi mechanically, without propagating the spirit behind the programme. They had therefore failed to carry the message of khadi to every home (p. 63). For centuries the charkha had been, Gandhiji said, "a symbol of poverty, helplessness, injustice and forced labour", but he wanted it to be "the symbol now of mighty non-violent strength, of the new social order and of the new economy. . . ." (p. 77). For this, the khadi work should be decentralized and carried on by dedicated individual workers persuading the villagers to produce khadi not for sale but for their own consumption. The aim should be to make them "strong to face life's problems", and "generate in them the strength for freedom". If the other crafts besides khadi could be revitalized in the same manner, the villages could be made "self-sufficient" and "self-reliant" (pp. 190 and 192-3).

This moral spirit should inform the whole of the constructive programme. Gandhiji repeated his conviction that the constructive programme was "the non-violent and truthful way of winning

purna swaraj''. Its ''wholesale fulfilment'' would by itself be ''complete independence''. Even if civil disobedience became necessary, the constructive programme would be an essential training for it, just as military training would be for armed revolt (pp. 218-9). *Kisans*, industrial workers and students had to be properly trained. The *kisan* should be so educated ''to work as to make it impossible for the landlord to exploit him''. Morally and intellectually labour should be so raised as to make it ''master of the means of production'' instead of being its slave as it then was. ''Labour united and morally and intellectually trained would any day be superior to capital.'' As for the students, their school and college instruction should be systematically supplemented so as to give them ''education in national consciousness'' (pp. 220-1).

The moral breakdown, however, that Gandhiji felt around him was so all-pervading that he was not satisfied with quiet constructive work. ''In the midst of this frightful triple slaughter of soldiers, civilians and truth,'' he told some friends and co-workers, ''it is impossible to settle down to anything.'' The situation required a more active expression of soul-force in the form of a fast, ''to stir up,'' Gandhiji said, ''myself and my surroundings and shake us out of our complacency.'' He saw millions ''experiencing the pangs of hunger in passive helplessness''. He could speak to them and identify himself with them only through a fast (p. 223). Gandhiji was also deeply perturbed by the prevalence of falsehood and black-marketing in the country (pp. 244 and 281). He however assured friends, who expressed concern, that he would not take any hasty decision unless he was convinced that it was a real call of the ''God of Truth'' (pp. 267, 270, 278, 280, 291, 293 and 307). Though in such a case one could only rely on one's own inner sense of certitude, Gandhiji explained in a public statement that he was ''testing'' himself, ''discussing the pros and cons with friends and allowing'' himself ''to be acted upon'' (p. 225). In the end he abandoned the intention of fasting. He accepted for himself the advice he gave to a correspondent: ''One cannot put an end to the misery of the masses by ending one's life. . . . We should do our utmost and leave the rest to God. He also bears with whatever His creation does . . .'' (p. 360).

It was this faith in God which sustained Gandhiji in all his trials and ordeals. ''The secret of my peace and sense of humour,'' Gandhiji wrote to Anand Hingorani, who was disconsolate over the loss of his wife, ''lies in my unflinching faith in God, that is, Truth'' (p. 230). That faith was nourished by

Gandhiji's joy in nature and in service. He advised the same correspondent, "To worship God in His invisible form, watch the stars every night and look at the sun early in the morning" (p. 333), and the "inner joy comes from doing God's work" (p. 212). Faith in God expressed itself in the humility of prayer. Gandhiji did not claim to know God and could not therefore say to whom he prayed. We should pray "to the God whom we do not know," he explained to a friend. If one had no faith in God, even then one must continue to pray as advised in the Bible, "Help thou my unbelief" (p. 9).

Gandhiji's life-long interest in problems of physical and moral well-being led him to the conclusion, "Evil thoughts are also a sign of illness" (p. 395). And he knew in his own experience the meaning of spiritual wholeness. Even while he was thinking of a fast, he could feel "the joy of living". He could do so, he said, because he knew "the joy of dying" (p. 223).

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PREFACE

The period of less than four months (January 1-April 24, 1945) covered by the present volume does not in essential respects differ from the period preceding it. The Congress Working Committee, along with the thousands of active workers arrested in 1942, continued to languish in captivity. (On the Government's own admission the number of political prisoners in February was around 15,000.) Suppression of all political activity in all provinces still remained the policy. Mass repression and resort to draconian laws, especially in Bengal, Sind and to some extent Bihar, further aggravated the situation, making any initiative to end the deadlock well-nigh impossible.

The only developments of some constitutional interest were the private initiatives of Bhulabhai Desai and Tej Bahadur Sapru which in the end did not amount to much. When Bhulabhai Desai, leader of the Congress Party in the Central Assembly, sought Gandhiji's support for his efforts to negotiate with Liaquat Ali Khan, the Muslim League leader, a formula that would enable a coalition Government to be installed at the Centre, Gandhiji was sceptical, but he was anxious to break the political deadlock and for this purpose to gain the League's support for the release of the Working Committee members. "You may," he told Bhulabhai, "do what you think best. My own thinking runs in the opposite direction to the parliamentary one." And he added the condition that "the League should join in the efforts to get the Working Committee released" (pp. 10-11). However, under Bhulabhai's proposals the members of the Working Committee were not to be released till after the interim government had been formed. The Viceroy's advisers saw in the proposals a "right-wing move" which provided the British a golden opportunity to split the Congress. But the British Cabinet were not sure about the credentials of Bhulabhai Desai and wanted commitments from the Congress which Desai had no authority to make.

A notable event during the period was the convening on April 25 of the Conference at San Francisco that launched the United Nations Organization. Gandhiji in a statement issued on the eve of the Conference gave expression to the fear that "behind the structure of world security sought to be raised lurk mistrust and fear which breed war". He urged the Allies

to "shed their belief in the efficacy of war and its accompanying terrible deception and fraud" and to "hammer out real peace based on freedom and equality of all races and nations". He called for universal disarmament, with "an international police force to enforce the lightest terms of peace". Declaring that "exploitation and domination of one nation over another can have no place in a world striving to put an end to all wars", he called for "the complete freedom of India from all foreign control" (pp. 389-90).

Gandhiji's health had suffered a set-back. This caused worry throughout the nation. When the volume opens we find him informing anxious enquirers that he had got rid of the complaints, except for the amoeba and hook-worm, "my old enemies", that he was "throwing off the poison". He attributed the ailment to his "sin in playing with Ayurveda". He rejected the advice that he should take to milk and daily enema—"I have lost faith in daily or frequent enema" (p. 9). He found diet and mud packs more beneficial. (pp. 1,2,6,9,12, 16 and *ff.*) "I am trying," he wrote, "to put myself under the unfailing Chief Medical Officer and to act under His guidance. If I err in interpreting His guidance, He is generous enough to correct me" (p. 26). He took keen interest in nature-cure treatment, which "means going towards Nature, towards God. Let us see where I arrive" (p. 17). His correspondence with nature-cure enthusiasts such as Dinshaw Mehta, A.N. Sharma, Kameswararao Sarma and Anand T. Hingorani brings out clearly his concern to make nature cure into an instrument for serving the poor; it made him sad that naturopaths disagreed and were also "obstinate and even lazy" (p. 51).

Gandhiji had sensed that though political freedom could not be long delayed it would not by itself bring an answer to the country's manifold problems. "Freedom is bound to come," he said, ". . . But mere political freedom will not satisfy me . . . Independence of my conception means nothing less than the realization of the 'Kingdom of God within you and on this earth'. I would rather work for and die in the pursuit of this dream though it may never be realized" (p. 300). What he envisaged was "a moral non-violent revolution in all the departments of life of a big nation, at the end of which castes and untouchability . . . must vanish, differences between Hindu and Muslim must become things of the past . . . and Princes and capitalists must live as perfect friends with the whole mass of India as the real and legal trustees of the people . . ." (p. 131). In concrete terms

this meant the regeneration of villages, which "ought to become prosperous in the real sense". This prosperity was not to come from outside; it should grow from within the villages as a result of the labour of every villager (p. 24). The task thus was that of harnessing the creative energies of the vast mass of rural India. This task, Gandhiji was convinced, could be accomplished only through a vigorous prosecution of the constructive programme, and the theme underlined in the volume is the streamlining of the constructive work of the various organizations such as the A. I. S. A., A. I. V. I. A., the Kasturba Trust and the Hindustani Talimi Sangh. The speeches Gandhiji made at the deliberations of these bodies form the bulk of the items in the volume, apart from the numerous letters.

These endeavours to reorganize constructive work were regarded by the British rulers with suspicion and unease. They saw in them preparations for launching a civil disobedience movement and in any case attempts to revive under other labels the Congress, which had been declared an unlawful organization in 1942. The Viceroy began sending concerned reports to London and the Administration was instructed not to countenance these activities. When in U. P. and Bihar a number of eminent leaders were arrested on flimsy pretexts, Gandhiji was forced to protest. Reiterating that "there is no plan under the present conditions to offer any form of mass civil disobedience", Gandhiji warned the Government against being too high-handed. "If things go on as they are doing in India," he said in a statement, ". . . victory won at the expense of India will mean that, out of the ashes of Fascism, Nazism and Japanese militarism will have arisen a new monster that will seek to eat all it sees and in the attempt will be eaten up, leaving I know not what" (pp. 130-2).

He called upon the workers engaged in the constructive programme to "give expression to their faith not through words but through deeds" (p. 305). While they should devote their entire energies to making this programme a success, they were not to mix politics with it. "This mixing," he said, "of politics and constructive work helps neither. I entirely concur with the view that for full justice to be done to constructive work it must stand on its own feet and should not be tied to political work" (p. 297). The emphasis in the constructive programme was as ever on khadi. Gandhiji was anxious that khadi should not "end up by being merely an occupation for the poor" (p. 190), rather it should become the symbol of a moral social order free from exploitation. He called upon the workers not to be deterred

from doing anti-untouchability work, out of fear that they might come into conflict with Ambedkar's followers, Gandhiji said: ". . . we should not let ourselves be provoked or give up our work because of it. We should reach their hearts and understand their feelings . . . At the same time it will also be right if those who consider anti-untouchability work as a part of the political programme of the Congress pursue it as such." The political and social programmes were distinct, but both were equally "religious". And so it was explained : "Religious duty is a very subtle and complicated thing. It is not a commodity that can be bought and sold. Perpetual inner searching is needed in order to discover it" (p. 298).

In Bengal, the people were starving amid surplus rice stocks. The poor could find not a scrap of cloth to cover their backs. Malaria had become endemic over wide areas. The agony in certain districts, like Midnapore and Chittagong, was beyond endurance. Gandhiji was most eager to rush to Bengal and make common cause with the starving dumb masses. "I want to be with the people and touch their decaying bones" (p. 30). He could not make the visit. The Governor, on instructions from Delhi, would not permit him to visit Midnapore and Gandhiji refused to accept the condition.

Gandhiji remained at Sevagram most of the time, deeply involved in the affairs of the Ashram. "My true body," he said "is the Ashram. If the Ashram is nothing, then I am nothing" (p. 323). There were disagreements and feuds among co-workers, in which Gandhiji had to act as arbitrator. Since he was observing silence, these consultations were carried on through the written word. Thus we find him advising a co-worker not to be in a hurry to accuse anybody, as that was "a sign of impatience and irritability" (p. 59), to develop "equipoise" and live "in conformity with social norms" (p. 84), to "try and somehow learn to exercise control over your voice" in an argument (p. 121), to think before speaking and as far as possible to cultivate silence (p. 241). "The secret of good life," he tells him, "is strictness with oneself and generosity to co-workers" (p. 41). He also advises him on how best he can cultivate *brahmacharya* (pp. 44, 72 and 150) and to avoid condiments, even salt if possible (p. 73). He advises another co-worker, in view of his "state of mind" to go away for a time—"staying away at this time can only do you good" (p. 274). He goes into the smallest details of the Ashram administration. For distinguishing which utensils belonged to whom : "Instead of engraving people's names on the

utensils, they should be numbered. This is the practice in jails . . .'' By way of economy they could have cups made of leaves and each may fashion ''for himself spoons of wood'' (p. 310).

Gandhiji sometimes wondered whether the Ashram community would get on better if he were not there. To an inmate he wrote : ''My desire to run away from here also has at the back of it the consideration of the convenience of you all'' (p. 151). Another time he wrote to the same inmate: ''. . . if you decide that the Ashram should be disbanded, I would consent to that too'' (p. 84).

It had been clear to Gandhiji that a great nation such as India could not hope to make any significant progress till it could develop a language for national discourse to replace English which could at best be understood by only a small *elite*. It was apparent to him that only the language known as Hindi or Urdu—depending on the kind of vocabulary used—could serve as this common language. But the Urdu style was identified with the Muslims, the Hindi style with the Hindus and the language issue was thus used to further aggravate the tension between the two communities. In the three speeches at the Hindustani Prachar Sabha Conference (pp. 170-1, 176-7 and 178-80) Gandhiji expounds his idea of Hindustani as the common language of the Hindus and Muslims of North India, written in two different scripts. He said : ''Hindustani exists but we do not utilize it. This is the age of Hindi and Urdu. These are two streams from which the third will flow'' (p. 179). He called upon all to learn both the Devanagari and the Persian scripts and ''at least one of the scripts of the South also'' (p. 177).

During the period covered by the volume the active pursuit of *brahmacharya* as a cherished value came into special focus because of what Gandhiji called his ''experiment''. The experiment consisted—in the manner of athletes setting for themselves stiffer and stiffer marks to cross—in his creating conditions of maximum temptation in which to pursue *brahmacharya*. The idea is not new to Hindu tradition. It recalls the *Asidhara Vrata*, or the sword's-edge discipline, which some ancient sages speak of. In the India of these times it could only shock people, as it did so many of Gandhiji's co-workers at Sevagram, and they voiced their protest. Gandhiji tried to explain his position : ''I deliberately want to become a eunuch mentally. If I succeed in this then I become one physically also'' (p. 193). He explained how he wanted to be wholly free from passion, so that he could contribute more to the welfare of the world (p. 222). But if any of the co-workers did not agree they were at liberty to leave him.

". . . anybody," he said, "who wishes to leave is free to do so. Let nobody think that it is his duty to stay on. Nobody should remain . . . by suppressing his feelings" (p. 218).

Leprosy relief had been one of Gandhiji's abiding concerns. When T. N. Jagadisan and Dr. R. B. Cochrane sought his assistance for organizing the work in rural areas under the aegis of the Kasturba Trust, he said : "You have preached to the converted. . . . send a detailed plan with expenditure . . . No thanks needed" (p. 114). The seed that was thus sown has grown into the Kasturba Kusht Nivaran Nilayam in South Arcot District.

On the death of Romain Rolland, the French savant, Gandhiji wrote : " . . . Romain Rolland is not dead. . . . He lived for truth and non-violence . . . He responded to all suffering. He revolted against the wanton human butchery called war" (p. 18).

He was deeply moved by English religious poetry—as is shown by his advice to Munnalal Shah to read *The Hound of Heaven*, telling him "you will not be happy anywhere if you turn your back upon the 'Hound' " (p. 227).

Some stray reflections : "I don't believe in ghosts. . . . It is all right if Bhansalibhai believes in them. That does not detract from his saintliness. But there is no reason to believe that everything a saint says must be true. . . . The planchette business is pure fraud" (p. 35).

CWMG - C

PREFACE

During the period covered by this volume (April 25–July 16, 1945) the political impasse that had persisted following the failure of the Gandhi-Jinnah talks in September 1944 was at last broken and Gandhiji was drawn once again into the vortex of constitutional negotiations. On June 14 the Viceroy announced in a radio broadcast the release of the members of the Congress Working Committee and the summoning at Simla of a conference of Indian leaders to take counsel with him "with a view to the formation of a new Executive Council more representative of organized political opinion". The new government, if formed, he made it clear, would work under the existing Constitution (p. 441).

The Viceroy's initiative marked the culmination of his dogged efforts, over the past several months, to persuade the die-hard leadership in London to mend its fences with nationalist India. The Cabinet made the concession also because the Conservatives did not wish to let go the political advantage they might derive from a generous-seeming gesture to progressive British opinion on the eve of the general elections scheduled for the following July.

When the Viceroy sent his letter of invitation, Gandhiji was at Panchgani, recuperating after the physical exhaustion he had suffered in November the preceding year. Gandhiji was not too happy with the Viceregal announcement. It did not go very far. He however recognized that "it was a step towards independence" (p. 383).

What he objected to most vehemently was the principle of "parity between caste Hindus and Muslims". In the first place, "there were no caste and casteless Hindus" and the Viceroy's proposal touched "the political mind of Hindus in its sensitive spot" (pp. 329 and 332). Moreover, the formula worked out, with Gandhiji's approval, between Bhulabhai Desai and Liaqat Ali, had spoken of parity between the Congress and the Muslim League (p. 406) and the shift to communal parity would have the effect of reducing the Congress to the status of a communal organization representing only "caste Hindus".

Gandhiji was clear in his mind that India's problems could not be solved by any balancing of communal claims. To create an atmosphere of trust and harmony and work for the welfare of the masses, the Congress had to preserve its secular character. If it identified itself in any manner with the Hindus as a community

the independence so gained, Gandhiji told the Viceroy, would be "one-sided, untrue and suicidal" and he therefore wanted the Congress to "remain for ever free to choose best men and women from all classes . . ." (p. 345). Communal parity, he explained to G. B. Pant, would spread the communal poison throughout the country and they would then never be able to win freedom. He would prefer the Congress being reduced to a minority in the proposed interim government to its becoming "a communal organization by selecting as many Hindus as there are Muslims" (p. 382). The Viceroy explained that there was no such intention and that the Congress would be free to include non-Hindus among its nominees for the Council.

Gandhiji further made it known that he was not a member of the Congress and that the organization could only be represented by its president. Wavell however insisted that Gandhiji should make himself available for consultations even if he could not be a delegate. Gandhiji accordingly made the journey to Simla. He was greeted, at railway stations on the way, by crowds "delirious and deaf with love or joy" (p. 367). He could get no sleep, but even so refused to avail himself of the air-conditioned coach provided for the leaders, preferring to "melt . . . in this natural heat" and so feel "a touch of real India" (p. 363).

The Conference began on June 25 on a hopeful note with the Viceroy acting as "leader" of the delegates and not as an agent of Whitehall (p. 390). The Viceroy invited the party leaders to submit to him lists of their nominees for the Council, out of which he would make his own selection and then again place it before the Conference for its consideration. The Congress gave its list, as did some other delegation leaders, but Jinnah refused to comply. He asked for assurances that : (a) all the Muslims to be appointed to the Council would be the nominees of the League, and (b) any measure to which Muslims objected would be carried only by a clear two-thirds majority of the Council. The Viceroy refused to concede either demand and, when the Conference reassembled on July 14, announced its failure, taking the blame upon himself.

Gandhiji wrote to the Viceroy : "This time you have taken the blame on your own shoulders. But the world will think otherwise. India certainly does." At the same time Gandhiji could not hide "the suspicion that the deeper cause is perhaps the reluctance of the official world to part with power . . . " (p. 426).

Gandhiji had all along been advocating the adoption of Hindustani as the country's common language, since this mixture

of Hindi and Urdu was understood and spoken by the common people of North India. When he felt that the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan did not share his approach he wished to resign from it (pp. 23, 46, 181 and 317-8). He urged the Muslims also to adopt a similar secular attitude in regard to the struggle of Syria and Lebanon for independence and advised them to make it "a national issue" and "speak as Indians". India divided against itself could "have no effect on the council of the nations of the world" (pp. 250-1).

Though Gandhiji was an orthodox Hindu in his spiritual outlook, his interpretation of the system of varnas had always been critical and dynamic, as is so clearly evidenced by his life-long crusade against untouchability. His views on varna divisions remained in constant evolution. In a foreword to a collection of his earlier writings on the subject he advised the reader "to discard anything" (p. 224) in his past writings which might appear incompatible with his latest views. A man "daily moves either forward or backward." His views had changed and might change in future; one should not even wish that one's views should not change. His vision of truth and ahimsa was, he believed, "becoming clearer every day" (p. 222).

This change was marked particularly in his attitude to intercaste marriage, more especially marriages between *savarna* Hindus and untouchables. Such marriages he now advocated with an insistence not shown before. He told a correspondent that he did not "at all approve of marriages within the same caste" and that he attached "the highest importance to marriages between Ati-Sudras and caste Hindus" (p. 77). He gave it as his "latest thinking" that "there should be no difficulty even about marriages between persons of different religions. . . . The offspring may choose either religion" (p. 78). He even went so far as to refuse to bless marriages unless they were intercaste (p. 99).

With the British political authority in India inexorably weakening, and with the Indian capitalists suddenly finding themselves flush with capital accumulated from war contracts, it became necessary for the British industrial circles to work out a new *modus vivendi* with their Indian counterparts for their joint future operations. Ardeshir Dalal and others worked out an industrial plan and a deputation of Indian capitalists embarked on a visit to England and America to make contacts with the industrialists there. Gandhiji felt unhappy over the move and its timing. "Big merchants, capitalists, industrialists and others,"

he said in a sharply worded Press statement, "speak and write against the Government, but in action do its will and even profit . . ." He urged them to "forgo the crumbs that fall to them from partnership with the British in the loot which British rule takes from India". The statement concluded with the stern warning : "The so-called unofficial deputation . . . dare not proceed, whether for inspection or for entering into a shameful deal, so long as the moving spirits of the Working Committee are being detained without any trial . . ." (p. 80). On G. D. Birla protesting that the deputation had no such intention as Gandhiji had assumed of harming India's interests, he offered them his "blessings and prayer in terms of famishing and naked India" (p. 94). The blessings were conditional and calculated to haunt them "like a ghost".

Even though for most of the time covered by the volume Gandhiji was "resting", his correspondence was so heavy that it hardly allowed him to "lift up" his "head from work" (p. 234). Among the things that claimed his attention was the management of the Ashram at Sevagram. With the kind of human material that made up the Ashram this had at no time been an easy task. There were differences of opinion (p. 5), differences of temperament (pp. 2, 17), so many interpersonal tensions and such sudden abdications of responsibility that Gandhiji could only hope that "the management of the Ashram will not completely break up" (p. 194). On one occasion he was driven to feel that perhaps "we should close the Ashram and everyone should settle down in different departments" (p. 43).

Gandhiji visualized the Ashram as a place where he could educate people in "institution ethics" (p. 105), learning and practising the art of collective living by effacing oneself completely in dedicated service (p. 263). For ensuring harmony he advised Manibehn Patel to regard one's own faults as "mountains" and other people's faults as "molehills" (p. 22). "One becomes oneself," he wrote to another Ashram worker, "only if one ceases to be oneself" (p. 11). This represented for him the spirit of *Ramarajya*, "the reign of the self-imposed law of moral restraint" (p. 300). Such moral democracy required the practice of non-attachment by the leaders and recognition of possible truth in points of view other than one's own. " . . . I do not wish to make everybody like me," he wrote, ". . . everybody should be true to himself" (p. 306). Adverting to his views on railways, etc., in *Hind Swaraj*, he recommended "a free and easy attitude in such matters" so that one could live with

all types of people. Non-attachment was the only proper dharma (p. 325).

Non-attachment, however, did not mean absence of feeling. "He who identifies himself with every living creature must feel every kind of woe and yet remain unaffected by it" (p. 300). How far Gandhiji had attained to such a state of inwardness and detachment may be seen from his account of an experience of the Himalayas while in Simla. As he looked at the snowy peaks, his mind was "filled with supreme peace". The spectacle made him think of Siva's Kailas. Soon, however, awakening from this what one may call aesthetic arrest he declared, "My Kailas, however, is Sevagram. The life-giving waters of my Ganga flow from there" (p. 397).

Gandhiji's ability to live with all kinds of people is illustrated by his attitude to the Communists, who had, during the War, supported the British and opposed the Quit India movement. Though the Party's Secretary, P. C. Joshi, had not responded in the right spirit to Gandhiji's letter (*vide* Vol. LXXVII and LXXVIII), Gandhiji wrote to a member of the party : "I dare not condemn you, Batliwala, Joshi or Habib of Lucknow .... I do not want to pass judgment against a political party" (p. 175), and "I have no difficulty in working side by side with Communists" (p. 238).

When Firoz Khan Noon, who had been sent by the British to represent India at the United Nations Conference in San Fransisco, issued a poisonous statement charging Gandhiji with pro-Japanese sympathies and suggesting that he should retire in favour of Jawaharlal Nehru, Gandhiji pointed out that the British themselves had quietly withdrawn the charge and as for his retiring in favour of Nehru, "He and I are friends. But we are no rivals. We are both servants of the people and the platform of service is as big as the world. It is never overcrowded" (p. 65).

Gandhiji retained to the last the happy human contacts of his South African days. A letter from Sonja Schlesin revived in him pleasant memories and he wrote back : "I am glad about Mrs. Naidoo. What is she doing? What about his children? Could you send me a photo of the family with Thambi in it?" (p. 125).

A book of Satis Chandra Das Gupta provided occasion to Gandhiji to stress the organic methods of tillage. In a foreword to *Cow in India* he wrote : "He proves the superiority of cattle over the engine for ploughing the fields of India. He establishes the inevitable connection and interdependence between the

cattle and other animal life, the earth and man'' (p. 149). Centralized large-scale production, even when State-controlled, was bound to ''multiply the people's wants'' and destroy ''the will to work''. For that reason he doubted that ''Russia will produce something unique''. But if it did, and ''intellectual and personal freedom is at the same time secured ... I will have to revise my present concept of ahimsa'' (pp. 152-3).

Of interest too is a discussion Gandhiji had with Rajagopalachari, who persistently advocated concessions being given to the Muslim League in order to hasten a political settlement. ''You want,'' Gandhiji told him, ''... power at any price. I have put a limit to the price to be paid.... I can afford to wait till it comes at my price, for I am making progress however slight it may be'' (p. 110).

The volume has its quota of ''memorable sayings''. Thus answering a request for a message for the Negro people of America, Gandhiji says : ''My life is its own message'' (p. 209). And to a correspondent : ''We should seek solitude among the multitudes—inaction in activity—but such activity should be without desire for fruits'' (p. 214).

Writing to Narayan Desai on learning through teaching in Nayee Talim and the significance of spinning, he said, ''Knowledge has infinite forms, but only he who knows that at the bottom all knowledge is one really knows'' (p. 146). The same idea he repeated in another letter : ''The study of one science makes the study of another science easier'' (p. 160).

CWMG - C

PREFACE

Of the three and a half months covered in this volume (July 17 to October 31, 1945), Gandhiji spent nearly two and a half (except for a brief visit to Bombay) in a nature-cure clinic in Poona supervising Vallabhbhai Patel's treatment and attending to heavy correspondence. He was in a mood of patient detachment from public affairs and said or wrote little about them. He withheld comment even on so momentous an event as the dropping of atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki (on August 6 and 9). All he could tell an American correspondent was: "I must act if I can" (p. 420). He had told the same correspondent earlier, "The world is not in a hurry to know my views" (p. 163).

The volume opens with echoes of the failure of the Simla Conference, held in June-July to form a provisional National Government. In an interview to a correspondent of *People's War* on his return journey from Simla, Gandhiji explained the Congress stand at the Conference as a vindication of the party's "national character". "It is wrong to say that the Conference broke over the question of one seat. The Congress fought for a principle. . . we were seeking able men of all parties and communities. We did not bother which party got what number of seats." He realized that there was "a danger of the situation drifting into a civil war" and wanted mutual recriminations to be avoided, though, he added, "truth will have to be spoken" (pp. 2-3).

Soon, however, the political climate changed for the better when the Labour Party of Great Britain, after a landslide victory in the general election, assumed office in the first week of August. Expressing a feeling of cautious optimism, Gandhiji in a letter of congratulations to Lord Pethick-Lawrence on his appointment as Secretary of State for India, hoped that the India Office would "receive a decent burial" at his hands and "a nobler monument . . . rise from its ashes" (p. 69). The hope seemed to be justified. The Government of India announced on August 21 that elections to the Central and provincial legislatures, which were held in abeyance during the war, would soon take place, and after a visit to London for consultation with the Home Government the Viceroy announced on September 19 the British Government's intention to bring into being a constitution-making body in consultation with the newly elected members of the

legislatures. The Congress, accordingly, occupied itself with preparations for the elections, with Vallabhbhai in charge.

Gandhiji took no interest in these preparations. As he explained in a letter to the Bombay Liberal leader Chimanlal Setalvad, he had ceased taking interest in elections for many years and, though on this occasion he was staying under the same roof with Vallabhbhai in Poona, he seldom talked with him about the subject (p. 310). Gandhiji was always careful to avoid embarrassing co-workers and now this restraint was all the more necessary in view of the serious differences in outlook between the Congress leaders and himself. He even issued a public statement explaining that, though he offered occasional advice about Congress matters while the members of the Congress Working Committee were in jail, such questions should no longer be addressed to him since his advice "independently given, may be in conflict with their opinion and it may embarrass them and even put them or me in a wrong position . . ." (p. 74). Such a situation had in fact arisen at the time of the Simla Conference. The Bhulabhai Desai-Liaquat Ali agreement which had Gandhiji's approval had stipulated Congress-League parity in the provisional Government. But the Congress Working Committee, despite Gandhiji's earnest pleading, had acquiesced in implementing the Viceroy's formula of Hindu-Muslim parity instead (p. 3). Members of the Working Committee had also disapproved of Gandhiji's offer of limited Pakistan to Jinnah during their talks in September 1944 (*vide* Vol. LXXVIII) and Gandhiji felt it necessary to explain that it represented his personal conviction (p. 74) and that Vallabhbhai and others were free to declare their disapproval of it in public (p. 110).

Another disagreement, however,—one with Jawaharlal Nehru —touched Gandhiji personally, and though, as a democrat, he accepted Jawaharlal's freedom to follow his own convictions, the disagreement between them was a deep wrench to him. The disagreement related to Gandhiji's vision of free India as he had outlined it in *Hind Swaraj*. The booklet had been much misunderstood and had earned for Gandhiji the obloquy of being a mediævalist and a revivalist. Nehru probably shared this view, and, with his buoyant faith in progress through science and industrialization, was impatient with Gandhiji's programmes of village reconstruction. Gandhiji poured out his heart in a frank personal letter, in which he explained the humane values that inspired and sustained his concrete programmes. The central

theme was his conviction that without truth and non-violence as the foundation of society "mankind will be doomed". And people could have "the vision of that truth and non-violence only in the simplicity of the villages", in an economic order, symbolized by the spinning-wheel, where the individual will have "control over the things that are necessary for the sustenance of life." In the absence of such control, Gandhi argued, "the individual cannot survive. Ultimately, the world is made up only of individuals. If there were no drops there would be no ocean." This view of the significance of the individual is a perennial spiritual insight, and Gandhiji wanted it to be integrated with the achievements of modern thought and science. "You will not be able to understand me," he confessed, "if you think that I am talking about the villages of today. My ideal village still exists only in my imagination." This village would be free from the squalor and the ignorance and the disease of the present Indian villages, as also from their social and economic inequalities. To realize this ideal, Gandhiji said, he could "still envisage a number of things that will have to be organized on a large scale." Gandhiji was keen that Nehru and he should understand each other on this fundamental issue. "Our bond," he pleaded with Nehru, "is not merely political. It is much deeper. I have no measure to fathom that depth. . . . It is only proper that I should at least understand my heir and my heir in turn should understand me. I shall then be at peace" (pp. 319-21). Nehru answered elaborately and the debate continued.

In the foreword (p. 145) to J. C. Kumarappa's *Economy of Permanence*, Gandhiji re-affirmed his faith in village industries as the only means through which the body could healthily satisfy its few wants and "be free to subserve the end of the imperishable soul".

Gandhiji avoided public criticism of the Government and preferred to communicate his views privately to the authorities. There were several cases in Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Bengal of prisoners condemned to death on criminal charges arising out of the "Quit India" upheaval of 1942, and representations were made to the Viceroy for remission of the sentences. Gandhiji wrote to the Viceroy appealing to him to exercise his prerogative of mercy (pp. 67, 253-4, 380-1 and Vol. LXXX, pp. 426-7) and succeeded in all cases except one, that of Mahendra Chowdhury, a young man of Bihar whom the courts had found guilty of dacoity and murder but whom the people considered innocent. Gandhiji regretted the Viceroy's decision as unwise

(p. 19) and described it in a letter to Amrit Kaur as "a bad augury" (p. 20). However, in the public statement which he issued on the subject (pp. 105-6) he wanted people to learn dispassionately "the lesson of this accomplished death sentence" and he put the Government's view of the case with objective impartiality, admitting, "Many professionals used the political ferment for their own ends." Whether or not it was so in this particular case could be established only by "a body of utterly impartial lawyers" and Gandhiji appealed to the Government also to welcome such an inquiry.

Another matter which had begun to arouse popular feelings was that of the officers and men of Subhas Chandra Bose's Indian National Army who had been captured during the operations against Japan and locked up in the Red Fort at Delhi. It was rumoured that some of them had been court-martialled and that the rest were going to be tried. Gandhiji wrote to the Viceroy and appealed for legal assistance of their choice being given to the prisoners (p. 35). The request was conceded, and when the trial began the defence was led by Bhulabhai Desai with Tej Bahadur Sapru serving on the Defence Committee and Jawaharlal Nehru appearing in court in his barrister's robe. Gandhiji made a last-minute appeal to the Viceroy to reconsider the whole matter, pleading, "India adores these men who are on their trial" (p. 438).

With Gandhiji's involvement in public affairs reduced to a minimum, the volume carries mostly personal letters. Many of them are concerned with personal problems and illustrate Gandhiji's gift of combining motherly tenderness with strict objectivity in dealing with human beings. We see this delicacy at its best in the way he soothes Bhulabhai Desai's hurt feelings. The latter was thought to have harmed the Congress cause by the manner in which he had carried on negotiations with Liaquat Ali Khan and in particular by accepting the principle of Congress-League parity. His name, therefore, was not included among the proposed Congress nominees for the Viceroy's Executive Council though he had been leader of the Congress Party in the Central Legislative Assembly since 1934. And now he was not being considered as a Congress candidate for the Assembly in the impending election. Taking on himself the responsibility for the decision, Gandhiji wrote: " . . . I am firm, for I am acting as your well-wisher. I want a big service from you, if you can give it. I wish to see you as a people's man" (p. 400). C. Rajagopalachari too was very close to Gandhiji, but Gandhiji

could not save him, either, from the displeasure of Congressmen who could not forgive his opposition to the "Quit India" movement and his having fathered the so-called Rajaji Formula offering a limited Pakistan. Gandhiji wrote to him: "... I do not want you to feel over the thing.... you should come here ... and let us amuse ourselves. Let the elections take care of themselves.... You will come to a friend, not as a Congressman to another, not on business" (pp. 299-300). Gandhiji's prescription, however, failed in both cases. Bhulabhai Desai died soon afterwards broken-hearted and Rajagopalachari continued to nurse his grievance so that Gandhiji wrote to him once again: "It distresses me to find that you were ill and morose. . . . I could not believe that you with your fund of humour at your disposal could ever be morose. . ." (p. 324).

There were the usual conflicts among the Ashram workers at Sevagram (pp. 102, 116-7, 128, 141, 186, 239, 249, 262-3 and 287-8); there were differences between Amritlal Thakkar and Mridula Sarabhai regarding the activities of the Kasturba Memorial Trust (pp. 357-8) and between the khadi workers of Bengal, Satis Chandra Das Gupta and Profulla Chandra Ghosh (pp. 372 and 396). Kasturba's brother who had been ill and whom Gandhiji had sent to a nature-cure doctor was dissatisfied and insisted on leaving the clinic though he was without resources and had nobody to look after him (pp. 70-1). Gandhiji dealt with them all with a strict sense of discipline, yet with a protective concern. He told one of them rather harshly, "Your ignorance and vanity is eating you up", and even asked him to leave the Ashram if he could not do his work quietly (pp. 208 and 234). In all such situations Gandhiji's effort was to help the correspondent to see the truth for himself. He wrote to one of them who felt sore over his failure to interest people in his plan of Hindu-Muslim unity: "I suggest to you to look inward for your failure and not outward. . . . I have not written this for argument but, if possible, to enable you to see the light" (p. 86).

Gandhiji's concern for co-workers also found expression in his solicitude for their health. He advised Mirabehn and Sucheta Kripalani to go to some cool place (pp. 29 and 40), worried over the illness of Sushila Nayyar (p. 17), Amrit Kaur (pp. 91 and 274) and Kishorelal Mashruwala (pp. 385-6), sent a number of patients for nature-cure treatment (pp. 7, 8, 9-10 and 58) and himself supervised Vallabhbhai Patel's treatment at Dinshaw Mehta's clinic at Poona. The illness of Sharda Chokhawala, daughter of

a valued Ashram worker, Chimanlal Shah, caused Gandhiji so much anxiety (pp. 148 and 164) that when he heard of heavy rains in Surat where she lived, he wrote to her: "On reading about the rains there, my thoughts flew to you as if I did not care for the others. Despite every effort to cultivate non-attachment, such things do happen sometimes" (p. 279).

But it was so only sometimes. Ordinarily, Gandhiji's mind was preoccupied with the plight of the millions. Writing to Narandas he confessed: " . . . at present my mind is occupied with the work lying before me and, therefore, I am not able to concentrate on problems of individuals. If something occurs to me on the spur of the moment, well and good. After that, the attention wanders off to the original problem" (p. 11). To another correspondent he wrote: "I do not belong to any single human being now" (p. 376). His prevailing mood may be judged from a remark about his proposed visit to Bengal, "I am not going there for a fixed period. I want to lose myself in the misery of Bengal" (p. 134).

In spite of this weight on his heart, however, Gandhiji could occasionally relax. He read Humayun Kabir's novel *Men and Rivers* "with great interest" and recognized the author's ability (p. 389). Likewise he wrote to a poet friend, "I would like to come over to Mahabaleshwar just to hear your poems" (p. 305). How well Gandhiji loved poetry can be seen also from his charming letter to one Mrs. M. H. Morrison of the Green Cross Society for the protection of wild life and nature. Here, echoing Wordsworth, he wrote : " . . . I have long believed that there is a 'spirit in the wood'. . ." (pp. 433-4). Consoling a bereaved sister Gandhiji said that he read for a few minutes daily the verses of Bhartrihari and found his reflections on "moral wisdom and detachment . . . worth pondering over at such times" (p. 361).

Gandhiji wrote to an American friend, " 'The Kingdom of God is within you' is all-sufficient. Follow it out in action and you need nothing else" (p. 162). To Pushpa Desai who needed guidance in a quandary, he gave the assurance: "Not only is disinterested action not an obstacle to *bhakti*, but on the contrary . . . it alone is true *bhakti*" (p. 220). He accepted a Christian social worker's statement that "just as faith without work is dead, so is work without faith" (p. 233).

PREFACE

The period covered by the present volume (November 1, 1945—January 19, 1946) was one marked by expectation and anxiety, as much for the rulers as for the country. Political activity, in so far as it concerned the masses, revolved round the elections to the Central Assembly and provincial legislatures, being held in pursuance of the programme announced by the Viceroy in September. The elections were to be followed by the setting up of a constitution-making body, in which the Muslim League might or might not co-operate. This body in turn would work out a constitutional frame-work for a free India, which again the League might or might not accept. British constitutional experts were consequently busy throughout the period (as the documents in *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. VI, reveal) devising alternative formulæ that would stand some chance with Jinnah, whom they felt they must appease.

One thing was quite clear: the British could not any longer go on governing India as of old. Things were fast getting out of their hands and they lived in fear of a mass uprising. Field Marshal Auchinleck gave it as his opinion that should such an eventuality present itself "nothing short of an organized campaign for the reconquest of India" would suffice. In Calcutta on November 21 and 23 police had to open fire no less than 14 times to disperse anti-Government demonstrations, killing 30 and wounding some 200 people.

Economic distress all over the country was on the increase. There was shortage of food, especially in Bombay, Bengal, Bihar and U. P. Extensive areas in Bengal were further suffering from the ravages of floods and pestilence (p. 275). For much of the time covered by the volume—seven weeks to be precise—Gandhiji was in Bengal, providing "whatever consolation his presence in their midst could give to the victims of . . . famine" and doing "whatever he could to relieve their distress" (p. 149). In a series of meetings with Governor Casey he deliberated on ways and means to bring relief to the suffering masses. He commended the Governor's idea of harnessing river waters that went waste, but pointed out that it was a long-term proposition. "The millions, meanwhile, must be taught to utilize every minute of the working hours . . ." (p. 182). To this end he

proposed a khadi scheme, to be worked by the Government in co-operation with workers engaged in constructive programme, that would "bring almost immediate individual relief to the crores by occupying their admitted leisure hours" (p. 201), for, as he pointed out, the question was one of utilizing waste labour, as under the Governor's scheme it was one of utilizing waste water (p. 202).

It was this waste labour that Gandhiji wanted to see harnessed for the constructive programme, which he felt strongly was "the truthful and non-violent way of winning *poorna* swaraj. Its wholesale fulfilment is complete independence" (p. 67).

He also took up with the Governor the case of political prisoners languishing in Bengal jails "all of them having undergone sentences above ten and most of them above fifteen years" (p. 215) and of untried detenus, "detained only on one-sided secret evidence" and pressed for their discharge. He even took time off to pay a visit to some of these prisoners lodged in the Alipore and Dumdum jails. Then there were grievances involving official high-handedness—for instance the delay in restoring back to the inhabitants twenty-eight out of the ninety-eight villages acquired for war purposes in the Feni taluka (p. 382), the behaviour of some soldiers going berserk and indulging in plunder, arson and rape (p. 387), non-availability of seed potatoes to farmers, and so on. These grievances called for immediate redressal, for which Gandhiji sought the Governor's intervention. Gandhiji had as many as six meetings with Casey at Government House and "each night," the latter reported to the Viceroy, "his departure was remarkable in that probably 150 of our servants (Muslim and Hindu) lined the passages and the entrance to the house, to see him—all salaaming profusely" (*TOP*, VI, p. 617). Gandhiji also took advantage of the Viceroy's visit to Bengal to see him on December 10.

But by far the largest share of Gandhiji's time in Bengal was claimed by the masses whom he met every day at the evening prayer, by political and social workers, and above all by those engaged in constructive work. At prayer meetings and other public gatherings, attended by thousands upon thousands, he exhorted the people to be calm, peaceful and disciplined (pp. 221, 248, 276 and ff.), to ply the charkha and adopt khadi (pp. 248, 276, 297, 332, and ff.) to be fearless (p. 256) and have faith in God. "We are engulfed in darkness today," he said at one of the gatherings, "our prayer today to God is to lead us from darkness to light, from untruth to truth, and let us

have peace—peace not only for India but for the entire world'' (pp. 156-7).

The *Harijan* weeklies continued to be under suspension during the period and Gandhiji's writing was confined for the most part to answering the innumerable letters he received. Thus, of the 599 items in the volume, letters, notes and telegrams alone account for 493, while reports of speeches, interviews, talks and discussions make up another 72. Some of these letters are to the Viceroy's Private Secretaries, Jenkins and afterwards Abell, and they dealt with such themes as the ill-treatment of political prisoners—Sheel Bhadra Yajee, Rammanohar Lohia and Prabhu Dayal Vidyarthi—in jails (pp. 35, 114-5, 180 and 227), the commutation of death sentences on certain freedom fighters (pp. 28, 36, 113) clearance for a medical mission from the Congress to Burma and Malaya, which the Government refused to grant (pp. 378-9) and the alleged incitement to violence by Jawaharlal Nehru and other leaders of the Congress. This charge was the subject of much correspondence between the Viceroy and the Secretary of State and there were rumours that these leaders might be arrested. Strongly defending Nehru Gandhiji wrote to Jenkins that the doctrine of ''forget and forgive'' could only apply ''to the excesses of a soldiery in action but surely not to inexcusable butchery, inhumanity, bribery, corruption and the like . . . if the Government's hands are clean they have nothing to fear from publicity'' (p. 68).

He was also in correspondence with the Viceroy concerning the trial of ex-soldiers of the I. N. A. and when a ''garbled version of one of his letters found its way into the press he was concerned, for, he told Jenkins, ''whatever influence I exercise is purely moral, whether with the people or with the Government'' (p. 6).

Organizational problems connected with the work of the Charkha Sangh and the Kasturba Nidhi demanded much of Gandhiji's attention at the time (pp. 31, 37, 52, 232, 261 and ff.). The problem had become somewhat complicated because quite a few of the workers had been persuaded, either by themselves or by others, that they should contest elections to the Assemblies. Gandhiji was quite clear that those engaged in constructive work should keep themselves aloof from active politics. They could not do two things at the same time. ''A Charkha Sangh worker,'' he wrote, ''will remain a true voter and will vote for the candidate put up by the Congress but he will not bother to canvass for him. He will not deliver

speeches supporting him. . . . How can a man ride two horses at the same time? One who joins the Charkha Sangh should devote himself wholly to its activities . . .'' (p. 19).

Gandhiji's interest in and involvement with nature cure had continued to grow. ''What lay dormant for years'' had ''awakened without any effort on my part. How can I resist it?'' (p. 93) he wrote in a letter. At the time his chief preoccupation in this area was to make the nature cure clinic at Uruli Kanchan an institution for the poor. ''From January 1,'' he wrote to Dinshaw Mehta, ''it should become an institution for the poor and cease to be one for the rich . . . . From the 1st January let the rich come after the poor are accommodated but only if they can live as the poor'' (p. 75). Gandhiji went into minute details of the working of the institution—accommodation, sanitation, book-keeping, sign-board, and so on. In a letter to Munnalal Shah he wrote: ''I was not unaware that meat, even beef, is cooked in the kitchen there. . . . You need not get alarmed and run away. It should be enough that you yourself do not eat either meat or beef. But you cannot prevent others from doing so'' (p. 207).

The individual as a person had of course always been of supreme importance to Gandhiji. As he said: ''those who make mistakes with individuals cannot make much success with causes; for the latter are never apart from individuals'' (p. 95). Consequently a large number of letters are concerned with personal problems of correspondents—with regard to work, to interpersonal relationships and so on. There were misunderstandings between Munnalal Shah and his wife and between Sharma and Gadodia that needed to be cleared up (pp. 110, 194). To a woman correspondent he gives hints on walking: ''It will be good if you give up the habit of walking about as you read. It spoils the eyesight and sometimes thoughts also wander . . . the eyes have to look around and take note of the surroundings and watch out for any obstructions in one's way'' (p. 84). He advises yet another correspondent on humility: ''Greatness lies in becoming small and smallness in assuming greatness. We should therefore only serve by becoming as small as dust particles'' (p. 176).

There are reflections on art and music and sociocultural questions. Rejecting the doctrine of art for art's sake and echoing Tolstoy he wrote to Munshi: ''It has always seemed to me a terrible thought that the end of art is for it to be made interesting. Leaving aside debauchery, even hypocrisy, violence and untruth can easily be made interesting'' (p. 9).

At Santiniketan, where Gandhiji spent a couple of days he had this to say on the music there: "Music in Santiniketan is charming, but has the professor there come to the conclusion that Bengali music is the last word in that direction? Has Hindustani music . . . anything to give to the world of music? If it has, it should have its due place at Santiniketan. Indeed I would go so far as to say that Western music which has made immense strides should also blend with the Indian" (p. 251). He also felt that the music of life was in danger of being lost in the music of the voice. "Why not the music of the walk, of the march, of every movement of ours and of every activity?" (p. 251)

On Arya Samaj Gandhiji reiterated the views he had expressed on earlier occasions. "There is much in the Arya Samaj," he wrote, "that I love, but I just cannot accept *Satyarthaprakash* as scripture . . . Hinduism, it seems to me, is already assimilating all that is good in the Arya Samaj, and this is the distinctive feature of Hinduism" (p. 11).

On terrorism as political behaviour Gandhiji admitted of no compromise. He told Ian Stephens: "I have discussed this question of violence threadbare with so many terrorists and anarchists. It is terrible whether the Arab does it or the Jew. It is a bad outlook for the world if this spirit of violence takes hold of the mass mind. Ultimately in destroying itself it destroys the race" (p. 151).

His faith in non-violence he affirmed in a resolution he drafted for the Congress Working Committee that met in Calcutta. Referring to the spontaneous uprising of the people in 1942 it said: " . . . the policy of non-violence adopted in 1920 by the Congress continues unabated, and . . . such non-violence does not include burning of public property, cutting of telegraph wires, derailing of trains and intimidation" (pp. 200-1).

Gandhiji's incessant quest for truth finds expression in the volume is some further reflections. To Pilate's question there is no simple answer and Gandhiji says: "I write the truth as I see it. Absolute truth alone is God. It is beyond reach. At the most we can say it is *neti*, *neti*. The truth that we see is relative, many-sided, plural and is the whole truth for a given time. There is no scope for vanity in it and the only way of reaching it is through ahimsa. Pure and absolute truth should be our ideal. We can reach the ideal only by constantly meditating on it, and reaching it is attaining *moksha*" (pp. 39-40). Such a quest calls for faith, and here Gandhiji has this to say:

"Faith becomes lame when it ventures into matters pertaining to reason. Its field begins where reason's ends. Conclusions based on faith are unshakable whereas those based on reason are liable to be unstable and vulnerable to superior logic. To state the limitation of science is not to belittle it. We cannot do without either—each in its own place" (p. 368).

The pursuit of truth also called for detachment. Asked how he managed to keep fit, Gandhiji answered that in a large measure "it is due to the practice of detachment of mind. By detachment I mean that you must not worry whether the desired result follows from your action or not, so long as your motive is pure, your means correct. Really it means that things will come right in the end if you take care of the means and leave the rest to Him" (p. 152).

Equally he thought it important not to be too much tied up with the past. What if the British Government in 1942 instead of co-operating with the Congress chose to thwart it? He refused to shed any tears over it—for that was past—and he advised the people to do the same. The present was enough to claim their energy and attention (p. 314). The same idea is expressed in "A Thought for the Day". "The past belongs to us but we do not belong to the past. We belong to the present. We are makers of the future, but we do not belong to the future" (p. 443).

CWMG-C

PREFACE

The period of this volume (January 20 to April 13, 1946) saw the beginning of the process which was to end in the transfer of power to Indian hands. A British Parliamentary Delegation came out early in January to make informal contacts with Indian leaders and "to demonstrate the sympathy of Parliament with Indian aspirations" (p. 15). On their return the British Prime Minister, Clement Attlee, announced in Parliament the decision to send out to India a Mission of Cabinet Ministers to discuss with the Indian leaders and the Viceroy the formation of an interim National Government and the setting up of a constitution-making body. This was followed up by the Prime Minister's declaration in Parliament on March 15 of the Government's firm intention to end British control of India and let the country have "freedom to decide her own destiny" (p. 432). The Cabinet Mission, consisting of Lord Pethick-Lawrence, Sir Stafford Cripps and A. V. Alexander, arrived in India on March 24 and started formal discussions with Indian leaders on April 3.

Gandhiji welcomed these developments, but he kept politics in the background in his public utterances and devoted most of his time to guiding constructive workers and educating the people in the responsibilities of freedom. He had been touring, and after spending more than a month and a half in Bengal and Assam arrived in Madras on January 21. During an eleven-day stay in Madras, he had discussions with constructive workers and took part in the Silver Jubilee Celebration of the Dakshin Bharat Hindustani Prachar Sabha. He noted with concern the indiscipline and with admiration the orderliness of the huge crowds that greeted him at prayer meetings and wayside stops. While the noise and commotion of the mammoth gathering in Madurai prevented him from speaking, the *shanti* of the crowd in Palni, he said, had brought *shanti* to his own soul (pp. 81-2).

Having rested at Sevagram for a week at the end of the visit, Gandhiji proceeded to Poona on February 17 to observe and guide the working of the Nature Cure Clinic there which had been converted into a health centre for the poor since the beginning of January. Realizing the impracticability of running such an institution in a city, Gandhiji paid a visit to Uruli-

Kanchan, a nearby village, to explore the possibility of shifting the Clinic from Poona to this village. While he was there, he received a message from Lord Pethick-Lawrence and Sir Stafford Cripps requesting him to reach Delhi on April 1 for informal discussions with them before the start of the official proceedings on April 3.

Gandhiji had received on January 10 a letter from Sir Stafford Cripps expressing the hope that "in these coming months we shall be able by mutual understanding, respect and trust, to work out between us a happier and brighter future for India" (*vide* Vol. LXXXII, p. 405). Gandhiji was therefore inclined to trust British declarations this time. In a public statement issued on February 14 on the impending food crisis in the country he declared that "swaraj is within sight inside of a few months" (p. 128). In an interview to the English journalist H. N. Brailsford, after Attlee's statement in the House of Commons, Gandhiji said, "This time I believe that the British mean business. But the offer has come suddenly. Will India be jerked into independence?" (p. 276).

The atmosphere in the country seemed none too favourable for a smooth transfer of power. The public trials of Subhas Chandra Bose's Indian National Army men which the Government of India had thoughtlessly staged since November had queered the pitch for the Home Government's conciliatory moves. The men were lionized by the public and violent disturbances broke out in Calcutta in the middle of February in protest against a sentence passed against one of the officers (p. 129). The rebellious spirit affected the Royal Indian Navy men, too, and in Bombay there was in February an open mutiny of the ratings which was controlled by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's intervention (p. 184). The situation was aggravated by an acute shortage of food and cloth which threatened to produce a countrywide panic.

Gandhiji was deeply concerned at these developments. "Hatred is in the air" (p. 133), he wrote in *Harijan*, which had resumed publication on February 10 after two and a half years of suppression. He explained the moral danger of the situation to Brailsford: "The tide of bitterness had risen high and that is not good for the soul" (p. 277). In Delhi Gandhiji found the atmosphere so full of bitterness against the British that he kept awake for many hours on the night of April 6, the annual day of mourning and prayer observed since 1919, wondering how the people would behave at the dawn of independence (p. 378).

Gandhiji tried patiently to reason the people back to the path of non-violence. It was no easy task, for as Gandhiji observed in a *Harijan* article, "The hypnotism of the Indian National Army has cast its spell" upon the people. Gandhiji admired Subhas Bose for his patriotism and bravery, but he added, "My praise and admiration go no further" (p. 135). In Delhi Gandhiji visited the I.N.A. detenus in the Cantonment and Red Fort and was able to establish a friendly bond with them. But, after the first visit on April 4, he told the gathering in his after-prayer speech the next day: "India has accorded to the released I. N. A. men a right royal welcome. . . . Everybody seems to have been swept off his feet before the rising tide of popular sentiment. I must, however, frankly confess to you that I do not share this indiscriminate hero worship." Subhas's last message to his men, Gandhiji was told, was that on their return to India they should serve the country "as soldiers of non-violence under the guidance and leadership of the Congress", and the men assured Gandhiji that they would do so (pp. 370-1).

More than the common people, some Socialist leaders believed in the efficacy of violent revolt. Gandhiji publicly reasoned with one of them, Aruna Asaf Ali. She had gone underground during the 1942 movement and the arrest warrant against her had been recently cancelled when the R. I. N. ratings' mutiny broke out. She identified herself with their cause and strongly protested against Gandhiji's statement condemning the navy men's action and "the known and unknown leaders of this thoughtless orgy of violence" (p. 171). Gandhiji argued that, though the people might not be "interested in the *ethics* of violence or non-violence," they were "very much interested in knowing *the way* which will bring freedom to the masses—violence or non-violence", and he urged her and her comrades "to ask themselves every time whether the non-violent way has, or has not, raised India from her slumber of ages and created in them a yearning . . . for swaraj" (p. 184). Maybe Aruna remained unconvinced, and Gandhiji wrote to her: "What is the use of defeating you? I would prefer your defeating me" (p. 262).

The importance Gandhiji attached to non-violence could hardly be understood by those who did not share his moral vision. Explaining the real meaning of the phrase "Quit India", Gandhiji wrote: "It does not mean the foreigner's destruction but his willing conversion to Indian life. In this scheme, there is no room for hatred of the foreigner. . . . It is fear of him that gives rise to hatred. Fear gone, there can be no hatred."

If India could win her freedom by thus converting the British through non-violent means, it would be, Gandhiji said, "a revealing lesson for the world" (pp. 330-1). Mankind was "at the cross-roads"; it had "to make its choice between the law of the jungle and the law of humanity" (p. 242). The law of the jungle had proved its bankruptcy in the war which had ended (p. 134).

On the food front also, Gandhiji appealed to the people for co-operation with the Government. The situation looked so grave that the Viceroy felt the need to seek the help of the national leaders and sent his Private Secretary to see Gandhiji at Sevagram and request him to say something "to lift the question out of the political arena and out of the general distrust of Government intentions". Gandhiji issued a Press Statement in which he urged the people, irrespective of what the Government did, "to think of the skeletons of India" and do everything possible to tide over the crisis by avoiding hoarding and speculation, economizing in consumption and adopting all possible measures to grow more food (pp. 120-1). He elaborated the suggestions in a *Harijan* article and advised the people: "We must fight this foreign Government on all other fronts except this one . . ." (pp. 127-8).

Together with public statements and appeals, Gandhiji employed the means of music and collective recitation of Ramanama at his public prayers to educate the people in emotional self-discipline. It was a profoundly satisfying experience to him to see thousands of people seated in the "temple of art" consisting of "mother earth" and the "canopy" of "the fine blue sky", praying in unison and maintaining "silence and order" (p. 75). Such congregational prayer, he explained, was "a means for establishing the essential human unity through common worship" (p. 152). Prayer was "the first and the last lesson in learning the noble and brave art of sacrificing self in the various walks of life . . ." (p. 372). It was also a means of establishing true swaraj, for "Swaraj will be incomplete without *shanti*"—without peace in the hearts of people expressing itself in mutual co-operation—and such *shanti* is a gift of God's grace earned through prayer (p. 87). During the Bengal tour of the preceding weeks, he had started the practice of including in the prayer programme collective musical recitation of Ramanama, known as *Ramdhun*. He had found, he told an audience in Bombay, that when "sung in tune to the accompaniment of *tala*, the triple accord of the voice, the accompaniment and the

thought creates an atmosphere of ineffable sweetness and strength which no words can describe'' (p. 257). He could therefore say from experience that there was ''something quite extraordinary in the recitation of Ramanama'' (p. 373). To non-Hindus, particularly Muslims, who could not join in the recitation on the ground that it was a specifically Hindu form of worship, Gandhiji explained: ''My Rama, the Rama of our prayers, is not the historical Rama, the son of Dasaratha, the King of Ayodhya. He is the eternal, the unborn, the one without a second. Him alone I worship, His aid alone I seek . . . He belongs equally to all''. A Muslim, however, could utter to himself the name of Allah or Khuda (p. 364).

Gandhiji's love of the *Ramayana* rewarded him with a precious friendship. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, the Liberal leader who had been an outspoken critic of Gandhiji's civil disobedience programmes, was a devoted lover of the *Ramayana* and felt his faith strengthened and enriched by Gandhiji's example. He was ailing and gradually sinking during Gandhiji's visit to Madras. Gandhiji called on him thrice. At the second meeting, on January 30, Sastri confessed with love: ''You have been a blessing to me in a hundred ways. . . . I am also a follower of truth, though at a great distance from you. The eternal truths propounded by Valmiki in the *Ramayana* have been the greatest source of inspiration to me'', as they had been to Gandhiji (pp. 62 and 64). At their last meeting, on February 4, Sastri repeated his confession: ''You are dearer and nearer to me than my own brothers and sons and members of the family. . . . We have come together by some inner affinity. No external reason can explain this friendship'' (p. 87).

Gandhiji's use of public prayer and *Ramdhun* to educate the people was part of his democratic faith in the capacity of the millions to rule their own lives and manage their own affairs. That faith did not let him approve of the Socialist and Communist method of ''generating and accentuating hatred'' in order to capture the State and then enforce equality through its power. ''Under my plan'', he said, ''the State will be there to carry out the will of the people, not to dictate to them or force them to do its will''. Satyagraha was ''a process of educating public opinion'' and violence interrupted that process, delaying ''the real revolution of the whole social structure'' (pp. 27-8). But sometimes the people also went wrong. In such situations, the political parties should not allow electoral considerations to influence their policy. He de-

clared clearly: "He who panders to the weaknesses of a people degrades both himself and the people and leads them not to democratic but mob rule. . . . The one leads to life and progress, the other is death, pure and simple" (p. 293).

And the citizens at large must ever be on the watch against hooligans taking the law into their own hands. In times of riots, people should not "take refuge" in the "moral alibi" of attributing the disturbances to hooligans, for the latter "are our own countrymen" and "we cannot disown responsibility for them consistently with our claim that we are one people" (p. 242). It could even be said that the people themselves were the makers of the hooligans. The latter "respond to the air about them" (p. 175).

Writing the first article for the revived *Harijan*, Gandhiji referred to the "cataclysmic changes in the world" during the period *Harijan* had remained suppressed, and asserted that the atom bomb had only strengthened his faith that truth and ahimsa "constitute the mightiest force in the world". That force resided "in everybody, man, woman and child", and was "capable of being awakened by judicious training". Self-destruction could be avoided, he wrote, only by "every individual training himself for self-expression in every walk of life . . . *Harijan* will attempt from week to week to stand up for this truth and illustrate it" (p. 77).

Gandhiji's idea of ahimsa, however, could not be reduced to an intellectually defined science or Shastra. "No man has ever been able to define God fully", and that held true of ahimsa also, he said in reply to a friend's suggestion to him to write a treatise on ahimsa. A living spiritual ideal grew in meaning with experience and reflection. "I can," Gandhiji therefore said, "give no guarantee that I will do or believe tomorrow what I do or hold to be true today". The best way was for the people to let the words and actions of those whom they regarded as men of God "soak" into their "being" and germinate their meanings in their hearts (pp. 180-1).

Expressing the central core of his religious striving, Gandhiji explained to the audience at a prayer meeting that for him Shastras were not "meant only for the benefit of the soul in the life to come. . . If dharma has no practical use in this life, it has none for me in the next" (p. 312). But the practice of dharma in this life could be an experience of exquisite inner harmony. Writing the "Thought for the Day" under February 22, Gandhiji said: "Music does not proceed from the

throat alone. There is music of the mind, of the senses and of the heart'' (p. 410). Like this unheard music, the truest dharma could be unconscious and inarticulate, as Gandhiji assured some African visitors: ''The Africans have a religion of their own, though they may not have reasoned it out for themselves. . . . There are many religions, but religion is only one. . . . You should absorb the best that is in each without fettering your choice and form your own religion'' (p. 11).

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PREFACE

The period (April 14 to July 15, 1946) covered by the present volume is largely taken up with the negotiations carried on by the Congress under Gandhiji's leadership with the British Cabinet Delegation and the Viceroy for arriving at the modalities that would govern the transfer of power to Indian hands. It also marks the final phase of Gandhiji's leadership, when he is content to guide the Congress leaders while offering well-meant advice to the British representatives. At the same time he was actively preparing the people for the responsibility of self-rule and struggling with all his moral might against M. A. Jinnah who, impelled more by personal ambition than by genuine concern for the future of Islam on the sub-continent, was driving the country towards a suicidal division.

The Cabinet Delegation had arrived in the last week of March and, after prolonged but fruitless discussions with Indian leaders, issued on May 16 a State Paper (App. VII), proposing a three-tier Constitution which would formally preserve India's political unity and also partly satisfy the Muslim League demand for separate political self-expression for Muslims. Convinced of the sincerity and goodwill of the Mission, Gandhiji commended the paper as "the best document the British Government could have produced in the circumstances" (p. 169). But the ambiguities and contradictions inherent in the plan filled Gandhiji with vague but deep fears about its working. He could not however explain these fears in rational terms and he advised the Congress Working Committee members to come to a decision independently of him, exhorted the people to follow the lead of the Working Committee and also helped at every step in promoting co-operation between the Congress and the Mission. But Gandhiji's fears proved true and in a few months' time the whole plan came to grief, aggravating the communal tensions which the Muslim League demand for Pakistan had generated.

The fundamental difference between Gandhiji's approach and that of the British Government was that while the latter thought exclusively in terms of political expedients based on a balance of agreements and disagreements among leaders, Gandhiji was concerned with the effects of any arrangements on the future progress and well-being of the country's millions. He used to describe the two approaches as "constitutional swaraj" and "organic

swaraj" (*vide* Vol. XXXVII), meaning by the latter a political order sustained by the power of healthy and well-informed public opinion and promoting the moral, social and economic growth of all classes of people. Such "organic swaraj" (which Gandhiji also called Ramarajya) would be the only true democracy, based on truth and non-violence, in which people would obey the Government normally and cheerfully because they respected it, not reluctantly because they feared it. A deeply and sincerely religious man, Gandhiji believed in the politics of mutual trust and human brotherhood. He therefore deemed Pakistan a "sin" and could not, he said, co-operate to "make sin a success" (p. 385).

The State Paper rejected Pakistan on political, administrative, economic and military grounds and provided, instead, for a Central Government limited to the subjects of Foreign Affairs, Defence and Communications with powers to raise finances for them and for grouping in sub-federations of the Provinces in the North-East and North-West zones claimed by the Muslim League for Pakistan (pp. 469-71).

And while Gandhiji saw in it the definite intention of the British "to get off India's back" (p. 162), this commitment, he pointed out, was only "the first step in the act of renunciation" and was therefore like "a promissory note" (p. 171). For the note to be fully honoured, other steps were essential. Gandhiji explained them in a letter to Lord Pethick-Lawrence (pp. 173-4), as also in a *Harijan* article (pp. 209-11). They related to the position of the European members of the Assemblies with regard to the Constituent Assembly, the exercise of Paramountcy in the intervening period, the withdrawal of British troops from India and the installation of an Interim National Government at the Centre. Gandhiji also assumed that the provision for the grouping of Provinces in sub-federations in the North-East and North-West zones was voluntary and that individual units would be free to keep away from the very beginning from the groups to which they were assigned. On the first two points, Gandhiji got partly satisfactory assurances from the Mission members (pp. 497, 173-4 and 478), but the latter were firm that the troops would not be withdrawn till after the Constituent Assembly had completed its labours and the Government of free India was established "in accordance with the instrument produced" by it (p. 480). Gandhiji and the Congress did not accept the position but acquiesced in it. The last two points, the installation of an Interim Government and freedom to Provinces to keep away from

the grouping, presented insoluble difficulties and ultimately led to the breakdown of the Mission Plan.

The Muslim League in its resolution of June 6 accepting the Mission Plan reiterated "that the attainment of the goal of a complete sovereign Pakistan still remains the unalterable objective of the Muslims in India", and agreed "to co-operate with the constitution-making machinery proposed" in the Mission's scheme "in the hope that it would ultimately result in the establishment of complete sovereign Pakistan. . ." (p. 488). The Congress Working Committee also felt that the Central Government as envisaged in the State Paper would be too limited for the affairs of a large country like India. But the Committee overcame its apprehensions and passed a resolution on June 26 accepting the plan outlined in the State Paper since it felt that, "taking the proposals as a whole, there was sufficient scope for enlarging and strengthening the Central authority and for ensuring the right of a Province to act according to its choice in regard to grouping. . ." (*Mahatma*, Vol. VII, p. 165).

Gandhiji advised the A. I. C. C., which met on July 7, to endorse the Working Committee's Resolution, but he was not happy with the decision. He attached great importance to the installation of an Interim Government which would practically function as a free Government, but there was no such Government in sight. From the very beginning he had been pressing the Mission members to give priority to the formation of an Interim National Government, for both political and practical reasons. Only when such a Government was formed, and not before, he wrote to Lord Pethick-Lawrence, "can a true picture of coming events be presented". The practical reason was the food crisis which had overtaken the country as a result of war shortages and official mismanagement. It demanded "immediate formation of a strong, capable and homogeneous National Government". "Every day's delay", Gandhiji added, "in forming such a Government is agony added to the agony of the famished millions of India" (p. 174). As the delay continued, he wrote in despair to Sir Stafford Cripps wondering "whether a satisfactory Interim Government will ever be formed . . ." (p. 216). The Mission members, however, found themselves faced with the old, insuperable difficulty of Jinnah's insistence on parity of representation between the Congress and the Muslim League. At the Simla Conference in July 1945, the Congress Working Committee had accepted against Gandhiji's advice Hindu-Muslim parity in place of Congress-League parity provided for in the

Bhulabhai Desai-Liaquat Ali Khan agreement of preceding January which had Gandhiji's endorsement. This time also the Congress would not accept Congress-League parity, and Hindu-Muslim parity as an alternative was not even discussed.

Gandhiji advised the Viceroy to by-pass the parity issue and invite the Congress and the Muslim League to submit a joint list representing "a coalition Government composed of persons of proved ability and incorruptibility". If they failed to produce a joint list, the Viceroy should examine the separate lists of the two parties and "accept either the one or the other (not an amalgam). . ." (p. 320). Gandhiji wrote again the next day, on June 13: "You are a great soldier —a daring soldier. Dare to do the right. You must make your choice of one horse or the other. . . . Choose the names submitted either by the Congress or the League. For God's sake do not make an incompatible mixture and in trying to do so produce a fearful explosion" (pp. 328-9). To Cripps also Gandhiji wrote: "As I see it the Mission is playing with fire. . . . You will have to choose between the two—the Muslim League and the Congress . . . Either you swear by what is right or by what the exigencies of British policy may dictate" (p. 330).

Gandhiji's solution required moral courage and a firm faith in the goodness and intelligence of the masses when given free play through "organic swaraj". Such courage and faith, or the wisdom of Solomon forbidding vivisection, could not be expected of practical politicians or administrators. The Mission members and the Viceroy feared that a one-sided arrangement such as Gandhiji proposed, either with regard to the Constitution-making machinery or the composition of the Interim Government, would lead to a civil war. Summarizing Gandhiji's attitude at a meeting on May 6, the Viceroy noted: "Gandhi seemed quite unmoved at the prospect of civil war, I think he had adopted Patel's thesis that if we are firm the Muslims will not fight" (p. 466). Recommending the proposals set forth in their State Paper of May 16, the Mission appealed "to all who have the future good of India at heart to extend their vision beyond their own community or interest to the interests of the whole four hundred millions of the Indian people" (pp. 475-6).

Gandhiji put his faith in those "four hundred millions", whom he knew well to be "godfearing and law-abiding". His hope was that the masses had "sufficiently imbibed the spirit of ahimsa" and that when the British went there might be "a little fight here and there" and then we should "settle down as bro-

thers giving a lesson of peace to the world'' (p. 47). The presence of the third party, pretending to be an impartial judge, encouraged the communal leaders to address their arguments to that party rather than to the common people who could be counted on to exert their own restraining influence on the extremists in either community. Charged with the sole responsibility of running the Government of the country, the Congress or the Muslim League, Gandhiji was convinced, would display greater realism and take pains not to put itself in the wrong in the eyes of the masses. British representatives, including Lord Mountbatten later, failed to appreciate this reasoning behind Gandhiji's suggestion to hand over power either to the Congress or to the Muslim League and persisted in their efforts to bring about an artificial agreement among leaders at the top.

Failing in that effort, Lord Wavell announced on June 16 a composite list drawn up by himself which, while denying parity to the Muslim League, also denied to the Congress the right it claimed of including a nationalist Muslim among its nominees. Both the Congress Working Committee and Jinnah were reconciled to the position. But Gandhiji pressed the Congress Working Committee not to sacrifice its character as a national organization by waiving its right, and even gave notice that if it yielded ''he would have nothing to do with the whole business and leave Delhi'' (p. 347). His firmness, coupled with ''the general right'' conceded by the Viceroy to Jinnah to have a say in the selection of names in future (pp. 387-8), finally decided the Committee against accepting the Viceroy's plan for the Interim Government.

For Gandhiji the negotiations with the Cabinet Mission were an experiment in trust. Though he felt dissatisfied with their approach and disagreed with their proposals, he was convinced of their sincerity and stressed it in all his public utterances on the subject (pp. 92, 102, 145, 162, 210-1 and 341). Even at the A. I. C. C. meeting in Bombay on July 7, Gandhiji declared that, whatever the defects in the State Paper of May 16, he had ''no doubt as to the honesty of those who have framed it'' (pp. 421-2). But in his private correspondence with the two Mission members whom he knew personally, Pethick-Lawrence and Sir Stafford Cripps, he freely expressed his dissatisfaction. To Cripps he wrote: ''You do not understand how uneasy I feel. Something is wrong. But,'' he added, ''I shall come to Simla'' (p. 83). And again about a month later: ''But I shall hope against hope and work for the success of the Mis-

sion even in spite of itself, though not hiding from them or the public honest doubt'' (p. 216). A draft letter to Lord Pethick-Lawrence vividly expresses the personal struggle in Gandhiji. ''As for me, I would gladly stay behind if you want me to. But I feel that I shall be a useless adviser. I can only advise out of the fulness of trust. I become paralysed when distrust chokes me'' (p. 324). In an interview on June 29 to Norman Cliff, Gandhiji summed up the final outcome of the Mission's efforts: ''While I have no distrust of the four actors''—the three Cabinet ministers of the Mission and the Viceroy—''I have a distrust of the way things have gone. . . . They have done a faithful job and yet a bad one. . . . The Mission . . . have done their best. But the best falls far short of India's needs or India's best'' (pp. 383-4).

According to Gandhiji, ''India's needs'' could only be met by the welfare and paramountcy of the people, even at the cost of vested commercial interests and princely privileges; and ''India's best'' could well be a harmony of world religions ensuring the supremacy in human affairs of spiritual authority over temporal power. Speaking at a prayer meeting after Badshah Khan, he compared the world religions to the various branches of the single human tree and declared, ''All of us, Hindus and Mussalmans, constitute an integral whole'' (p. 157).

A Vaishnava of purest ray serene, Gandhiji knew that in the long run dharma or ''soul force'', the dynamic spiritual dimension in all human beings, must prevail over all material or military strength, for ''there is no power greater than God in the world'' (p. 314). This God may be a big X (p. 315), the ''Unknowable'' of Advaita, the ''Unknown'' of the Christians, the great and powerful One of the Muslims, or the impersonal Truth of the atheist. But He, whether invoked as *Allah-o-Akbar* or by any other cry, was the sole Reality and the ultimate Power. The Congress, representing the millions of India, had no equivalent cry. Gandhiji's own ''cry from the heart'', his infallible Ramanama, not only thrilled him but evoked endless echoes in most Indian hearts. This dear, poetical, uplifting Name (Vol. XLVIII, p. 127) stood both for the formless, all-transcendent Being and the personal God, embodied and functioning in Time as the economic and social dharma that governs the historical process, for Rama was by common consent *Shuddha Brahma Paratpara* as well as *Kalatmaka Parameswara*.

While Gandhiji was willing to render unto Cæsar, and even prepared to collect by law, whatever might be due to him, he

never doubted or questioned the overriding sovereignty of God, the Real Ruler of the universe. The foundation of every Sangha is Dharma, for there can be no polity without the rule of law and no law without morality and religion. Religion as faith in a living God had a function in the modern world and this function was "to save the temporal power from losing its soul". As he told some Missionary friends anxious for the future of Christianity in a free India, no genuine religion depended upon the State for protection. Faith in a "living God" "needed no guarantee, statutory or otherwise" (p. 52).

Because of such firm faith in a living God, Gandhiji was humble and patient, and would not yield to the impatience which, refusing to be sottish, "becomes a dog that's mad". He was burdened with a heavy sense of responsibility in "dealing with the destinies of dumb millions" (p. 176) and feared that "failure now would be a great human tragedy" (p. 385). He felt that it was not for one man alone to bear such tremendous responsibility and he appealed to the crowds at prayer meetings to pray with him and rely upon the strength and guidance that this big X alone, God the "Unknown" and "Unknowable", could give (p. 315).

It was in the midst of these "dumb millions" or in the awful bliss of solitude that he felt most vividly the presence of God. Hence, to gain some strength and guidance from this inner light which he shared with the common people, he had first to free himself from the atmosphere of "corruption, falsehood and deceit" that seemed to surround him. Only thus could he put himself "entirely in God's hands" and he therefore wished to go alone to Simla for the negotiations (p. 87). He was overruled, but having reached Simla he sent away his companions the following day. He faced now "a crisis within a crisis", a moment of self-diffidence, and he wished (as he told Agatha Harrison) to give his "undivided self to God". If shaking off all attachment and, deprived of his daily human associations, he could still feel this "inner joy", he would succeed in another big experiment in his life and pass through "a necessary stage" in his "spiritual growth" (p. 98), the stage which led him later in the winter to the sublime loneliness of the Noakhali pilgrimage.

Gandhiji's faith in Ramanama was no mere superstition or blind credulity. It was firmly founded on personal experience and a rational philosophy. Day after day he wrote and spoke about its miraculous efficacy in preserving health of body and sanity of mind (pp. 29, 44, 56, 91, 125, 133, 203, 213, 214, 236-7

and 279). He assured a young Ayurvedic physician that those "inspired by it in all their actions can testify to the wonders of Ramanama" (p. 258). Faith in Ramanama came only to those who "cultivated the virtues of truth, honesty and purity within and without". But then Ramanama "was also a means for acquiring purity" (p. 209), Faith inspired practice and the experience of practice and its effects sustained and strengthened faith. This mutuality between purity of life and devotion to Rama could culminate in a state of perfect purity when the recitation of the Name would become unnecessary (p. 214). When *jnana* and *karma* merge, means and ends become one. As he had explained in *Anasakti Yoga* (Vol. XLI, p. 96), "the extreme of means" was the end, liberation.

Through all this striving for personal perfection and concern for the public good, Gandhiji remained intensely human. After sending away his companions from Simla, he wrote to his son Manilal: "Parting is such a sweet sorrow. I did feel moved to tears when bidding good-bye to you all, but soon calmed myself" (p. 130).

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PREFACE

The period covered by the present volume (July 16–October 20, 1946) marks the prelude to the final transfer of power to India, and also provides (in the great Calcutta carnage) a bitter foretaste of the tragedy that was to accompany the triumph.

When the volume opens, the administration of the country is in the hands of a caretaker Government of officials that had on July 4 replaced the old Viceroy's Executive Council, thus preparing the way for an Interim Government composed chiefly of representatives of the Congress and the Muslim League as stipulated in the Cabinet Mission's proposals. Meanwhile the Viceroy and the leaders of political parties were engaged in nerve-racking negotiations to arrive at a compromise that would make the setting up of such a Government possible.

The Muslim League refused to recognize the right of the Congress to include a Muslim among its nominees for the Interim Government and in the last week of July finally withdrew its acceptance of the Cabinet Mission's statement of May 16. Having thus disqualified itself from participation in the Interim Government, the League launched its programme of Direct Action to "achieve Pakistan . . . and to get rid of the present British slavery". As it turned out, the programme had little to do with ending "British slavery" and was no more than a concerted effort to incite communal riots on a massive scale all over the country. On August 16, declared by the League as Direct Action Day, Calcutta witnessed an outbreak of violence that left in its wake, according to official figures, five thousand dead and fifteen thousand wounded. Communal riots were indeed nothing new in India, but the organization behind these, like their dimension and intensity, staggered and stunned the country. The blame for this orgy of violence Gandhiji put squarely on the League's hate propaganda which he rightly described as "a hymn of obscenity". Wishing that the violence of Calcutta did not become a signal for its spread all over, Gandhiji concluded: "It depends on the leaders of the Muslim League of course, but the rest will not be free from responsibility. They can retaliate or refrain. Refraining is easy and simple, if there is the will" (pp. 186-7).

It was clear to Gandhiji, as to everyone else, that with the British authority struggling to quit India (p. 281), a stage had been reached when the Muslim League intended to make

increasing use of communal violence to gain its political ends. Even as civil war was approaching, Gandhiji advised people not "to look to British authority for protection. . . . My advice is satyagraha first and satyagraha last. There is no other or better road to freedom. Whoever wants to drink the ozone of freedom must steel himself against seeking military or police aid" (p. 282).

Gandhiji was firmly convinced that the Pakistan demand was "un-Islamic" and sinful and that those who wanted "to divide India into possibly warring groups were enemies alike of India and Islam" (p. 367).

With the situation getting out of hand, the need for a popular government had acquired added urgency and the Viceroy accordingly invited Jawaharlal Nehru to send him a list of names for the Interim Government. This the latter did and the Government was sworn in on September 2. Gandhiji, at his prayer meeting, called it "a memorable day in the history of India", but added that it was "no occasion for jubilation" as the ministers were only "putting on the crown of thorns". The Hindus could not join the Muslim Leaguers in observing the day as a day of mourning, but "they should avoid illuminations, feasting and other forms of rejoicing" (p. 243).

The Calcutta carnage had proved conclusively, if proof were needed, that British Power in India had been rendered totally ineffective and was no longer in a position even to discharge the function of maintaining law and order. The situation demanded that the British should not wait upon the order of their going but go. They were however anxious first to make sure that Muslim interests were protected, which meant conciliating Jinnah, who was in no mood to be conciliated. Thus it was that Wavell in his anxiety committed a *faux pas* which brought him a rebuke from the Secretary of State. In the week preceding the swearing in of the Interim Government he called Gandhiji and Nehru and, as it appeared, without sufficient authority, held out the threat that unless the Congress gave its acceptance of the clause concerning the Grouping of Provinces envisaged in the Cabinet Mission's statement, he would not convene the Constituent Assembly. In a sharp letter to the Viceroy Gandhiji told him that the Congress could not "be expected to bend itself and adopt what it considers a wrong course because of the brutal exhibition recently witnessed in Bengal. Such submission would itself lead to an encouragement and repetition of such tragedies" (p. 216).

Throughout September and October efforts to bring the Muslims League into the Interim Government continued. Gandhiji,

in his anxiety to secure the co-operation of Jinnah, even signed an agreement (p. 416) recognizing the League as "the authoritative representative of an overwhelming majority of the Muslims of India", and the right of the Congress to "choose such representatives as they think proper from amongst the members of the Congress", and stipulating that "all the Ministers of the Interim Government will work as a team for the good of the whole of India and will never invoke the intervention of the Governor-General in any case". All that the agreement achieved was a meeting between Nehru and Jinnah and an exchange of letters between the two. Jinnah even denied that the paragraph about the ministers working as a team formed part of the agreement (*Transfer of Power*, VIII, p. 673). The Viceroy however persisted in his endeavours and finally on October 13 Jinnah in a letter conveyed to the Viceroy the Muslim League's willingness to join the Interim Government. It was, in the words of Wavell, a case of objecting "to everything possible which was being accepted before accepting it" (*TOP*, VIII, p. 721).

Gandhiji's worst fears were soon proved right. Even while Jinnah was writing his letter of "acceptance" on October 13 rioting started in Noakhali. Governor Burrows reported on October 16 : "Large bands of Muslim hooligans are moving about terrorizing Hindus and committing acts of arson, loot, murder, kidnapping and forcibly converting Hindus. The gangs appear to be organized" (*TOP*, VIII, 743). Gandhiji was greatly distressed. He recalled and seriously considered a correspondent's suggestion that he should himself "go to some place of riot and show. . .the way of quelling riots in a non-violent manner by personal example" (pp. 54-5). He dwelt on this theme again and again in his prayer discourses (pp. 464-5, 480, 482, 491 and 503).

The country continued to reel throughout this period under the impact of shortages especially of food and clothing. In Mysore and Rayalaseema "mass deaths due to starvation" were feared (pp. 165-6). Travancore was reported to have food only for fifteen days (p. 280, pp. 349-50). Gandhiji deprecated any talk of importing food and asserted that India could grow enough food provided the Government was "capable of dealing sternly with all profiteering, black-marketing and, worst of all, laziness of mind and body" (p. 133). To N. G. Ranga he wrote. "If people have to starve I shall blame none but ourselves. If we can survive only by importing food we deserve to perish. . . . It is not big conferences that we want, what is required is understanding, hard work and purity" (p. 162).

For overcoming the shortage of cloth Gandhiji's recipe was the scheme he had earlier tried to persuade Governor Casey to take up. "The essence of that scheme was that, instead of supplying textiles to the people, they should be taught how to make cloth for themselves and provided the necessary means . . . " (p. 171). This implied discouraging the setting up of new textile mills, for mills and khadi could not go hand in hand. While khadi put crores worth of cloth into the hands of the poor, the crores accruing from the mills went into a few hands (pp. 378-9). The mills India should depend on existed in the villages in the shape of hands, spindles, wheels and looms (p. 280). Gandhiji commended the example of Madras, where the Government under T. Prakasam had adopted Gandhiji's scheme despite opposition from vested interests (pp. 295, 301, 378). It was folly and sinful laziness to depend on others for food and clothing. "If we can but be self-reliant in food and clothing we shall be at peace with the whole world" (p. 342). Gandhiji was convinced that in India, " . . . if all the able-bodied millions work with one mind and with zeal, they could compete on their own terms with any nation, however well-equipped it may be with modern machines". And if human hands could compete with machines, an unarmed individual or nation could also defend himself or itself "against a whole world in arms. . . . a nation or group which has made non-violence its final policy, cannot be subjected to slavery even by the atom bomb" (p. 133).

Widespread strikes by factory workers, students and even the services were a cause of concern to Gandhiji. He opposed strikes for economic betterment being mixed up with ulterior political ends. Strikes should never "be led by goondaism" and workers should exercise self-restraint to permit the Congress to solve the political problem through the Constituent Assembly (p. 117).

Happenings in the States like Kashmir, Hyderabad and Mysore and in Goa also claimed Gandhiji's attention. When the Portuguese Governor-General defended censorship and argued that the State was bound to "look after the mental health" of people and could not leave it "a prey to unsettling ideas", Gandhiji declared, ". . . no person or group can thus remain without civil liberty without losing self-respect" (pp. 109-10).

With freedom from British rule on the horizon, Gandhiji presented to the people the model of the polity that he wished to see ushered in its place. This polity he would call Ramarajya or Khudai Raj or the Kingdom of God on earth (p. 135). It would be a society "naturally based on truth and non-violence"

deriving its strength from the sovereign goodness of the common people. It would be structured on the pattern of "ever-widening, never-ascending circles" — unlike "a pyramid with the apex sustained by the bottom." It would be "an oceanic circle whose centre will be the individual always ready to perish for the village, the latter ready to perish for the circle of villages . . . " Independence, beginning at the bottom would mean "independence of the whole of India". There would be no room for machines that would displace human labour and concentrate power in a few hands (pp. 32-3). In so far as the machine exploited the millions, it had not added to man's stature. "We stand today in danger of forgetting the use of our hands. To forget how to dig the earth and tend the soil is to forget ourselves" (pp. 96-7). Gandhiji's ideal polity was a means and a medium for the evolution of man as a moral and social being, a blending of man's perpetual aspiration for spiritual perfection with the modern ideals of justice and equality.

Nature cure was a way of life to ensure individual and social well-being through "triple purification of body, mind and soul" (p. 109). Faith in God (or Ramanama) was an essential pre-condition for such purification. "For, man is both matter and spirit, each acting on and affecting the other" (p. 175). Nature cure also enabled identification with the widest masses of people. Treating disease through use of earth, water, sun and air like maintaining social health and harmony through ahimsa or seeking spiritual growth through remembrance of God, was not only natural but available equally to all human beings, though it demanded more personal effort than buying some nostrum. The pursuit of excellence by the intellectual or spiritual athlete was wholly consistent with and indeed conducive to his pursuit of equality when the means chosen were clean, elemental and universally available. Taking the name of God might or might not be a remedy for disease, but it certainly made one less self-centred. You "are wholly selfish when you take penicillin in order to get well though you have the certain knowledge that the others cannot get it" (p. 176). Ahimsa itself would lose its value in Gandhiji's eyes if it were available only for the saint and the seer. If "ahimsa cannot be practised by millions, I have no use for it for myself. But if they did not want to, although they could, I would hold on to it, even if I were all alone" (p. 205). Enjoying the touch of Nature that makes the whole world kin, the good Vaishnava, like Yudhishthira, would walk the path of dharma all alone but would not enter heaven leaving a friend behind. Filled with

fear for the future of his country, Gandhiji was surrounded by darkness, but the darkness could not engulf him. He was not a "perfect devotee", he confessed, he was "no more than an aspirant" (p. 105). His aspiration was to take his people with him to the promised land. The Jesus tradition, according to him, enshrined "an eternal law—the law of vicarious and innocent suffering" (p. 481).

Questioned by an American journalist how to prevent the next war, his answer was: "By doing the right thing irrespective of what the world will do". Such heroic conduct alone could move others and silence cynics. When an individual had reduced himself to zero he became "irresistible" and his action became "all-pervasive in its effect" (pp. 369-70). Egoless service brought transparent purity and strength of mind. "A drop which has merged in the sea does not rot, but lends the sea its greatness. . . . You can see clearly through a glass window. If you coat the pane with mercury, you will see none but yourself" (p. 90). Integrity of conduct, the honest practice of what one professes, binds individual and society and raises political action to the level of spiritual sadhana. The Congress had no doubt accepted truth and non-violence as a policy, not a creed. "But whilst it lasts, policy is tantamount to creed and hence becomes obligatory" (p. 352).

Self-reliance and single-minded performance of one's swadharma are the source as well as the result of happiness. As a practical idealist, Gandhiji taught this one lesson to friends and followers who looked to him for guidance whether in private or public life : "We should blame no one except ourselves. That is the only way to be happy in life and remain clean" (p. 201). "If you see only the faults in yourself and only the virtues in others, you will advance fast, be happy and never experience sorrow. We have no right to expect anything from anyone" (p. 300). Meekness, however is not weakness and non-violence is not cowardice. In fact, cowardice is "violence double distilled" (p. 11). And if oppression is sin, submission to violence is no less sin (p. 73). Non-violence is the noblest virtue because it is the highest manliness.

PREFACE

Throughout the period covered by the present volume (October 21, 1946–February 20, 1947), constitutional parleys continued to be deadlocked over the question of compulsory grouping of provinces which, according to the interpretation of the Muslim League and the British Government, the Cabinet Mission's statement of May 16 stipulated. In the Congress view the Statement did not make grouping compulsory, but left it to the decision of the elected representatives of the provinces concerned sitting together in sections. If the Congress view was not acceptable the matter of interpretation could be taken to a court. Gandhiji said: "No law-giver can give an authoritative interpretation of his own law. If then there is a dispute as to its interpretation, a duly constituted court of law must decide it.... They cannot impose theirs on others" (p. 10).

With the Constituent Assembly scheduled to open on December 9, Whitehall made one more attempt to induce the Muslim League to co-operate. They invited the leaders of parties, including Nehru and Jinnah, over to London for talks. These talks however did not bear fruit and the Constituent Assembly met without the representatives of the Muslim League.

It appeared to Gandhiji that for the Constituent Assembly to meet in spite of the boycott by the Muslim League would amount to its meeting under "the visible or invisible protection of the British forces", a thing to be avoided at all cost. A few days before the meeting of the Assembly, therefore, he expressed the view that it should not meet under the State Paper of May 16 but under "some other statement which they can draw up in consultation with the Congress". He added: "It may be said that not to meet as a Constituent Assembly under these circumstances will amount to a surrender to Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah or the Muslim League. I do not mind the charge because the waiver will not be an act of weakness, it will be one of Congress strength because it would be due to the logic of facts. If we have attained a certain degree of status and strength to warrant us in convening our own Constituent Assembly irrespective of the British Government, it will be a proper thing. We will have then to seek the co-operation of the Muslim League and all the parties including the Princes, and the Constituent Assembly can meet at a favourable place even if some do not join" (pp. 184-5).

The Congress having nevertheless gone ahead with the business of the Constituent Assembly, Gandhiji in a note again cautioned the leaders: "In my opinion, it will be a grave mistake if the Constituent Assembly attempts, in the face of the boycott by the Muslim League, to frame a constitution for the whole of India. . . . the Constituent Assembly should have a right to frame a constitution of independence for all the Provinces, States and units that may be represented at the Constituent Assembly. This will be an honourable and consistent position . . ." (p. 235).

Gandhiji also saw no objection to the Congress accepting the Grouping formula "if it allows Assam and the Frontier Province to secede from the Congress for the purposes of the Constituent Assembly" (p. 235). Neither the Congress nor Gandhiji could allow considerations of political expediency to infringe the autonomy of a province. Gandhiji clearly told Bardoloi, the Assam Premier, that "if there is no clear guidance from the Congress Committee, Assam should not go into the Sections. It should lodge its protest and retire from the Constituent Assembly" (p. 228). To the Sikhs too he offered similar advice if the Congress was unable to give them an undertaking that it would not accept Grouping. "Revolt against the Congress," he said. "I have revolted several times myself" (p. 242). He asked: "Why should Assam be absorbed in Bengal against its will or the Frontier Province or the Sikhs into the Punjab and Sind? The Congress or the League, as the case may be, should make their programme and policy intrinsically attractive so as to appeal to the reason of the recalcitrant Province or Group" (p. 361).

Notwithstanding Gandhiji's advice to the contrary, the Constituent Assembly resolved to draw up for the country's future governance a constitution "wherein the territories that now comprise British India, the territories that now form the Indian States . . . as well as such other territories as are willing to be constituted into the independent sovereign India shall be a Union of them" (p. 488). This only further infuriated the League leaders who all the time were vociferously denouncing the proceedings of the Constituent Assembly as illegal, just as they refused to recognize the Interim Government, of which they formed part, as a Government in the legal sense or the Prime Minister as Prime Minister.

In the period therefore any kind of constitutional breakthrough remained as remote as ever. Events, however, had a relentless logic of their own and would not wait upon any

constitutional niceties. Two parallel, though interacting, processes were at work: on the one hand the inexorable collapse of the Imperial system and on the other the disintegration of that harmony between India's two major communities towards which enlightened national effort had been directed over the preceding fifty years.

If there had been any doubt as to British intentions with regard to the transfer of power it was dispelled when on February 20 Attlee read out in the British Parliament the statement of his Government announcing that, settlement or no settlement, they intended to relinquish authority at a date not later than June 1948. The statement came after nearly two months of drafting labours and the realization that the British just could not hold India any longer, what with Britain's global commitments, inadequacy of armed forces, demoralization in services, and so on (see *Transfer of Power*, IX, pp. 68-9). British policy in India during the period was thus largely concerned with contriving ways to secure British strategic and economic interests in the country subsequent to the transfer of political power.

India was thus poised for the leap into freedom. The question was: what kind of freedom was it going to be? Would it be the kind of freedom Gandhiji dreamed of? "Independent India," he said, "as conceived by me, will have all Indians belonging to different religions living in perfect friendship. There need be no millionaires and no paupers; all would belong to the State, for the State belonged to them" (p. 460). Omens however pointed a different way. The nearer the freedom came the sharper became the antagonisms, the fiercer the passions, the more violent and wanton the conduct of masses of people swayed by obscurantist slogans, inspired and guided by political groups avowedly communal.

The ill wind of communal rioting which had followed the inauguration of Direct Action by the Muslim League in August 1946 had now become a veritable tornado which lashed vast areas of the sub-continent. By October Noakhali and Tripura in Bengal were ravaged by well-organized gangs who went from village to village carrying murder, rape and plunder, and forcibly converting people. According to Government reports some 300 homes in Noakhali and 350 in Tripura had been burnt down and plundered. And, as if this was not enough, the storm broke with redoubled fury over Bihar, where the same story was repeated, only on a much larger scale. Gandhiji was stunned and bewildered. He saw it as a personal failure. He cut

down his intake of food, partly for reasons of health, but also because he was "tired of the body". He wrote in a letter: " . . . the cry came from within: 'Why should you be a witness to this slaughter? If your word . . . is not heeded, your work is over. Why do you not die?' . . . Do not waste time thinking of my death. Leave me in the hands of God and stop worrying" (pp. 78-9). "Has my ahimsa become bankrupt?" he asks on another occasion. "If I fail" it "will simply mean . . . that there is some fault somewhere in my technique" (p. 155).

Gandhiji decided that he could not ignore the call of Bengal, where everything he had held dear was at stake. He accordingly arrived in Calcutta on October 29 and by November 9 was set on his mission of peace in Noakhali. Here he was confronted by "darkness all around" (pp. 137, 181), by "exaggeration and falsity" and "terrible mutual distrust" (p. 138). Yet he seemed to feel that the darkness was not so much outside as inside him (pp. 182-3, 196) for his ahimsa seemed to fail in the matter of Hindu-Muslim relations (p. 183). Throughout his sojourn in East Bengal, where he trudged from village to village though "not fit enough to walk three or four miles even" and with "no conveyance . . . except country boats," (p. 177) Gandhiji remained a prey to despondency. "I don't want to die a failure," he remarked. "But it may be that I may die a failure" (p. 200). But with a grim determination he kept on, resolved to "do or die". He would leave "only when things become perfectly normal again" (p. 186), even if it meant a lifetime (p. 175). "Do or die" is thus the cry issuing out of the volume, the refrain he dinned into the ears of his small band of co-workers accompanying him, whom he soon dispersed to settle each in a different village (p. 138).

His message to the riot victims was to shed fear (pp. 131, 132-3, 181, 363), to stick to their homes and defend themselves, if possible non-violently, but anyhow defend themselves. Speaking to a group of people he said; "People must not take the offensive, but defend themselves they must, even, if necessary, with the help from the neighbouring people. None must flee and even if one is surrounded by 1,000 people, one should, if need be, die fighting" (p. 88).

Again in a letter he said: "One may react to violence by counter-violence, but that counter-violence can be either brutal or civilized and effective. What happened in Bihar was brutal and ineffective . . ." (p. 200).

He wrote to the Bihar Premier (p. 251) and the Indian Home Minister Vallabhbhai Patel (pp. 264, 432) suggesting

immediate appointment of an enquiry commission. The suggestion however was not implemented.

The situation created by the communal fury that had gripped India, just as she was about to take her place among the free nations of the world, had so shaken Gandhiji that for the first time in his half century of leadership we find him no longer sure of himself. It raised for him issues of the greatest moment. The way he saw it was that if he lived by certain values then those values should prevail. If they did not prevail then there was something wrong in him. He must re-examine his position, grapple with himself. That was one of the reasons he chose to walk alone and unaided. "Where do I stand?" he asks. "Do I represent this ahimsa in my person? If I do, then deceit and hatred that poison the atmosphere should dissolve. It is only by going into isolation . . . and standing on my own feet that I shall find my bearings and also test my faith in God" (p. 134).

Gandhiji had held that *brahmacharya*, purity of life, was the chief prerequisite for a successful pursuit of truth and he argued that if there had been failure on his part his *brahmacharya* might have been at fault. Pursuing this line of reasoning he started, towards the end of December, his great "experiment in *brahmacharya*" which consisted in his sharing his bed with Manu Gandhi, a young relative. His aspiration, as he explained at a prayer meeting, was to make himself a "eunuch of God". It was an integral part of the *yajna* he was performing (p. 420). Since he was engaged in "the supreme test of non-violence in his life, he wished to be judged before God and man by the sum total of his activities, both private and public. . . . non-violent life was an act of self-examination and self-purification . . ." (p. 423).

Gandhiji's co-workers, as was only to be expected, did not quite understand and they were upset and one after another began to give frank expression to their disapproval. Writing to Vinoba Bhave Gandhiji said: ". . . the co-workers' pain makes me lose confidence in myself. My own mind, however, is becoming firmer than ever, for it has been my belief for a long time that that alone is true *brahmacharya* which requires no hedges. My experiments arose from this belief" (p. 452). He wrote in a similar vein to others (pp. 464-5, 465-6, 475-6) trying to explain what could hardly be explained in words—his desperate, anguished striving to find a way to discover his identity; it was what Carl Jung would describe as a quest for individuation.

As Vinoba says: "Gandhiji was a great man; nevertheless, he had laid bare his mind in its fulness before the world. For his

part, he had permitted no secrecy. Even so, I must confess, the last chapter of his life, which I have called the "Swargarohan Parva", or the chapter of the "Ascent to Heaven", remains a mystery to me. Indeed, in my eyes, it stands equal to the last phase of Lord Krishna's *leela*. To unravel its mystery, it may become necessary for Gandhiji himself to be born again." (Foreword to *The Mind of Mahatma Gandhi*)

Gandhiji sensed the decline in his political authority. His views did not carry the same weight with the leaders of the nation as before. His advice about the Constituent Assembly, his advice about the withdrawal of British troops, even his suggestion that an enquiry commission be appointed to go into the happenings in Bihar and Bengal were disregarded. In a letter he exclaimed: "My voice carries no weight in the Working Committee. If I leave the scene, the soreness will go. I do not like the shape that things are taking and I cannot speak out" (p. 295). Writing to Vallabhbhai Patel he listed the various critical things that had been reported to him concerning Patel's manner of leadership and he gave the warning: "The times are very critical. If we stray from the straight and narrow path by ever so little, we are done for. The Working Committee does not function harmoniously as it should" (p. 289). In a note on the Congress he expressed his conviction "that the four-anna membership should go. The membership of the Congress should be forty crores . . ." (p. 370).

Broken down in health and not a little in spirit Gandhiji thus carried on with his message of sanity and reason, applying his healing touch to the bruised humanity of Bengal, determined to "strive and carry this issue towards light. I live or perish in the attempt. Noakhali and Tipperah are not an isolated problem but it is a problem which India must solve for herself and for humanity" (p. 483).

CWMG-C

PREFACE

This volume (February 21 to May 24, 1947) carries Gandhiji's healing mission from Noakhali to Bihar, where riots against Muslims had broken out in the last week of the preceding October as a reaction to the barbarities in Noakhali earlier in the month (*vide* Vol. LXXXVI). Gandhiji, however, was not able to pay to this new task the single-minded attention that he could to his Noakhali mission for three-and-a-half months. Events had begun to move fast in the political arena and he was twice called to Delhi for advice and guidance in the discussions which had started. On February 20, the day before this volume opens, Prime Minister Attlee had announced the intention of His Majesty's Government to withdraw British authority from India by June 1948 and the appointment of Lord Mountbatten as Viceroy in place of Field Marshal Lord Wavell to carry out the operation. The new Viceroy arrived in India on March 22 and wrote to Gandhiji on the same day inviting him to Delhi. Gandhiji met Lord Mountbatten on March 31, but in the discussions which followed he could not carry the Congress Working Committee with him in his great "act of faith" for entrusting power and responsibility to Mr. Jinnah and with their permission, therefore, he returned to his work among the people in Bihar (p. 258).

This work was much more taxing than the ordeal he underwent in Noakhali in the midst of a hostile population and cut off from the outside world. There he had been able to summon the deepest spiritual resources of his inner being and, though full of anguish at the seeming failure of his non-violence, could take joy in the "velvety earth and soft grass" of rural Bengal (p. 128). His lone tours there from village to village on foot have the sublimity of a serene faith in the reality and power of the spirit. The Bihar mission, in contrast, was an unrelieved agony and foreshadowed the cruel suffering of Gandhiji's heart in the months after August 15.

Gandhiji had expressed concern to Jawaharlal Nehru about the Bihar riots as soon as he had read about them and, in a public appeal to the people of Bihar on the day he left Calcutta for Noakhali, told them that he might have to undertake a fast if the riots did not stop. Thanks to the presence of Jawaharlal Nehru in Bihar, the situation had soon been brought under control and Gandhiji had been assured by Rajendra Prasad a

few days later that things had settled down. Trusting to that assurance, he had resisted the suggestion of Bengal's Premier H. S. Suhrawardy and other Muslim leaders that he should go to Bihar (Vol. LXXXVI, pp. 70, 78, 81-2, 137, 166, 259 and 260). But late in February Gandhiji received a report from Dr. Syed Mahmud, Bihar's Minister for Development and Transport, that the situation was indeed serious and required his personal attention. Convinced that "the happenings in Noakhali and Tipperah paled into insignificance" before "the atrocities that had been committed by the Hindus of Bihar" (p. 29), Gandhiji left his Noakhali mission incomplete and hastened to Bihar.

Arriving in Patna on March 5 Gandhiji toured many of the affected villages, saw for himself the extent of the destruction and heard from the survivors tales of the killings. Large numbers of Muslims had crowded into refugee camps, some had left for Bengal and some for Sind. A rehabilitation programme had been approved by the Cabinet, but even four months after the carnage little progress had been made in implementing the programme. The Provincial Congress Committee was ineffective or, worse still, not interested in helping to restore normalcy. It was even alleged that some Congressmen had themselves taken part in inciting the crowds, and after careful investigation Gandhiji could not say that there was no substance in the charge (pp. 59 and 118). Though like oases in the desert there were Hindus who had saved Muslims during the riots at the risk of their own lives (p. 136), the bulk of the Hindus felt no shock at what had happened and some of the guilty ones even boasted that by their action they had saved India from further Muslim aggressiveness (pp. 45-6).

The wound was all the more cruel because at places the crowds had perpetrated their barbarities with shouts of *Mahatma Gandhiki Jai* (p. 52). Day after day Gandhiji told his audiences at prayer meetings that the Hindus had committed a sin and a crime and called upon them to atone for their misdeeds. He could not bear to describe in detail how the Muslim houses in one village had been razed to the ground and Muslim women and children slaughtered (p. 82). At another village, Gandhiji was so affected by what he heard that he could not "narrate the whole story", he told the prayer meeting, "because my heart is so full that I might burst into tears if I tried to tell it" (p. 125). At a private meeting with Congress workers, Gandhiji very nearly broke down. And he declared, "I will not rest nor let others rest. I would wander all over on foot and ask the skeletons

lying about how all that had happened. There is such a fire raging in me that I would know no peace till I have found a solution for all this'' (pp. 118-9).

The Chief Minister tried to explain the Government's failure by saying that they ''were caught unprepared'', that the Governor was absent and that the Chief Secretary and the Inspector-General of Police, both Englishmen, ''had let them down'' to have ''their revenge for 1942''. But Gandhiji accepted no excuses and asked the Ministers to turn ''the searchlight inward''. They had shown lack of foresight, intelligence and courage (pp. 59-60). But it was not a failure of the Government alone, or even principally of the Government. With his strong sense of the organic unity of a people, Gandhiji held that the moral failure of any one section of the society was a failure of the whole society (pp. 44, 105 and 171). ''Every one of us'', he told a prayer meeting, ''is equally guilty of what anyone of us has done'' (p. 55). And not in Bihar only. ''We are all Indians,'' Gandhiji told another meeting, ''and an evil deed committed anywhere in India is the concern of every Indian'' (p. 77). And similarly he told a deputation of national-minded Muslims who expressed regret at the conduct of Noakhali Muslims: ''It is our sorrow that we always think in terms of mine and thine. You should realize that a wrong committed by even a child of India is a wrong committed by each one of us'' (pp. 296-7). In that spirit of common humanity Gandhiji wanted the Hindus of Noakhali to feel for the wrongs done to the Muslims of Bihar and the Muslims of Bihar to feel for the sufferings of the Noakhali Hindus (pp. 33, 69, 96 and 296). Quoting Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, Gandhiji likened Hindus and Muslims to ''the two eyes of Mother India'' and asked both to realize that just as ''the trouble in one eye afflicts the other too, similarly the whole of India suffers when either Hindus or Muslims suffer'' (p. 152).

Gandhiji devoted his prayer speeches to educating the Hindus of Bihar in this attitude of human sympathy and moral concern. ''With our overflowing love'', he told the prayer meeting on the day after his arrival in Bihar, ''we should re-assure the Muslims that the Hindus are their brothers and that there can be no difference between us'' (p. 47). He called upon the Hindus to contribute funds for the relief of Muslims and to rebuild with their own hands the dwellings which had been destroyed, clean their wells and sink new wells (p. 126). He reminded people that the old way of retaliation had led to the atom bomb, and urged them to pray that they might be

saved from that "atom bomb mentality" (p. 70). India would be able to prove herself worthy of the freedom she was about to win only if she gave to the world what was good in her and did not compete in making atom bombs (p. 45). Gandhiji was firm in his faith that the lasting cure for all violence (whether inter-religious or international) was to be found in the moral transformation of human beings rather than in any institutional arrangements. He held further that the spiritual resources to bring about this necessary and possible change were already available in the great religions of the world and that India with its tradition of tolerance and pluralism provided the most congenial soil for the active pursuit of the spiritual value of universal brotherhood. Hence his insistence on the recitation of verses from the Koran in his prayer meetings, even in those held in or near temples, and the replacement of "Sitaram" by "Rama-Rahim" and "Krishna-Karim" in a popular *bhajan*. For the benefit of those Hindus who objected to such "defilement" of holy places and sacred hymns, Gandhiji defined a Hindu as one "who is also a good Muslim and a good Parsi" (p. 184) and claimed that he himself was a Christian and a Muslim "besides of course being a Hindu" (p. 190).

Regarding the common people with the reverence which enlightened teachers pay to children for their "wholeness", Gandhiji told the Inter-Asian Relations Conference that the essence of wisdom was to be found in the humble cottages of the poor in the villages which were the "real India", that the West had distorted the religion of Jesus, and that Asia which had produced Zoroaster, Buddha, Jesus and Mohammed, could still "conquer the West through love and truth". And he added that this conquest "would be loved by the West itself" (p. 193).

While thus Gandhiji strove to preserve and present the freedom movement as a world-wide effort to spiritualize politics and public life, globally as well as locally, it was the tragedy of our times that others were bent on "politicizing religion" and using it for narrow, selfish ends. Hence, Gandhiji's fervent appeals in the name of the common humanity of Hindus and Muslims and the true ideals of Islam, evoked no response from Mr. Jinnah and other League leaders. It is true that Mr. Jinnah did agree, under pressure from Lord Mountbatten, to sign a peace appeal denouncing "the use of force to achieve political ends", but only on condition that Gandhiji alone, and no other Congress leader, should sign it with him (pp. 261 and 277). Even this appeal was for Mr. Jinnah a political agreement, or in the Viceroy's words a "truce" (p. 548), to be observed condi-

tionally on others observing it. The argument that it was unjust, inhuman and insane to retaliate against a wrong done by one community at one place by victimizing innocent members of that community elsewhere, found no echo in Mr. Jinnah's utterances. He made no serious attempt to see that the appeal he had formally signed was honoured by his followers. Gandhiji's pleas for more energetic action by him (pp. 247, 395, 400, 444 and 458) elicited from him nothing more than an assurance that "he would do his best" (pp. 437 and 550). Gandhiji pitted the whole strength of his body and soul to check the irrational forces at work among the Hindus and to "cleanse the dirt and brighten the image of Hinduism" (p. 56). Mr. Jinnah showed no inclination to restrain the passions aroused by years of propaganda that Islam was in danger.

Gandhiji hoped that Mr. Jinnah could be won over by a gesture of goodwill and taught the limits of power by being entrusted with responsibility. He, therefore, suggested to Lord Mountbatten that Mr. Jinnah should be given the option of forming a central government of his own choice to replace the Interim Government headed by Jawaharlal Nehru, assuring the co-operation of the Congress provided Jinnah agreed to work for the interests of the country as a whole and the new government under him did their utmost to preserve peace in the country (pp. 199-200). This bold suggestion could not be pursued as the members of the Congress Working Committee were not prepared for such an act of faith. Gandhiji withdrew from the discussions and asked for the Viceroy's permission to return to Bihar (p. 254). Writing to Vallabhbhai Patel he asked whether "keeping only the good of the country in view" it would be advisable for him "to meet the Viceroy even as an individual" (p. 271). Gandhiji again went to Delhi in the first week of May in response to a pressing request by Jawaharlal Nehru, but there was nothing he could do to prevent partition which now appeared inevitable.

Gandhiji was as much against compulsion as against violence. "He was as much against forced partition as against forced unity." But it was for the people "with a pure heart" to decide, not for the so-called leaders. If the people really and sincerely wished for anything, "God, being a servant of His servants, would Himself carry out that will" (p. 30). Gandhiji's life-long mission was to educate people and teach them self-reliance for self-rule. If the people were ignorant they would be exploited. When the people realized their strength and the fact that the bottom sustained the top, it would be well with them (p. 466).

Trusting the inarticulate wisdom and inherent strength of the common people, Gandhiji hoped to "educate" leaders by entrusting them with responsibility and letting them learn by listening and responding to the people.

His understanding of the working of moral forces in human affairs made Gandhiji feel that the communal violence which was spreading in the country was the result of the violence which had crept into the freedom struggle. He told Rajendra Prasad and others: " . . . what we regarded as non-violent fight was not really so. Otherwise the dragon of communalism would not have raised its head amongst us . . ." (p. 406). Gandhiji was more forthright with the Socialist leaders Aruna Asaf Ali and Ashok Mehta: " . . . if the Bihar masses had not had the lesson which they had at your hands in 1942, the excesses which Bihar witnessed last year would never have occurred. . . . Once the evil spirit of violence is unleashed, by its inherent nature it cannot be checked or even kept within any prescribed limits. All violence inevitably tends to run to excess." Gandhiji therefore pitted all the power of his soul against violence and staked his very life to put out the flames. If, he told them, in the course of his mission of peace "death comes, I shall welcome it" (p. 424). Gandhiji not only wished for such a death, he was daily growing more convinced "that God will bless me with a death befitting a non-violent person" (p. 408).

It was in order to make himself a worthy medium for the manifestation of perfect non-violence that Gandhiji had undertaken the *brahmacharya* experiment which had invited so much criticism from some of his valued co-workers. For him it was a *yajna*, a spiritual discipline for complete purification of self (p. 14) and he thought that it had brought him nearer to God and Truth (p. 384).

Gandhiji agreed with modern thinkers like Havelock Ellis and Bertrand Russell in refusing to look to institutions and usages for safeguarding moral purity (p. 90). But he had not become modern in the sense of disbelieving the moral and spiritual value of self-control in matters of sex. So far from believing in permissiveness, he aimed at total eradication of body-consciousness and sex-feeling and was in this sense "as ancient as can be imagined" (p. 103).

Even amid the darkening gloom Gandhiji's faith in human goodness and the power of joy stood unshaken. To his Quaker friend, Horace Alexander, who had fallen ill in Delhi, he wrote: "I must make a desperate effort to see you in your bed and make you laugh" (p. 397).

PREFACE

The present volume (covering the period May 25 to July 31, 1947) marks the final break with the Cabinet Mission's scheme and whatever chance it offered of keeping the country whole, and the inauguration and working out of what came to be described as the Mountbatten Plan, with its mixed blessings of freedom, partition and bloody turmoil unparalleled in India's history.

Except for a short visit to Hardwar, Gandhiji spent this period in Delhi after his return from his pacification mission in riot-torn Calcutta and Bihar. At the end of July he left for Kashmir, where the Maharaja had been giving a hard time to Sheikh Abdulla and his National Conference (p. 54).

The Mountbatten Plan, though formally announced on June 3, had been in substance before the Indian leadership since early May. On the Congress side there had been distress at the frankly communal approach envisaged, also misgivings about the future, but at the same time there had been the realization that, given the situation in the country, it was perhaps the only way out. So, with a sigh, they had given their approval to the principles underlying it. But Gandhiji had not been reconciled. Even as late as May 26 he was imploring: "I would therefore urge every patriot and certainly the British Power, irrespective of the worst kind of violence, to leave India under the Cabinet Mission's document of the 16th May of last year. In the presence of the British Power today we are only demoralized by the orgy of bloodshed, wanton killings, arson and worse" (p. 13). And on May 27: "The very idea of partitioning the country is frightening. Our concern today should be to bring about an agreement in a peaceful manner to ensure that the country is not partitioned and still the British leave" (p. 14). Then on May 29, writing to Kripalani he said: "If you think that the Congress should accept the two-nation theory, it is a very serious matter" (p. 32). And at the prayer meeting in the evening of the same hay he was even more outspoken: "It will be an act of betrayal if they (the British) do not stand by the proposals of the Cabinet Mission. . . . The Constituent Assembly is sitting in terms of the May 16 paper. . . . I do not take the cables from London seriously. I must cling to the hope that Britain will not depart by a hair's breadth from the letter and the spirit of the Cabinet Mission's statement of May 16 . . ." (p. 39).

He even suggested, as a transitional arrangement, that power could be handed over either to the League or to the Congress, but the Congress Working Committee rejected this suggestion. Gandhiji would not mind a free and friendly decision by the Indian leaders for separation after British withdrawal. Once the British Power was withdrawn, he hoped, "we would have the wisdom to think coherently and keep India one or split it into two or more parts" (p. 13). It was a dispute between brothers and partition should take place, if at all, "through mutual agreement" without third party intervention (p. 14). Moreover, it would be fatal cowardice to yield to the violence of the League and accept Pakistan under "threat and intimidation" (p. 39). Refusing to be cowed down by violence, he said, they should "tell the turbulent elements in the country firmly and boldly that there can be no departure from the document of May 16 until they stop the sanguinary strife" (p. 39).

It soon became apparent not only that the May 16 scheme was dead but that the Congress leadership had watched the burial. The Working Committee had been persuaded that the only way out of the impasse was for them to accept the inevitability of the partition of the country along communal lines. In a talk with Manu, Gandhiji gave vent to his agony: "[Even the Sardar and Jawaharlal] think that my reading of the situation is wrong . . . They did not like my telling the Viceroy that even if there was to be partition, it should not be through British intervention . . . They wonder if I have not deteriorated with age" (p. 50). Gandhiji foresaw the heavy price that would have to be paid. He said: "I see clearly that we are setting about this business the wrong way. We may not feel the full effect immediately, but I can see clearly that the future of independence gained at this price is going to be dark. I pray that God may not keep me alive to witness it" (p. 51). He continued: "I shall perhaps not be alive to witness it, but should the evil I apprehend overtake India and her independence be imperilled, let posterity know what agony this old man went through thinking of it. Let not the coming generations curse Gandhi for being a party to India's vivisection" (p. 52).

Page after page of the volume documents this wide divergence of views on the most momentous political questions between Gandhiji on the one hand and the Congress leadership on the other. This had become so marked that at one stage Gandhiji felt constrained to write to Nehru : "The more I contemplate the differences of outlook and opinion between the members of the

W. C. and me, I feel that my presence is unnecessary even if it is not detrimental to the cause we all have at heart'' (p. 113).

But Gandhiji would not oppose the leadership. Though deeply distressed over the impending tragedy, he had no desire to launch a struggle against what now looked like an accomplished fact (p. 63). And once the Congress Working Committee had accepted the June 3 Plan Gandhiji defended it in public and advised the A. I. C. C. to endorse it (pp. 73, 75, 84-5, 97-8, 118, 153-7). He sensed that the country was not with him but with the C. W. C. He felt that he and the Congress lacked the strength to resist partition non-violently. Above all, his loyalty to the Congress and his friendship for Nehru and Patel prevented an open breach with them (pp. 66, 150, 342, 394, 446). As he put it : ". . . If I rebel against the Congress, it will mean that I am rebelling against the whole country . . . '' (p. 85). Again : "When I said that the country should not be divided I was confident that I had the support of the masses. But when the popular view is contrary to mine, should I force my own view on the people? . . . the general opinion is not with me, and so I must step aside and stay back'' (p. 118).

Therefore, though Mountbatten never really succeeded in selling him the partition scheme, Gandhiji tacitly acquiesced and made available equally to the leaders and to the Viceroy his counsel and co-operation in working the scheme. His chief concern throughout was to see steps taken that would help diffuse the mounting tension between Hindus and Muslims in the most sensitive areas and to have issues settled through negotiation rather than confrontation.

This is illustrated by Gandhiji's approach to the problem of N. W. F. P., where the Muslim League's agitation against the Congress ministry led by Dr. Khan Saheb had assumed the character of widespread communal rioting and where a referendum had been contemplated under the Mountbatten Plan to determine which of the two Constituent Assemblies the province would join. Gandhiji first proposed that the Viceroy should prevail upon Jinnah to visit the province and talk things over with the Government leaders there and present to them his picture of Pakistan so as to help them make up their minds (pp. 88-9, 126-7), and in the event of Jinnah not co-operating—which of course he did not —he further proposed that the Frontier ministry should resign in protest against the contemplated referendum (pp. 94-5) and that the Pathans should refrain from participating in it (pp. 276 -7). It need hardly be mentioned that the Congress leadership entirely disagreed with the steps proposed (pp. 483-5).

Gandhiji had been as much opposed to the partition of provinces as to that of India as a whole, but when in Bengal it became apparent that the M. L. A.s representing the non-Muslim minority areas would vote for the division of the province, Gandhiji lent his full support to the step. He said: "The people . . . have the right to act as they desire. My individual opinion cannot thwart the opinion of many" (p. 109). Therefore when Sarat Bose, with the support and connivance of some Muslim League leaders worked out a scheme for a United Socialist Bengal and started lobbying for it, Gandhiji took him severely to task. At a prayer meeting he said : "Who would not be happy if Bengal was spared partition and could remain one undivided whole? But I cannot join hands with anyone who talks of preserving unity through falsehood, fraud and bribery" (p. 123). He was equally outspoken in writing to Bose and sternly told him to "cease to disturb the atmosphere that has been created for the partition of Bengal" (p. 103).

Even more upsetting than the partition of the country was the division of the army which Gandhiji deplored as a "terrible mistake" and potentially the most dangerous part of the plan (pp. 287, 297, 335, 341). While accepting, however reluctantly, the political division of the sub-continent into two "states", he refused to consider the people of India and Pakistan as two "nations". He feared and expressed the fear that the British were leaving a "legacy of war" and even "reproved" Lord Mountbatten for using the word "nations" instead of "States or Countries" (pp. 489-90). In speeches and letters he persistently preached the lesson that geographical division should not mean "sundering of hearts". If Britain and India could remain friends, why not Pakistan and India? (pp. 125, 130, 163, 204). He appealed in particular to the Hindus in India to disprove the "two-nation" theory by themselves practising "the generosity of true Hinduism" (p. 155). He reminded the Hindus that the minorities should enjoy perfect freedom and equality in the Indian Union, as he "who makes slaves of others himself becomes a slave" (p. 425). By respecting the religious sentiments of others Hindus would exalt and ennoble Hinduism (pp. 285-6). In any case he expected and exhorted Hindus to be both courageous and self-restrained and never to answer with violence against Muslims the violence practised by Muslims somewhere else (pp. 37-8, 145, 215).

The old order was thus decisively changing, yielding place to the new, but the old problems remained and were even aggravated: chronic poverty, shortages, economic disparity and conse-

quent social tensions and scramble for loaves and fishes. Gandhiji addressed himself to these too. Writing in *Harijan* he said : "As far as the economic question is concerned it has to be solved in any case. . . . There can be no *Ramarajya* in the present state of iniquitous inequalities in which a few roll in riches and the masses do not get even enough to eat" (p. 2).

Disregarding the political division and communal differences people should bend their energies, he said, to build a better India by discharging the duties pertaining to their station. This appeal was made to businessmen (pp. 55-6); to doctors, engineers and scientists (p. 62), to Government servants (pp. 67-8) and to students (pp. 77-8).

Communists and socialists were regarded by Gandhiji as co-workers rather than as enemies, as "one could not clap with one hand". Hence he took every opportunity of explaining to them his ideal of a socialist order based on truth and non-violence to be established by personal example rather than propaganda (pp. 14-8, 96-7, 107, 262, 283, 324).

With similar wisdom Gandhiji advocated the utilization of the talents and experience of non-Congressmen and deprecated the tendency of Congressmen to regard others as lacking in the spirit of patriotism (pp. 72, 235, 347).

The change of mood from active participation to detached observation is clearly seen and cheerfully accepted by Gandhiji. He tells Rajagopalachari : "I see no place for myself in what is happening around us today" (p. 4). He writes to an Ashram inmate : " All of you . . . should arrange your lives as if I was no longer in your midst" (p. 10).

The "witness" would not shut his eyes or withdraw from the scene, however terrible. He tells Manu, " . . . I am experiencing an ineffable inner joy and freshness of mind. I feel as if God himself was lighting my path before me . . . the Himalayas of my penance are where there is misery to be alleviated, oppression to be relieved. There can be no rest for me so long as there is a single person in India . . . lacking . . . clothing, education, food and shelter of a decent standard" (p. 51). In this time of trial, he sees it as a sign of God's grace that he keeps his physical strength, maintains his serenity in the midst of daily shocks and turmoil and remains happy and cheerful (p. 121).

Unable to convince even close friends that "love alone can prevail against anger", he concludes : "God is humbling my pride. I am being severely tested. But still my heart is full of joy" (p. 259). That he was steadily preparing himself for the severest test of all and that this apparently "spent bullet" had

one more message to deliver is clear from his words to some visitors : "I shall be content if, when someone comes to kill me, I can remain composed, let myself be killed and pray to God that He may grant good sense to the killer . . . " (p. 357).

But sorrow remains the keynote of the volume, so much so that Gandhiji refused to celebrate the freedom to come on August 15. He said: "Unfortunately the kind of freedom we have got today contains also the seeds of future conflict between India and Pakistan. How can we therefore light the lamps?" (p. 380).

In this period Gandhiji also suffered a bereavement in the death of Chakrayya, a Harijan worker. Said he : "I feel like crying over his death; but I cannot cry. For whom should I cry and for whom should I refrain from crying? If Mother India should have any children they should be, as Tulsidas has said, either generous or brave. Chakrayya was generous . . . He was also brave because he welcomed death" (p. 47).

CWMG - C

PREFACE

In the period covered by this volume (August 1 to November 10, 1947) the triumph of the Transfer of Power is overshadowed by the tragedy of Partition. The "waters of the ocean catch fire" and we see Gandhiji trying to quench with his tears the spreading flames and incurring the wrath of those who loved his mother-religion not wisely but too well.

On August 15, the country became free, the non-violent struggle against foreign rule ending in the conversion of an Empire into a Commonwealth. The historic event, however, was disfigured by barbarous outbreaks of communal violence provoked and sustained by the prolonged "hymn of hate" (p. 330), which accompanied the campaign for a separate state for the Muslims. Gandhiji pitted his whole soul against this madness and tried to calm the angry passions on both sides. In Calcutta the "One-man Boundary Force" (as Lord Mountbatten hailed him) stopped the rioting, while 55 thousand soldiers failed to do so in the Punjab (p. 116). The local miracle was completed by a fast which extinguished the fire in Bengal. It could not, however, be repeated in Delhi; it needed the martyrdom five months later to cure the country's madness once for all.

The volume opens on a hopeful note. Disagreeing with a correspondent's suggestion that he was being "buried alive", Gandhiji pointed out that even the members of the Muslim League had started saying, "we are all brothers" (p. 1), that the masses had not lost faith in his ideals and that he would be "alive in the grave and . . . speaking from it" (p. 16).

Gandhiji's faith in the people seemed to be vindicated in Calcutta, where he reached on August 9 on his way to Noakhali to resume his peace mission there, intending afterwards to go to Bihar. Here he found the Muslims "living in terror". The memory of the "great Calcutta killing" of August 16, 1946, provoked by the Muslim League's observance of "Direct Action Day" (*vide* Vol. LXXXV), was rankling in the people's minds and the Hindus, it was reported to Gandhiji, had started threatening revenge (pp. 19-20). The Secretary of the Calcutta District Muslim League waited on Gandhiji on August 10 and "entreated" him "to stay on in Calcutta even if it were only for two more days". Gandhiji agreed, on condition that they guaranteed the peace of Noakhali, warning them that if things went wrong there

on the 15th they would have to face a fast unto death by him. The Muslim leaders accepted the condition (p. 21). Appealing for sanity in his prayer speech on the 11th, he said: "... we must unlearn the habit of retaliation in every shape and form", not merely in action but, more importantly, in thought (p. 27).

Late in the evening the same day the former Muslim League Premier of Bengal, H. S. Suhrawardy, came with the Muslim League leader and requested Gandhiji to prolong his stay in Calcutta indefinitely till peace was firmly restored in the city. Gandhiji replied: "I would remain if you and I are prepared to live together.... We shall have to work till every Hindu and Mussalman in Calcutta safely returns to the place where he was before. We shall continue in our effort till our last breath." He asked Suhrawardy to think carefully before accepting the offer, for this would mean "that the old Suhrawardy" would "die" and become a fakir (p. 28). Suhrawardy accepted the offer, and on the 13th evening the two moved for joint residence to an old abandoned house in the predominantly Muslim locality of Beliaghata. Gandhiji wrote to his trusted co-worker, Satis Chandra Das Gupta: "I have taken many risks, perhaps this is the greatest of all" (p. 40).

The Hindus were in an aggressive mood, for Suhrawardy was believed to have been responsible for the killing on August 16, 1946. Facing an angry demonstration on the very first day of their arrival at the place, Gandhiji reasoned with the leaders: "... I have come here to serve not only Muslims but Hindus, Muslims and all alike.... I am going to put myself under your protection. You are welcome to turn against me ..." (p. 33). Their reply was: "We do not want your sermons on ahimsa. You go away from here." But Gandhiji persisted in the non-violent confrontation. "You can obstruct my work, even kill me. I won't invoke the help of the police.... what is the use of your dubbing me an enemy of the Hindus? ... how can I, who am a Hindu by birth, a Hindu by creed and a Hindu of Hindus in my way of living, be an 'enemy' of Hindus?" (p. 34). The opposition was softened somewhat, but not quite. It was overcome the next day, on the 14th evening, only when Suhrawardy openly admitted his responsibility for the previous year's killing on August 16. The admission, Gandhiji said afterwards, "was the turning-point. It had a cleansing effect" ... (p. 43).

And so on the 15th, Gandhiji celebrated the coming of freedom with prayer and fasting and spinning. Calcutta threw

itself into a delirium of joy, "Hindus and Muslims meeting together in perfect friendliness" and "Hindus . . . admitted to mosques and Muslims . . . to the Hindu *mandirs*" and exuberant cries of 'Long Live Hindustan and Pakistan' "from the joint throats of the Hindus and the Muslims". Gandhiji claimed no credit for this miracle. "This sudden upheaval is not the work of one or two men. We are toys in the hands of God. He makes us dance to His tune. . . . in this miracle He has used us two as His instruments and . . . I only ask whether the dream of my youth is to be realized in the evening of my life" (pp. 47 and 48-9).

There was encouraging news from West Pakistan, too. Jinnah was reported to have said that "there was no longer any quarrel" between Hindus and Muslims. C. Rajagopalachari had confirmed the information (p. 52). Regardless of Pakistan's policy, Gandhiji urged the Hindus in India to be just to Muslims at all cost. "The proper thing," he said, "was for each majority to do their duty in all humility, irrespective of what the other majority did in the other State" (p. 61). Gandhiji wrote in *Harijan*, ". . . the Indian Union and Pakistan belong equally to all who call themselves and are, sons of the soil, irrespective of their creed or colour" (p. 73). Gandhiji pleaded with the Press: "Let the past be buried. Do not rake it up. Think of the future" (p. 67).

Gandhiji wished India "to assure liberty of religious profession to every single individual". This was the one great achievement of ancient India. It had "recognized cultural democracy", holding that "the roads to God were many, but the goal was one, because God was one and the same. . . . the roads were as many as there were individuals in the world" (p. 57). In other words, religion was " a personal matter" and should be confined to " the personal plane" (p. 79).

The atmosphere was too vitiated, however, for such wise and humane counsels to prevail. Gandhiji sensed the continued tension in the air. "Though there is rejoicing," he wrote to Amrit Kaur on August 16, "somehow or other, there is disturbance within. Is there something wrong with me? Or are things really going wrong?" (p. 50) He shared his doubts with Vallabhbhai also: "I am reminded of the days of the Khilafat. But what if this is just a momentary enthusiasm?" (p. 55).

Before two weeks were over, Gandhiji's fears proved true. While Calcutta and Bengal were returning to peace, trouble started in the Punjab and the waves of the passions it aroused reached Calcutta through the Punjabi population there. And on the last day of the month, even as Gandhiji, believing that things had

settled down in Calcutta, was preparing to leave for Noakhali on September 2, an excited crowd of Hindu youths invaded Hydari Mansion where Gandhiji was staying, threatening the inmates. The next day there were reports of conflagrations in several parts of the city. Gandhiji began a fast "to end only if and when sanity returns to Calcutta" (p. 132).

As usual, co-workers remonstrated against the decision. "Can you fast against the goondas?" asked C. Rajagopalachari.

Gandhiji replied: "It is we who make goondas. Without our sympathy and passive support, the goondas would have no legs to stand upon. I want to touch the hearts of those who are behind the goondas" (p. 132). Anticipating criticism from Vallabhbhai Patel, he wrote : "If the riots continue what will I do by merely being alive? What is the use of my living? If I lack even the power to pacify the people, what else is left for me to do?" (p.134).

The fast had the intended effect. Sarat Chandra Bose, leader of the Forward Bloc, called on Gandhiji on September 2 and promised to do his "best on your lines for the establishment of peace" (p. 139). Syama Prasad Mookerjee, the Hindu Mahasabha leader, gave the assurance that the Mahasabha's National Guards would patrol the streets along with the Muslim National Guards (p. 140). A prominent member of the Bengal Muslim League "with tears in his eyes" assured Gandhiji that "no Muslim in this area will again disturb the peace". The leaven had begun to work (p. 142). A group controlling the turbulent elements in Calcutta met Gandhiji on September 4 and told him that the ring-leaders would all surrender themselves to him (p. 150). One of them confessed responsibility for the disturbance in Gandhiji's camp on September 1, and agreed to "gladly submit to whatever penalty" Gandhiji might impose (p. 151). In the evening a deputation of prominent citizens representing all the communities met Gandhiji and signed a pledge promising that they would "never again allow communal strife in the city" and would "strive unto death to prevent it" (p. 153). Thus peace returned to the city. Gandhiji broke the fast at 9.15 p.m. The following morning a stream of young men brought some country-made arms and surrendered them to Gandhiji. A peace corps was formed, to whom Gandhiji gave his well-known message "My life is my message" (p. 156).

Freed thus from anxiety on account of Calcutta, Gandhiji left for Delhi on the 7th and, on the 9th, issued a Press statement: " 'Man proposes, God disposes' . . . I knew nothing about

the sad state of things in Delhi when I left Calcutta . . . I have been listening the whole day long to the tale of woe that is Delhi today. . . I heard enough to warn me that I must not leave Delhi for the Punjab until it had regained its former self" (p. 166).

Gandhiji had arrived too late. Jawaharlal Nehru had written to him on August 21 that the Punjab needed his "healing presence", but did not press him to go immediately (p. 75). Gandhiji wrote to him, again and again asking, "When do you think I should go . . . if at all?" (p. 83). But Nehru could not make up his mind. Well aware of the serious situation there, he did not perhaps want Gandhiji to expose himself to danger. Receiving no positive response from Nehru, Gandhiji decided to leave for Noakhali on September 2, accompanied by Suhrawardy. But that resolve, too, "collapsed" after the events of August 31 and September 1 (p. 124). The next day, on September 2, came Nehru's wire, "I feel sure now that you should come to Punjab as early as possible" (p. 134). But meanwhile Gandhiji's fast had commenced and he could leave only on September 7. Arriving in Delhi, "which always appeared gay", he now found it "a city of the dead" (p. 167).

The plague had spread from the Punjab where men had simply gone insane with hatred and indulged in large-scale killing, looting and arson, Muslim against Hindu and Sikh and *vice versa.* The glorious land that was India had become a cremation-ground (p. 243). Gandhiji prayed to God to take him away and spare him from being a helpless witness of the senseless destruction (pp. 182, 197, 209, 213, 271, 275, 286 and 469).

However, Gandhiji did not yield to the weakness of despair. "I am surrounded by fire on all sides," he wrote to a correspondent, "and yet I am not consumed by it. This is so only because of Ramanama. I derive profound peace from it" (p. 484). This peace survived even disappointment caused by differences among political co-workers and lapses of Ashram inmates. He continued to live in spite of them because he looked upon life "as a particle of God" and took "care of it as His gift" (p. 465), to be spent in the service of His creation.

With this faith in God and man, Gandhiji reached out to the hearts of the people, Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs, to awaken the truth of life in them. He put the blame for the tragedy first on the Hindus and Sikhs who ought to have been "men enough to stem the tide of hatred?" (p. 188). Not that he lacked sympathy for the sufferers. "I have seen the terrible plight of the Hindus and Sikhs of Pakistan. . . . Do you think I am not pained?

. . . I would say that his brother is my brother, his mother is my mother, and I have the same anguish in my heart as he has.'' But the way of revenge was not the human way. The right response was to make the wrongdoers ''feel repentant for their crimes'' (p. 174).

If the Muslims had lost their humanity, that was no reason why the Hindus and Sikhs also should lose theirs. ''It seems to me,'' he told a prayer meeting, ''that we have all become savages. Both Hindus and Muslims have turned savage'' (p. 261). ''What is going on is not Sikhism, nor Islam nor Hinduism,'' Gandhiji told those who thought they were fighting to save their religions (p. 245). ''No one can destroy Hinduism. If it is destroyed, it would be at our own hands. Similarly if Islam is destroyed in India, it would be at the hands of Muslims living in Pakistan. It cannot be destroyed by Hindus'' (p. 247).

Addressing a rally of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, Gandhiji praised their ''discipline, complete absence of untouchability and rigorous simplicity'', but added that ''if the Hindus felt that in India there was no place for anyone else except the Hindus and if non-Hindus, especially Muslims, wished to live here, they had to live as the slaves of the Hindus, they would kill Hinduism'' (p. 193).

At the same time, Gandhiji advised the Muslims to show by their behaviour that they were loyal citizens of the country. They should surrender their arms and admit that ''they had wished to . . . turn the whole of India into Pakistan'' but had now realized their error (pp. 186-7). And they should shed their exclusiveness. ''If you desire complete protection for Muslims,'' he told U. P. Muslim League members, '' . . . you should show sympathy towards the Hindus who have come from Pakistan. You should serve them in their camps and convince them that you are their brothers'' (p. 512). Gandhiji complained, both publicly and in private to Lord Mountbatten, that even Jinnah had failed in this regard. In trying to reach the hearts of Muslims, Gandhiji had to contend against the prejudice of the Muslim masses who had been taught to regard him as an enemy of Islam. On the other hand, because of his efforts to befriend the Muslims, the Hindus were furious with him. ''I shall not be surprised,'' he said, ''if one day I fall a prey to this fury'' (p. 384).

Gandhiji acknowledged that Pakistan's High Commissioner in Delhi was ''an enthusiastic believer in communal peace and friendship'' (p. 172). Suhrawardy, who had gone, at Gandhiji's

suggestion, on a peace mission to Jinnah, reported that the Pakistan Government had become unpopular with the masses because of its policy towards the Hindus and Sikhs (p. 307). But some of the public utterances of the Pakistan leaders had created deep distrust among the Hindus and Sikhs. Gandhiji blamed Jinnah primarily for this. The mischief, he told Suhrawardy, "commenced with Qaid-e-Azam, and still continues" (p. 418).

The distrust was aggravated by the problem of the accession of the three States, Hyderabad, Junagadh and Kashmir. Gandhiji and the Government of India held that it should be decided by the wishes of the people in each case (p. 414). When Junagadh went to India by popular action, Pakistan allowed Frontier tribesmen to invade Kashmir and force the hands of its ruler to join Pakistan. But the action had the opposite effect of uniting the people of the State, under their leader Sheikh Abdullah, who preferred accession to India. Gandhiji commended the Sheikh's nationalism: "If this is the attitude of the Sheikh and if he has influence on the Muslims, all is well with us. The poison which has spread amongst us should never have spread. Through Kashmir that poison might be removed from us" (p. 434).

The Hindu-Muslim conflict was not the only problem, though it was the most difficult one, that demanded Gandhiji's attention. About shortages of food and cloth he suggested decontrol in order to let the people learn "self-help and self-reliance" and self-discipline (pp. 294-5, 353 and 468). He advised self-help to the refugees, too, for maintaining cleanliness in the camps and overcoming their hardships (pp. 184, 332 and 503). He also outlined a code of conduct for Governors (pp. 17-8 and 53-4). But Gandhiji was content with offering advice and refused to dictate or to choose his own men to run the Government. "Government of the people, by the people and for the people", he told a correspondent, "cannot be conducted at the bidding of one man" (p. 145).

Realizing the differences of approach between Jawaharlal Nehru and Vallabhbhai Patel, Gandhiji even suggested that either the one or the other should assume sole charge and drop the other from the Cabinet (p. 520).

To critics who advised Gandhiji to retire from politics, his consistent answer was: " . . . the life of the millions is my politics from which I dare not free myself without denying my life work and God" (p. 13), and "My life-line is cast in active public service. . . . destined to continue till the last breath. . . ." (p. 216). The guiding principle of that service was summed up in

the talisman Gandhiji gave to a co-worker. "Recall the face of the poorest and the weakest man whom you may have seen, and ask yourself if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him. . . . will it lead to swaraj for the hungry and spiritually starving millions?" (p. 125).

CWMG - C

PREFACE

This volume covers the last eighty-one days of Gandhiji's life, from November 11, 1947 to January 30, 1948, the fateful Friday, when martyrdom mercifully ended his prolonged agony as he witnessed the fires of hatred burning fierce on both sides of the country's new Western border. In fulfilment of his vow to "do or die", to establish peace in Delhi or perish in the attempt, he undertook on January 13 a fast which did have a cleansing effect on most people in both countries, but which roused the resentment of a few fanatics who promptly put out the light that hurt their eyes. Then the whole world passed through a moment of hushed silence, the "calm of mind, all passion spent", which follows any profound aesthetic experience. This perfect end to a life which was a perfect poem, composed of deeds, not words, lifted the protagonist from Indian history to world mythology where human imagination (in Coleridge's phrase) repeats in time and space "the eternal act of creation in the Infinite I AM". The *Kavi* and the *Kapi* merged; the Mahatma became Hanuman, the servant through Time of the Eternal Master.

The volume indeed reads like the last act of a Greek tragedy, with Gandhiji playing the double role of hero and chorus, the bird that eats the fruit and the bird that looks on, till the President of the Immortals pulls some string and stills the moving music into synchronic silence.

In a convocation address on December 13, 1947 Nehru said: "Freedom came to us, our long-sought freedom, with a minimum of violence. But immediately afterwards we had to wade through oceans of blood and tears . . . Horror piled on horror and a sudden emptiness seized us. . . . The lights seemed to go out. But one bright flame continued to burn and shed its light on the surrounding gloom. And looking at that bright, pure flame, strength and hope returned to us . . . There was the Spirit of India, strong and unsullied, rising above the turmoil of the present . . . during the past four months, in a dissolving world, he has been like a rock of purpose and a lighthouse of truth".

The volume opens with Gandhiji's speeches on Diwali, the festival of lights, symbolizing the triumph of good over evil. Using the myth for interiorizing the historical situation and its moral imperative, Gandhiji reminds his hearers that all men, even Rama and Ravana, are brothers, that Rama is the light

divine within each human heart and Ravana the darkness which is but deliberate denial or forgetfulness of that light. It is within each human heart that the great war between good and evil is being perpetually waged. The paramount need, then, was to keep alive "the light of love within". The Diwali festival would be celebrated in truth only when all the Muslims who had fled in fear were brought back (pp. 18-9).

While humbly admitting his failure to understand the working of ahimsa (pp. 2-3 and 34), Gandhiji never lost his faith in God and in the power of His Name, which gave him a peace transcending his mental agony. This faith sustained his strength as he struggled with patience beyond measure to save India's humanity (pp. 37, 82, 101 and 273). In prayer speeches and in talks with visitors and with refugees in their camps, he urged Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims alike to shed anger and hatred, reminding them of the common human proneness to "commit mistakes" and also of the need and the ability "to forgive and forget" (p. 52). Admitting that the Muslim League started the mischief long before August 15, 1947 and that Pakistan's sins were "terrible enough", he told the Hindus and Sikhs that by copying the sin they had become "fellow-sinners" (pp. 99 and 123) and that confession of one's guilt "purifies and uplifts" (p. 228). He spoke again and again of reported atrocities against Muslims in Jammu, Junagadh and elsewhere, even at the risk of his remarks being exploited in Pakistan (pp. 115, 117-9, 140-3 and 169).

With Indian Muslims he was gentler but not less frank. He wanted them to acknowledge their part in bringing about the tragedy and to atone for it. He told them, "I shall never advise you to go away from here. . . . you should stay, for India is your home. And if your brethren should kill you, you should bravely meet death" (p. 154).

In Calcutta where Suhrawardy had shown such heroic courage and faced the angry Hindus, a miracle had been possible. But in Delhi there was no responsible Muslim who could approach the Hindus "if only to die"; even the nationalist Muslims had "lost this strength" (pp. 23-4). Nevertheless he looked forward to the day when "all those who had been driven away from their hearths and homes would return . . . and resume their avocations in perfect security and peace as before" (p. 262). That Hindus and Muslims could not co-exist was a "poisonous doctrine" which he pledged himself to resist and to do or die in the attempt (p. 222).

Gandhiji had to do some plain speaking in the Congress Working Committee and the A. I. C. C. which represented "the vast

ocean of Indian humanity'' (p. 38). He told them, ''The Muslim League indeed is culpable, but not every Muslim. . . . it is your prime duty to treat Muslims as your brothers, whatever may happen in Pakistan'' (p. 41). The All-India Congress Committee did pass a resolution urging that ''every effort should be made to enable the evacuees and refugees from either Dominion ultimately to return to their homes and to their original occupations under conditions of safety and security'' (pp. 538-9). But its implementation required reciprocity and this was not forthcoming from Pakistan.

Far from responding to this gesture of friendship, Pakistan made mutual reconciliation impossible by its cynically one-sided approach to the problem of the princely States. In Junagadh it readily accepted the Muslim ruler's accession without reference to the will of the people (most of whom were Hindus), but it objected to Kashmir's accession to India, though it was on the advice of Sheikh Abdullah and subject to confirmation by the people. The Maharaja's decision was precipitated by the invasion of the State by tribesmen, permitted, if not incited, by Pakistan's rulers and later actively supported by its army. The conflicts over the two States destroyed whatever chances there might have been for a wise and humane solution of the refugees problem.

For Gandhiji and the Government of India, accession was a matter to be decided by the will of the people. Even so, Gandhiji was not at all happy over his nephew Shamaldas Gandhi's role in frightening away ''the poor little ruler of Junagadh'' to Karachi instead of winning him over through love (pp. 101-2).

In Kashmir, Gandhiji would have preferred non-violent mass resistance to the Afridis, but in the absence of such moral strength in the people, he had to yield ''tacit consent'' to the Government of India's action in sending the army to defend Kashmir against the invaders (p. 511). But once this ''righteous war'' had been won, he would have liked a mutually agreed settlement so that ''we could live as peaceful neighbours''. Mistakes had been made on both sides, but we should not ''persist in those mistakes'' (p. 357).

The Government of India tried to put pressure on Pakistan, and so procure a quick, agreed settlement, by postponing payment of the agreed share of the cash balances of undivided India. In a statement to the Press on January 12, Sardar Patel explained at length the rationale of this decision. However, as a result of Gandhiji's fast beginning on January 13 ''in the cause of the Muslims'' (p. 415), the Indian Cabinet reversed a ''settled fact'' and in order to save Gandhiji's life and remove a ''cause of

friction between India and Pakistan", decided to give immediate effect to the agreement about cash balances and to transfer Rs. 55 crores to Pakistan's account (Appendix V, pp. 550-6).

Like a mother giving bitter pills to her children, Gandhiji gave to ministers, constructive workers and over-zealous reformers much salutary advice, however harsh it might have sounded at the moment. He warned people that freedom was not "suicidal anarchy", that it called for self-sacrifice and self-restraint, for everyone thinking of "the whole of India", not of oneself and one's family alone (p. 86). Refugees should learn to live together, should work for and earn their bread, clothing and shelter, keep their camps clean and "build ideal cities" (pp. 84 and 186). Since controls encouraged laziness and corruption (which was even worse than violence), they should be removed so that the millions would learn to be far-sighted, "by making mistakes and rectifying them" (p. 197). In a democracy, government should trust the people and educate them in and through the exercise of freedom (p. 344). "Real democracy people learn not from books, not from the government who are in name and in reality their servants. Hard experience is the most efficient teacher in democracy" (p. 399). Gandhiji had unbounded faith in the inborn goodness of the common people and their capacity to learn. For the communal disturbances he held others, intellectuals and leaders, responsible, not the common people (pp. 83 and 248). People should be educated in freedom so that they could "keep the ministers on their toes" (p. 391). A good government should ensure both freedom and welfare and thus promote "the largest good of the people with the minimum of controls" (p. 325).

While busily engaged in containing and quenching the fire raging round him, Gandhiji never lost sight of the ultimate goal of building a better India on the secure foundation of self-reliant citizens in prosperous villages. He asserted that future governments (whether Congress, Socialist or Communist) would, after stumbling in attempts to compete with America or Russia, realize the truth that India had no option "except to develop village industries" (p. 57). On December 11 and 12 he called a meeting of various constructive work organizations and told them that "the social order of our dreams cannot come through the Congress of today", that the task of the constructive workers was to "improve our national character", that with imagination and intellect these institutions could be forged into "instruments for the building up of democracy", and that this aim could be achieved only if they kept away from the competition for political power

(pp. 215-23). Renunciation of power was the prerequisite for the development of soul-force or the power of love. Compassion was the root of dharma, and its outward expression was loving service of the common people, and its fruit was spiritual authority strong enough to prevail over temporal power. Indeed, the weapon of satyagraha could be effective only in the hands of a "man of God" who "renders unto Caesar that which is Caesar's, but who knows how to deal with the usurpation if Caesar forgetting his limits oversteps them" (p. 119).

In the flames of hatred raging round him Gandhiji saw, not the failure of ahimsa, but his own failure to understand and apply the truth behind ahimsa. In a letter to Karl Struve he humbly confessed that he had not "exhibited any heroic and demonstrable" non-violence in himself as yet (p. 337). On January 1, he wrote to a friend that the peace in Delhi was only from fear of the police. "There is fire in people's hearts. That fire must either consume me or must be extinguished" (p. 339). On January 4, he wrote: "Everything about me is uncertain. But I am moving towards light" (p. 353). On January 8, he wrote: "There is still much fire smouldering. One cannot say when it may not leap into flames" (p. 383). Some Maulanas of Delhi saw him on January 11 and one of them asked for help to enable them to go away to England. Gandhiji had no answer to give them (p. 422). In his prayer speech that evening, he pleaded: ". . . we must forget that we are Hindus or Sikhs or Muslims or Parsis. . . . we must be only Indians. It is of no consequence by what name we call God in our homes. In the work of the nation, all Indians of all faiths are one. . . . We are Indians and we must lay down our lives in protecting Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Sikhs and all others" (pp. 403-4).

For days he had been brooding over his "impotence" to give the right answer to the Muslim friends who had sought his guidance. The final conclusion flashed upon him on the afternoon of the 12th and it made him happy. Without consulting anyone, not even Nehru or Patel, who had called on him a couple of hours earlier, he drafted a statement to be read out at the prayer meeting in the evening, announcing the commencement of an indefinite fast the following day. This was his answer to the Maulanas. The fast was to quicken conscience, not deaden it, to turn the searchlight inwards and seek self-purification. "No man, if he is pure, has anything more precious to give than his life. I hope and pray that I have that purity in me to justify the step" (p. 409).

The step was indeed justified as it evoked the right response from all quarters. Numerous telegrams from Pakistan as well as India conveyed assurances of communal amity. On the 16th, the Government of India announced the decision to release forthwith the cash balances due to Pakistan. On the 17th, leaders of all communities, Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims, met in Delhi and on the 18th a hundred representatives of various organizations called on Gandhiji with a joint statement pledging themselves to fulfil the conditions he had laid down for breaking the fast. Satisfied at last, he said, "... till today our face was turned towards Satan, we have now resolved to turn towards God" (p. 446). Then the fast was broken.

Even during this ordeal Gandhiji retained his detachment and sense of humour. He wrote to Mirabehn that his meal consisted of 8 oz. of hot water "sipped with difficulty" and he took several such "poison-tasting but nectar-like" meals. "Yet I claim to be fasting and credulous people accept it" (p. 430). Among these credulous people, strangely enough, were two famous former critics of fasting as a method of coercion. This time Arthur Moore of *The Statesman* and Nehru himself went on a sympathetic fast.

After breaking the fast, Gandhiji wrote to co-workers, "From calm I have entered storm" (pp. 454 and 468). In two days it became clear what shape the storm would take. During his prayer meeting on the 20th a group of angry Hindus made the first attempt on his life. Gandhiji did not know at the time that it was a bomb explosion. The following evening he adjured his listeners not to hate the bomb-thrower. In fact, he pleaded his case and cited in his defence a verse from the *Gita*. "He had taken it for granted that I am an enemy of Hinduism" and "thinks he has been sent by God to destroy me" (p. 472).

Deprecating the security measures taken by the Government, he told his host G. D. Birla, "... it is Rama who protects me ... everything else is futile" (p. 470). As the end drew near, it became clear that the oft-repeated *mantra* "Do or die" had only been the sombre, strident counterpoint to the steady, bright, basic melody: we are all in the hands of Rama, playthings, dancing to the tune He sings, dancing as He pulls the strings (pp. 96, 273).

On January 24, he wrote to a friend, "I am a servant of Rama. I will do His work so long as He wills.... if I have been sincere in my pursuit of truth, non-violence, non-stealing, *brahmacharya*... I shall certainly be granted the kind of death that

I seek . . . that should someone kill me I may have no anger against the killer . . . and I may die with Ramanama on my lips'' (p. 489).

With such serene faith in Rama, he was busy as usual, discussing with co-workers how the Congress could be reorganized and made ''a strong and efficient instrument of public service and of public will'' in free India (p. 506). He planned a ten-day visit to Sevagram in February to study the ''possibility of uniting the various organizations for constructive work into one body . . .'' (p. 520). To an angry refugee who advised him to retire to the Himalayas, he replied, ''I want to find peace in the midst of turmoil or I want to die in the turmoil. My Himalayas are here'' (p. 525).

On the last day of his life on earth Gandhiji was preoccupied with the reported rift between Nehru and Patel. In a long discussion with Patel from 4 p. m. up to the minute he had to leave for the prayer, he told him that the presence of both himself and Nehru in the Government was ''indispensable'' (p. 534). While he was busy talking with Patel, some visitors from Saurashtra sent in a request for an appointment and received the message: ''Tell them I shall talk with them during my walk after the prayers, if I am alive'' (p. 533).

The last words he uttered were ''Hey Ram''. The real Ruler of the Universe, whose names are many and whose ways are mysterious, loved his patient servant and would not on the rack of this tough world stretch him out longer.

Gandhiji's political legacy, a functioning democracy albeit mounted on a rickety machine, was safe in the hands of a team of selfless patriots led by Nehru, an idealist with a heart of gold, and Patel, a realist with a mind of steel. Friendship with the British people was intact and promised to be permanent. Their rule had gone, but the use of their language would never go (p. 443).

No such concrete success could be expected for Gandhiji's larger mission of ''spiritualizing'' politics and public life. Indeed there was for a moment the danger of ''politicizing'' religion and so destroying it. The fast which restored the Hindus to sanity averted this danger and was not the least of the Mahatma's services to his mother religion. Right from his early South African days, he had continued and carried forward the process of purifying and revitalizing the ancient dharma, a process begun in South India by Ramalinga Swami and in Bengal by Swami Vivekananda. The former was the mentor of the Tamil ''coolies'' whose steadfast faith in dharma opened the eyes of the barrister to the integrity of the common people and transformed him into

a mahatma bound by mutual trust with the masses of India. The latter set up Daridranarayana (God in the form of the poor) as the living image whose service was the highest *sadhana*. In a letter to Wybergh in 1910 (Vol. X, pp. 247-8), Gandhiji had declared that the ideal of *moksha*, the highest value and the immediate aim of all mankind, should not be lowered for anyone or withheld from anyone. Unbridled "materialism", the bane of modern civilization, did not add one inch to man's moral stature. The reduction of economic and social disparities was most smoothly effected by the simultaneous satisfaction of the survival needs of the poor and the Being needs of the rich. Gandhiji therefore asserted that self-realization was "impossible without service of, and identification with, the poorest" (Vol. XXXI, p. 511). What Gandhiji meant was not relief or charity, but radical restructuring of the present exploitative economic system.

By thus bringing the light and warmth of dharma to bear on *artha*, Gandhiji did succeed in some measure in breaking down the barriers between Brahmin and "untouchable", between the rich elite and the poor masses, between sacred and profane. He spread far and wide the faith and the feeling that all life is holy, all selves are one and all human beings potentially divine. Man was not an ape drunk with Mephistophelean power, but a god *manque*. Life on earth was a constant ascent; the Hindu should become a better Hindu, the Muslim a better Muslim, the Christian a better Christian and so on (p. 293).

This Vaishnava dharma, which is the undying poetry of earth, lives embodied in Rama and Krishna, gods whom one does not fear and obey, but loves as friends and admires as heroes, and freely chooses to play with and work for. In this myth, metaphysics and morals meet as the beauty of truth in thought and deed; like any athlete, artist or mathematician, the devotee of Vishnu rejoices as much in discipline as in freedom, and the ego wears away in the service of Narayana, who is Goodness, Beauty and Truth combined. The wheel of dharma would not let the servant rest one moment, but at its still centre there is peace for the strong. This too Gandhiji knew: "My God is Formless and Faultless and it is He who is giving me strength" (p. 37).

Identity with others is a felt, though not permanent, experience, taken for granted by ordinary people uncorrupted by materialism and is comparable to the aesthetic delight in agony as in ecstasy. It is not rhetoric, but a reminder of our common humanity, when Gandhiji says, ". . . when someone commits a crime anywhere I feel I am the culprit. . . . If I were to commit

any crime you should also think that you too were guilty of it. Let us all merge in each other like drops of ocean. If the drops of ocean remain apart they would dry up'' (p. 133).

The *Gita* teaching Gandhiji summed up to this effect: This whole universe exists in God, and even thieves and tigers are ourselves. ''It is man's nature to do good, for all selves are one. . . . When this is realized man's ego melts away'' (Vol. XXXII, pp. 218 and 280).

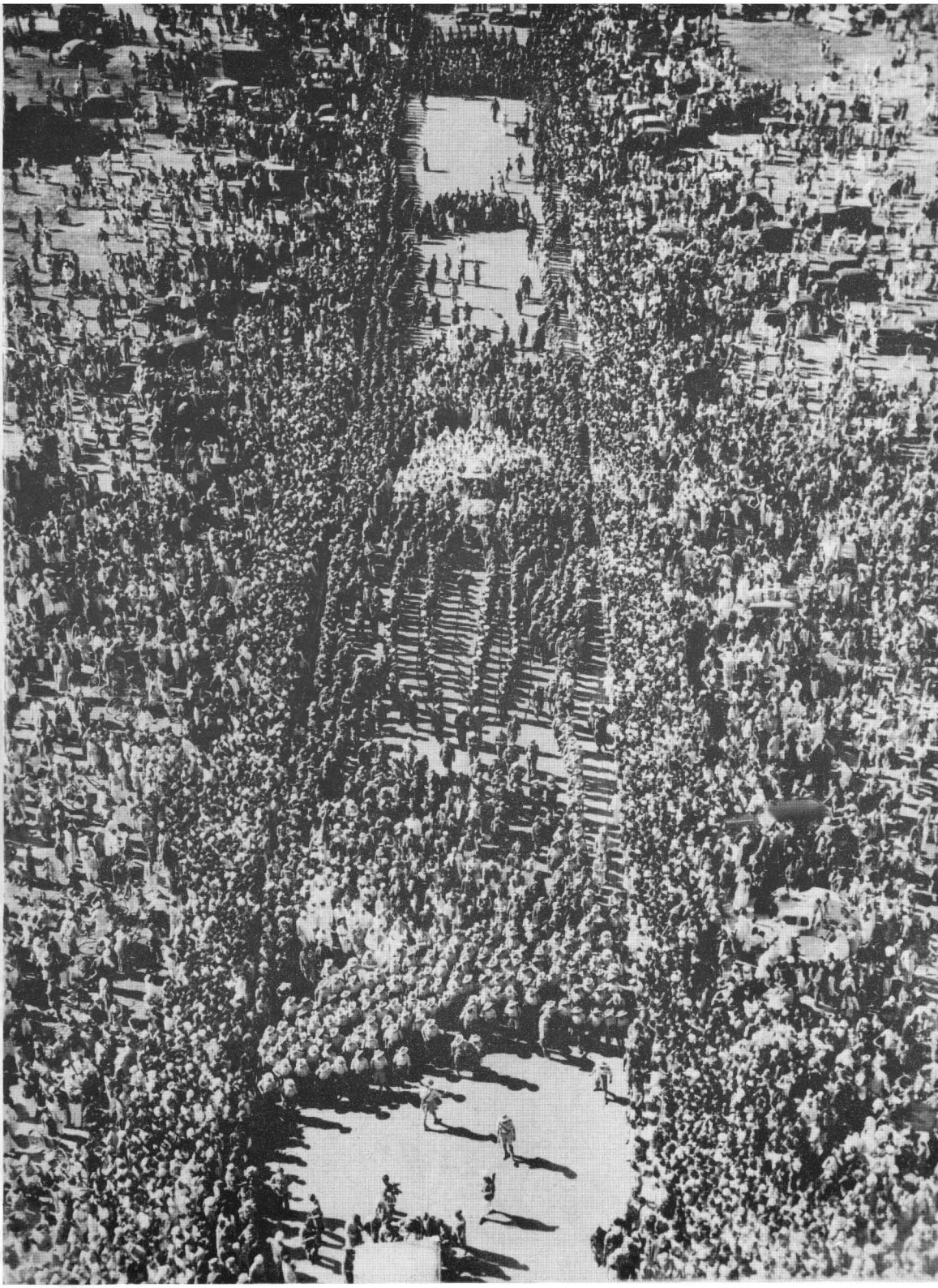
All human beings are thus born friends bound together by love and kindness. Hence mutual co-operation is normal, natural and necessary in any society where wants and desires are limited to legitimate needs. Hatred, distrust, cruelty and war are ugly and unnatural, and therefore to be shunned. ''Love, otherwise ahimsa, sustains this planet of ours'' (p. 195). The rule of life is friendly co-operation with all. However bad a man may be ''we must treat him as a friend and work with him. We must never under any circumstances treat anyone as an enemy'' (pp. 450-1). Satyagraha is effective because it is a good friend's deliberate and temporary withdrawal of co-operation in some action or policy which is ugly and painful as it tends to disrupt the essential unity that binds all human beings. All of us are prone to commit sins sometimes, and also prone more often to perform saintly actions. *Swadharma* consists in responding courageously to the call of the Inner Ruler and rising above our usual selves. Only so can one realize the ultimate truth through the pursuit of beauty in action. ''Everybody must act on the promptings of his conscience; you, on yours; I, on mine; others, on their own; and from that at last truth will come out'' (p. 225). Inwit, the Inner light, illumining head and heart alike, would guide the seeker of Truth from step to step on the path of action.

If beauty is a means to Truth, so too is utility. If a beautiful myth moves the heart to heroic action, a lemma, like the assumption of a separate and surviving self, may well be used to support morality. In a letter of 1935, Gandhiji defines realization as ''pure and selfless service of all living creatures'' (Vol. LX, p. 2). In another letter he further explains: ''For a belief in rebirth, it is necessary to believe in the existence of 'I'. If I do not exist and God alone exists, then who is to be reborn and how? This realization itself is rebirth, isn't it? . . . When you truly believe . . . that 'God alone exists', then there is no rebirth for you. The man who becomes one with God is liberated. . . . Realization comes through the heart. The head can provide only logic. . . . Service alone can bring about realization'' (Vol. LX, p. 159).

However much doctrines and theories may differ, all real religion ". . . makes for peace, love and joy in the world. . . . science and religion are complementary to each other" (p. 316). One's *swadharma* is not determined by casuistry, but by the inner call to prompt and precise action to relieve tension in human relationships. All religions, applied in a "scientific" way to any concrete situation, tend to converge and "make for peace, love and joy". A wooden slate-frame gone out of shape could be set right by firm, correct handling of the one corner one happens to hold (p. 84).

Taking the utmost responsibility on oneself and conceding the utmost freedom to others, feeling and thinking globally and acting locally, Gandhiji's empirical religion reconciles the dualism of Madhva and Islam, the modified non-dualism of Ramanuja and Christianity and the non-dualism of Sankara and pure science. Where people are unconsciously moved to action by the poetry of religion, goodness and beauty attend their thoughts, words and deeds as naturally as leaves, flowers and fruit come to a living tree. It is this humanizing Hinduism with its pluralistic world view and non-violent way of life that Gandhiji was proud of and claimed to be the universal religion which would free the world from all its ills (p. 248) and which would live as long as the sun shines in the sky (p. 79). From Man's spiritual element, the ocean of compassion, all religions arise and into it again must Islam, Christianity and other streams flow back (p. 177).

The golden age which began with Ramalinga Swami and included Vivekananda, Sri Aurobindo, Tagore, Narayan Guru, Bharati and Ramana Maharshi, and which ended with Vinoba Bhave provided the congenial milieu for Gandhiji's political and social action. It was Gandhiji's spiritual mission to try and harmonize all religions and make multitudes of men and women doers of the Word of God instead of being merely its preachers and hearers.



THE LAST JOURNEY

CWMG - C

PREFACE

The matter that is proposed to be included in the Supplementary Volumes of the *Collected Works* falls into two classes : first, items that became available too late to be included in the various volumes in the main series to which they properly belong; and second, items which carry no dates and could not be assigned dates with a degree of accuracy justifying their being included under those dates. Most of these latter are now being published under dates assigned to them on the basis of textual or circumstantial evidence, with a possibility of error being conceded. A few items, which defied all attempts at chronological placement, will appear in a separate section in the last Supplementary Volume to come out.

An item included in the present Volume which scholars may find of special interest is the Diary of the year 1894, when Gandhiji, a young man of 25, was striving to find his feet in racist Natal, already embarked upon a campaign against the Natal Franchise Law Amendment Bill—a campaign that was to determine the course of his life for the next twenty-one years.

The rest of the Volume is made up of letters, with a few telegrams and a speech or two. Of particular interest are those to the Transvaal authorities: the Lt. Governor, the Colonial Secretary and others, many dealing with the denial of licences to certain categories of Indian traders and a few, later on, with the whole gamut of anti-Indian laws in the Colony.

Then there is quite a volume of correspondence Gandhiji carried on with the various revenue officials, with the Bombay Governor, and even with the Viceroy's office in the context of the Kheda Satyagraha of 1918. We much regret not having had this material available in time for inclusion in Vol. XIV, where it belongs.

Many of the letters to Mathuradas Trikumji found in the Volume have been already included in the Volumes of the main series. They have been given here again because the versions carried earlier, from a printed source, were too fragmentary and did not really do justice to the text.

Altogether, as the title indicates, the items reproduced in the Volume form supplementary material to be read along with the items in the main series, to which cross-references are carried in footnotes wherever possible and necessary.

CWMG - C

VOLUME — XCI *(Supplementary - One)*[1]

(1894 – 1928)

The matter included in Volume XCI (Supplementary - One) onwards falls broadly into two categories; first, items that became available too late to be included in the various volumes to which they properly belong; and second, items which carry no dates and could not be assigned dates with a degree of accuracy justifying their inclusion in the earlier volumes. Most of the material falling in the second category is now being published under dates assigned to them on the basis of textual or circumstantial evidence. Despite every effort having been made to be as accurate as possible in assigning dates, the possibility of error is not completely ruled out. There are still a few items which have defied all attempts at their chronological placement. These items will be published in a separate section in the text-wise last volume. In these volumes also the emphasis again is on the choronological placement of items, in a way it is the chronology within the chronology that begins from the present volume.

The matter included in this volume encompasses a very important hectic phase of Gandhiji's life. The diary of the year 1894 may be of special interest to the scholars and others. Then a youngman of 25, Gandhiji was striving to find a foothold in the racist South Africa to launch a campaign against its dracanian laws. The object and purpose of which was to jeopardize the interests of the Indian community there. The Franchise Law Amendment Bill had been introduced in the Natal Legislative Assembly. The proposed Bill sought to deprive British Indians of their voting rights. While the Bill was passing through various stages of consideration in the Assembly, Gandhiji drafted and sent petitions after petitions to authorities including the Legislative Council and the Governor. We find from his diary that on September 3, he was admitted as an Advocate to practise in Natal Courts.

Alongside his crusade for protecting the interests and political rights of the Indian Community, Gandhiji discussed and wrote about

[1] Prefaces to Volumes XCI (Suppl. - One) and XCII (Suppl. -Two) are being redrafted with a view to attaching due importance to them. The matter included in these volumes has been received 'late' only. It is not that it had deliberately been kept aside on its merit. Merit-wise it includes items as important as those in earlier volumes. Some of them are very important documents also. In earlier volumes some letters taken from the published books are available in fragments only. These volumes provide the full text of those letters.

other subjects close to his heart. One such subject was vegetarianism. He preached the virtues of vegetarianism to whomsoever he came in contact with. He had to face some reservation also from some people. One such incident has been mentioned in his diary when he went to meet his personal friend Mr. Askew at his house. Mrs. Askew did not like him to chat on vegetarianism or Buddhism because she feared that her children might become contaminated. "She questioned my sincerity. Said I should not go to their house if I was insincere and not seeking the truth. I said it was not within my power to make her believe that I was sincere and that I had no wish to thrust myself on her as a companion." In one of his letters Gandhiji suggests what constitutes a very beneficial and wholesome diet.

Hindu-Muslim unity had a very high priority on Gandhiji's agenda. He believed that Hindus being majority community should show greater accommodation to their Muslim brethren. "As a man of truth, I honestly believe that Hindus should yield to the Mahomedans what the latter desire, and that they should rejoice in so doing. We can expect unity only if such mutual large heartedness is displayed" (p. 78).

The rest of the volume comprising the major portion is, for the most part, made up of letters including a few telegrams. Other items included in this volume are notes, messages, speeches, interviews and evidence tendered before an enquiry committee. Communications on behalf of the British Indians addressed to the Transvaal authorities, the Lt.-Governor, the colonial secretary, and others are of particular interest. Many of them deal with the denial of licences to certain categories of Indian traders. Some other letters voice the grievance of the people of Indian origin against the whole gamut of anti-Indian laws in force in the colony.

Gandhiji's views in brief on a variety of subjects including machines and industries, primary education, caste-system and even drinking milk find place in a talk which he had with Veerchand Panachand Shah and others. According to him we must "establish a balance" between big and small industries to check dehumanization of man (p. 99). Gandhiji was a votary of woman's rightful place in society. He thought we must "do away with this age-old attitude that regards woman as inferior creatures" (p. 110). Referring to the "utterances in the Sanskrit texts" demeaning woman's status Gandhiji opines that we must get rid of the false notion that "every verse coined in Sanskrit is the word of the scriptures" (p. 110).

Then there is quite a volume of correspondence Gandhiji carried on with the various revenue officials, the Bombay Governor and even with the Viceroy's office in the context of the Kheda Satyagraha of 1918.

Many of the letters to Mathuradas Trikumji found in the volume have already been included in earlier volumes. They have been given again because the versions carried earlier from a printed source were too fragmentary and did not really do justice to the text.

The items reproduced in the volume should be read along with the items in earlier volumes to which cross-references are given in footnotes wherever possible and necessary.[1]

[1] This volume was published in April 1989.

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PREFACE

This Volume is second in a series being published as a supplement to the main series of 90 Volumes of the *Collected Works*. As already pointed out in the first publication of the supplementary material, there are items in these Volumes which had carried no date at the time of collection, but which have been included here under dates inferred from textual or circumstantial evidence. The philosophical content of many of them transcends the concrete problem of assigning to them chronological verity.

The matter that is being supplied in the present Volume spans the years 1929-34—an eventful period in the history of the freedom struggle in India, when Gandhiji launched the strategy for the Dandi March, after which he spent intermittent jail terms in the "Yeravda Mandir" between 1930 and 1933. The *Gita*, which was his constant companion during these years of intensive reading and introspection, gave him the equipoise to regard birth and death with perfect detachment, as when he heard of the death of his grandson Rasik on February 9, 1929, he nevertheless took his meal and "sat down to work" (p. 7).

The period also covers Gandhiji's mission to England in 1931 to attend the Second Round Table Conference, which he described as "a packed conference, not one of elected representatives . . ." (p. 280). Even as the s. s. *Rajputana* carried him out of the shores of India, Gandhiji averred, with his vision of free India, "In our future swaraj women should have the same property rights as men" (p. 277).

Gandhiji formulated a Satyagraha campaign consistent with the ethics of non-violence and having self-reliance as the means and self-realization as the goal. He expected to "reach my God through truth and non-violence" (p. 285). On the less metaphysical level, Gandhiji stressed the interdependence among groups in conflict—Hindus and Muslims, 'touchables' and untouchables, landlords and peasants, capitalists and labourers. Sensing the need of the hour for co-operation among all these sections, he wrote : " I do not wish to see the destruction of capitalists and Indian States.... There will always be some people who have more wealth and some who have less" (pp. 270-71).

Though having earned the title of 'Mahatma', Gandhiji explicitly repudiated that he was or ever tried to be a *sannyasin*—

one who renounces the world. "I alone know what a humbug I am as a sadhu", (p. 397) he wrote to Mridula Sarabhai in a moving passage that lays bare his tenderness and deep respect for Kasturba.

As in the case of Supplementary Volume I, the items reproduced in this Volume form additional material, to be read along with the items in the main series, to which cross-references are given in foot-notes wherever possible and necessary.

CWMG - C

VOLUME – XCII *(Supplementary - Two)*

(1929-1934)

The present volume contains material which became available after the volume, to which it appropriately belongs as per its chronological placement, had already been planned and published. As mentioned in the preface of volume XLI (Suppl. Volume-One) items, mostly letters, included in this volume carried no dates at the time of collection. The dates assigned to these items have been inferred from textual and circumstantial evidence and as such the possibility of error in the matter is not completely ruled out. In fact, the philosophical contents of many of them transcend the concrete problem of assigning to them chronological verity.

The matter contained in this volume, spans an eventful period in the history of the Indian National Movement. It was the period when the Lahore Congress session presided over by Gandhiji's nominee Jawaharlal Nehru adopted a resolution stressing *inter alia* Purna Swaraj (complete independence). Gandhiji's historical Dandi March was another important event of this period.

In March-April 1930 Gandhiji marched from Sabarmati Ashram to Dandi in Gujarat coast. The march evoked overwhelming response from all sections. During the march "women came forward to participate in the movement, not only women who had received a European education, but women from the villages who could not even sign their names. . . . Women and the aged participated in the movement as much as children" (pp. 282-3). There he committed a technical breach of the Salt Law. The meeting of the A. I. C. C. held on March 25, 1930 endorsed the resolution passed by the working committee giving full authority to Gandhiji in the matter of civil disobedience (p. 176). The Salt Satyagraha was his first challenge to the Government. In May 1930 Gandhiji was arrested and put in the Yeravda jail at Poona. Despite the arrest of Gandhiji Civil Disobedience in different forms continued

in all provinces. Special stress was laid on boycott of foreign goods, particularly cloth. Towards the end of January 1931 Gandhiji and other Congress leaders were released. Direct talks were held between Gandhiji and the Viceroy and as a result Gandhi-Irwin Pact was concluded on March 5, 1930. Under this settlement boycott of British goods as a political weapon was to be given up, but it should have continued to be an effective economic weapon" which certainly required intensification. "Just after the Settlement there was a lull, that is to say, we were all purposely not doing anything to egg the people on to picketing. . . . When the aggressive form ceased all the zest seemed to have disappeared and several committees left off picketing in sullen discontent", wrote Gandhiji in his letter to C. F. Andrews (p. 266). He apprehended that if that laxity was long overlooked the organisation would become inefficient. He could not afford to see foreign cloth coming in and competing with khadi and indigenous mill-cloth and so he felt the necessity of "warning the people against buying foreign cloth". He saw "nothing inconsistent with ahimsa in this or with the terms of the settlement" (p. 267).

The Congress did not participate in the first session of the Round Table Conference nor did it give recognition to its proceedings. The second session of the Round Table Conference was attended by Gandhiji which he described as "a packed conference not one of elected representatives" and said "I will not be surprised if it fails" (p. 280). The failure of the conference led to the renewal of Civil Disobedience. Gandhiji was arrested and All-India Congress Committee and other Congress bodies were banned and their funds seized. Throughout this hectic phase of struggle for freedom, Gandhiji adhered to his cherished principles and was never dismayed when his attempts sometimes did not produce direct and practical results. "I am doing what I can according to my lights. I do not feel disheartened because I am unable to show results. I can therefore understand the criticism. . . . For, except the result, what other criterion can you have to measure the success of what I may have done ?"(p.64) He had deep and abiding faith in his principles which gave him hope in spite of heavy odds. "My optimism is based on faith. There is nothing in the surrounding atmosphere that can please me and nothing in which I can see a single ray of hope" (p. 54). He believed in God and was of the view that "He presides over our destinies. Even our sorrows turn into joy if we surrender ourselves completely to God" (p.491).

The *Gita* was his constant companion during these hectic years. His conviction that "the path of non-attachment taught by the *Gita* was the result of the realization that truth and non-violence were supreme"

(p.105), grew stronger day by day. There are frequent references of the *Gita* and its teachings in many of his letters. "The author of the *Gita* saw with his divine eyes that the results of truth and ahimsa are always good, but he also saw that man is not able to see them when he wishes. And very often he is also not able to decide what is good and what is bad," says Gandhiji in a letter and adds, "The author showed him the path of non-attachment" (p.105).

Besides giving important information relating to political activities of the period covered by this volume the letters and some other items included in it contain Gandhiji's considered ideas and views on a wider range of social, moral, ethical and philosophical issues.

Gandhiji's concept of the National movement and various campaigns launched thereunder invariably included his social and economic programmes. He imposed upon the people that "preparing for civil disobedience means propagation of the spinning-wheel, removal of untouchability, propagation of Hindu-Muslim unity, propagation of prohibition . . . internal unity and self-purification" (p. 67). Regarding Hindu-Muslim unity, he had implicit faith that both communities "will one day come together and that faith is derived from my faith in Hinduism and ultimately in human nature" (p. 269).

Gandhiji fought against the practice of untouchability all his life and castigated those who believed it to be a divine institution saying that "it is a man made institution (p. 491).

In spite of his very busy schedule and his time being 'so mapped out that outside my daily routine there is hardly a minute left" (p. 54). Gandhiji kept up correspondence with national and international leaders, intellectuals, his friends and relatives discussing therein a wide variety of subjects from politics to the tips for good health. He says, "I am convinced more and more each day that it is worth giving a trial."

Gandhiji was basically a thinker. His letters and speeches included in this volume are interspersed with gems of thoughts. He laid stress on introspection, devotion and acquiring knowledge bereft of ego. According to him "devotion is not devotion if it is bereft of humility. What produces pride is not knowledge. He who acquired inner knowledge automatically turns inward" (p. 49).

Gandhiji had earned the title of 'Mahatma' but he himself discovered it saying, "I do not consider myself a Mahatma" (p. 496). "I alone know what a humbug I am as a *sadhu*" (p. 397). He wrote to Mridula Sarabhai in a moving passage that lays bare his tenderness and deep respect for Kasturba.[1]

[1] This volume was published in June 1991.

CWMG - C

VOLUME --- XCIII *(Supplementary-Three)*

(January 1935 --- July 1941)

The volume unfolds with the year 1935, holding the Gandhian mirror to men and matters and to India on the anvil of the freedom struggle. Letters to Gandhiji's fellow-workers and close associates, as also to youngsters, bring into focus the tremendous inner conflicts of a moralist and a pragmatist, endeavouring through an unrelenting personal *tapasya* to strike the perfect balance between the two. "The flesh must be subdued", he avers, writing to Maurice Frydman, for "freedom from that bondage is mastery over the flesh, the self. All *tapasya* is self-torture. All restraint is self-torture. It is a surgical operation which has got to be performed (p. 255).

The destruction of the fleshly mantle in this life will mean its complete subjection. It must be a state where you crave for seeking "the presence of God so much so that we see Him face to face. In the presence of God, there can be no sin, no sorrow, no anger, no malice, no falsehood. In His presence there is no fear, no external affliction can put us out" (p. 257). At the present moment everybody is completing his own story. "Whatever may be the story, the remedy is the same. As in the body so in the spirit, though the diseases are various the cause is one and so is the remedy one". . .(ibid.) but till the story is complete one can pass through a process of self-introspection. Gandhiji too 'for the first time during the past 50 years found himself in a 'Slough of Despond'. 'Statement to the Press' (Vol. LXVI, pp. 36-8) with regard to the cause of his despondency remains incomplete without 'Note to Ashram Inmates' in the present volume (pp. 171-2). The cause is 'purely internal' and comes from within'. He says "my whole life has been shaped in the belief that there is nothing wrong about innocent physical touch of woman. Before I took the vow of *brahmacharya* and after, I touched numerous women in a light-hearted way or in affection, I have not experienced any adverse effect thereby and have not known any woman who may have been sensually aroused" (p. 171). The process of self - introspection results in the realization that "only he who can observe complete *brahmacharya* can give complete training in non-violence". Even then he will continue his experience in non-violence so long as "I feel convinced that even my imperfect *brahmacharya* has lent considerable support to non-violence (p. 172). But the Ashram inmates could not be satisfied with this. They

were still complaining about the way Sushilabehn serves Gandhiji. The latter, just after three and a half moths goes back to what had stirred him so much. He says I have a somewhat different conception of *brahmacharya*. It is not *brahmacharya* which cannot bear physical contact with women when it is called for. *But this is a digression"* (p. 205).

To understand Gandhiji amidst his conflicting statements, one has perhaps to go into the meaning of meaning. "To know their deeper significance, going by the literal meaning of the words would be futile and burdensome" (p. 153).

The Civil Disobedience campaign of Gandhiji's conception must be consistent with the ethics of non-violence and self-purification, namely, *yajna*, as emphasized in the *Bhagavad Gita*. In a poignant letter to Pyarelal, he rues the inadequacy of his *brahmacharya*. "In no sense have I been the *brahmachari* of my definition. . . . I am trying to understand myself in the light of the *Gita*" (p. 167).

The volume has scores of letters to Pyarelal and Sushila Nayyar as also to Lilavati Asar which not only appear so frequently throughout the volume, but also present Gandhiji as the most intimate to them. He would tell Lilavati what the real joy is. "One who follows religion with proper understanding always finds great joy before which other pleasures are insignificant" (p. 56).

Gandhiji tells Mathuradas Trikumji that he does not favour marriage within the caste (p. 211). To Anasuyabehn Sarabhai he discloses his ideal of using only village made things. He tells her that "We must spend every *pie* with the utmost care because it belongs to the poor" (p. 55). He can be seen advising Rajaram R. Bhole not to leave Sanatorium, telling Sumangal Prakash as to what should be his intake and writing to Raojibhai Patel about how to remove husk from ordinary paddy. Gandhiji's letters take you to different destinations — from everyday life to the domain of philosophy and from philosophy to deep introspection and Gandhiji's inner self. But it is not always so. He is a man of action. He is always with men and women sharing their difficulties, problems. He is always trying to modernise and reform the society. He generally entertained those ideas which can be materialized and be fruitful to society. The present Kasturba Gandhi Medical College and Hospital at Wardha owes its origin to the idea of building a hospital that struck Gandhiji's mind in 1939 (p. 263).

The volume contains the Congress Working Committee Resolution which Gandhiji drafted during the C.W.C. meeting on January 16 and 18, 1935. It was in connection with the Silver Jubilee Celebrations of the Coronation of king George V. The Congress declined to celebrate

the occasion. The Resolution says : "The Congress has and can have nothing but good wishes for the personal well-being of His majesty, but the Congress cannot ignore the fact that the rule in India with which His Majesty is naturally identified has been a positive hindrance to the political, moral and material growth of the nation" (p. 2). In a letter to C. Vijayaraghavachariar, Gandhiji not agreeing to the former's views, tells him : "We have not to deal with the family of the Great Queen as individuals, but we have to deal with them as representatives of a mighty government. We have to celebrate an event in connection not with the private virtues of an autocrat, but we have to deal with the events of an empire for a period of twenty-five years during which King George has been the nominal head but which as an individual he has perhaps no more power to influence than you or I, and infinitely less than the Collector of your district in his own district" (p. 4).

Gandhiji expresses willingness to proceed to Quetta, if permitted, and participate in the relief work for the earthquake affected people. Quetta had been rocked by a severe earthquake on May 31, 1935. It was a devastating human tragedy. He suggests the Government to form a small relief Committee comprising all sections to concert measures of relief. He also suggests that the public should be taken into confidence about everything that may be done regarding alleviation of distress. Gandhiji forgets about differences with the Government. "All differences vanish in the midst of the awful calamity in Quetta following almost in the wake of Bihar" (p. 23).

References to Netaji Subhas Bose's desire to see him are also traceable in letters to Mahadev Desai, but Gandhiji is not keen on this (pp. 240 and 241). This indifference of his can be seen in the light of his 'Statement to the Press' (Vol. LXVIII, pp. 359-60) where he considers Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya's defeat in the contest for the office of Congress President as his own. Sarat Chandra Bose complains against some of the ex-members of the Working Committee who, according to him, carried malicious propaganda against Subhas Chandra Bose at Tripuri Congress. Gandhiji's reply to his letter, probably of March 21, 1939 is available here. "With so much that you have to say against your erstwhile colleagues and they against you both, how can I act, what can I do ? . . . I therefore suggest either a meeting of all of you so that you can pour out your hearts to one another or come to an understanding or, if the poison has gone too deep to be eradicated, I suggest Subhas's (when he is restored to health) telling the A.I.C.C. that he cannot work with the old Working Committee and that he should be relieved of the command or be left a free hand to choose his own cabinet . . ." (p. 244).

This was the period when political milieu in the country was passing through a change, when the Congress had a new leadership, when the world was moving towards a big disaster, the World War II. Gandhiji is also confronted with upheavals within and without. So at times we have to go into the meaning of meaning to understand what he really means.[1]

CWMG - C

[1] This volume was published in April 1993.

PREFACE

During the period covered by this Volume (July 18, 1941–April 1947) Gandhiji had been the busiest person. In fact the matter pertaining to this period has already been covered in our fourteen volumes (Vols. LXXIV to LXXXVII). What necessitates the existence of this volume is the matter which we received when the volumes in which it was to be included were already published. When we began arranging the residuary matter again in a chronological order, it made four volumes, the present volume being the last (though not of the entire series). Text-wise the series goes up to Volume XCVII. Two volumes of cumulative Subject Index and Name Index, as also a Volume of Prefaces make the series a hundred-volume set. In fact what ends with the present volume is chronology within the chronology.

The volume carries important correspondence of Gandhiji with persons instrumental in deciding the fate of new India, precious documents, useful discussions and timely decisions. It has Gandhiji's draft for Congress Constitution which reflects his concern for the nation in general and villages in particular (pp. 227-9), followed by his reflections on Congress Constitution (p. 229). Gandhiji prepares a resolution on the Indian resisters in South Africa. This resolution is on behalf of the AICC and praises the Indian settlers in South Africa who once more offered "satyagraha in the land of its birth against a law imposing on them a colour bar far more sinister than the one against which they had put up a brave fight between 1907 and 1914 ". The AICC "congratulates the handful of satyagrahis on their brave but unequal action against heavy odds" (p. 284).

Gandhiji formulates steps for the Congress-League coalition at the centre. The move for this was initiated by Bhulabhai Desai in early January 1945 (pp. 184-5). Jinnah and Liaquat Khan's stand worries Gandhiji. Government starts arrests and Gandhiji instructs Bhulabhai "to talk in a firm tone and tell the Viceroy that this will not do" (p. 187). Not only this, Gandhiji had other fears too. He says "Viceroy will create Hindu Mahasabha and other such parties. But we are not accepting them. There are only two parties Congress and League. Sikhs and Harijans, we have accepted as a concession" (p. 188).

[vi]

Pethick-Lawrence in his letter to Abul Kalam Azad had invited Congress to discussions on the basis of a scheme which, *inter alia,* envisaged "two groups of Provinces, the one of the predominantly Hindu Provinces and the other of the predominantly Muslim Provinces" with residuary "sovereign rights". Azad had objected to the classification of the Provinces in terms of "predominantly Hindu and predominantly Muslim" and also to the term sovereign being applied to the residuary rights. Pethick-Lawrence in his reply expressed his inability to make any "textual alterations" in the proposal as conveyed in his letter. In a draft reply to Lord Pethick-Lawrence on the same subject, which was to be sent by Abul Kalam Azad, Gandhiji clarifies his position: "You yourself admit that your scheme is a recommendation. Therefore at no stage can there be any compulsion read into it. The Congress has never taken the power nor has it any desire to compel a single unit. And I know, as a matter of fact, that neither the Frontier Province nor Assam nor the Sikhs of the Punjab will submit to any compulsion. They have signified their intention of not joining any group whatsoever. All I wish to say is that the scheme cannot be used for the purpose of compelling acceptance by any unit or group. The whole beauty of it resides in its voluntary character which should not be impaired. But, of willingness to conclude a treaty will always be there. But the treaty must be a voluntary act on the part of Independent India. If it presupposes compulsion, there is no Independence."

At the same time he writes notes on Interim Government to be sent to Qaide Azam M.A. Jinnah by Jawaharlal Nehru: "No reference to the Viceroy at any stage on any matter; League to nominate all League quota of Muslims whenever vacancy occurs; Congress to nominate other members including other minorities including nationalist Muslims; communal safeguards shall be decided by joint consultation subject to reference to arbitration in point of difference; Vice-President to be from the Congress; the Chairman of the inner cabinet to be the leader of the House; the Congress would like Q.A. to join the I.G."

Gandhiji had been cautious enough in his correspondence on important subjects even if it was done by someone else and he simply prepared the draft. Secondly, he had a very firm stand and he would stick to it come what may. Extracts from his two letters to Abul

Kalam Azad can be quoted to prove this: "Lawrence told me last night that you had written to him suggesting some alterations in his letter and that he had sent you a reply. What is all this? I could not say much in the matter but I did not like it. I am perplexed. It looks like I shall have to go to Simla. The mind shrinks from the thought. I feel somewhere in some way we are committing a mistake" (p. 271).

"The third is a personal matter. Ever since I first heard the Viceroy's proclamation, that is, while I was still at Panchgani, I have been shouting that the Congress cannot accept the principle of parity between Muslims and non-Harijan Hindus, an organization of Hindus alone. Even if I am the only one among crores to do so, I shall refuse to be a party to it. I do not care if the negotiations break down on this, for I know and believe that the moment you try to form a national government at the centre in this way you will be laying a wrong foundation" (p. 212).

He was equally firm on the issue of British army of occupation to leave India. In a letter to Major Short he writes: "The note is something quite different from what you said yesterday. For one thing it does not contemplate independence. It seems to take Pakistan for granted. As I said yesterday nothing can be done so long as the British Army of occupation remains. The people can't be natural so long as their territory is occupied. Therefore, there is no meeting-ground in the note" (p. 272). In his letter to Horace G. Alexander he endorses his stand: "you have frankly given me your reaction to the situation in Calcutta. I wholly endorse your first reaction. It is in every way undesirable for the Congress to rely upon British troops or even police for upholding authority and keeping law and order. It is tantamount to suicide."

This busy man believes in constantly working for a mission. For him, "Man is not a lifeless machine, though he should work like a machine; he is a conscious being and while working as a machine he should work with faith and intelligence, that is to say, with his heart and his mind. Only then will he shine and succeed in his effort" (p. 208).

On Howard Goldstein's invitation to Gandhiji to attend the San Francisco Conference at Glendora in the suburbs of Los Angeles, Pyarelal replies on behalf of Gandhiji: "He has not much faith in the

value of more verbal talks. He is trying to forge the message of non-violence through his work in India. If he shows visible success here the world will get the message it needs. Therefore the conscientious objectors who are going to meet near Glendora would do well to closely study what he has been saying and doing in India. Particularly, they should study his writings preceding and after the 8th August, 1942 – Resolution of the Congress. They reflect the working of a non-violent mind in the face of the greatest crisis in the world's history" (p. 208).

Gandhiji has a firm faith in non-violence and he goes on educating people about it: "I can understand the hardship resulting from the refusal of the farmers to sell the stocks of grains lying with them to the Government at rates lower than they can afford. But the looting of Government grain stocks cannot be called non-violent whether it is done after serving prior notice or not" (p. 124). "I cannot include acts like sabotage of railways, etc., in non-violence" (p. 124). "It is of course not easy to decide a programme for someone who is bent upon facing bullets in a non-violent way but it is not impossible. One is not duty bound to give one's name. Informing about the action contemplated would suffice. If at the time fixed one finds that no one has come to the spot because the notice, being anonymous, had been thrown away, another notice can be sent. If this is done again and again, one day the tiger is sure to come. However, do not conclude from this that I consider the programme mentioned in the second question non-violent even if carried out after giving prior information" (p. 124).

It was the time of the World War II which Gandhiji condemns as a crime against humanity: "The rivers of blood that are daily flowing in this war which is without parallel in barbarity and ferocity should convince even the confirmed sceptic of the utter immortality of the war. Except for hypnotism which hardens even the sense of perception, there should not be any difficulty in perceiving the crime against humanity which the present war means" (p. 53). Gandhiji seems to have been advising not only everyone in the Congress but perhaps on every subject also. Here is an extract from Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru: "It dwells on the question of who should be the Congress President in view of the fact that you will be the Prime Minister. You incline in favour of Maulana Saheb. This I do not

understand and cannot understand. In my view, Maulana Saheb should not accept nomination. Maulana Saheb hesitates to accept ministership. The responsibilities of the President, especially in the present juncture are I feel arduous. But in my view it is not the only reason why he should not be president. I cannot accept, too, that other than Maulana Saheb, Sardar Patel and Rajendra Babu, no suitable person can be found.

"I cannot definitely say who else will be suitable because I am not any more in very close touch with the Congress organization.

"One thing more. It is also a question as to who should be the President of the Constituent Assembly. I shall not write anything more about it now, because it is not certain whether the Constituent Assembly will meet"(p. 296).

He had advised K.M. Munshi to leave the Congress as the latter could not conform to the explicit Poona Resolution of the Congress on internal disorders, passed on July 28, 1940. In the course of his discussions with Gandhiji, Mr. Munshi had accepted in the abstract the principle of ahimsa with all its implications, but felt the greatest difficulty in acting upon it. During the riots in Bombay he thought it was difficult to convince Hindus to defend themselves through ahimsa. With him the question was not one of interpretation of Congress Resolutions but of being truthful to himself and to the country. Gandhiji advised him that the only dignified and brave course for him was to resign from the Congress. This much had already been covered in detail in Vol. LXXIV. In the present Volume Gandhiji in a letter to Sarojini Naidu explains: "I cannot be held responsible for what he does after severing his connection with the Congress. Those who know me understand that such influence as I can exert on Shri Munshi must still be on the side of non-violence. Those who do not trust me will impute motives to me which I can only disprove by my conduct" (p. 1).

Gandhiji is throughout busy – sending Jawaharlal Nehru to have discussion with Maharaja of Kashmir, advising T. Prakasam on the latter's ambitious programme of Basic Education and Industries in Madras State as also asking him to provide full facts regarding Sriramulu's resolve to go on fast on the issue of Harijan-entry in temples, writing to H.S. Suhrawardy on Hindu-Muslim question in Bihar and clarifying to Lord Samuel the position of Congress on forming a truly national government.

CWMG - C

PREFACE

The present volume covers the largest span of time (June 1900 – around December 25, 1947) and in addition contains more than two hundred undated items. This span is covered by our 87 volumes (Volume I to Volume LXXXVII). In a way it could be a true representative of this hundred-volume series and in some respects it is.

The volume opens with a farewell address by the Indian subscribers in Durban to Dr. Lancelot Parker Booth who had been kind enough to provide free medical assistance to the poor, irrespective of caste or creed. The volume gives glimpses of the violation of the Agreement of 1914 and postponement of passive resistance against it in South Africa. Gandhiji's unflinching support to the cause of Indians in South Africa can be seen in the beginning of the volume."It is my firm conviction that Indians in South Africa must not submit to the latest racial legislation of the Union of South Africa. They have well nigh exhausted all constitutional means of seeking redress. Therefore they have at their disposal the matchless weapon of satyagraha which was successfully tried for the first time in South Africa" (p. 129).

In between comes 'Gandhi, the good life'. He will go on advising his close associates or anybody who comes in contact with him or seeks his advice on matters of day-to-day requirements. "Remember this much that no one gives or takes from anyone. This does not mean that we do not take anything from anyone. But that act of taking is to be performed by us. The Ganga flows for everyone. It does not on its own give anything to anyone. But one draws from it according to one's need" (p. 189). One wonders how this great soul would render advice on innumerable fronts. He had plenty of ideas which could be shared by all, even though 'one in a million' could follow some of them. But then he would at once make it for all. "It would, of course, be best if a woman could remain unmarried her whole life. But only one in a million would be able to do so. Desire for a marriage is a natural thing. There is nothing to be ashamed of in it. To believe marriage to be fall has an adverse effect on the mind and causes harm in many other ways. The best way is to treat marriage as a religious duty and to exercise the utmost self-restraint in the married state" (p. 173). Gandhiji often recollects the casual remarks by friends or relatives and uses them for the benefit of others when any such occasion arises. In the early days his mother must have enlightened him about one's rights. He suddenly recollects her words and puts forth a new idea : ". . . all rights to be

deserved and preserved came from duty well done. Thus the very right to live accrues to us only when we do the duty of citizenship of the world. From this one fundamental statement, perhaps it is easy enough to define the duties of man and woman and corresponding duty to be first performed. Every other right can be shown to be usurpation hardly worth fighting for. I wonder if it is too late to revise the idea of defining the rights of man apart from his duty" (p. 142).

The last pages of the dated items of the volume mark the prelude to the final transfer of power to India and hint at the 'seeds' sown by the vested interests that later grew as a tragedy that was to accompany the great triumph. When Mr. Evelyn Wrench tells Gandhiji Mr. Jinnah's conviction that Muslims will never be subservient to Hindu authority, he promptly denies it."The Muslim is as much an Indian as I am and of the same blood. There is no fundamental cleavage between Hindus and Mussalmans. We have lived in the same land as brothers for generations and what has been possible all these years will certainly be possible in the future" (p. 119). According to him, Jinnahsaheb resorts unconsciously to untruth and speaks as a disappointed man does in order to maintain his view at any cost" (pp. 118-9).

Gandhiji was a firm believer in Hindu-Muslim unity, removal of untouchability and efficacy of the charkha. These formed part of his constructive programme. Whenever he was free from political life he used to spend most of his time in propagating or implementing the constructive programme. The present volume also takes the reader to the scene of this programme. According to him, "to live, man primarily requires two things – food and clothing. And the means to solve the problem are simple. One way is to accept gifts. But begging never helps the poor to solve their problem. On the contrary, they lose their spirit and become weak and indolent. Another way is to take up a job. But service, too, does not make one self-reliant. The third way is to produce the things one needs. There are two means of doing that : the charkha and the mill" (p. 175). But Gandhiji would prove supremacy of the charkha. Let us see how : "But if unfortunately for the country it is attacked by bombs, the first targets will be the mills and not the houses where the charkha is plied. If, when the mills are razed to the ground as a result of the bombing, the charkha and the *takli* are plying, we shall not feel helpless and the world will see that though India's mills had been reduced to ashes, she was still standing on her feet" (ibid.). The word 'bombing' here has a reference to 'possibility of a third world war'.

"If a third world war breaks out", says Gandhiji, "it is doubtful whether we shall not be dragged into it. But I leave that question aside, though I can say with confidence that if India only makes up her mind not only can she keep herself away from war but she has the strength to prove to the world the futility of war" (ibid.).

The third war never came but there had been aggressions here and there during the time of which Gandhiji was blamed in certain quarters for taking side with one and opposing the other country. By some, his views on non-violence were also questioned. Gandhiji had to explain his position time and again. "As a matter of fact, I wrote strongly against Japan's misdeeds as I did against those of Great Britain and I put down in writing the non-violent way of resisting Japan's aggression on India. Much more baseless is the charge about my 'agreement to the use of weapons in case of a brother-war between Hindustan and Pakistan'. My writings would show the contrary. My views against war and on non-violence remain just as strong as they ever were" (p. 169).

CWMG - C

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PREFACE

A few years ago, when the Government of India acquired a substantial collection of Gandhiji's letters to Hermann Kallenbach at an auction in South Africa, little did they realize that in the wealth thus brought home lay whole invaluable new world of Gandhiji hitherto not glimpsed by historiographers.

This volume is predominantly of Gandhiji's correspondence with Kallenbach, interspersed with letters to Millie and Henry Polak and some occasional letters to A. H. West. The addressees, as the reader may be aware, were among the principal non-Indian figures in the history of satyagraha in South Africa. The letters are a documentation of Gandhiji's intense humanism and tenacity, of voluble sentimentality and pious self-flagellation.

The beginning of the twentieth century, with which the volume opens transmuted Gandhiji, on the threshold of his fortieth year, filling him with the resolve that he should be more than a mere man. It was from this resolve that his well-known treatise, *Hind Swaraj,* was born.

With his chosen friend Kallenbach to share this resolve, Gandhiji opted for a life of simplicity and forged a charter of joint ideals with him, never forgetting the discipline that this early self-imposed austerity enjoined upon him. "Lead Kindly Light" became an important motto in verse for him, leading him in later years through the "encircling gloom" in the Indian sub-continent, to deliverance for his countrymen from foreign yoke. The burden of the song sung at the Satyagraha Ashram every Friday (from May 1932) became the burden of Gandhiji's life.

In June 1909, Gandhiji went on deputation to England in order to rouse public opinion in England about the status and condition of Indians reeling under the Draconian laws of Transvaal in South Africa. He firmly believed that the principal corollary to the success of negotiations with the British statesmen was "unadulterated passive resistance, that is, the sufferings of the people", and "that the suffering should, as time progresses, be mute and undemonstrative" (p. 18).

Supporting the *avant garde* movement in peaceful politics were Henry Polak, Kallenbach, A.H. West, C.F. Andrews and Rev.

Doke, to name a few European sympathizers who figure in this volume.

Of Andrews Gandhiji wrote to Kallenbach, "Andrews is a wonderful man, full of wonderful experiences" (p. 157), describing his role in carrying the negotiations forward "with all the spiritual force he possesses" (p. 158).

Recounting in 1946 to Norman Cliff of *News Chronicle* his first meeting with "Charlie" Andrews in South Africa, Gandhiji says, "Andrews found in me not only a live Hindu but a live Christian.... He said that he must at bottom remain a true Christian if he was a true Hindu and Muslim" (Vol. LXXXIV, p. 384).

Even as he threw himself into the £3 tax cause which "is the cause of the helpless and the dumb" (p. 155), Gandhiji busied himself with copious reading from the literature of the West, trying to integrate it into the philosophy of the East.

"You are a trustee. Nothing is yours" (p. 24), Gandhiji would often remind soul-partner Kallenbach, thus pinning him down to the spartan life. This insistence on self-denial and non-attachment grew so strong that he recalls having "thrown into the sea a pair of beautiful field-glasses because they were a constant bone of contention between a dear friend (Kallenbach) and myself" (Vol. XXXV, p. 42). Kallenbach submitted willingly to these tests and trials, seldom protesting. Such was the reciprocity of his affections for his friend. Yet, Gandhiji, with his penchant for self-analysis and scrupulous avoidance of susceptibility to praise and unquestioning surrender to his conclusions, was wont to point out, "Watch me . . . not with a friendly eye, but a highly critical and fault-finding eye" (p. 107).

Running through the letters to Kallenbach is the Gandhi-Kasturba story, told with complete openness, sometimes with love, sometimes with wounded pride, and at yet other times in sheer desperation. This was the Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi who while striving consciously towards an ideal, tried to carry those nearest to him along on this tough journey, be it Kasturba or Kallenbach.

"In my lonely journey through the world, you will be the last... to say good-bye to me" (p. 166), he would write to Kallenbach, unaware that the earnest fellow-traveller was to predecease him.

The journey was indeed long and lonely, as the letters reveal,

and all the harder for Gandhiji when he embarked upon it. Quite early in this voyage of self-discovery, he confessed to Kallenbach, with ill-concealed sentiment, "Devdas made me weep today as I have not wept for years" (p. 125), reporting a minor offence by this young son, of whose all-round growth he never ceased to be happy.

The first three months of 1914 engaged Gandhiji's mind and body considerably. Kasturba's illness during this period found him honing his skills as a nurse. One might perhaps see a touch of black humour in Gandhiji's preparedness for the death of Ba who, belying all expectations of her end (Gandhiji had actually made arrangements for her funeral!), revived miraculously (pp. 171 & 175), to be his partner in the new life for the next 30 years.

Ba's illness, however, did give Gandhiji "food for introspection and a review of the past" (p. 171). The swings of the pendulum in his moods *vis-a-vis* Kasturba provide new insights into their relationship as when he bares his soul to Kallenbach about Ba in whom he sees a combination of the devil and the divine, analysing "the real cause of the devil waking in her now and again." In the process of analysis he becomes the generous husband giving "the devil" her due, as it were : "Truly she has so far been my teacher. She teaches me . . . patience, forgiveness, greater need for sacrifice, for love and charity" (p. 182).

Gandhiji's world meanwhile was growing larger, stretching beyond the geographical boundaries of South Africa and the emotional bonds with Kallenbach. The motherland groaning under the weight of British imperialism beckoned to him and he had perforce to leave behind a struggle which he had been stewarding with astute vision.

Poverty of the kind he had not known awaited him on the Indian shores and of this he was to write later to Henry Polak, "To read of semi-starved millions was so different from seeing them" (p. 278).

"This is my India", he announced with fervour to Kallenbach from Ahmedabad in 1914, having just established the Kochrab Ashram there, "It may be my blind love . . . it gives me peace and happiness" (p. 212). But loving India took its toll of his energies, for he had to contend with formidable opposition at every step while he went about making 'reformist' changes in the Ashram.

Interestingly, though as time went by and as he moved more and

more towards self-realization and the attainment of *moksha,* the early authoritarianism yielded conversely to a qualified liberalism. Viewing woman as *vamangini* – the left side of the body – and the better half of man, he would now declare, "I do not think that dharma requires a wife to do everything her husband does" (Vol. XXX, p. 367).

For Kallenbach, Gandhiji was friend and companion, mother and mentor – all rolled into one. During his long moods of depression, either due to a bereavement or over the Jew-Arab impasse or on account of bouts of self-deprecation, Gandhiji cheered him with long and loving letters, often sending with them clippings from edifying writings such as from Carlyle, Ruskin and Tolstoy, along with his own guiding *mantra* : "one step enough for me" (pp. 10,209 & 245).

Part of the secret compact between the two friends was the way each addressed the other. Kallenbach, a couple of years younger than Gandhiji, was "Lower House" and Gandhiji "Upper House." Gandhiji abjured the sobriquet (p. 196) for a period during their separation after his departure for India in 1914 and resumed it in 1917 (p. 276), jubilant at having resurrected Kallenbach whom he had believed perhaps dead.

If with Kallenbach Gandhiji shared a rare intimacy, he bore an immense brotherly affection towards the Polaks – Henry and Millie– which was as abiding as it was stormy. Polak had rendered outstanding service in the cause of the Indians, both as a journalist piloting *Indian Opinion* and as an ambassador of goodwill mobilising the forces of opinion in England in favour of India. While Gandhiji regarded Polak to be a "gem of the purest ray serene" who "can reflect those he loves" (p. 177), it became obvious to him as the years of struggle rolled by, that his protege would not, however, reflect his political philosophy. So sharply divided were the two, despite their "Bhai-Chhota Bhai" status to the end, that their letters grew progressively acerbic over the Congress and its policies in India.

"Henry may not agree with me on the Khilafat question" (p. 271), Gandhiji wrote to the Polak couple in 1919. Six months later, he expressed his eagerness to Henry to "endeavour to convert you to my view" (p. 273). But the desired conversion never came about and Gandhiji attributed it to the fact that Polak was "unable to feel the foul stench that modern Europe is filling the world with" (p. 273),

and, living as he did in the midst of the inferno", he could not "view things otherwise" (p. 301).

With Polak's wife, Millie, however, he shared a deep affinity which sustained itself through "the mighty tragedy" of the war years. Reposing firm faith in her capacity for sacrifice and for that of Polak as 'reformer', he wrote to her in 1918, "If India is to become the seat in the world of a mighty spiritual force, it would need to have international workers in her midst who are fired with spiritual zeal" (p. 260).

The dated section of the volume ends with a letter of December 1944 to Kallenbach, some three months before his death. Gandhiji had by then become sufficiently rooted in the *Bhagavad Gita* to view life and death with equanimity, and not to mourn over the separation of body from soul, be it of his dearest friend.

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PREFACE

The period covered by this, text-wise the last Volume (1903-1947) is almost as big as that by Volume Ninety-five (Supplementary-V) with the difference that the former contains letters written to close relatives while the latter has glimpses of the socio-political scenario also through which the country was passing, especially during 1946-7. Material for the present Volume has been obtained chiefly from two sources—the Sumitra Kulkarni Papers made available by the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi, and the papers received from the Sabarmati Sangrahalaya, Ahmedabad. Letters received from the former are addressed to son Ramdas and his family members, wife Nirmala (Nimu), daughters Sumitra (Sumi) and Usha (Ushi), and son Kanam (Kanu). The latter again contains letters written mostly to family members, viz., cousins Chhaganlal, Maganlal, Narandas and Jamnadas, nephew Prabhudas and his wife Amba. Among his relatives, Gandhiji's position is worth noticing. He can be seen advising Prabhudas to look upon his ailment "as a trustee of his body" and while doing what he can about it, to stop worrying (p. 176). In a letter to Keshav, he says : "I have noticed an artificiality in you. Be generous and make others happy, share their sorrows, sacrifice your own interests for the sake of others, make such sacrifices cheerfully and find your happiness in self-sacrifice. All these are the qualities of a *brahmachari's* character" (p. 44).

Gandhiji criticizes wickedness and not the wicked. But he knows what criticism is. "Calling a crow black is not criticism of the crow but calling a swan black is criticism. It is not a criticism of Yudhishthira when we say that he lied once in his life, but to call him a coward because he did not rescue Draupadi when she was being derobed, is his criticism" (p. 117).

He wanted to make his associates responsible persons in every field. Whether it is home or office or ashram, one has to observe perfect discipline. In money-matters too, he insisted on a fool-proof system of keeping a detailed account. "Even if the money is one's own, one should keep a detailed account of every *kori* spent, for the fact is that nothing in this world is our own. It is our daily experience that everything belongs to God. We should, therefore, be very reasonable in the way we use things and spend our money. He who lives in this way would keep for his own satisfaction an account of every *pie* spent by him" (p. 23).

If there is breach of discipline, there is no need to be lenient to the offender. "It will not do if you remain lenient. To be lenient with Ratilal is to be cruel to him. To be strict with him is kindness. What would have happened if the doctor had made an incision on my stomach lightly? Or, how effective would

be a person who pierces the earlobes if he pricked the needle lightly" (p. 56). One has to be vigilant and strict with persons who seem to be incorrigible. Gandhiji advises Chhaganlal to deal with Ramachandra in a strict but frank manner. "Even with Ramachandra, be strict as the situation demands and be frank. After you have shown your generosity to the full, he should realise what his shortcomings are (pp. 56-7).

And when it came to Chhaganlal himself, whom Gandhiji had brought up like a son, he also was not spared. It was found that Chhaganlal had been engaged in a series of petty larcenies over the years. This was detected quite incidentally by the Secretary of the Ashram. Gandhiji was deeply pained by it and wrote about it in *Navajivan.* Chhaganlal at first tried to conceal the guilt, but finally left the Ashram. Gandhiji wrote to Prabhudas : "If Chhaganlal is to be purified, all of you will have to help him in that. At present, he is crying his heart out. That is not sincere repentance. There is no place for tears in genuine repentance. Why mourn for the body you have laid aside? One should rather rejoice in the new body. Getting rid of our impurity, we should feel lighter" (p. 98).

Gandhiji wanted that the organisation of the society should be such that everyone got 'social work' to do. But it was not always so. The young preferred work of their liking. What then was Gandhiji to tell them? He says, "To a great extent, cleaning toilets is work for us because we dislike doing it. So another definition of work is engaging in an activity which we dislike. This definition is relevant at the moment" (p. 45).

A young man can work only if he is healthy. If one wants to be healthy, one should know about one's diet And with his dietetic experiments to back him, Gandhiji was always ready to guide them: ". . . one can preserve one's strength even without milk. . . . Our normal food is full of rituals and takes a whole day to eat. To cling to that food is attachment. Living on fruit is the best. . . . Experience suggests that as we start leading a simple life and as we become firm in our search for self- realization, our craving for variety in food dwindles" (pp. 7-9). Our normal food is not only full of rituals but at times full of dogmas too. How then, could he convince the young of what was good for their health? Gandhiji did it quite often, clearly and convincingly. "Beetroot", he says, "contains a kind of sugar and therefore to some extent it is healthy. It has a purgative value too. Beetroot has to be boiled well. It is a false notion that the vegetables and fruits which are red in colour have *rajoguna.* Onions, in spite of being white, definitely have *rajoguna.* Tomatoes, melons, red grapes, in spite of being red are *satvik.* If those who practise yoga hold contrary views, I would like to know the reasons" (p. 52). Gandhiji thus pleads for a good physical and spiritual health. But what is needed most is a balanced state of mind. He does not forget this and says, "Thinking overmuch is not a good sign. Just as it is a sign of disease if

the heart-beat is too slow or too fast, so is it with the mind. To be equiminded, one has to avoid being both. It is a rather unusual state of mind" (p. 57). In fact it was the mind which understood things around it, judged situations and solved problems. If we cannot solve our problems, we cannot serve our dharma in right earnest. "We can be said to have served our dharma as we know it, to the best of our ability, only when we learn to solve our problems ourselves" (p. 65).

Gandhiji was a man of faith. On certain occasions, he would decide matters on the dictates of his inner voice. But in all his social activities, he never parted company with his intellect. Spinning, for example, was a *yajna* to Gandhiji. And for the performance of this great *yajna,* he glorified its instrument, viz., the spinning-wheel, to an extent that this simple instrument became an object of a big philosophy. In a letter to Mazharul Haque, Gandhiji persuades him to realise the whole truth underlying the charkha. "There is no alternative to Hindu-Muslim unity other than charkha. It alone is the saviour of the minorities. There is no other weapon of non-violence except this. And there is no other way to find a solution to the problem of poverty in India . . ." (p. 262). Not only did he propagate the efficacy of spinning-wheel throughout the country, he constantly sought to make changes in its existing designs for efficiency and speed. One such model designed by Prabhudas was named by Gandhiji 'Magan Spinning-wheel' (p. 134). He was the Master who could spiritualise the day-to-day experiences of the world and transform such spiritual experiences as those of fasting and prayer into a science (p. 260).

This was what he thought about the spinning-wheel. But on the use of other tools, Gandhiji had different ideas from time to time. Once Maganlal Gandhi requested him to put down in writing his views on agriculture and machine tools. Gandhiji's reply was : "I do not find any violation of the principle in keeping all the tools you have referred to. We may keep them when we feel that they are necessary. But I feel that we do not have the capacity to keep and use them at the present moment. When we do not have the strength to cope with the work we have in hand, why should we take up other activities? Therefore, my reply would be that for saving time on the current activities, we may make use of the tools which are not beyond our means" (p. 47).

In this Volume, Gandhiji can be seen in different shades. There are references to some significant events also which make it an important one. We find Gandhiji undertaking a two-week fast for Hindu-Muslim unity (p. 43). He undertook a five-day fast for atonement of the Chauri Chaura crime. "Crimes", he says, "will certainly take place in this world. We are no doubt responsible for them but they are an indirect responsibility. However, there are certain crimes for which we are directly responsible. We have but to atone for those. One of such crimes is that of Chauri Chaura. So I have decided to fast till Saturday morning" (p. 39).

During June 1917, Gandhiji had been in Champaran in Bihar where indigo peasants had been agitating for quite some time. The Lt. Governor of Bihar agreed to appoint an Official Committee to inquire into the grievances of the peasants who were compelled to cultivate indigo on 3/20th of the land rented to them by the European indigo planters. Gandhiji was appointed a member of the Committee as a representative of the peasants (p. 21).

Thus, but for this Volume, we would have lost a great treasure, a number of priceless gems.

CWMG - C

FOREWORD

The main series of The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi comprises ninety volumes running to well over 43,000 pages of text. Five supplementary volumes, incorporating material that came in too late for inclusion in the right place in the right volume, are under preparation. This by no means exhausts Gandhiji's writings. There must still be numerous letters, notes and memoranda lying untraced in various collections, official and private. Many other items may never see the light of day, the addressees being dead and their heirs being unknown.

Thus some small corners of the huge mass of utterances that make up the Gandhian corpus remain unexplored. However, the mountain as a whole is now lit up and open for minute inspection. And here the difficulty arises from the sheer expanse and the tangled nature of the terrain. It is not easy for one to find one's way unaided and discover what one is looking for. How to pick the needed needles hidden somewhere in these ninety haystacks? It is to aid the earnest seeker in this predicament that this Index has been devised and compiled.

The aim is to enable the student to locate all the significant references to a topic and to help him to view them in their mutual relation and in their bearing on a dominant theme. The frequency and impact of such statements provide a measure of Gandhi's preoccupation with any theme and illustrate his method of thinking and acting in concrete situations. Mere mentions of any fact or subject so numerous that the listing of them would help no reader are left unnoticed.

The selected references are grouped together under general heads and classified in appropriate ways. Thus, under the main entry AHIMSA, one sub-entry reads: "and killing of harmful animals", followed by a list of volumes and pages. To guide the reader to more specific information, a cross-reference draws attention to sub-entries under DOGS and SNAKES.

At page IX of this volume, a Table is given showing the time-span covered by each volume. Where the topic is concerned with a political or social movement, the Table will help the student to place the pronouncement quickly in its historical context and to trace the changes in Gandhiji's attitudes to systems and institutions in response to changing situations. Gandhiji was not merely the

unquestioned leader of great political and social movements; he was the bearer of a message transcending history and circumstance. His main mission was to introduce a moral and spiritual dimension into individual and social thinking and behaviour. For the understanding of this universal and eternal message, the Table provides little help. But it does serve a purpose by showing how Gandhiji's "inconsistencies" appear only among statements made *ad hoc et ad hominem*.

If the Index is not technically perfect, it is because the material itself is amorphous, lacks contours and is not amenable to precise treatment. In this improvisation we have tried our best to encourage and help the student to understand Gandhiji's message and his humane and effective method of dealing with persons and situations. If this succeeds in inducing the general reader and the serious scholar to study Gandhiji's words and ways in greater depth and detail, we shall feel amply rewarded.

This is an Index of Subjects. It is proposed to follow it up with an Index of Persons. The present Index includes references to books, but in listing the names of persons mentioned as historical or literary figures, we have had to be selective though not (we hope) arbitrary.

Altogether the Index has over 4,000 entries, further sub-divided into about 9,000 sub-entries.

The Index has been thoughtfully designed and laboriously built up brick by brick, by a special unit comprising Shri J. P. Uniyal, Deputy Chief Editor, and Shrimati Anjani Bhushan and Kumari Sneh Rai, Asst. Editors. Much help was also rendered by Shri L. S. Rengarajan, Deputy Director. The sustained care and devotion they brought to bear on this complicated task are reflected in the clarity and helpfulness which the intelligent user will find in the entries and sub-entries and in their arrangement.

K. SWAMINATHAN

CWMG - C

FOREWORD

This volume of Index of Persons is a sequel to the already published Index of Subjects. The volume seeks to bring together names of persons running through over 43,000 pages of text in the corpus of ninety volumes of *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*. Scanning individual indexes of ninety volumes for references to people is no mean task. The explicit purpose, therefore, of this tome is to furnish in one consolidated guided source, information on people addressed or mentioned by Gandhiji.

Some names of historical personalities and literary figures of the past which have been included in the Index of Subjects do not find mention here. For example, names of characters in *Ramayana* like Sita and Rama and of literary figures like Shakespeare and Kalidasa, do not figure in the Index of Persons. Also, entries from the five supplementary volumes could not be incorporated as they were not ready at the time this Index was being compiled. Names occurring in footnotes and addresses in letters have been ignored for the sake of brevity.

Though every attempt has been made to identify the names correctly and group entries accordingly, at times information as to the exact identity of a person was not available. In such cases, the names, though similar, have been indexed separately. For example, there are references to ten 'Kamalas' who could not be identified. They all figure separately in this Index, exceptions having been made only in cases where evidence indicated otherwise.

In arranging the names in alphabetical order, the surname has been followed in general. However, in some cases where the same surname in an Indian language is spelt differently in English, like Dutt, Datta or Dutta, only one spelling has been retained. A list of variant spellings of names figuring in the volumes and the spellings preferred, is given at page VII for the readers' convenience.

In cases where surnames are not used at all, the last part of the name has been taken into account for alphabetical arrangement, e. g., Rajendra Prasad has been placed under 'Prasad'. In cases where this has not been possible or where it would have led to confusion, the full name has been given such as 'Jayaprakash Narayan'. In the case of South Indian names, the last name has

usually been treated as surname but it has not been possible to follow this rule in all cases. Again, in the case of Muslim names, either part of the name has been placed first, cross-references to other variations having been given where considered necessary.

Though names have been given in alphabetical order according to the actual name of a person, sometimes the more widely known form of the name has been preferred. For example, Gandhiji's Secretary Pyarelal's name figures as 'Pyarelal' and not as 'Nayyar, Pyarelal' though a cross reference has been given under 'Nayyar'. Similarly, 'Madeleine Slade' has been indexed as 'Mirabehn' which was her popular Indian name and a cross-reference has been given under 'Slade, Madeleine'.

In cases where the identity of a person could not be established for lack of sufficient evidence, the fact has been indicated within brackets. Biographical information with some entries has been provided in order to assist the reader in distinguishing and identifying people having similar names.

At page XII of this volume, a Table is given showing the time span covered by each of the ninety volumes. The Table will help the reader in placing the reference quickly in its historical context and determining the period of time when a person was in contact with Gandhiji.

This index has been compiled by a special unit comprising Shri J. P. Uniyal, Deputy Chief Editor, Shrimati Anjani Bhushan and Kumari Sneh Rai, Assistant Editors, with occasional assistance in the early stages of the work, by Shrimati Usha Kiran Goel, Assistant Editor.

It is hoped that punctilious care and effort of years which have gone into this compilation will benefit users of this comprehensive index, through easy and accurate directions, in locating references to persons in the CWMG volumes.

A. A. SHIROMANY

CWMG – KS – EDITION – 1956-1994: VOLUMES – I (1) TO C (100) (ENGLISH SERIES) :
ELECTRONIC MASTER COPY REPRODUCED FROM THE FOLLOWING EDITIONS :

VOLUME NO.	PERIOD COVERED	EDITION USED
001 - I	1884 – June 4, 1896	*Second revised edition: January 1969* (*Māgha 1890*)
	{**EDITIONS NOT USED** *First edition: January 26, 1958* (*Māgha 6, 1879*) *Reprinted: August 1958* (*Srāvana 1880*)}	
002 - II	May 26, 1896 – December 17, 1897	*Second Edition: October 1976* (*Asvina 1898*)
	{EDITION NOT USED *First Edition: January 1959* (*Pausa 1880*)}	
003 – III	February 28, 1898 – October 1, 1903	*Second Revised Edition: June 1979* (*Jyaishtha 1901*)
	{EDITION NOT USED *First Edition: April 1960* (*Chaitra 1882*)}	

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VOLUME NO.	PERIOD COVERED	EDITION USED
004 – IV	October 8, 1903 – June 30, 1905	*August 1960* (*Bhādrapad 1882*)
005 – V	July 1, 1905 – October 20, 1906	*June 1961* (*Asādha 1883*)
006 – VI	October 20, 1906 – May 30, 1907	*December 1961* (*Pausa 1883*)
007 – VII	June 1, 1907 – December 31, 1907	*July 1962* (*Asādha 1884*)
008 – VIII	January 3, 1908 – August 30, 1908	*December 1962* (*Agrahāyan 1884*)
009 – IX	September 1, 1908 – November 12, 1909	*April 1963* (*Vaisākh 1885*)
010 – X	November 18, 1909 – March 31, 1911	*September 1963* (*Bhādra 1885*)
011 – XI	April 1, 1911 – March 29, 1913	*March 1964* (*Chaitra 1886*)
012 – XII	April 1, 1913 – December 23, 1914	*August 1964* (*Shrāvana 1886*)

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CWMG – KS – EDITION – 1956-1994: VOLUMES – I (1) TO C (100) (ENGLISH SERIES) :
ELECTRONIC MASTER COPY REPRODUCED FROM THE FOLLOWING EDITIONS :

VOLUME NO.	PERIOD COVERED	EDITION USED
013 – XIII	January 9, 1915 – October 4, 1917	*November 1964* (*Agrahāyana 1886*)
014 – XIV	October 9, 1917 – July 31, 1918	*March 1965* (*Phālguna 1886*)
015 - XV	August 1, 1918 – On or after July 30, 1919	*March 1965* (*Phālguna 1886*)
016 – XVI	Before August 2, 1919 – January 31, 1920	*July 1965* (*Shrāvana 1887*)
017 – XVII	February 1, 1920 – Before July, 1920	*September 1965* (*Ashvina 1887*)
018 – XVIII	July 1920 – November 17, 1920	*November1965* (*Agrahāyana 1888*)
019 – XIX	November 19, 1920 – April 13, 1921	*March 1966* (*Phālguna 1888*)
020 – XX	April 15, 1921 – August 19, 1921	*May 1966* (*Vaisākha 1888*)
021 – XXI	August 21, 1921 – On or after December 14, 1921	*August 1966* (*Bhādra 1888*)
022 – XXII	December 15, 1921 – March 2, 1922	*November 1966* (*Agrahāyana 1888*)
023 – XXIII	March 4, 1922 – May 7, 1924	*March 1967* (*Chaitra 1889*)
024 – XXIV	May 8, 1924 – August 15, 1924	*March 1967* (*Chaitra 1889*)
025 – XXV	August 16, 1924 – January 15, 1925	*May 1967* (*Vaisākh 1889*)
026 – XXVI	January 16, 1925 – April 30, 1925	*November 1967* (*Agrahāyana 1889*)
027 – XXVII	May 1, 1925 – July 31, 1925	*March 1968* (*Phālguna 1889*)
028 – XXVIII	Before August 1, 1925 – November 22, 1925	*April 1968* (*Chaitra 1890*)

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VOLUME NO.	PERIOD COVERED	EDITION USED
029 – XXIX	November 22, 1925 – February 10, 1926	*June 1968* (*Jyaistha 1890*)
030 – XXX	February 11, 1926 – June 14, 1926	*September 1968* (*Asvina 1890*)
031 – XXXI	June 15, 1926 – November 4, 1926	*February 1969* (*Māgha 1890*)
032 – XXXII	November 5, 1926 – January 20, 1927	*April 1969* (*Chaitra 1891*)
033 – XXXIII	January 21, 1927 – June 15, 1927	*May 1969* (*Vaisākha 1891*)
034 – XXXIV	After June 15, 1927 – September 15, 1927	*June 1969* (*Asādha 1891*)
035 – XXXV	September 16, 1927 – January 31, 1928	*August 1969* (*Srāvana 1891*)
036 – XXXVI	February 1, 1928 – June 30, 1928	*January 1970* (*Māgha 1891*)
037 – XXXVII	July 1, 1928 – October 31, 1928	*February 1970* (*Māgha 1891*)
038 – XXXVIII	November 1, 1928 – February 3, 1929	*March 1970* (*Phālguna 1891*)
039 – XXXIX	February 3, 1929 – February 14, 1929	*September 1970 (Bhādra 1892)*
040 – XL	On or after February 15, 1929 – May 31, 1929	*September 1970 (Bhādra 1892)*
041 – XLI	June 2, 1929 – October 15, 1929	*October 1970 (Asvina 1892)*
042 – XLII	October 16, 1929 – February 28, 1930	*December 1970 (Agrahāyana 1892)*
043 – XLIII	March 2, 1930 – June 30, 1930	*January 1971 (Pausa 1892)*
044 – XLIV	July 1, 1930 – December 15, 1930	*May 1971 (Vaisākha 1893)*

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045 – XLV	December 13/16, 1930 – April 15, 1931	*July 1971* (*Asādha 1893*)
046 – XLVI	April 16, 1931 – June 17, 1931	*August 1971* (*Srāvana 1893*)
047 – XLVII	June 18, 1931 – September 11, 1931	*September 1971* (*Bhādra 1893*)
048 – XLVIII	September 12, 1931 – January 3, 1932	*November 1971* (*Agrahāyana 1893*)
049 – XLIX	January 4, 1932 – May 30, 1932	*January 1972* (*Pausa 1893*)
050 – L	June 1, 1932 – August 31, 1932	*March 1972* (*Chaitra 1894*)
051 – LI	September 1, 1932 – November 15, 1932	*August 1972* (*Bhādra 1894*)
052 – LII	November 16, 1932 – January 10, 1933	*October 1972* (*Asvina 1894*)
053 – LIII	January 11, 1933 – March 5, 1933	*December 1972* (*Pausa 1894*)
054 – LIV	March 6, 1933 – April 22, 1933	*April 1973* (*Chaitra 1895*)
055 – LV	April 23, 1933 – September 15, 1933	*August 1973* (*Bhādra 1895*)
056 – LVI	September 16, 1933 – January 15, 1934	*November 1973* (*Kārtika 1895*)
057 – LVII	January 16, 1934 – May 17, 1934	*January 1974* (*Pausa 1895*)
058 – LVIII	May 18, 1934 – September 15, 1934	*March 1974* (*Chaitra 1896*)
059 – LIX	September 16, 1934 – December 15, 1934	*November 1974* (*Kartika 1896*)
060 – LX	December 16, 1934 – April 24, 1935	*December 1974* (*Agrahāyana 1896*)

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061 - LXI	April 25, 1935 – September 30, 1935	*May 1975* (*Vaisākha 1897*)
062 – LXII	October 1, 1935 – May 31, 1936	*October 1975* (*Asvina 1897*)
063 – LXIII	June 1, 1936 – November 2, 1936	*January 1976* (*Māgha 1897*)
064 – LXIV	November 3, 1936 – March 14, 1937	*April 1976* (*Chaitra 1898*)
065 – LXV	March 15, 1937 – July 31, 1937	*July 1976* (*Asādha 1898*)
066 – LXVI	August 1, 1937 – March 31, 1938	*October 1976* (*Asvina 1898*)
067 – LXVII	April 1, 1938 – October 14, 1938	*December 1976* (*Pausa 1898*)
068 – LXVIII	Before October 15, 1938 – February 28, 1939	*January 1977* (*Māgha 1898*)
069 – LXIX	March 1, 1939 – July 15, 1939	*July 1977* (*Asādha 1899*)
070 – LXX	July 16, 1939 – November 30, 1939	*September 1977* (*Bhādra 1899*)
071 – LXXI	December 1, 1939 – April 15, 1940	*January 1978* (*Pausa 1899*)
072 – LXXII	April 16, 1940 – September 11, 1940	*March 1978* (*Phālguna 1899*)
073 – LXXIII	September 12, 1940 – April 15, 1941	*April 1978* (*Chaitra 1900*)
074 – LXXIV	April 16, 1941 – October 10, 1941	*June 1978* (*Jyaistha 1900*)
075 – LXXV	October 11, 1941 – March 31, 1942	*January 1979* (*Māgha 1900*)
076 – LXXVI	April 1, 1942 – December 17, 1942	*July 1979* (*Asādha 1901*)

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077 – LXXVII	December 17, 1942 – July 31, 1944	*October 1979* (*Asvina 1901*)
078 – LXXVIII	August 1, 1944 – December 31, 1944	*December 1979* (*Pausa 1901*)
079 – LXXIX	January 1, 1945 – April 24, 1945	*May 1980* (*Vaisākha 1902*)
080 – LXXX	April 25, 1945 – July 16, 1945	*September 1980* (*Asvina 1902*)
081 – LXXXI	July 17, 1945 – October 31, 1945	*September 1980* (*Asvina 1902*)
082 – LXXXII	November 1, 1945 – January 19, 1946	*September 1980* (*Asvina 1902*)
083 – LXXXIII	January 20, 1946 – April 13, 1946	*September 1981* (*Asvina 1903*)
084 – LXXXIV	April 14, 1946 – July 15, 1946	*November 1981* (*Kārtika 1903*)
085 – LXXXV	July 16, 1946 – October 20, 1946	*February 1982* (*Māgha 1903*)
086 – LXXXVI	October 21, 1946 – February 20, 1947	*August 1982* (*Srāvana 1904*)
087 – LXXXVII	February 21, 1947 – May 24, 1947	*February 1983* (*Māgha 1904*)
088 – LXXXVIII	May 25, 1947 – July 31, 1947	*May 1983* (*Vaisākha 1905*)
089 – LXXXIX	August 1, 1947 – November 10, 1947	*September 1983* (*Asvina 1905*)
090 – XC	November 11, 1947 – January 30, 1948	*April 1984* (*Vaisākha 1906*)
SUPPLEMENTARY VOLUME I		
091 – XCI	1894 – January 14, 1929	*April 1989 (Chaitra 1911)*

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VOLUME NO.	PERIOD COVERED	EDITION USED
SUPPLEMENTARY VOLUME II 092 – XCII	January 13, 1929 – December 21, 1934	*June 1991* (*Asādha 1913*)
SUPPLEMENTARY VOLUME III 093 – XCIII	January 16, 1935 – July 15, 1941	*March 1993* (*Phālguna 1914*)
SUPPLEMENTARY VOLUME IV 094 – XCIV	July 18, 1941 – April 1947	*August 1994 (Bhādrapad 1916)*
SUPPLEMENTARY VOLUME V 095 – XCV	June 29, 1900 – After December 25, 1947, and without dates	*August 1994* (*Bhādrapad 1916*)
SUPPLEMENTARY VOLUME VI 096 – XCVI	July 3, 1905 – December 3, 1944, and without dates	*August 1994* (*Bhādrapad 1916*)
SUPPLEMENTARY VOLUME VII 097 – XCVII	November 25, 1903 – April 22, 1947, and without dates	*August 1994* (*Bhādrapad 1916*)
INDEX OF SUBJECTS 098 – XCVIII	Index of Subjects for volumes upto XC	*April 1988* (*Vaisākha 1910*)
INDEX OF PERSONS 099 – XCIX	Index of Persons for volumes upto XC	*December 1992* (*Pausa 1914*)
PREFACES 100 – C	Compilation of Prefaces as written for respective volumes	* SEE SPECIAL REMARK BELOW

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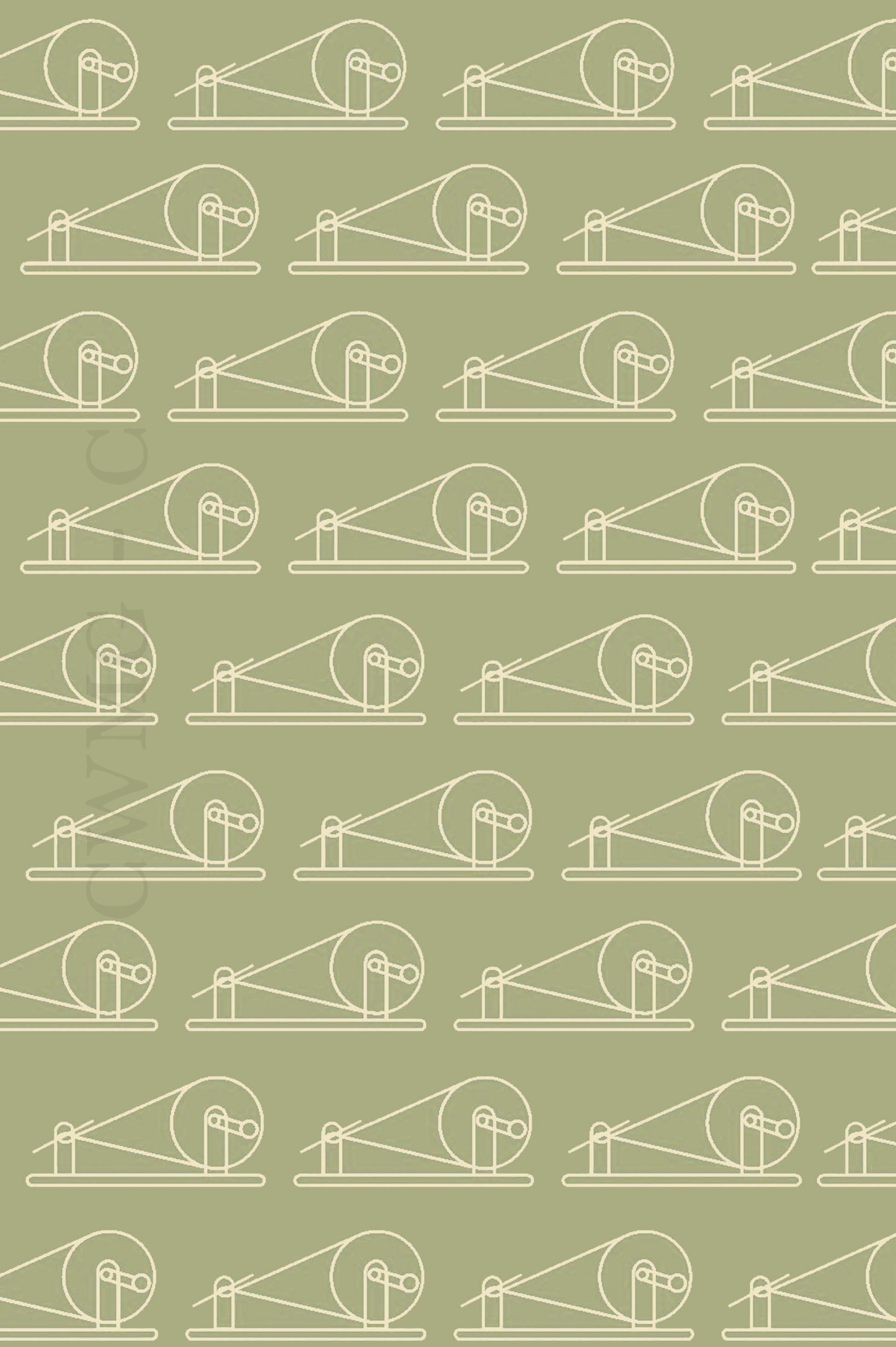
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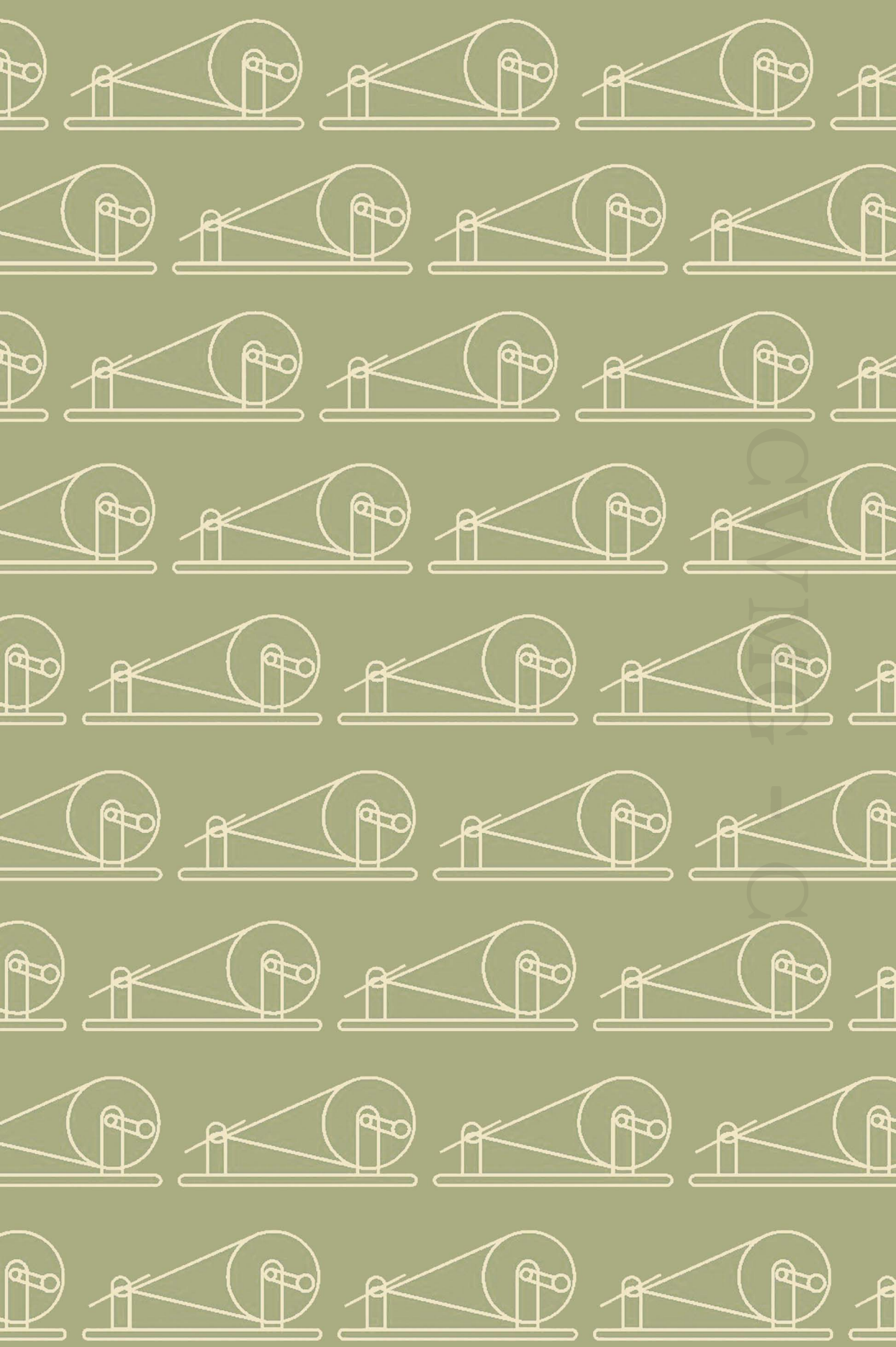
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