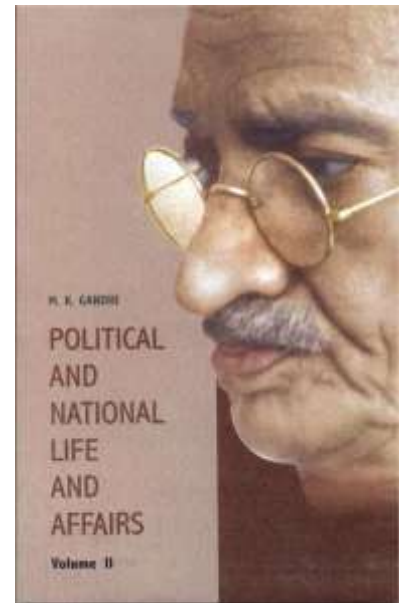


Political and National Life and Affairs – Volume II

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First Published: 1967



Printed and Published by:
Jitendra T. Desai
Navajivan Mudranalaya,
Ahmedabad 380014 (India)

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A popular State can never act in advance of public opinion. 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.

–M. K. Gandhi

Young India, 30-7-'31, p. 199

POLITICAL AND NATIONAL LIFE AND AFFAIRS
VOLUME II

TO THE READER

I would like to say to the diligent reader of my writings and to others who are interested in them that I am not at all concerned with appearing to be consistent. In my search after Truth I have discarded many ideas and learnt many new things. Old as I am in age, I have no feeling that I have ceased to grow inwardly or that my growth will stop at the dissolution of the flesh. What I am concerned with is my readiness to obey the call of Truth, my God, from moment to moment and, therefore, when anybody finds any inconsistency between any two writings of mine, if he has still faith in my sanity, he would do well to choose the later of the two on the same subject.

Harijan, 29-4-1933, p, 2

M. K. GANDHI

SECTION ONE: HEALTHY BODY POLITIC

PART I: IN POWER SERVICE

1. SILENT SERVICE

(From paragraphs in the columns of "Notes" which appeared under the title "The True Spirit")

There should be no rivalry among workers for offices of honour. All must aim at becoming the most efficient workers. But all cannot possibly be elected to offices of honour if they also carry heavy responsibility with it. The best way is for every one to be ready to stand aside, and let the others be elected. Thus it is possible to avoid bitterness, unhealthy rivalry and heart burning. The best service is certainly possible, even though one may never hold any office. Indeed the best workers all the world over are generally the most silent.

Young India, 29-6-'21, p. 201 at p. 203

2. ALL FELLOW-WORKERS

(Extract from "Majli and Jail Treatment" which appeared in "Notes")

How nice ... it would be if every one of us could sincerely say to himself: "I am not worth anything"! Then we would all be fellow-servants and fellow-workers among whom the only competition would be to do the maximum of work without the slightest desire for gaining prominence or publicity Swaraj could then be won and run without any difficulty Innumerable difficulties arise when every one wants to lead and advise and nobody wants to work.

Young India, 3-4-'24, p. 110 at p. III

3. POWER THAT ENNOBLES AND POWER THAT CORRUPTS

Power that comes from service faithfully rendered ennobles. Power that is sought in the name of service and can only be obtained by a majority of votes is a delusion and a snare to be avoided.

Young India, 11-9-'24, p. 300 at p. 301 4

4. A TRUE CONGRESSMAN

I

"You do not know what we (Congressmen) are. I will tell you. One well-known Congressman went to a comfortable house. He was not invited there. He had not written either to the owner. On reaching there he was asked by the owner, 'Where are you going to stay?' This Congressman said, 'Here of course, where else do you think?' The owner was unprepared for this favour. But he had to make the best of the job though he never omitted to speak about the meanness of this guest who had imposed himself upon him. He even made opportunities for delicately insulting this Congressman who was too far gone to notice the insults. I must tell you that the unwilling host was not a Congressman."

II

"Another Congressman imposed himself on a Congress worker without notice. He had a large company with him and felt mightily offended when he could not get all the convenience that he had expected. We Congressmen have come to think so much of ourselves that we presume we have a right to demand and receive the best service without the least cost."

These incidents were related to me by an earnest Congress worker with so much pain that I thought I should place them on record and draw a moral from them. Let no one, however, wear the cap unless it fits him. The incidents have been purposefully defaced. I do not know the other side. No one therefore need waste his time in a vain effort to identify them.

The thing is to avoid copying examples quoted. A Congressman to be true must be above suspicion. Let him remember that he is out to gain Swaraj by 'legitimate and peaceful means'. We have been a long time getting it. The obvious inference is that we have not at all adopted even among our mutual intercourse means that can bear scrutiny. Indeed a correspondent once suggested that whilst we must be truthful and peaceful towards opponents, we need not be that in our mutual dealings. But experience shows that we cannot be truthful and peaceful on some occasions and for some people only, if we are not so on all occasions. And if we will not be considerate towards one another, we shall not be considerate to the world outside. All the prestige acquired by the Congress will be gone if we are not scrupulously clean in our dealings within or without in every detail. Pounds will take care of themselves, if we could but take care of the pennies.

A true Congressman is a true servant. He ever gives, never wants service. He is easily satisfied so long as his own comfort is concerned. He is always content to take a back seat. He is never communal or provincial. His country is his paramount consideration. He is brave to a fault because he has shed all earthly ambition, fear of Death himself. And he is generous because he is brave, forgiving because he is humble and conscious of his own failings and limitations. If such Congressmen are rare, Swaraj is far off and we must revise our creed. The fact that we have not got Swaraj as yet is proof presumptive that we have not as many true Congressmen as we want. Be that, however as it may, if I have placed on record the ugly incidents which can be multiplied, I must bear grateful testimony to the fact that there are nameless Congressmen no doubt few today but daily growing in number who fulfil all the tests I have mentioned. They are unknown to fame. It is well that they are. Work will be impossible if they wanted to shine in the limelight and expected honourable mention in Congress dispatches. Those who obtain even Victoria Crosses are by no means and necessarily always the bravest humanitarians. To the end of time the real heroes of the world will be never known. Their deeds remain imperishable. They are their own reward. Such men are the real scavengers without whom

the earth will be a plague spot not worth living in. It has been my lot to meet such men and women in the Congress ranks. But for them the Congress will not be an institution to which it would be a pride to belong. There is no doubt at the present moment a hunt for offices and an unhealthy competition to capture the Congress. It is a disease which has come to the surface and it is bound to give place in the course of time to health. That will not happen if the Congress becomes anything but an institution for hard, honest and selfless toil.

Let the Congress be ever so democratic, but democracy must not be brag and bluster, a passport to receiving service from people. If *vox populi* is to be *vox dei* it must be the voice of honesty, bravery, gentleness, humility and complete self-sacrifice. A woman is to guide the Congress next year. Woman is nothing if she is not self-sacrifice and purify personified. Let us men and women of the Congress humble ourselves, purify our hearts and be worthy representatives of the dumb millions.

Young India, 19-11-'25, p. 400.

5. NOT FOR SELF

(Originally appeared in "Notes" under the title "All for Thee")

A kind Tamil friend sends me for my day of silence quotations that do one's soul good to read. I do not give in *Young India* quotations except when there is an association about them and they are relevant. In the collection the friend has sent me I find the following very appropriate verses from George Herbert:

"Teach me, my God and King,
In all things Thee to see,
And what I do in anything,
To do it as for Thee!
A servant with this clause
Makes drudgery divine;
Who Sweeps a room for Thy laws,
Makes that and the action fine."

I give one more equally appropriate. It is from Ruskin:

"When we build, let it be such a work as our descendants will thank us for; and let us think, as we lay stone on stone, that a time is to come when stones will be ' held sacred because our hands have touched them, and that men will say as they look upon them, see! this our forefathers did for us."

Public life would be much purer than it is if we would do everything in the name of King of kings and not for self but for posterity.

Young India, 11-11-'26, p. 394

6. STORM SIGNALS

The Sholapur affair and the labour unrest in Cawnpore and Ahmedabad show how uncertain is the Congress control over forces of disorder. Tribes called criminal cannot be dealt with radically differently from the past practice without ascertaining how they will behave. One difference can certainly be made at once. They may not be treated as criminals to be dreaded and shunned, but efforts should be made to brother them and bring them under the national influence. It is said that the red flag men (communists) have been at work among the men in the Sholapur settlement. Are they Congressmen? If they are, why are they not found by the side of the Congressmen who are Ministers at the wish of the Congress? If they are not Congressmen, do they seek to destroy the Congress influence and prestige? If they are not Congressmen and do seek to destroy the Congress prestige, why have Congressmen been unable to reach these tribes and make them proof against the blandishments of those who would exploit their traditional violent tendencies, so-called or real?

Why are we living in Ahmedabad and Cawnpore in perpetual dread of lightning or unauthorized strikes? Is the Congress unable to influence organized labour in the right direction? We may not distrust Government notices issued in the provinces administered by Congress Ministers. It will not do to belittle their notices as we used to treat the irresponsible Government's notices. If we distrust Congress Ministers or are dissatisfied with them, they can be dismissed

without ceremony. But while they are permitted to remain in office, their notices and appeals should receive the full-hearted support of all Congressmen.

On no other condition can the holding of offices by Congressmen be justified. If in spite of honest effort by Congressmen, forces of disorder cannot be brought under control without the assistance of the police and the military, in my opinion, acceptance by the Congress of the burden of office loses all force and meaning, and sooner the Ministers are withdrawn, the better it would be for the Congress and its struggle to achieve complete independence.

My hope is that the outbreak in the Sholapur settlement and the labour unrest in Ahmedabad and Cawnpore are symptoms of the exaggerated expectations of radical betterment of the condition of labour and even of the so-called criminal tribes. Then the Congress should have no difficulty in checking disorders. If on the contrary, they are signs of weakness of Congress control, the whole situation arising out of acceptance of office by Congressmen requires reviewing.

One thing is certain. The Congress organization needs strengthening and purging. On the Congress register there should be, not merely a few lacs of men and women, but every adult male or female above the age of 18, no matter to what faith they belong. And these should be on the register in order to receive a proper training or education in the practice of truth and non-violence in terms of the national struggle. I have always conceived the Congress to be the greatest school of political education for the whole nation. But the Congress is far off from the realization of the ideal. One hears of manipulation of Congress registers and of bogus names being put in for the purpose of showing numbers. When the registers have been honestly prepared there is no attempt to keep in close touch with the voters.

The question naturally arises: Do we really believe in truth and non-violence, in sustained work and discipline, in the efficacy of the fourfold constructive programme? If we do, sufficient has been achieved to show, during the working of the Congress ministries for the past few months, that complete independence is much nearer than when offices were accepted. If, however,

we are not sure of our own chosen aims, we need not wonder, if one fine morning we discover that we had committed a grave blunder in embarking upon office acceptance. My conscience as A or THE prime mover in the direction of office acceptance, is quite clear. I advised it on the supposition that the Congressmen as a whole were sound not only on the goal but also in the truthful and nonviolent means. If we lack that political faith in the means, office acceptance may prove to be a trap.

Harijan, 20-11-'37; p. 340

7. A CRITICISM

A C. E correspondent sends me a bitter letter criticizing the C.E Ministry. I condense it below toning down the bitterest part: "I have been wanting to write to you for some time but did not do so advisedly. I do so now as one interested in the good government of my province which, I take it, is also your adopted home for the rest of your life. We were led to believe that government by the representatives of the Congress would be so good as to escape calumny and be able to rule for all time merely by reason and by moral influence. But the main purpose of the Congress Ministry appears to us to be:

- (a) to worship your idol in public and break it in secret;
- (b) to worship the symbols of Imperialism in secret and denounce them in public;
- (c) to play the malefactor towards their opponents whom they cannot conquer by truthful and legitimate methods;
- (d) to carry on a brisk traffic in legislation and public offices.

"The Government of a people cannot be run, as the Congress Ministers in the C.E seem to imagine, by the common argument of promised boons and by corrupting the electorate with hope. During the past ten months your Ministers have left no stone unturned to shake the moral foundation of good government of this province. The Ministry and its component parts are honey-combed with intrigues and corruption. To sum up, my conclusion, which I wish to convey to

you, is that the Congress Party might have been deemed capable of governing had they never assumed power and responsibility. Next to assumption of power is the responsibility of relinquishing it. It is strange that your soul should not revolt against such a predatory Ministry for the creation of which the moral responsibility is entirely yours." The Working Committee referred all the complaints against the Ministry to the Parliamentary Board which carried on an enquiry on the spot. Its report is public property. The Congress is a wholly democratic organization with the widest possible franchise. The Working Committee is its mouthpiece and has to work within the limits prescribed for it by the Congress Constitution. It was open to the C.E Congress representatives to demand resignation from the Congress Ministers, but they did not. On the contrary they wanted the present Ministers to compose their differences and carry on the Government. The Parliamentary Board could not disregard the wishes of the representatives. It had no power to do so. But it did all it could to rid the Ministry of whatever shortcomings they had discovered. The Ministers, it must be admitted, offered no opposition to whatever the Board wanted to do. It now remains to be seen how the new arrangement works.

The point, however, that I wish to make is that the Working Committee does not hush up any evil that is found in the Congress organization. It is not afraid to impose discipline which is readily obeyed in most cases.

I wholly endorse the correspondent's proposition that the Congress can only rule 'by reason and moral influence'. He and critics like him may rest assured that the Congress will die a natural and deserved death if and when it substitutes reason and moral influence by *goondaism*.

One more point. The Congress is composed of ordinary mortals. They share the virtues and vices of the nation which they seek to represent. But after all is said and done, it will not be denied that it is the oldest political organization in the country, it is the most representative, it has drawn to itself the best talent in the country, it has the highest amount of sacrifice to its credit. Above all it is the one organization that has offered *the* greatest resistance to foreign rule and exploitation. Whilst all honest criticism is to be welcomed, I would like to

remind the correspondent and other critics that it is open to them to join the Congress and criticize it from within and to try to rid it of all the removable limitations they may discover in it.

Harijan, 18-6-'38, p. 149

8. CHOICE BEFORE CONGRESSMEN

Since the publication of my article on violence said to be creeping into the Congress ranks, evidence is coming in to corroborate the complaints made by my correspondents. Violence at Congress elections, they say, is on the increase. It looks as if Congressmen are not able to digest the power that has come to the Congress. Everyone wants to have a share in the spoils of office. And so there is an unhealthy competition to capture committees.

This is not the way to win Swaraj, nor is it the way to work the office programme. The holding of any office in the Congress Government must be in the spirit of service without the slightest expectation of personal gain. If A is satisfied in ordinary life with getting Rs. 25 per month, he has no right to expect Rs. 250 on becoming a Minister or obtaining any other office under the Government. And there are many Congressmen who are taking only Rs. 25 per month in voluntary organizations and who are well able to shoulder ministerial responsibility. Bengal and Maharashtra are teeming with able men who have dedicated themselves to public service on a mere pittance and who are well able to give a good account of themselves no matter where they are put. But they are not to be tempted to leave the fields they have chosen, and it would be wrong to drag them out of their invaluable self-chosen obscurity. It is true all the world over, and more true perhaps of this country, that as a rule the best and the wisest men will not become Ministers or accept positions under Governments. But I have digressed.

We may not always get the best and the wisest men and women, to run Congress Governments, but Swaraj will become a distant dream if the Ministers and other Congressmen holding offices are not selfless, able and incorruptible.

We are not likely to have such men if Congress committees became job-hunting arenas in which the most violent would win.

How to preserve the purity of the organization is the question. Anyone who subscribes to the credal article of the Congress and pays 4 annas can demand registration as a member. Many sign the Congress pledge without believing in the necessity for observing truth and non-violence as conditions of attainment of Swaraj. Let no one cavil at my use of the expressions 'truthful and non-violent' as synonymous with 'legitimate and peaceful'. From the very commencement of the Congress constitution I have used those adjectives without challenge. The word nonviolence was first introduced by me in the resolution on non-cooperation carried in Calcutta by the Congress. Can anything be untruthful and yet be legitimate, violent and yet be peaceful? Be that as it may, I claim that those who commit a breach of these two primary conditions no matter by what adjectives they are known, can have no place in the Congress organization so long as it is governed by the present constitution.

Similarly those who do not use khadi as habitual wear have no place in any Congress committee. This condition should apply also to those who do not carry out vital resolutions of the Congress, A.I.C.C. or the Working Committee. My prescription would be that those, who commit a breach of any of these conditions should automatically cease to belong to the Congress. It may be urged that the remedy is too drastic. It is, if it is regarded as a punishment. If it is the automatic result of a particular act or omission of a person, it is no punishment. I know that thrusting my finger into a furnace will surely burn it and still I thrust it, my suffering is no punishment, it is the natural consequence of my action. Punishment depends upon the will of the judge. Natural consequences are independent of any person's will.

It will be urged that under these conditions the Congress will cease to be a democratic organization, it will become a close corporation.

I hold a contrary view.

Democracy of the West is, in my opinion, only so-called. It has germs in it, certainly, of the true type. But it can only come when all violence is eschewed

and malpractices disappear. The two go hand in hand. Indeed malpractice is a species of violence. If India is to evolve the "ting" type, there should be no compromise with violence or untruth. Ten million men and women on the Congress register with violence and untruth in their breasts would not evolve real democracy or bring Swaraj. But I can conceive the possibility of ten thousand Congressmen and women who are cent per cent true and free from having to carry the burden of innumerable doubtful companions, bringing Swaraj.

Let us reflect upon the past a little. Over fifty years ago a handful of men and women took it into their heads to meet together and represent and speak in the name of the dumb millions. Time has proved the validity of their claim. Since then the prestige of the Congress has risen not in proportion to its numbers, not in proportion to the display of intellect on the platform or in committee rooms, but it has risen in proportion to the ability of Congressmen to suffer and sacrifice themselves for the nation. No one will deny that when in 1920 the Congress definitely became a democratic, duly elected body having a large number of voters on its rolls, it found itself possessed of new power only because it deliberately adopted truth and non-violence as its means of reaching its goal. And even at the present day, the Congress has quite an insignificant number of men and women on its register compared to the tremendous power it wields. The reason to my mind is that it shows a measure of sacrifice, cohesion and discipline unequalled by any other organization in India. But as an experienced servant and general I make bold to say that we shall have to show a much higher measure of these qualities, if we are to win independence before many years are out. It is my deliberate conviction based on closest observation that we can secure all we want within much less time than perhaps any one of us imagine, simply by showing high efficiency and equally high honesty in every one of the Congress activities.

It would ill become us as truly brave men and women to wish ill to the British in order to gain our end. In non-violent warfare wishing ill to the enemy is not

permissible. A non-violent person relies upon his own strength and refuses to trade upon his opponents' weakness.

With all the earnestness I can command I, therefore, plead with every Congressman who believes in his pledge to make his choice: either to apply the purge I have suggested, or if that is not feasible, because of the Congress being already overmanned by those who have lost faith in its creed and its constructive programme on which depends its real strength, to secede from it for its own sake and prove his living faith in the creed and programme by practising the former and prosecuting the latter as if he had never seceded from the Congress of his ideal. If one or the other thing is not done, I see grave danger of the Congress collapsing by the weight of its own weaknesses.

It has given me no pleasure to pen these lines. But having felt the urge, I would have been untrue to the Congress if I had not uttered the warning. It is the voice of the silence. For the reader should know I took silence over a fortnight ago for an indefinite period. It has given me peace I cannot describe. And it enables me to commune with Nature.

Harijan, 3-9-'38, p. 242

9. DO NOT JUDGE

(Originally appeared in "Question Box" under the above title)

Q. Many Congressmen in Bombay have joined the Congress for the sake of offices. They never spin. Some have spinning wheels in their house just for show. What about this?

A. Do not judge others. Be your own judge and you will be truly happy. If you will try to judge others, you are likely to burn your fingers. If I were secretary of a Congress Committee, I should see that those who do not observe discipline are struck off the Congress register.

Harijan, 28-7-'40, p. 217 at p. 218

10. NO ROOM FOR POWER POLITICS

(Originally appeared in "Question Box" under the title "Strengthen the Organization")

Q. What is the meaning of strengthening the Congress organization?

A. You can strengthen it no doubt by enlisting members who know the meaning of the fundamental article of the Congress, namely, attainment of *Poorna Swaraj* by peaceful and legitimate means. Enlisting of bogus members and seizing power in the Congress is vicious and harmful.

There is no room for power politics within the Congress if the Congress is to end the power or the system that grinds the people and be itself in power. Therefore real strengthening of the organization consists in every Congressman working the constructive programme to its fullest capacity. Enlisting bona-fide members without much effort provides running expense of the Congress, only if the enlisting itself does not eat up the subscriptions you collect from members.

On the way to Kashi, 20-1-42

Harijan, 25-1-42, p. 16

11. ARE WE GOING DOWN?

"Personal likes and dislikes, ambitions and jealousies should have no place in our organizations. What therefore distresses me greatly is that dislike, hatred and vindictiveness in private life and even public speeches are becoming common among Congressmen and consequently indiscipline and hooliganism are increasing." This extract is taken from a long letter from a friend. She even quotes instances and elaborates her thesis. But I have reproduced sufficient for my purpose. I wholeheartedly endorse every word of what she says. Though I do not read newspapers diligently, I feel that there is truth in her experience. Now that it seems that we are coming into our own, the evils complained of ought to go and calmness, rigid discipline, co-operation and goodwill must take the

place of passion, indiscipline and jealousies, public and private. Or else Swaraj machinery will crack and go to pieces and our future state may very well become worse than the present, bad and insufferable as it is. As I said in Mahishadal, the glow of Swaraj in action must be felt by the illiterate millions of India. They must feel the vital difference between the present autocratic and ordinance regime and the orderly democratic non-violent regime under Swaraj. I hug the hope that when real responsibility comes to the people and the dead weight of a foreign army of occupation is removed, we shall be natural, dignified and restrained. We are living just now in a state that is highly artificial and unnatural. The sooner we get out of it the better for us, the ruling power and the world. I can therefore only suggest to my friends and those who think like her, that they should rigidly carry out in practice what they think even though they be a handful.

On the train to Madras, 4-2-'46

Harijan, 10-2-'46, p. 3

12. CAUSE BEFORE SELF

(From "Question Box")

Q. Can the same person take up parliamentary work, constructive work as distinguished from the parliamentary and the organization work of the Congress, in addition to working for his own livelihood?

A. He must be a modern Hercules who can effectively do these things at the same time. I can conceive the possibility of the same person managing all these departments with a staff of efficient secretaries and clerks working under him. The point of the question, however, is wholly different. Division of labour is a necessity. One-man-show is always undesirable and is a positive hindrance to a system of organization. An organization like the British kingship is not personal. "The king is dead. Long live the king". Hence the saying, 'the king can do no wrong'. A king as an individual may be a rascal but personified as an organization he is perfect in the sense the word 'perfection' is understood in a

given society. The moral is that however inefficient the persons in charge may be in the beginning stages, in a progressive organization persons taking charge should be above board and should put the organization first, themselves last. If an attempt is made to organize work through rascals, the organization will always have rascals at its head.

Harijan, 31-3-'46, p. 61

13. THE REAL DANGER

As during the two days of the session of the A.I.C.C. in Bombay I listened to some of the spirited speeches against the Working Committee's resolution submitted to the A.I.C.C. for ratification, I could not subscribe to the dangers portrayed by the opposition. No confirmed satyagrahi is dismayed by the dangers, seen or unseen from his opponents' side. What he must fear, as every army must is the danger from within.

Opposition however eloquent it may be, will defeat its purpose if it is not well informed, balanced and well-based and does not promise action and result more attractive than what is opposed. Let the opposition at the late meeting answer.

My purpose here is merely to point out the danger from within. The first in importance is laziness of mind and body This comes out of the smug satisfaction that Congressmen having suffered imprisonment have nothing more to do to win freedom and that a grateful organization should reward their service by giving them first preference in the matter of elections and offices. And so, there is an unseemly and vulgar competition for gaining what are described as prize posts. Here is a double fallacy. Nothing should be considered a prize in the Congress dictionary and imprisonment is its own reward. It is the preliminary examination of a satyagrahi. Its goal is the slaughter house even as that of the spotless lamb. Jail going is, instead, being used as a passport to every office accessible to the Congress. Hence there is every prospect of satyagrahi imprisonment becoming a degrading occupation like that of professional thieves

and robbers. No wonder my friends of the underground variety avoid imprisonment as being comparatively a bed of roses. This is a pointer to the pass the Congress is coming to.

The friends who opposed the resolution on the British Cabinet Delegation's proposal do not seem to know what they are aiming at. Is independence to be bought at the price of a bloody revolution as was, say, the French, the Soviet or even the English? Then frank and honest work has yet to begin. They have to tread a very dangerous path in openly making the Congress such an institution. My argument has no force if subterranean activity is a doctrine of universal application and is now being employed against the Congress. The very thought repels me. I should hope for the sake of my own sanity that the thought is devoid of any foundation. Then it is clearly their duty to say to the Congressmen that now that there is Congress Raj or Representative Raj, whether of the Congress variety or the Muslim League, they must set about reforming it in detail and not condemn it *in toto*. Total non-violent, non-co-operation has no place in popular Raj, whatever its level may be.

Who is responsible for the mad orgy in Madura and, coming nearer in Ahmedabad? It will be folly to attribute everything evil to British machinations. This senseless theory will perpetuate foreign domination, not necessarily British. The British will go in any case. They want to go in an orderly manner as is evident to me from the State Paper or they will go and leave India to her own fate assuming that India has forsaken the path of nonviolence with the certain result of a combined intervention of an assortment of armed powers. Let the opposition say to Congressmen what kind of independence they want. Congressmen in general certainly do not know the kind of independence they want. They recite the formula almost parrot-like. Or, their notion of independence is fully expressed in saying that they mean by it Congress Raj. And they won't be wrong. They have left further thinking to the Working Committee—a most undemocratic way. In true democracy every man and woman is taught to think for himself or herself. How this real revolution can be

brought about I do not know except that every reform like charity must begin at home.

If then the Constituent Assembly fizzles out, it will not be because the British are wicked every time. It will be because we are fools or, shall I say, even wicked? Whether we are fools or wicked or both, I am quite clear that we must look for danger from within, not fear the danger from without. The first corrodes the soul, the second polishes.

Bombay, 9-7-1946

Harijan, 14-7-'46, p. 220

14. DO NOT ELIMINATE TRUTH AND NON-VIOLENCE

A correspondent who sends his name and describes himself as devoted to service writes:

"I read your *Harijanbandhu* regularly. Recently in your reply to Shri Shankerrao Dev you have said: 'I have been saying for sometime that the words "Truth and Nonviolence" should be removed from the Congress constitution.'

"If this happens in the existing circumstances, people will lose their faith in Congress because they will feel that so long as it was not in power it was thought best to adhere to truth and non-violence but now that power has come it contemplates removing these words from the constitution. They might even infer that the removal is being resorted to in order to counter the Muslim League's threat of direct action.

"If these words are eliminated from the Constitution, Congress will fall from the high pedestal which these means alone have secured for it. It will lose in prestige. You have always said that you yourself cannot go forward one step without truth and non-violence, and is it not their adherence to these that makes the public think of Congressmen as trustworthy, merciful, full of the spirit of service and bravery? The tree

must perish if its roots are destroyed. You must see to it that the roots go deeper and deeper and are not eradicated.

"Therefore, I feel that you should compel every Congressman to follow these principles and if he refuses, he must leave the Congress."

How can I, the champion of *ahimsa* compel anyone to perform even a good act? Has not a well-known Englishman said that to make mistakes as a free man is better than being in bondage in order to avoid them? I believe in the truth of this. The reason is obvious. The mind of a man who remains good under compulsion cannot improve, in fact it worsens. And when compulsion is removed all the defects well up to the surface even with greater force.

Moreover, no one should be a dictator. Even the Congress cannot force its members to follow truth and non-violence. These have to be accepted willingly from the heart.

I have been recommending the elimination of these words from the Constitution for over a year, long before the Muslim League contemplated direct action which makes no bones about *himsa* or *ahimsa*. Thus my recommendation has no connection with the League's resolution. But I have no help for those who invariably attribute sinister motives to my words.

I have strong grounds for my recommendation. Congress may not cover untruth and violence under the guise of truth and non-violence. Is not this an all-sufficing reason? If Congressmen were no hypocrites, nothing could be better than that Congress should adhere to these two pillars.

I could never wish the Congress, the moment it comes into power, to discard the very ladder by which it has climbed so high. I believe that if Congressmen, while in power, renounce truth and non-violence, the lustre surrounding the Congress will grow dim.

We must all guard against one mistake. There is no rule against following what is not in the Constitution. Indeed my hope is that when these words are removed all, or a large majority of Congressmen will heartily follow truth and non-violence even to the point of death.

The writer has forgotten to mention one thing which I should like to clarify. The words in the Constitution are 'peaceful and legitimate'. I have no right to interpret them as truthful and non-violent, if they don't bear that meaning. Congress has adopted them as a policy, not as a creed. The question of my right to retain or eliminate them does not arise. But whilst it lasts, polity is tantamount to creed and hence becomes obligatory. Of course, my recommendation has no meaning if 'peaceful' can be interpreted as violent and 'legitimate' as untruthful.

New Delhi, 21-9-1946

Harijan, 29-9-'46, p, 333

15. GOOD WORK NEVER DIES

(From "Gandhiji's Walking Tour Diary")

Q. Several workers are engaged in village work according to your direction. What has been the result of their work on the local Hindu or Muslim population? If you had not been here would their influence have been equal to what it is at present? Will the present influence of your workers be of a lasting character?

A. As to this fourth question Gandhiji said that if he was pure and meant what he said his work was bound to survive his death. He believed that there must be perfect correspondence between private and public conduct. Similarly, if his associates were actuated purely by the spirit of service and were pure within and without and were not dominated by the glamour that surrounded him, they would work on with unabated zeal and that their joint work would flourish with time. He had never subscribed to the superstition that any good work died with the worker's death. On the contrary, all true and solid work made the worker immortal by the survival of his work after his death.

Harijan, 2-3-'47, p. 45 at p. 47

16. THE CURE FOR LOVE OF POWER

(From "Some Important Questions")

Q. It has been our experience that a worker becomes power-loving after some time. How are the rest of his co-workers to keep him in check? In other words, how are we to preserve the democratic character of the organization? We have found that non-co-operation with the party in question does not help. The work of the organization itself suffers.

A. This is not your experience alone, but it is almost universal. Love of power is usual in man and it often only dies with his death. Therefore, it is difficult for co-workers to keep him in check, if only because they are more likely than not to have the same human frailty; and so long as we do not know a single completely non-violent organization in the world, we cannot claim to know the utterly democratic character of an organization because, as can be definitely proved, no perfect democracy is possible without perfect non-violence at the back of it. The question would be proper if non-co-operation was violent as it often, if not invariably, is. Claiming to know somewhat from experience the non-violent character of non-co-operation, I suggest that given a good cause, non-violent non-co-operation must succeed and no organization can suffer through offering non-violent non-co-operation. The questioner labours under the difficulty of having experience of non-co-operation, at best partially non-violent, at its worst bare-faced violence sailing under the name of non-violence. The pages of the *Harijan* and *Young India* are filled with instances of abortive non-co-operation, because of these two vital defects, non-violence being partial or totally absent. During my long experience, I also noticed that those who complain of others being ambitious of holding power are no less ambitious themselves, and when it is a question of distinguishing between half a dozen and six, it becomes a thankless task.

Harijan, 2-3-'47, p. 44

17. IF THE CONGRESS ENGAGES IN UNGAINLY SKIRMISH FOR POWER

(Originally appeared under the title "Congress Position")

Indian National Congress which is the oldest national political organization and which has after many battles fought her non-violent way to freedom cannot be allowed to die. It can only die with the nation. A living organism ever grows or it dies. The Congress has won political freedom, but it has yet to win economic freedom, social and moral freedom. These freedoms are harder than the political, if only because they are constructive, less exciting and not spectacular. All embracing constructive work evokes the energy of all the units of the millions.

The Congress has got the preliminary and necessary part of her freedom. The hardest has yet to come. In its difficult ascent to democracy, it has inevitably created rotten boroughs leading to corruption and creation of institutions, popular and democratic only in name. How to get out of the weedy and unwieldy growth?

The Congress must do away with its special register of members, at no time exceeding one crore, not even then easily identifiable. It has an unknown register of millions who could never be wanted. Its register should now be co-extensive with all the men and women on the voters' rolls in the country. The Congress business should be to see that no faked name gets in and no legitimate name is left out. On its own register it will have a body of servants of the nation who would be workers doing the work allotted to them from time to time.

Unfortunately for the country they will be drawn chiefly for the time being from the city dwellers, most of whom would be required to work for and in the villages of India. The ranks must be filled in increasing numbers from villagers.

These servants will be expected to operate upon and serve the voters registered according to law, in their own surroundings. Many persons and parties will woo them. The very best will win. Thus and in no other way can the

Congress regain its fast ebbing unique position in the country. But yesterday the Congress was unwillingly the servant of the nation, it was *khudai khidmatgar*— God's servant. Let it now proclaim to itself and the world that it is only God's servant—nothing more, nothing less. If it engages in the ungainly skirmish for power, it will find one fine morning that it is no more. Thank God, it is now no longer in sole possession of the field.

I have only opened to view the distant scene. If I have the time and health, I hope to discuss in these columns what the servants of the nation can do to raise themselves in the estimation of their masters, the whole of the adult population, male and female.

New Delhi, 27-1-1948

Harijan, 1-2-'48, p. 4

18. HIS LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT

(The following is the draft constitution for the Congress referred to in the article, "The Fateful Friday", which by the circumstances of Gandhi's death has become his last will and testament to the nation. — Pyarelal)

Though split into two, India having attained political independence through means devised by the Indian National Congress, the Congress in its present shape and form, i.e. as a propaganda vehicle and parliamentary machine, has outlived its use. India has still to attain social, moral and economic independence in terms of its seven hundred thousand villages as distinguished from its cities and towns. The struggle for the ascendancy of civil over military power is bound to take place in India's progress towards its democratic goal. It must be kept out of unhealthy competition with political parties and communal bodies. For these and other similar reasons, the A.I.C.C. resolves to disband the existing Congress organization and flower into a Lok Sevak Sangh under the following rules with power to alter them as occasion may demand.

Every Panchayat of five adult men or women being villagers or village-minded shall form a unit.

Two such contiguous Panchayats shall form a working party under a leader elected from among themselves.

When there are one hundred such Panchayats, the fifty first grade leaders shall elect from among themselves a second grade leader and so on, the first grade leaders meanwhile working under the second grade leader. Parallel groups of two hundred Panchayats shall continue to be formed till they cover the whole of India, each succeeding group of Panchayats electing second grade leader after the manner of the first. All second grade leaders shall serve jointly for the whole of India and severally for their respective areas. The second grade leaders may elect, whenever they deem necessary, from among themselves a chief who will, during pleasure, regulate and command all the groups.

(As the final formation of provinces or districts is still in a state of flux, no attempt has been made to divide this group of Servants into Provincial or District councils and jurisdiction over the whole of India has been vested in the group or groups that may have been formed at any given time. It should be noted that this body of servants derive their authority or power from service ungrudgingly and wisely done to their master, the whole of India.)

1. Every Worker shall be a habitual wearer of khadi made from self-spun yarn or certified by the A.I.S.A. and must be a teetotaler. If a Hindu, he must have abjured Untouchability in any shape or form in his own person or in his family and must be a believer in the ideal of inter-communal unity, equal respect and regard for all religions and equality of opportunity and status for all irrespective of race, creed or sex.
2. He shall come in personal contact with every villager within his jurisdiction.
3. He shall enrol and train workers from amongst the villagers and keep a register of all these.
4. He shall keep a record of his work from day to day
5. He shall organize the villages so as to make them self-contained and self-supporting through their agriculture and handicrafts.

6. He shall educate the village folk in sanitation and hygiene and take all measures for prevention of ill health and disease among them.
7. He shall organize the education of the village folk from birth to death along the lines of *Nai Talim*, in accordance with the policy laid down by the Hindustani Talimi Sangh.
8. He shall see that those whose names are missing on the statutory voters' roll are duly entered therein.
9. He shall encourage those who have not yet acquired the legal qualification, to acquire it for getting the right of franchise.
10. For the above purposes and others to be added from time to time, he shall train and fit himself in accordance with the rules laid down by the Sangh for the due performance of duty.

The Sangh shall affiliate the following autonomous bodies:

1. A.-I.S.A.
2. A.-I.VI.A.
3. Hindustani Talimi Sangh
4. Harijan Sevak Sangh
5. Goseva Sangh

Finance

The Sangh shall raise finances for the fulfilment of its mission from among the villagers and others, special stress being laid on collection of poor man's pice.

New Delhi, 29-1-1948

Harijan, 15-2-'48, p. 32

PART II: TOLERANCE

19. TOLERANCE IN PUBLIC LIFE

(From "Party Organization")

Replying to a letter in August 1919 of Mr. G. S. Arundale Gandhiji wrote:

You suggest the desirability of unity. I think unity of goal we have. But parties we shall have—we may not find a common denominator for improvements. For some will want to go further than others. I see no harm in a wholesome variety. What I would rid ourselves of, is distrust of one another and imputation of motives. Our besetting sin is not our differences but our littleness. We wrangle over words, we fight often for shadow and lose the substance. ... It is not our differences that really matter. It is the meanness behind that is ugly.

Young India, 4-2-'20, p.3

20. SOCIAL BOYCOTT V. POLITICAL BOYCOTT

(Originally appeared under the title "Social Boycott")

A correspondent writes from Hyderabad Sind a letter regarding boycott which I gladly publish.¹ He refers to what is alleged to have happened to Mr. Khaparde. Hyderabad Sind is a far cry from Amraoti. I do not know that Mr. Khaparde has been put to all the inconveniences that the correspondent relates. Mr. Khaparde is well able to take care of himself. I hope, however, that there is much exaggeration in the information supplied to the correspondent about the treatment.

Nevertheless, the issue raised by the correspondent is important and serious. It would be a dangerous thing if, for differences of opinion, we were to proclaim social boycotts.

It would be totally opposed to the doctrine of non-violence to stop the supply of water and food. This battle of non-cooperation is a programme of propaganda by reducing profession to practice, not one of compelling others to

yield obedience by violence direct or indirect. We must try patiently to convert our opponents. If we wish to evolve the spirit of democracy out of slavery, we must be scrupulously exact in our dealings with opponents. We may not replace the slavery of the Government by that of the non-co- operationists. We must concede to our opponents the freedom we claim for ourselves and for which we are fighting. The stoutest co- operationist will bend to the stern realities of practice if there is real response from the people.

But there is a non-violent boycott which we shall be bound to practise if we are to make any impression. We must not compromise with what we believe to be an untruth, whether it resides in a white skin or a brown. Such boycott is political boycott. We may not receive favours from the new councillors. The voters if they are true to their pledge, will be bound to refrain from making use of the services of those whom they have declined to regard as their representatives. They must ratify their verdict by complete abstention from any encouragement of the so- called representatives.

The public will be bound, if they are non-co-operationists to refrain from giving these representatives any prestige by attending their political functions or parties.

I can conceive the possibility of non-violent social ostracism under certain extreme conditions, when a defiant minority refuses to bend to the majority, not out of any regard for principle but from sheer defiance or worse. But that time has certainly not arrived. Ostracism of a violent character, such as the denial of the use of public wells is a, species of barbarism, which I hope will never be practised by any body of men having any desire for national self-respect and national uplift. We will free neither Islam nor India by processes of coercion, whether among ourselves or against Englishmen.

Young India, 8-12-'20, p. 3

1 Omitted from this collection. The correspondent, one Dayaram Parsram Mirchandani, who described himself as a non-co-operationist started his letter by quoting an extract from a letter which he had received from Gandhiji in February, 1920, which is as follows:

"It is true that conscience should be the final arbiter. ... A true satyagrahi does not expect others to look always eye to eye with him. He is always tolerant and polite to others even to those who differ from him. He tries to win others to his opinion by fairness and graceful attitude."

21. SOCIAL BOYCOTT OF OPPONENTS

(From "Fraught with Danger")

Social boycott of the witnesses who gave evidence against Pandit Sri Ram is clearly a mistake and will defeat its own end. We must not resort to social boycott of our opponents. It amounts to coercion. Claiming the right of free opinion and free action as we do, we must extend the same to others. The rule of majority, when it becomes coercive, is as intolerable as that of a bureaucratic minority. We must patiently try to bring round the minority to our view by gentle persuasion and argument.

Young India, 26-1-'22, p. 54

22. NEVER TO BE FORGOTTEN

(A few paragraphs from the above article are reproduced below.)

Whilst I was listening to praises of me at the Excelsior Theatre in Bombay on Sunday last, I felt that Mr. Bharucha had staged a play for the benefit of the distressed people in the South. But an incident changed it into a serious business for me. Mr. Bharucha had endeavoured to bring on the platform people belonging to different political parties. He had therefore put up Mr. Jamnadas Dwarkadas as one of the speakers. Mr. Jamnadas spoke of me as Gandhiji instead of 'Mahatma'. Two or three in the audience who could not brook the insult of my being called 'Gandhiji' required the speaker to call me 'Mahatma'. Mr. Jamnadas bravely but courteously persisted in calling me Gandhiji, though, he said, he loved me no less than any in the audience. He protested that his manner of addressing me was more pleasing to me. The interruptions however continued almost to the end. It was nevertheless more creditable to the meeting that the cry against Mr. Jamnadas was not taken up by the audience.

Mr. Jamnadas was able to finish his speech without difficulty. All the same the interruption jarred on me. I saw that those admirers of me dishonoured and misinterpreted their idol whereas Mr. Jamnadas honoured and interpreted me properly by courteously but firmly reiterating his dissent from some of my political views and by refusing to call me 'Mahatma' at the dictation of any person. I therefore asked the friends who had been so discourteous to publicly apologize. I drew their attention to the fact that the rules of public meetings demanded a respectful behaviour even towards opponents. The code of courtesy was still more exacting for non-violent non-co-operators. The non-violence of non-co-operators obliged them to respect their opponents even as they respected their friends. Moreover, the audience must respect the sentiments of those in whose honour they might meet. The interrupters should have known that I had often said that the name 'Mahatma' stank in my nostrils. It did for instance at the time of the Bombay riots of 1921. The use of the adjective was prohibited at the Ashram. Mr. Jamnadas had therefore done what was after my heart. After saying this I paused for the apology. The audience helped me by murmuring approval and advice to the interrupters to apologize. And the latter bravely stood up and apologized with folded hands. It was a sight that I cannot easily forget. In resuming my speech and in thanking the interrupters for their apology, I could not help remarking that the seed of Swaraj lay more in such true and gentlemanly conduct than in any number of eloquent speeches or debates and votes in the councils. The penitent members of the audience had brought Swaraj nearer by their frank and fearless repentance.

This prelude which was both unhappy and happy at the same time emphasized the note underlying my speech and gave it an unexpectedly dignified turn.

It enabled me in dealing with Malabar to pay a tardy tribute to the inexhaustible capacity for social service of Mr. Devdhar and to show that though in politics we seemed to differ as poles asunder my regards for his personal character, devotion to duty and self-sacrifice remained undiminished.

Young India, 4-9-'24, p. 289

23. HOW TO DEAL WITH AN ADVERSARY?

(Originally published under the title "For Followers")

A friend sends me the following:

"It will be very helpful if you will kindly guide your followers about their conduct when they have to engage in a political controversy. Your guidance on the following points is particularly needed:

- (a) Vilification so as to lower the opponent in public estimation;
- (b) Kind of criticism of the opponent permissible;
- (c) Limit to which hostility should be carried;
- (d) Whether effort should be made to gain office and power."

I have said before in these pages that I claim no followers. It is enough for me to be my own follower. It is by itself a sufficiently taxing performance. But I know that many claim to be my followers. I must therefore answer the questions for their sakes. If they will follow what I endeavour to stand for rather than me they will see that the following answers are derived from truth and ahimsa:

- a) Vilification of an opponent there can never be. But this does not exclude a truthful characterization of his acts. An opponent is not always a bad man because he opposes. He may be as honourable as we claim to be and yet there may be vital differences between him and us.
- b) Our criticism will therefore be if we believe him to be guilty of untruth to meet it with truth, of discourtesy with courtesy, of bullying with calm courage, of violence with suffering, of arrogance with humility, of evil with good. 'My follower' would seek not to condemn but convert.
- c) There is no question of any limit to which hostility may be carried. For there should be no hostility to persons. Hostility there must be to acts when they are subversive of morals or the good of society.

d) Office and power must be avoided. Either may be accepted when it is clearly for greater service.

Young India, 7-5-'31, p. 99

24. AGAINST CODE OF HONOUR

(Originally appeared in "Notes" under the title "Unseemliness Is Indiscipline")

The Daily Press reports that at the opening of the C.R Assembly session the gallery which was packed to overflowing made an unseemly demonstration against Shri Raghvendra Rao. Those who packed the gallery were presumably Congressmen or those who sympathized with the Congress. I suppose there will be parties even after we have complete independence of our make. It will go hard with us if the parties will not tolerate one another or show towards one another ordinary courtesy. And the Congress which claims to represent the whole nation can ill afford to be intolerant towards its political opponents or others. If it is, and it is, the only all India body, it represents all interests. It represents even Shri Raghvendra Rao who was at one time a respected member of the Congress organization. It may be that the votes in the constituency for which he stood were tampered with. If they were, the law would look after it. But he must be presumed to be honest till he is proved guilty. And even if he is proved guilty, the guilt will be no warrant for unseemly demonstration against him.

Intolerance, discourtesy, harshness are not only against Congress discipline and code of honour, they are taboo in all good society and are surely contrary to the spirit of democracy.

Harijan, 14-8-'37, p. 209

25. NO ROOM FOR SECTARIANISM IN MY NAME

I

(From "Weekly Letter" by M. D.—part of the opening address by Gandhiji at the second Annual Session of Gandhi Seva Sangh held at Hudli in Belgaum District.)

Then there is another and a graver risk. There is the danger of your Sangh deteriorating into a sect. Whenever there is any difficulty you will turn to my writings in *Young India* and *Harijan* and swear by them. As a matter of fact my writings should be cremated with my body. What I have done will endure not what I have said and written. I have often said recently that even if all our scriptures were to perish, one *mantra* of Ishopanishad was enough to declare the essence of Hinduism, but even that one verse will be of no avail if there is no one to live it. Even so what I have said and written is useful only to the extent that it has helped you to assimilate the great principles of Truth and Ahimsa. If you have not assimilated them, my Writings will be of no use to you. I say this to you as a satyagrahi meaning every word of it.

I want you to face the problems that will come before you this week, in the spirit of what I have said. My faith in truth and nonviolence is ever growing, and as I am ever trying to follow them in my life I too am growing every moment. I see new implications about them. I see them in a newer light every day and read in them a newer meaning. That is why I am constantly placing new proposals before the Spinners' Association, the Harijan Sevak Sangh and the Village Industries Association. That does not mean that I am unsettled or unbalanced; that means that those are living organizations and must ever grow even as a tree is ever growing. I want you also to grow with me. I should not care to know what happens after I am gone, but I do wish that your organizations may never be a stagnant pool but an ever-growing tree. Forget me therefore; my name is an unnecessary adjunct to the name of the Sangh; cleave not to my name but cleave to the principles, measure every one of your activities by that standard and face fearlessly every problem that arises.

II

(From report by M. D. of proceedings of the annual Gandhi Seva Sangh Conference held in Malikanda in E. Bengal, which appeared under the caption, "Gandhi Seva Sangh")

Let Gandhism be destroyed if it stands for error. Truth and ahimsa will never be destroyed, but if Gandhism is another name for sectarianism, it deserves to be destroyed. If I were to know, after my death, that what I stood for had degenerated into sectarianism, I should be deeply pained. We have to work away silently. Let no one say that he is a follower of Gandhi. It is enough that I should be my own follower. I know what an inadequate follower I am of myself, for I cannot live up to the convictions I stand for. You are no followers but fellow-students, fellow-pilgrims, fellow-seekers, fellow-workers.

26. THE LAW OF MAJORITIES

Mrs. Besant having read a report of my speech at the Punjab Meeting organized by the Home Rule Leagues and the National Union, Bombay, and having therein seen that I had moved the resolution asking for the prosecution of General Dyer and the impeachment of Sir Michael O'Dwyer, asks how I could move a resolution whose terms I had not approved. Mr. Shastriar has also felt uneasy about the same act. I have not seen any report of my speech. I am unable to say therefore whether I am correctly reported. My speech was in Gujarati and may have suffered at the hands of the translating reporter. I shall endeavour to explain my own position independently of the reports of my speech. And I do so gladly because I recognize that the principle raised by the two great leaders is very important.

I have often been charged with having an unyielding nature. I have been told that I would not bow to the decision of the majority. I have been accused of being autocratic. Now on the occasion of the Punjab Meeting, I was pressed to

move a resolution which did not commend itself to me. I undertook to do so reserving to myself the right to expressing emphatic opinion to the contrary. And I did so. I have never been able to subscribe to the charge of obstinacy or autocracy. On the contrary I pride myself on my yielding nature in non-vital matters. I detest autocracy. Valuing my freedom and independence I equally cherish them for others. I have no desire to carry a single soul with me, if I cannot appeal to his or her reason. My unconventionality I carry to the point of rejecting the divinity of the oldest *shastras* if they cannot convince my reason. But I have found by experience that if I wish to live in society and still retain my independence, I must limit the points of utter independence to matters of first rate importance. In all others which do not involve a departure from one's personal religion or moral code, one must yield to the majority. In the case in question I had an opportunity of illustrating my position. Of my so-called unyielding nature the country had abundant illustration. It was happy to find a great occasion where I could safely yield. I believe still that the country is wrong in asking for General Dyer's prosecution and Sir Michael O'Dwyer's impeachment. That is purely the business of the British. My purpose is to secure the removal of wrong-doers from any office under the Crown. Nothing I have seen since has altered my view. And I pressed it before the very meeting at which I moved the resolution in question. Yet I moved it because there is nothing immoral in asking for General Dyer's prosecution. The country has the right to demand it. The Congress sub-committee has advised that waiver of that right can only do good to India. I thought therefore that I had made my position quite clear, namely that I still opposed the idea of prosecution and yet I had no objection in moving the resolution that involved prosecution because it was not bad or harmful *per se*.

I admit however that during the crisis we are passing through, my moving the resolution was a dangerous experiment. For, whilst we are evolving new codes of public conduct and trying to instruct, influence or lead the masses, it is not safe to do anything that is likely to confuse the mass mind or to appear to be 'truckling to the multitude'. I believe that at the present moment it is better to be 'dubbed' obstinate and autocratic than even to appear to be influenced by

the multitude for the sake of its approbation. Those who claim to lead the masses must resolutely refuse to be led by them, if we want to avoid mob law and desire ordered progress for the country. I believe that mere protestation of one's opinion and surrender to the mass opinion is not only not enough but in matters of vital importance, leaders must *act* contrary to the mass of opinion if it does not commend itself to their reason.

Young India, 14-7-'20, p. 3

27. MAJORITY V MINORITY

(Originally appeared in "Notes" under the above title)

A graduate from Madras sends the following quotation from *Indian Home Rule*:

"It is a superstition and an ugly thing to believe that an act of majority binds a minority. Many examples can be given in which acts of majorities will be found to have been wrong, and those of minorities to have been right. All reforms owe their origin to the initiation of minorities in opposition to the majorities. If among a band of robbers, a knowledge of robbery is obligatory, is a pious man to accept the obligation? So long as the superstition that man should obey unjust laws exists, so long will their slavery exist. And a passive resister alone can remove such a superstition." and writes:

"Kindly permit me to invite your attention to the above extract from your *Indian Home Rule*. From this we see that you once held the opinion contained therein. However, the above opinion of your own is trampled under foot in connection with the 'Temple Entry' question. Are we to take that the present position differs from the position held by you then? Apparently, the position taken up by you is inconsistent. We hope to be enlightened on this subject." It is unjust to a writer to quote against him passages from his writings without reference to the context. Nor should I care to defend what may appear to be my inconsistencies. I should leave the readers to judge for themselves. In this instance the quotation appears to me to propound a great truth often overlooked. Any way I believe in every word of it. The Temple Entry Bills do not

violate the rule. They do not bind the minority to anything, they compel it to do nothing. But if a majority may not compel a minority to its will, nor may the latter compel the former. But the natural rule is that, where there is a dispute between a majority and a minority the latter will, without admitting the rightness of the action of the former, let it have its way and, if it believes the majority in the wrong, refuse its co-operation. One of the Temple Entry Bills does that and nothing more. But I am myself so jealous of the rights and wishes of minorities if only because I have been always, in the beginning at least, in a minority. I have, therefore, proposed as the reader should know, a solution whereby the minority will have its wishes also respected. The other Bill takes away no rights of anybody. It simply takes the question of Untouchability from the purview of the civil law. It does not interfere with the conscience or the religious observance of anybody. In fact, the Bills are designed to protect all views and one merely provides what to do in the event of a difference of opinion. Here I see no infringement of the rule enunciated in the question from *Indian Home Rule*. It shows how a minority can protect itself.

Harijan, 1-4-'38, p. 2

28. AM I REFORMIST?

Q. Is not Subhas Babu right when he ascribes to the High Command, including of course you, the reformist and the liberal tendency?

A. Of course he is right. Dadabhai was a great reformist. Gokhale was a great liberal; and so was Pherozeshah Mehta, the uncrowned king of the Bombay Presidency. So too was Surendranath Baneijee. They were in their days the nation's tribunes. We are their heirs. We would not have been if they had not been. What Subhas Babu in his impatience to go forward forgets is that it is possible for men like me to compete with him in the love of the land in spite of our having reformist and liberal tendencies. But I have told him he has youth before him and he must have the dash of youth. He is not held down by me or anybody else. He is not the man to be so held. It is his own prudence that holds him. And in that way he is as much reformist and liberal as I am. Only I with my

age know it, and he in his youth is blind to the good that is in him. Let my correspondents rest assured that, in spite of our different outlooks and in spite of the Congress ban on him, when he leads in non-violent battle they will find me following him, as I shall find him following me, if I overtake him. But I must live in the hope that we shall gain our common end without another fight.

Harijan, 3-2-'40, p. 433

29. DANGER SIGNAL

The happenings in Ajmer are a danger signal, if the facts received by me are correct. I have no reason to doubt their accuracy. The facts are these. There was a Khadi exhibition held during the National Week by known workers. The promoters had arranged a series of lectures on the importance of khadi and other village industries. The National Flag was hoisted as is usual at these functions. The authorities served a notice that a flag having been erected on the rampart of the fort had caused annoyance to some of His Majesty's subjects and should be hauled down within an hour. The promoters claimed that the ground was under municipal jurisdiction, and that they had authority from the municipality to hold the exhibition. The protest was of no avail. The flag was unceremoniously hauled down by the police and addresses prohibited. If the exhibition was held under the permission of the municipality, the interference with the flag was clearly illegal. But apart from the illegality, the hauling down of the flag was a highly provocative act. An incident such as this can easily lead to unexpected results. I suggest that the matter is one for the Central authority to investigate. I hope that the Central authority does not want to provoke a clash which is highly likely if incidents like the Ajmer one are repeated. It would be deplorable if the non-intended happened.

The promoters telephoned to me for advice immediately the incident happened. Contrary to their expectations I advised the workers to submit to the order. Ordinarily I would not have a moment's hesitation in advising disobedience of such an order. I am the author of the flag. It is dear to me as life. But I do not believe in flag waving. This flag represents unity, non-violence

and identification through the Charkha of the highest with the lowliest in the land. Any insult to the flag must leave a deep scar on an Indian breast. But today unity is lacking; the Muslim League has declared its hostility to the flag; those who honour it do not accept the authoritative implications of the flag. And the nation is preparing for a vast struggle. In a situation such as this I felt that the best course was to suppress the impulse to answer the insult. I felt that the restraint would be a test of the discipline of the workers in Ajmer. It would be a lesson to all India in the non-violent technique, and an opportunity for the Central authority to undo what appears to have been a wanton interference with the ordinary peaceful non-political activity of the Congress. It should be remembered that the exhibition had nothing whatsoever to do with the impending struggle. I congratulate the workers on their prompt compliance with my instructions. They have strengthened the Congress by showing their capacity for observing discipline.

Sevagram, 16-4-'40

Harijan, 20-4-'40, p. 96

30. A MUNICIPAL CHAIRMAN'S DUTY

(From "Question Box")

Q. My father is the Congress Municipal Chairman of a certain place. In a recent by-election for a ward the official Congress candidate was defeated. A local youth organization gave a tea-party in honour of the successful non-Congress candidate. My father was invited and he attended. His view was that once a candidate is elected, no matter to what party he belongs, as Chairman it was his duty to welcome him and get the best of cooperation from him in the interests of civic welfare. Some people feel that attending a function given in honour of an opponent is harmful to the party's cause.

A. Your father, I am sure, was quite right. He would have been wrong, if he had not attended the function. An opponent is entitled to the same regard for his principles as we would expect others to have for ours. Non-violence demands

that we should seek every opportunity to win over opponents. And what can be better than that we should share their joys and sorrows? Moreover your father as Chairman was bound to be impartial. It was, therefore, doubly his duty to attend the function.

Sevagram, 30-4-1940

Harijan, 4-5-'40, p. 109 at p. 110

PART III : DISCIPLINE

31. INDISCIPLINE OR INDIFFERENCE?

(From "Notes")

I received letters from various provinces complaining that the head office does not get returns or answers from Districts in spite of repeated warnings and reminders. What are they to do in such a case, they ask. The ordinary answer would be 'disbandment'. A subordinate office that does not obey or respond to the head office is worse than useless. The new franchise tests the quality of obedience from the individual member and the subcommittees. A member's constancy is tested from month to month in that, he or she has to send his or her quota of yarn from month to month. An organization is not worth much if its members will not take the trouble of paying their subscriptions regularly. I know that the complaint about non-payment and non-attendance is as old as the Congress itself. Irregularity of payment has not crept in since the new franchise. Imagine what would happen to a firm or a government whose employees did not attend to their work regularly or majority of whose subscribers or rate-payers did not pay rates or subscriptions regularly and without call? The firm or the government would cease to function. The Congress is, or should be, more than a firm or a government. Yet its members have to be coaxed to pay their rates or subscription. How can the Congress produce the desired effect? I do not suppose that the A.I.C.C. has got its quota of yarn. I am convinced that the provincial head quarters as well as the A.I.C.C. should be absolutely firm in securing the quota. The Congress is no stronger than the strength of regularity with which the members and groups are doing their self-imposed tasks.

Young India, 28-5-'25, p. 186 at p. 188

32. LET IT BE A WARNING

(Originally appeared under the title "Nagpur Satyagraha")

I see an Associated Press telegram in the papers, in which Mr. Manchershah Awari is reported to have said that he had my consent and full sympathy for his movement of civil disobedience with regard to the Arms Act and the Explosive Substances Act, designed for the release of the Bengal detenus.

If my recollection is correct, either the A.E representative has misunderstood Mr. Awari or the latter has misunderstood me. I have no recollection of having given my consent in advance to Mr. Awari's proposed launching out on civil disobedience in any connection whatsoever. It is really contrary to my practice to give such consent in advance. I did discuss the theory of civil disobedience with Mr. Awari, for whose patriotic spirit and self-sacrifice I have great regard. I drew his attention to the grave limitations of civil disobedience. He spoke, and rightly, with great warmth and concern about the Bengal detenus, and I remember having said, that if some movement in the shape of civil disobedience could be conceived and successfully launched, it would be a great thing. I hold that view even at the present moment. For I regard the indefinite detention of the Bengal patriots without any trial of any sort as a grave injustice. And if I have remained dumb, it is not because I do not feel the wrong as keenly as the closest friends of the detenus, but because I do not desire to make a fruitless exhibition of my powerlessness. A public worker has to learn to endure with fortitude what he cannot cure. And bed-ridden though I am if I could think of any feasible civil plan for securing the release of these prisoners, I should embark upon it without the slightest hesitation. But I confess that I have none in view. My own personal opinion is that there is no atmosphere in the country for civil disobedience. We have fallen upon evil times. The atmosphere today is one not of non-violent disobedience but of every violent and suicidal disobedience.

I have no knowledge whatsoever of what is being done in Nagpur. I can pronounce no judgment upon Mr. Awari's movement. I have given no consent

for the movement. I had intended to say not one word about the movement, and it would have been well if Mr. Awari had not dragged in my name. If he thought that his movement had my consent, he should have laid the whole of his plan in a concrete form before me and secured it in writing. If I had approved of it and if I could not have taken an active part myself, I would at least have backed it with all the force at my command through these columns. He must now thank himself if my disclaimer harms his movement in anyway.

And let it be a warning in future to every one concerned against using my name in connection with any movement without my previous consent in writing. Indeed it is necessary for workers to become self-reliant and dare to prosecute their plans if they so desire without hankering after the backing of names of persons supposed to be great and influential. Let them rely upon the strength of their own conviction and the cause they seek to espouse. Mistakes there will be. Suffering even avoidable there must be. But nations are riot easily made. There will have to be rigid and iron discipline before we achieve anything great and enduring, and that discipline will not come by mere academic argument and appeal to reason and logic. Discipline is learnt in the school of adversity. And when zealous young men will train themselves to responsible work without any shield, they will learn what responsibility and discipline are. And out of this army of candidate leaders, will arise one real leader, who will not have to plead for obedience and discipline but who will command it as a matter of course, because he will have been tried in many a skirmish and will have proved his right to undisputed leadership.

Young India, 19-5-'27, p. 160

33. EMBANKMENT OF DISCIPLINE

(Originally appeared under the title "Danger Looming")

The public know little of what took place in Karachi the other day. A half cracked man like me by name Gajadhar Shahu from Central Provinces took it into his head that he could establish Swaraj in a few days. He collected all the

unemployed and other labourers, promising them two rupees per day and delivered an ultimatum to the merchants and moneyed men that they should stop export and import business, stop the manufacture of mill-cloth, collect one crore rupees in a fortnight and utilize it for giving employment to all who were in need at a level wage of two rupees per day through the spinning wheel and the like. Meetings were held and fierce resolutions were passed. Keys of safes were demanded. The indefatigable Mayor of Karachi met the men and in a lucid moment Sjt. Gajadhar said he would stop his activity if I disapproved of it. This was good enough for Sjt. Jamshed Mehta and his friends and Sjt. Gajadhar who by this time had become a Mahatma came to me as also later Sjts. Sidhwa and Isherdas. I recognized in Sjt. Gajadhar an old correspondent who always tried my and my co-workers' patience by sending long letters and even wire. We became friends on sight. I had to give him nearly two hours I could scarcely spare. The upshot of it all was that he promised to stop his activity though I did not carry conviction to him. Whether he will carry out his promise remains to be seen. Even if he does not, the workers of Karachi will be able to deal effectively with any crisis that may arise.

But the incident of Karachi is a portent. If the acts of Congressmen are not firm and absolutely correct, there is every danger of the Congress and all other healthy activities being swallowed up by the crushing floods for want of the necessary embankment of discipline. Storms and floods there always will be. But discipline is to disorder what bulwarks and embankments are to storms and floods.

The awakening of the masses hitherto drugged into sleep by ignorance and despotism can easily prove their own undoing together with a wreckage of the social structure. The attempt of the Congress is to reform the social structure, remove abuses and at the same time help the masses to occupy the position of which they have been long deprived.

Behind the crazy demand of Sjt. Gajadhar Shahu there was a substratum of truth. Unemployment there undoubtedly was and still is in Karachi as elsewhere, as throughout the 7,00,000 villages of India. No society can long

endure that harbours or creates an army of unemployed. There is something wrong in such society. There must therefore be some occupation always available for those who will work. The Karachi scheme asked for employment through the Charkha. Unfortunately the author knew no more perhaps about the Charkha than the name. But I do believe that in its extensive meaning so as to include all the cotton processes from picking to weaving and washing, colouring and tailoring, it does provide permanent and unlimited occupation for the city dwellers as well as the villagers. This does not exclude other occupations. But this one thing may be adopted anywhere and everywhere.

One thing we must rigidly guard against and that is free kitchens. Free kitchens are a dangerous institution designed to manufacture paupers. Public kitchens may be run wherever they are a felt want. Every one can work for a meal and be sure of getting a clean cheap meal in healthy surroundings. It is necessary for us to learn that it is a sin to give a free meal to one who is fit to do any remunerative work at all.

Young India, 14-5-'31, p. 107

34. THAT UNFORTUNATE WALK-OUT

The walk-out at the last A.I.C.C. meeting of the opponents of the Civil Liberties Resolution was an unfortunate and hasty act. What was their protest against? I understand the President went out of his way to let them make as many and as long speeches as they liked. Therefore the protest was against the majority refusing to accept amendments which cut at the root of the resolution which was regarded as vital to the existence of the Congress in its present form.

The walk-out has served one good purpose. It has brought out in clear light the fact that the Congress is not today the homogeneous body it used to be. It has members and parties who have no faith in its creed or its constructive programme, specially Khadi and prohibition.

In these circumstances the Congress must cease to be a compact fighting organization engaged in a life and death struggle against the most experienced

and organized corporation in the world. It has been since 1920 like an army in action having one will, one policy, one aim and exact discipline. All this must go if the protestors can have their own way. In the first place there can be no amendment of or protest against accepted policies. But even if such is permissible, there should be perfect and willing obedience after the rejection of amendments and protests. Opposition in the Congress is not to be compared to the opposition, say, in the Central Assembly. There the opposition has little in common with the Government. In the Congress there can only be those who willingly and wholeheartedly subscribe to its creed. Those who do not want independence cannot become its members nor can those who do not believe in truth and nonviolence, Khadi or communal unity or total abolition of Untouchability among Hindus or total prohibition of drink and intoxicating drugs.

It is up to those who do not believe in the fundamental policy of the Congress seriously to consider whether they would not serve the Congress and the country better by remaining outside the Congress and converting the people to their view of conducting the campaign rather than by remaining within and obstructing those who do not see eye to eye with them and yet are in the unfortunate position of having the majority on their side. It is equally the duty of the majority to consider how best to deal with those who will resort to obstructive tactics. My opinion based on experience is that if, after a friendly discussion with the obstructionists (if the use of that word is permissible to describe them), it is found that they believe it to be their duty to continue obstruction, it would conduce to the good of the country to hand over the reins to the minority and themselves follow the existing Congress programme without using the Congress name. All this can succeed beyond expectations, if it is done without huff, without malice, without bitterness, and merely to meet a situation that is becoming impossible. If chaos is to be prevented, proper measures must be taken in time.

Harijan, 15-10-'38, p. 287

35. CURIOUS DISCIPLINE

(From "Notes")

The manifesto of the Kerala socialists, one of whom is the General Secretary of the Provincial Congress Committee, is a curious specimen of 'discipline'. Here are the choicest sentences from it:

"The Charkha cult is part of the policy of the Congress leadership, which consists in postponing the fight as long as possible, keeping out all leftist forces when fight becomes inevitable, and in compromise.

"The signatories to the statement do not believe in the cult of the Charkha. But still they appeal, in the name of discipline, to all people in Kerala to take the new pledge." Soldiers who criticize their generals as the Kerala patrons of the Congress have done would be considered guilty of treason, for they would if they could, bring their generals into contempt with the soldiery. It would be more dignified and certainly braver on the part of these gentlemen to secede from the Congress and convert the country to their method than to remain in it although they have no faith in its programme. They are postponing the day of deliverance who are undermining the influence of the only fighting organization in the country by belittling its programme and its leaders.

Harijan, 3-2-'40, p. 437

36. HOW NOT TO DO IT

(Originally appeared in "Notes" under the above title)

Prof. Ranga is a co-worker whom I have had the pleasure of knowing for a long time. He is brave and good-natured, but he has the knack of often saying things he ought not to and doing wrong things at the wrong time. He sent me a telegram when he had decided to break the order of internment served upon him. He knew that he was under discipline. If he had left me the time, I should have asked him to obey the order to confine himself to his place, Nidubrole. By

compliance he would have shown a fine spirit of discipline and today he would be doing constructive work in his place and earning the privilege of joining the civil disobedience brigade. As it is, in my opinion, he has harmed the cause and done no good to himself or anybody. He has harmed the cause by setting a bad example to those who look up to him for guidance. If I could persuade him, I would certainly advise him to inform the authorities that he had committed a breach of internal discipline for which he was sorry and that, if he was discharged, he would gladly proceed to Nidubrole and remain there till the order of internment was withdrawn. I make bold to say that, if he followed my advice, he would help me and help the country's cause.

Sevagram, 9-4-'40

Harijan, 13-4-'40, p. 84 at p. 85

37

A TERRIBLE CONTRAST

(Originally appeared in columns of "Notes" under the above title)

Prof. Kumarappa is at present in London. From his letter received from there I quote the following extracts:

"The air travel, as I explained to you, is extremely dull as the sense of motion that we get on surface travel is practically absent. From our height you can see nothing but the bare red earth with some streaks indicating rivers. Trees etc. are not visible except as dumps of grass here and there."

* * *

"Last evening I strolled all over Marble Arch, Hyde Park, Kensington, Westminster, Whitehall, James Park, Piccadilly, Bond Street etc., clad in my *dhotijamma*. London is hot even for that. Our old time London of plenty and pleasure seems to have undergone a radical change. There seems to be very effective rationing in which a great deal of credit

should be given to the willing co-operation of the public in restraining themselves in the interests of all. This is in striking contrast to our lack of a public conscience. I used to think the efficiency of rationing here was a credit to the efficiency of the government machinery here. But I think now that it is largely due to public self-control that even black markets are not able to hold their own. Our culture, though based on self-discipline and self-control, has to extend its influence to public behaviour. This should be the foundation of our Swaraj."

Assuming the correctness of the information the writer gives, the contrast, between willing co-operation in London and the black marketing with all its implications here, is terrible.

New Delhi, 22-7-'47

Harijan, 3-8-'47, p. 261

PART IV: ELIMINATION OF ROWDYISM AND HOOLIGANISM

38. DIFFICULTIES IN OUR WAY

Our difficulties are of two kinds; those that are imposed from without and those that are of our own creation. The latter are far more dangerous, because we often hug them and are therefore reluctant to remove them. Thus, for instance, the disturbance created at Mrs. Besant's recent meetings at Bombay was of our own making. And it is easier to deal with a seditious meetings proclamation than the disturbance at Mrs. Besant's meetings. A prohibition of 'seditious' meetings gives us strength. Disturbances created by us undoubtedly weaken our cause. The verbal rowdyism at Mrs. Besant's meeting was a type of violence. It was a distinct departure from the creed of non-violent non-co-operation. It may easily result in physical violence.

Those who created the disturbance ought to realize its seriousness for the sacred cause they have at heart. It is the very worst training we can give ourselves in Swaraj. Swaraj presupposes mutual toleration of views, no matter how distasteful they may be to us. If the non-co-operationists refuse to listen to the other party's views, they lay themselves open to the same charge as the Government, which they complain comes to decisions without considering their viewpoint. Non-co-operation against the Government is based on, and is possible, with cooperation among ourselves. We must bring about as far as possible and consistently with our creed, harmony among ourselves. Rowdyism is hardly the way to do so. By their action at the meetings in question non-co-operationists have still further estranged from themselves Mrs. Besant and her friends and followers. The loss is patent enough. They have certainly gained no new adherents by their rowdyism. In so far as the students were concerned in the insult offered to Mrs. Besant, they have discredited themselves at a critical period in their evolution. They are called upon in the name of religion and country to disregard the wishes even of their parents, should they dissuade them from leaving schools tainted with Government grant or affiliation. Such disregard is permissible only to sons and daughters who have cultivated the

sense of scrupulous respect and obedience towards their parents and elders. That disobedience is a virtue only when it is resorted to in response to a higher call and has not a trace of bitterness, hostility or resentment in it. It is a positive voice when it becomes thoughtless, insolent and rowdy. The one ennobles, the other degrades. And after all, do we not owe anything to Mrs. Besant's years, her past brilliant services and her sex? The rising generation will commit suicide if it becomes ungrateful. India's gratefulness ought to ensure for Mrs. Besant a respectful hearing even when she opposes India's sentiment. She does so from pure motives. She thinks that we are in error, she is of opinion that we are retarding India's progress. Surely it is her duty to wean us from what she considers is our error. And it is our duty respectfully, to consider what she says.

But I have been told that unless, at her meetings, an emphatic dissent is expressed, she would make capital of our supposed silence, and claim that there is a larger body of Indian opinion at her back than is really the case. Surely rowdyism is not the only way of expressing dissent. The best and the chosen way would be not to attend her meetings, unless we wish to go in order to be convinced. We need not swell her audience when we know that we do not approve of her views. The other way, if we must attend, is to enter our respectful dissent at the end of the meeting, or if we consider her remarks to be offensive to express our dissent by courteously walking out. A noisy demonstration is a sign of our weakness. A dignified withdrawal is a proof of our strength. Rowdyism is, as a rule intended to cover a minority that wishes to break up a meeting. A majority conscious of its strength produces an eloquent and electrical effect both on the speaker, and his, or her, minority of followers.

It is true that this rowdyism is not a result of the movement of non-co-operation. It is a legacy of our past. We have been, to our harm, nurtured in the baneful traditions of the West in the manner of conducting our meetings. Applause and shouts of dissent are essentially a Western institution. With the, for us, new method of *non-violent* non-co-operation, the old must go. The two

cannot co-exist. If we are engaged in a duel between religion and irreligion, and if we truly represent the forces of religion, we shall have to give up even verbal violence and learn dignified ways of dealing with our opponents. It is through training in cool courage and self sacrifice, discipline and faith in God, and therefore humility to the uttermost, that we shall conserve the honour of Islam and our country and turn our opponents into admirers and fellow workers.

Young India, 10-11-'20, p. 3

39. HOOLIGANISM

The columns of *Young India* are open to all who have any grievance against non-co-operators. 'One who knows' has sent to the Editor a letter which I gladly publish. He has in a covering letter giving his name pleaded for the publication of his letter. Such pleading was unnecessary in connection with a matter of public importance. If the facts related by the correspondent are true, they reflect no credit on the young men of Dharwad. The correspondent has connected the incident with non-co-operation. It is the fashion nowadays to connect every incident of indecent behaviour with non-co-operation. I wish that the incident had been brought to my notice when I was at Dharwad. I would then have been able to investigate the matter and dealt with it then. I may state that stones were thrown at a meeting of Dharwad students that was held by me in the open. One boy narrowly escaped being seriously hurt. And it was a pleasure to watch the audience remaining unmoved in spite of the stone-throwing. I was told too that stone-throwing at meetings was not an unusual occurrence at Dharwad in connection with the non-Brahmin movement. I state this fact only to show that Dharwad enjoys the unenviable reputation for stone-throwing in a special manner. I must therefore decline to connect the incident either with non-co-operation or with any anti-European movement. Though the correspondent's letter is obscure on the point, it is evident from what he says that resentment was felt at the idea of girls taking part in a drama. The correspondent says that the drama was dropped 'in the nick of time at the

desire of the guardians'. There must have been persistence to provoke resentment.

But my position is clear. No amount of provocation could possibly justify the hooliganism of the 'mob of young men'. They had no right to prevent the performance that was at last determined upon, if the guardians of the girls did not mind it. The truest test of democracy is in the ability of anyone to act as he likes, so long as he does not injure the life or property of anyone else. It is impossible to control public morals by hooliganism. Public opinion alone can keep a society pure and healthy. If the young men of Dharwad did not like a public exhibition of Dharwad girls on the stage, they should have held public meetings and otherwise enlisted public opinion in their favour. The movement of non-co-operation is intended to check all such abuses. Non-co-operationists are undoubtedly expected, not only to refrain from taking part in such violent scenes as are represented to have taken place at Dharwad, but they are expected also to prevent them on the part of others. The success of non-co-operation depends upon the ability of non-co-operationists to control all forces of violence. All may not take part in the programme of self-sacrifice but all must recognize the necessity of non-violence in word or deed.

I am surprised that the correspondent in his covering letter speaks of the hooliganism at Dharwad in the same breath as the massacre of Jallianwala Bagh, He loses all sense of proportion when he compares the cold-blooded and calculated butchery of innocent men, who had given no provocation, with the undisciplined and thoughtless demonstration of a 'mob of young men', who were labouring under a fancied or real wrong. Both acts are worthy of condemnation. But there is as much difference between the programme of the Dharwad boys and the Dyerism at Amritsar as there is between an attempt at simple hurt and a completed murder.

Young India, 1-12-'20, p. 3

40. ROWDYISM

(Originally appeared in "Notes" under the above title)

Certainly, non-co-operation has received a rude shock by disgraceful behaviour at the Bombay and Poona meetings towards Messrs. Shastri and Pranjpye. I have seen the explanation that the hooliganism was resorted to, not by non-cooperating students but by those who wanted to discredit the movement itself, and to rouse prejudice against non-co-operation students. The explanation is likely to be partly true for there are undoubtedly men who would for the sake of killing the movement even create violence. For non-co-operation to be speedily successful, we must be able to provide even against such contingencies. A soldier cannot plead difficulties in defence of his defeat. When General Buller failed to relieve Lady Smith he was superseded. When Lord Roberts failed to finish the South African war, Lord Kitchener took over command. This Government will live on only so long as it can circumvent non-cooperation. If non-co-operation students did not want to be discredited why did they attend the meeting either in Bombay or in Poona? The notices clearly stated that only those who wished to hear the other side of the question were to attend. There was, therefore, no excuse for the scenes that were enacted in Bombay and Poona. Moreover, it is often forgotten that Messrs. Shastri and Pranjpye are among the oldest and the most public spirited men we have in the country. They are as much lovers of their country as non-co-operators themselves. We may consider them to be mistaken. But we shall grievously err if we refuse to listen to the arguments of our opponents.

Nor need we seek to justify rowdyism on the strength of English precedents. We may not call the movement religious and continue still to copy the bluster and violence of English meetings. Our strength lies in not copying foreign or other precedents without discrimination. This movement if it is to be non-violent in essence as it must be to be successful, has to retain its distinctive character at every step and at all times.

Young India, 23-2-21, p. 57

41. DISGRACEFUL HAPPENINGS IN BOMBAY

I

(Originally appeared under the title "A Deep Stain". Under this heading Gandhiji published the following note after having witnessed the unfortunate disturbances in Bombay during the visit of Prince of Wales.)

The reputation of Bombay, the hope of my dreams, was being stained yesterday even whilst in my simplicity I was congratulating the citizens upon their non-violence in the face of provocation. For the volunteers with their captain were arrested during the previous night for pasting posters under authority on private property. The posters advised the people to boycott the welcome to the Prince. They were destroyed. The Swaraj Sabha's office was mysteriously entered and the unused posters, so far as I am aware not declared unlawful, were also removed. The Prince's visit itself and the circumstances attending the ceremonials arranged and public money wasted for the manufacture of a welcome to his Royal Highness constituted an unbearable provocation. And yet Bombay had remained self-restrained. This, I thought, was a matter for congratulation. The burning of the pile of foreign cloth was an eloquent counter-demonstration to the interested official demonstration.

Little did I know that at the very time that the Prince was passing through the decorated route and the pile of foreign cloth was burning, in another part of the city the mill hands were in criminal disobedience of the wishes of their masters emptying them, first one and then the others, by force, that a swelling mob was molesting peaceful passengers in the tramcars and holding up the tram traffic, that it was forcibly depriving those that were wearing foreign caps of their headdresses and pelting inoffensive Europeans. As the day went up the fury of the mob now intoxicated with its initial success rose also. They burnt tramcars and a motor, smashed liquor shops and burnt two.

I heard of the outbreak at about 1.00 o'clock. I motored with some friends to the area of disturbance and heard the most painful and the most humiliating

story of molestation of Parsi sisters. Some few were assaulted, and even had their *sadis* torn from them. No one from among a crowd of over fifteen hundred who had surrounded my car denied the charge, as a Parsi with hot rage and quivering lips was with the greatest deliberation relating the story. An elderly Parsi gentleman said, "Please save us from this mob rule." This news of the rough handling of Parsi sisters pierced me like a dart. I felt that my sisters or daughters had been hurt by a violent mob! Yes, some Parsis had joined the welcome. They had a right to hold their own view free of; molestation. There can be no coercion in Swaraj. The Moplah fanatic who forcibly converts a Hindu believes that he is acquiring religious merit. A non-co-operator or his associate who uses coercion has no apology whatsoever for his criminality.

As I reached the Two Tanks I found a liquor shop smashed, two policemen badly wounded and lying unconscious on cots without anybody caring for them. I alighted. Immediately the crowd surrounded me and yelled "Mahatma Gandhiki jai". That sound usually grates on my ears, but it has grated never so much as it did yesterday when the crowd unmindful of the two sick] brethren choked me with the shout at the top of their voices. I rebuked them and they were silent. Water was brought for the two wounded men. I requested two of my companions, and some from the crowd to take the dying policemen to the hospital. I proceeded then to the scene a little further up where I saw a fire rising. There were two tramcars which were burnt by the crowd. On returning, I witnessed a burning motor car. I appealed to the crowd to disperse, told them that they had damaged the cause of the Khilafat, the Punjab and Swaraj. I returned sick at heart and in a chastened mood.

At about five, a few brave Sindhi young men came to report that in Bhendi Bazaar the crowd was molesting every passerby who had a foreign cap on and even seriously beating him, if he refused to give up his cap. A brave old Parsi who defied the crowd I and would not give up his *pugree* was badly handled. Maulana Azad Sobhani and I went to Bhendi Bazaar and reasoned with the crowd, told them that they were denying their religion by hurting innocent men. The crowd made a show of dispersing. The police were there but they

were exceedingly restrained. We went further and, on retracing our steps, found to our horror a liquor shop on fire. Even the fire brigade was obstructed in its work. Thanks to the efforts of Pandit Nekiram Sharma and others, the inmates of the shop were able to come out.

The crowd did not consist of hooligans only or boys. It was not an unintelligent crowd. They were not all mill hands. It was essentially a mixed crowd unprepared and unwilling to listen to anybody. For the moment it had lost its head. And it was not a crowd but several crowds numbering in all not less than twenty thousand. It was bent upon mischief and destruction.

I heard that there was firing resulting in deaths and that in the Anglo-Indian quarters every one who passed with Khadi on came in for hard beating, if he did not put off his Khadi cap or shirt. I heard that many were seriously injured. I am writing this in the midst of six Hindu and Mussalman workers who have just come in with broken heads and bleeding and one with a broken nasal bone and other lacerated wounds and in danger of losing his life. They went to Parel led by Maulana Azad Sobhani and Moazzam Ali to pacify the mill hands, who it was reported were holding up tramcars there. The workers, however, were unable to proceed to their destination. They returned with their bleeding wounds to speak for themselves.

Thus the hope of reviving mass civil disobedience has once more in my opinion been dashed to pieces. The atmosphere for mass civil disobedience is absent. It is not enough to say that such an atmosphere is to be found in Bardoli, and, therefore, it may go on side by side with the violence in Bombay. This is impossible. Neither Bardoli nor Bombay can be treated as separate, unconnected units. They are parts of one great indivisible whole. It was possible to isolate Malabar. It was also possible to disregard Malegaon. But it is not possible to ignore Bombay.

Non-co-operators cannot escape liability. It is true that non-co-operators were ceaselessly remonstrating everywhere with the people at considerable risk to themselves, to arrest or stop the mischief and that they are responsible for saving many precious lives. But that is not enough for launching out on civil

disobedience or to discharge us from liability for the violence that has taken place. We claim to have established a peaceful atmosphere, i.e. to have attained by our non-violence sufficient control over the people to keep their violence under check. We failed when we ought to have succeeded. For yesterday was a day of our trial. We were under our pledge bound to protect the person of the Prince from any harm or insult. And we broke that pledge inasmuch as any one of us insulted or injured a single European or any other who took part in the welcome to the Prince. They were as much entitled to take part in the welcome as we were to refrain. Nor can I shirk my own personal responsibility. I am more instrumental than any other in bringing into being the spirit of revolt. I find myself not fully capable of controlling and disciplining that spirit. I must do penance for it. For me the struggle is essentially religious. I believe in fasting and prayer, and I propose henceforth to observe every Monday a twenty-four hours' fast till Swaraj is attained.

The Working Committee will have to devote its attention to the situation and consider in the light thereof whether mass civil disobedience can be at all encouraged until we have obtained complete control over the masses. I have personally come deliberately to the conclusion that mass civil disobedience cannot be started for the present. I confess my inability to conduct a campaign of civil disobedience to a successful issue unless a completely non-violent spirit is generated among the people. I am sorry for the conclusion. It is a humiliating confession of my incapacity, but I know that I shall appear more pleasing to my Maker by being what I am instead of appearing to be what I am not. If I can have nothing to do with the organized violence of the Government, I can have less to do with the unorganized violence of the people. I would prefer to be crushed between the two.

Young India, 24-11-'21, p. 380

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(Originally appeared under the title "Appeal to Bombay Citizens")

Men and Women of Bombay,

It is not possible to describe to you the agony I have suffered during the past two days. I am writing this now at 3.30 a.m. in perfect peace. After two hours' prayers and meditation I have found it.

I must refuse to eat or drink anything but water till the Hindus and Musalmans of Bombay have made peace with the co- operators.

The Swaraj that I have witnessed during the last two days has stunk in my nostrils. Hindu-Muslim unity has been a menace to the handful of Parsis, Christians and Jews. The non-violence of the non-co-operators has been worse than the violence of co- operators. For with non-violence on our lips we have terrorized those who have differed from us and in so doing we have denied our God. There is only one God for us all whether we find Him through the Koran, the Bible, the Zenda Avesta, the Talmud, or the Gita. And He is God of Truth and Love. I have no interest in living save for proving this faith in me. I cannot hate an Englishman or any one else. I have spoken and written much against his institutions, especially the one he has set up in India. I shall continue to do so if I live. But you must not mistake my condemnation of the system for that of the man. My religion requires me to love him as I love myself. I would deny God if I did not attempt to prove it at this critical moment.

And the Parsis? I have meant every word I have said about them. Hindus and Musalmans will be unworthy of freedom if they do not defend them and their honour with their lives. They have only recently proved their liberality and friendship. The Musalmans'are especially beholden to them, for the Parsis have, compared to their numbers, given more than they themselves to the Khilafat funds. Unless Hindus and Musalmans have expressed full and free repentance, I cannot face again the appealing eyes of Parsi men and women that I saw on the 17th instant as I passed through them. Nor can I face Andrews when he returns from East Africa if we have done no reparation to the Indian Christians, whom we are bound to protect as our own brothers and sisters. We may not think of what they or the Parsis in self-defence or by way of reprisals have done to some of us.

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. I invite every Hindu and Musalman to do likewise. But I do not want any one to fast. Fasting is only good when it comes in answer to prayer and as a felt yearning of the soul. I invite every Hindu and Musalman to retire to his home, ask God for forgiveness and to befriend the injured communities from the bottom of his heart.

I invite my fellow workers not to waste a single word of sympathy for me. I need or deserve none. But I invite them to make a ceaseless effort to regain control over the turbulent elements. This is a terribly true struggle. There is no room for sham or humbug in it. Before we make any further progress with our struggle we must cleanse our hearts.

One special word to my Musalman brothers. I have approached the Khilafat as a sacred cause. I have striven for Hindu-Muslim unity because India cannot live free without it and because we would both deny God if we considered one another as natural enemies. I have thrown myself into the arms of the Ali Brothers because I believe them to be true, and Godfearing men. The Musalmans have to my knowledge played the leading part during the two days of carnage. It has deeply hurt me. I ask every Musalman worker to rise to his full height, to realize his duty to his faith and see that the carnage stops.

May God bless every one of us with wisdom and courage to do the right at any cost.

*I am,
Your servant,
M. K. Gandhi*

19th November 1921

Young India, 24-11-'21, p. 382

III

(Originally appeared under the title "An Appeal to the Mavalis")

To the Mavalis of Bombay,

The most terrible mistake I have made is, that I have] thought non-co-operators had acquired influence over you and that you had understood the relative value, the political wisdom of non-violence though not the moral necessity of it. I had thought that you had sufficiently understood the interests of your country not to meddle with the movement to its detriment and that therefore you would have wisdom enough not to give way to j your worst passions. But it cuts me to the quick to find that you I have used the mass awakening for your own lust for plunder, rapine and even indulging in your worst animal appetite. Whether you call yourself a Hindu, Musalman, Parsi, Christian or Jew, you have certainly failed to consider even your own religious interests. Some of my friends would, I know, accuse me of ignorance of human nature. If I believed the charge, I would plead guilty and retire from human assemblies and return only after acquiring knowledge of human nature. But I know that I had no difficulty in controlling even the Indian Mavalis in South Africa. I was able because I had succeeded in approaching them through co-workers where I had no personal contact with them. In your case I see now that we have failed to reach you. I do not believe you to be incapable of responding to the noble call of religion and country.

See what you have done! The Hindu and Musalman Mavalis have violated the sanctity of Parsi temples, and they have exposed their own to similar risk from the wrath of Parsi Mavalis. Because some Parsis have chosen to partake in the welcome to the Prince, the Hindu and Musalman Mavalis have roughly handled every Parsi they have met. The result has been, that the Parsi Mavalis have now turned their attention to Hindus and Musalmans. Certainly the Parsi Mavalis are less to blame. Hindu and Musalman Mavalis have rudely, roughly and insolently removed the foreign cloth worn by some Parsis and Christians, forgetting that not all Hindus and not all Musalmans, nor by any means even a majority of them, have religiously discarded the use of foreign cloth. The Parsi and the

Christian Mavalis are therefore interfering with the Hindus and Musalman wearers of Khadi. Thus we are all moving in a vicious circle, and the country suffers.

I write this not to blame but to warn you and to confess that we have grievously neglected you. I am doing the penance in one way. The other workers are doing it in another way. Messrs. Azad Sobhani, Jayakar, Jamnadas Mehta, Sathe, Moazzam Ali and many others have been risking their lives in bringing under control this unfortunate ebullition. Shrimati Sarojini Naidu has fearlessly gone in your midst to reason with you and appeal to you. Our work in your midst has only just begun. Will you not give us a chance by stopping the mad process of retaliation? The Hindus and the Musalmans should be ashamed to take reprisals against the Parsis or the Christians. The latter must know it to be suicidal to battle against Hindu and Muslim ferocity by brute strength: The result is they must seek the assistance of an alien government, i.e. sell their freedom. Surely the best course for them is to realize their nationality and believe that the reasoning Hindus and Musalmans must and will protect interests of minorities before their' own. Anyway the problem before Bombay is to ensure the absolute protection of the minorities and the acquisition of control over the rowdy element. And I shall trust that you, the Mavalis of Bombay, will now restrain your hand and give a chance to the workers who are desirous of serving you. May God help you.

I am,
Your friend,
M. K. Gandhi

Young India, 24-11-'21, p. 382

IV

(Originally appeared under the caption "To Co-workers")

Comrades,

Past few days have been a fiery ordeal for us, and God is to be thanked that some of us have not been found wanting. The broken heads before me and the

dead bodies of which I have heard on unimpeachable authority, are sufficient evidence of the fact. Workers have lost their lives or limbs, or have suffered bruises in the act of preserving peace, of weaning mad countrymen from their wrath. These deaths and injuries show that in spite of the error of many of our countrymen, some of us are prepared to die for the attainment of our goal. If all of us had imbibed the spirit of non-violence, or if some had and the others had remained passive, no blood need have been split. But it was not to be. Some must therefore voluntarily give their blood in order that bloodless atmosphere may be created. So long as there are people weak enough to do violence, there will be others weak enough to seek the aid of those who have superior skill or means for doing it. And that is why the Parsis and the Christians sought and received the assistance of the Government such that the Government openly took side and armed and aided the latter in retaliatory madness, and criminally neglected to protect a single life among these who though undoubtedly guilty in the first instance were the victims of the pardonable wrath of the Parsis, the Christians and the Jews. The Government has thus appeared in its nakedness as a party doing violence not merely to preserve peace, but to sustain the aggressive violence of its injured supporters. Its police and military looked on with callous indifference whilst the Christians in their justifiable indignation deprived innocent men of their white caps and hammered those who would not surrender them, or whilst the Parsis assaulted or shot not in self-defence but because the victims happened to be Hindus or Musalmans or non-co-operators. I can excuse the aggrieved Parsis and Christians, but can find no excuse for the criminal conduct of the police and the military in taking sides.

So the task before the workers is to take the blows from the Government and our erring countrymen. This is the only way open to us of sterilizing the forces of violence. The way to immediate Swaraj lies through our gaining control over the forces of violence, and that not by greater violence but by moral influence. We must see as clearly as daylight, that it is impossible for us to be trained and armed for violence effective enough for displacing the existing Government.

Some people imagine that after all we could not have better advertised our indignation against the welcome to the Prince than by letting loose the mob frenzy on the fateful seventeenth. This reasoning betrays at once ignorance and weakness, ignorance of the fact that our goal was not injury to the welcome, and weakness because we still hanker after advertising our strength to others instead of being satisfied with the consciousness of its possession. I wish I could convince every One that we materially retarded our progress to our triple goal.

But all is not lost if the workers realize and act up to their responsibility. We must secure the full co-operation of the rowdies of Bombay. We must know the mill hands. They must either work for the Government or for us, i.e. for violence or against it. There is no middle way. They must not interfere with us. They must either be amenable to our love or helplessly submit to the bayonet. They must not seek shelter under the banner of nonviolence for the purpose of doing violence. And in order to carry our message to them, we must reach every mill hand individually and let him understand and appreciate the struggle. Similarly we must reach the rowdy element, befriend them and help them to understand the religious character of the struggle. We must neither neglect them nor pander to them. We must become their servants.¹

The peace that we are aiming at is not a patched up peace. We must have fair guarantees of its continuance without the aid of the Government, sometimes even in spite of its activity to the contrary. There must be a heart union between Hindus, Musalmans, Parsis, Christians and Jews. The three latter communities may and will distrust the other two. The recent occurrences must strengthen that distrust. We must, go out of our way to conquer their distrust. We must not molest them if they do not become full non-co-operators or do not adopt Swadeshi or the white Khadi cap which has become its symbol. We must not be irritated against them even if they side with the Government on every occasion. We have to make them ours by right of loving service. This is the necessity of our situation. The alternative is a civil war. And a civil war, with a third power only too happy to consolidate itself by siding now with the one and then with the other, must be held an impossibility for the near; future?

And what is true of the smaller communities is also true of the co-operators. We must not be impatient with or intolerant to them. We are bound to recognize their freedom to cooperate with the Government if we claim the freedom to non-co-operate. What would we have "felt if we were in a minority and the co-operators being in a majority had used violence against us? Non-co-operation *cum* non-violence is the most expeditious method known to the world of winning over opponents. And our struggle consists in winning opponents including Englishmen over to our side. We can only do so by being free from ill-will against the weakest or the strongest of them. And this we can only do by being prepared to die for the faith within us and not by killing those who do not see the truth we enunciate.

I am,
Your faithful Comrade,
M.K. Gandhi

22nd November 1921,

Young India, 24-11-'21, p. 383

1. The following appeal signed by representatives of all communities was issued to the public:

The citizens of Bombay will be glad to learn that thanks to the concerted efforts of Hindu, Musalman and Parsi leaders, peace has been restored in most parts of the town. From morning till night they went about in the town, in carriages, pleading with people to be quiet and to preserve peace, and the latter responded to their appeals. Some excitement still, no doubt, prevails in a few localities. Every one should endeavour to restore quiet in those parts. It behoves us all to forgive and forget the errors of one another. Hindus, Musalmans, Parsis, Christians and Jews, who have their homes in India, ought to live as brothers and sisters and bear with the differences and failings of one another. We have all to be ashamed of the stain on the fair name of Bombay. Only by regtoring and preserving peace can that stain be wiped out, and we appeal to all the citizens of Bombay for hearty cooperation in the matter.

42. HOOLIGANISM IN MADRAS

Dr. Rajan in a letter written on the 13th day of the *hartal* in Madras writes:

"The Madras *hartal* has been thoroughly successful. The whole city seems to be dead for the day. No conveyances except for the sick and not even tram cars, and the few that ran this morning had to stop for want of passengers. The vast city is bereft of all noises, cries and the ever-rolling crowds. The armed, sepoy and the armed policeman form the solitary relief. But I never dreamt of the underlying risks of a *hartal* in a great city. We had prided ourselves that the inflammable parts of the city had been brought under control. But the mob mind is so passionate at one time and so peaceful the next moment; it seems to be a double-edged sword. I, Ramanathan and Audinarayana Chettiar were at three or four danger spots and averted an impending riot. It is hard to lay the blame on any particular party. The mob simply get furious at those who defy public opinion, but yet a kind word, a gentle remonstrance from those who represent the Gandhi party pacifies them. The sight of the armed men irritates them. One little boy was bayoneted in his thigh in the city. So far we have heard of no other incidents. Just as I am writing, I hear that two were shot at: near Mount Road. For lack of any conveyance I am unable to proceed there immediately. Anyhow I am sending messengers! We have withdrawn all our volunteers since last night and not one of them is out today. It has no doubt been strenuous work for the volunteers and for the elderly men. Messrs. Singaravelu Chettiar and Kumaraswami Chettiar, both on them devoted non-co-operators, did good work. Out of 5001 volunteers that worked there were not more than a dozen students. About 300 were Mahomedans and the rest Hindus.

"I am glad I stayed behind and did not go to Bombay even for the Working Committee meeting. It was a fair fight between us and the bureaucracy and the Ministers. Lord Willingdon the Governor and Sir E Thyagaraja Chetty, the Chief of the ministerial party, went in person to the KotwaB

Bazar—the heart of the city. They promised military aid. The trustees of the market threatened the shopkeepers with eviction if they observed *hartal*. But today not a single shop is open.

"Later, I went to Mount Road on foot. A Parsi cinema house "Wellington" was the scene of the tragedy. There was] a threatening crowd in front of the cinema and there was some stone throwing. A Parsi fired from upstairs in the midst of the crowd. One of the crowd died on the spot and I was told two more were injured. The crowd got excited broke into the theatre and smashed windows and furniture. After some time they were brought under control and the whole of the locality is under military guard. Cavalry and armoured cars are patrolling. This road happens to be the route through which the Prince has to travel to and fro. But the Prince's route has been changed, along the beach.

"I am just now informed that Sir Thyagaraja Chetty is besieged in his own house by the crowd. He did not attend the Council today when the Prince came. I propose proceeding to that place to disperse the crowd if it has not dispersed already. These events are very regrettable, but I am glad nothing worse happened. I understand nothing has happened to his person nor is likely to happen."

I have reproduced Dr. Rajan's letter not to congratulate Madras on the successful *hartal*, but to bemoan the outbreak of hooliganism on the day of *hartal*. It were better if there was no *hartal* and no hooliganism. It is no defence that the wanton destruction was the work of hooligans. For it is complete proof of non-co-operators' unfitness for self-government in Madras. Those who claim the capacity must be able to control all forces of violence. *Hartal* was not peaceful because what happened to the poor cinema keeper would have happened to the others if they had dared to keep open their shops. I hold the firing by the cinema man to be justifiable inasmuch as his theatre would have been destroyed if he had not fired. The mob's increased fury was an exhibition of insolent rage against deserved punishment. The investment of Sir Thyagaraja Chettiar's house was a cowardly interference with personal liberty.

The crowd that prevented the Knight from doing honour to the Prince dishonoured itself and enhanced the value of the honour Sir Thyagaraja Chettiar was prevented from doing. It might be the crowd's way but it was not non-cooperators' way of 'doing business'.

Dr. Rajan and his lieutenants left no stone unturned to make and keep the *hartal* peaceful. All honour to them. But Madras teaches us a lesson as Bombay has. We have still much work to do before we can really establish a Swaraj atmosphere. Either we believe in a successful peaceful revolution or we believe that non-violence is merely a preparation for violence. If the latter represents the true state of things, we must revise our creed. But I am optimistic enough to believe that India has imbibed the spirit of non-violence in a most remarkable way. The exemplary self-restraint, exercised in Amritsar, Lahore, Aligadh, Allahabad, Calcutta, Barisal and other places too numerous to mention, shows that where only pledged non-co-operators work, we can rely upon non-violence being observed, but where as in Madras undisciplined mob gathers together, non-co-operators have no control. We must not despair of devising a remedy against repetition of the Madras hooliganism. Equally unfortunate is the attack in Hardoi upon Mr. Baker who has fortunately escaped death. The stray maniacs are most difficult to trace or handle. I doubt not that it is the work of some unknown person unconnected with non-co-operation. But we must deal with such cases also. In a non-violent atmosphere such occurrences must be almost impossible. But it must be confessed that the requisite atmosphere has not yet been reached. It will only be, when we have eradicated violence from our thoughts.

Young India, 19-1-'22, p. 41

43. WHAT IS TAMMANY HALL?

Exception has been taken to my defence at a memorial meeting of the memory of Deshabandhu against the charge of Tammany Hall methods. It has been taken on the ground that such a reference at a memorial meeting was a jarring note. I believe that I have the sense of the delicate. I knew what I was doing. I

was presenting Deshabandhu's life to the students of Calcutta. I had in my mind audible whispers about Tammany Hall methods alleged to have been adopted by Deshabandhu. And as I had a most vivid recollection of my conversation with him on the matter, I felt that I would have been false to the sacred memory of a comrade if I had not assured the students of the baselessness of the charge. After all we will not make the memory of our distinguished countrymen sacred by covering their blemishes. It should be permissible to cherish the memory of our heroes at the same time that we acknowledge their proved blemishes. False delicacy is no delicacy. If Deshabandhu was guilty of Tammany Hall methods, let us own the fact and whilst treasuring all that was noblest in him, let us beware of his particular methods. But believing as I did that he was not guilty of those methods, I could not conceive a happier occasion than the one I had at the University Institute.

But what are Tammany Hall methods? If I know them correctly, it is a name given to the machinations secret and open resorted to by a class of men in America for seizing for their selfish end corporations and offices in which they do not hesitate to make use of fraud, bribery and every form of public corruption. I had the most emphatic repudiation from Deshabandhu's most trusted lieutenants and then at Darjeeling from Deshabandhu himself with the invitation to investigate such charges and publicly denounce every proved charge of bribery or corruption. The first indispensable test of Tammany Hall is obviously lacking. Neither Deshabandhu nor his lieutenants to his knowledge had any selfish ends to serve. Indeed such people could not long remain with him. So if any one bribed anybody else it was for an unselfish end. But personally I draw no distinction between the two forms of bribery. Nor did Deshabandhu draw any. He said to me emphatically that he could not, even if he would, free his country by corrupt methods if only because the Government had reduced bribery or corruption to a perfect science. The truth is that for the first time within the experience of the present generation we have a well-drilled, disciplined and compact political party functioning in the Councils and the Assembly. It, therefore, seems unthinkable to some that such a party could be kept together without bribery and corruption. The Government has done

their best to discredit the party by all the means at «ts command. Rival political parties have lent a ready ear to every rumour or talk about bribery. There is no doubt that some people honestly believe that bribery was one of the means resorted to by Deshabandhu for keeping the party together and gaining other support at crucial moments in the Councils.

So far as I know there is no foundation for the charge. The memory of Deshabandhu will not suffer by anyone who can clearly establish the charge of his having done so. It is better that the public know definitely what is said in inaudible tones. After all, the charge was not merely against the Deshabandhu, rather, it was more against his party than against him personally. Though he is no more among us the party survives. And if I know it, I know that it is capable of standing the searchlight of investigation if anyone has proof of corruption against it.

Young India, 16-7-'25, p. 249

44. INTIMIDATION IN PUBLIC LIFE

(From "Notes")

A correspondent from the South writes:

"I think it is highly necessary that we should draw attention to the fact that intimidation is threatening to become the rule in settling political differences and disputed personal loyalties. I wish to bring to your notice a recent instance that has come under my observation. I asked a co-worker to meet me at. ... I waited for him at the appointed place and time. He did not turn up. Subsequently, I learnt that on the way to the appointed place he was accosted by ... and was asked why he had written to the press against. . . ., This friend passed on without heeding this interlocutor; when he was rudely fisted on the back. He sustained more or less severe injury. Reports of such rowdyism had come to me before, but I disbelieved them. But I do not disbelieve the testimony of

this friend. I pass the information on to you for such use as you may choose to make of it."

If the report is true, and it appears to me to be quite authentic, and if it is also true that rowdyism of the type referred to by the correspondent is at all general, it is a most regrettable thing. It consolidates the very power against which both the, rowdies and we are endeavouring to fight. I have the names and full addresses of the parties and I have no doubt that those who know will have no difficulty in dotting the 'i's and crossing the 't's. But my purpose is not to expose the evil doers. I want to expose the wrong that they are doing, in the hope that it might not be repeated. Those who are in charge of affairs should courageously deal with the evil and nip it in the bud.

Young India, 6-8-'25, p. 268 at p. 269

45. OVERCOMING GOONDAISM IN THE CONGRESS

(Originally appeared under the title "Dangers of Democracy")

There is no human institution but has its dangers. The greater the institution the greater the chances of abuse. Democracy is a great institution and therefore it is liable to be greatly abused. The remedy therefore is, not avoidance of democracy but reduction of possibility of abuse to a minimum.

The Congress has become a vast democratic body. It reached a high water-mark during the past twelve months. Without being technically on the register millions took possession of it and added lustre to it. But *goondaism* also entered the Congress to a much larger extent than hitherto. It was inevitable. The ordinary rules prescribed for the selection of volunteers were practically set aside during the last stages of the struggle. The result has been that in some places *goondaism* has made itself felt. Some Congressmen have even been threatened with disaster if they will not give the money demanded of them. Of course, professional *goondas* may also take advantage of the atmosphere and ply their trade.

The wonder is that the cases I have in mind are so very few compared to what they might have been, regard being had to the great mass awakening. My conviction is that this happy state is due to the Congress creed of non-violence, even though we have but crudely followed it. But there has been sufficient expression of *goondaism* to warn us to take time by the forelock and adopt preventive and precautionary measures.

The measures that suggest themselves to me are naturally and certainly a scientific and more intelligent and disciplined application of non-violence. In the first place if we had a firmer faith in non-violence than we have shown, not one man or woman who did not strictly conform to the rules regarding the admission of volunteers would have been taken. It would be no answer to say that in that case there would have been no volunteers during the final stage and therefore there would have been a perfect failure. My experience teaches me to the contrary. It is possible to fight a non-violent battle even with one satyagrahi. But it, i.e. a non-violent battle, cannot be fought with a million non- satyagrahis. And I would welcome even an utter failure with nonviolence unimpaired rather than depart from it by a hair's breadth to achieve a doubtful success. Without adopting a non- compromising attitude so far as non-violence is concerned, I can see nothing but disaster in the end. For, at the critical moment we may be found wanting, weighed in the scales of non-violence, and may be found hopelessly unprepared to meet the forces of disorder that might suddenly be arrayed against us.

But having made the mistake of indiscriminate recruitment how are we to repair the mischief in a non-violent way? Non-violence means courage of the highest order and therefore readiness to suffer. There should therefore be no yielding to bullying, bluff or worse, even though it may mean the loss of a few precious lives. Writers of threatening letters should be made to realize that their threats will not be listened to. But at the same time their disease must be diagnosed and properly treated. Even the *goondas* are part of us and therefore they must be handled gently and sympathetically. People generally do not take to *goondaism* for the love of it. It is a symptom of a deeper-seated disease in

the body politic. The same law should govern our relations with internal *goondaism* that we apply in our relations with *goondaism* in the system of Government. And if we have felt that we have the ability to deal with that highly organized *goondaism* in a non-violent manner how much more should we feel the ability to deal with the interned *goondaism* by the same method?

It follows that we may not seek police assistance to deal with the disease although it is open during the truce, to any Congressman to seek it precisely in the same manner as any other citizen. The way I have suggested is the way of reform, conversion, love. Seeking police assistance is the way of: punishment, fear, want of affection if not actual disaffection. The two methods therefore cannot run together. The way of reform; appears at some stage or other to be difficult but it is in reality the easiest.

Young India, 7-5-'31, p. 99

46. CRIMINAL IF TRUE

A letter from Karnatak contains the following information:

"On 1-2-'46 at about 10 a.m. when the Karnatak Provincial Congress Parliamentary Board was conducting its business in its office in Hubli, 20 to 25 persons effected an entrance into the meeting hall without first obtaining]permission of the President.

"The Board had met to discuss some important matters. Some of the persons abovementioned asked for time to make certain representations. The President told; them that sufficient time for this purpose had been given to them on the previous day. The Board was now engaged in serious deliberations but would see them again during the afternoon. In reply they said they had further important matters to represent and insisted on doing so then and there. The President opined that their attitude was quite inconsistent with due decorum and discipline but they continued to insist, whereupon the President said that he would be obliged to leave the hall. As he stood up in order to go away one member of the party

tried forcibly to hold him down. Another snatched the office files from his hands and was going to take them away. Yet another hit Shri Divakar on the head with his umbrella. Persons in the hall finally came to the rescue and restored order."

If such be the case the Congress organization will go to pieces. Indeed, no organization can successfully work under a system of terror. I do not go into the merits. That work will be done by the Congress Working Committee. What is reported to have taken place is not only against decency and all the rules of the game but is manifestly against non-violence. Moreover, there seems to be an indecent longing for getting into the legislatures. This indecency shows that the deciding reason for contesting elections is being lost sight of.

Sevagram, 9-2-'46

Harijan, 17-2-'46, p. 15

47. ROWDYISM IN ELECTIONS

(Translated from *Harijaribandhu*—originally appeared in "Question Box")

Q. You are no doubt aware of the rowdyism resulting in severe damage during one of the recent elections in Bombay. Does it become the teacher of ahimsa to keep silent on such an occasion?

A. I do not want to enter into the question of whether silence becomes me or not. If the rowdyism is not a forerunner of what the future holds, it will be wrong to take note of it. Such sporadic clashes should not worry us. The education of the masses in ahimsa can make way gradually. It may be that it will develop from the lessons learnt from such happenings. But it may be that rowdyism is symptomatic of an epidemic. Many people imagine that they alone are right and everyone else wrong, and they do not consider that there is anything unworthy in forcing their point of view down others' throats. This error has to be rectified. If we are in the right we must have infinite patience.

Just now we seem unable to see our own mistakes. Those who lack the faculty of reason, or who desire to live for the sake of enjoyment, can never see the

error. If there are many such then we must conclude, that our non-violence has been a weapon of the weak, *himsa* masquerading in the guise of *ahimsa*. If this weakness continues we shall have to go through rivers of blood once the British rule goes. We may even come under the sway of some other foreign power or it may be that with internecine warfare the weaker side will have to submit to the one that has the mightier weapons. If we are unfortunate enough to witness such strife, believers in non-violence will joyfully die in the effort to stop it and thereby live.

My hope is that the masses have sufficiently imbibed the spirit of *ahimsa* and that when the British go, there may be a little fight here and there and then we shall settle down as brothers giving a lesson of peace to the world.

Only those who fought in Bombay know what good they achieved by fighting. I am ignorant of who fought and what the fight was about and what were the gains if any.

Harijan, 28-4-'46, p. 105

48. WAS LAWLESSNESS TO BE TOLERATED?

(From "Gandhiji's Post-Prayer Speeches")

Referring to the hooliganism at Calcutta, Gandhiji said that people seemed to "have come to believe that they could get anything through violence. It was entirely wrong. In the past he has fasted as a protest against such violence even when it was directed against a foreign Government. Now that they had their own Government, was lawlessness to be tolerated? People complained against Government measures to suppress disorderly behaviour. He would have them understand that freedom could never mean exemption from punishment against offences. If, there was anything which they considered unjust, they could agitate against it in a proper manner. Had they tried out peaceful means and found them wanting? Their freedom was a baby of a little over three months. If they obstructed the Government in the reported fashion, it would become impossible for it properly to discharge its functions of supplying food and other

amenities to the people. Did all this mean that Indians could be only destructive and that they were unfit for carrying out constructive policies? The fight against the British Government was passive resistance, not violence. Now that they had their own Government, it was wrong to resort to methods which were taboo against the foreign Government.

Harijan, 21-12-'47, p. 477 at p. 479

PART V : PUBLIC FUNDS

49. HOW TO FINANCE THE MOVEMENT

(One relevant paragraph only from the above article is reproduced herein below.)

I propose however to devote this article to a consideration of the financial difficulty. The All-India Tilak Memorial Swaraj Fund should be large enough to meet every requirement, not excluding that of national institutions. Welcome as the thousands of moneyed men must be to us, we must rely upon the pice of the masses. Every pice knowingly given will be a token of the determination of the giver to establish Swaraj. I make bold to say that the movement can be financed by the nation abandoning its superfluities, its questionable habits and its vices.

Young India, 12-1-'21, p. 13

50. ALL-INDIA TILAK SWARAJ FUND

The Punjab deserves the first place in having organized the Tilak memorial in a methodical manner. The new Committees should now be in working order and we must dot the whole of the country with collectors for the fund. In the Punjab, the Congress Committee has issued one rupee receipts, thus expecting those who can to pay nothing less than one rupee. A memorial week, subsequently extended to a fortnight was declared, and trusted volunteers went round to make collections. They have collected over one lac of rupees in that province. The Committee has already forwarded Rs. 25,000 on account of its contribution to the All-India Congress Committee.

In my opinion, the rest of us cannot do better than copy the useful example of the Punjab. It is necessary to fix the sum we should collect. One crore of rupees of the whole of India is a most modest tribute to the memory of a patriot so great as the Lokamanya. It is a trifle when we think of the object with which the memory of the deceased is to be associated. To contribute one crore of rupees towards the attainment of Swaraj is not much. And it may be

noted here that the money is not to be spent in foreign or other propaganda, but largely in spinning, weaving and other educational activity. It is to be spent in educating our children. The collection has to be distributed among the twenty- one provinces and should be finished before the 30th June next. Each province will on an average be expected to collect about five lacs of rupees. But Bombay, Gujarat, Bengal, Punjab and such other provinces, may be expected to collect much more than Orissa or Andhra for instance.

The Working Committee has made the task easier by allotting each province to retain 75% of the collection for provincial expenditure. It is to be hoped, therefore, that not a moment will be lost in organizing the great memorial. It will be a fitting and noble tribute to the memory of one who gave his life to the attainment of Swaraj and died with Swaraj only in his thoughts. The Working Committee will no doubt issue authoritative instructions. But we need not await instructions in a matter of clear duty. We may safely follow the Punjabis' lead and show to the forthcoming All-India Congress Committee what we have done towards the fulfilment of our duty.

Young India, 16-3-'21, p. 84

51. THE TILAK SWARAJ FUND

Truly to revere the memory of a person, is to achieve his life's purpose. Truly to revere the memory of Bal Gangadhar Tilak, whom India delighted and still delights to call Lokamanya, must be to establish Swaraj, and thus for ever to perpetuate his memory. How fine, how noble, if we could establish Swaraj on the anniversary of his death? Nor is it impossible to do so, during the forty days that remain at our disposal. But my sanguine temperament cannot visualize Swaraj by the first of August next.

By strenuous work, it is certainly possible to establish Swaraj on the first day of October next. It must be death to the Congress, if Swaraj cannot be established on or before the 31st December next. But it cannot be, if we do not carry out our Bezwada undertaking to raise one crore of rupees. These lines will be

published on the 22nd inst. The reader has therefore to think how to complete the crore in eight days.

Let us know how we stand. If all goes well it may safely be assumed, that forty lacs will have been collected by that date outside Bombay. That means, let me further state, at least three lacs in Bengal, four in the Punjab, three in Sindh, three in Andhra, three in the C.R, four in Bihar and ten in Gujarat. That makes thirty lacs. Ten lacs for the remaining provinces is not an extravagant estimate. Let us assume, that all the provinces but Bombay succeed in collecting all together forty lacs.

How to collect sixty lacs in and through Bombay, that is the question. If we are to reach the total of one crore before the 30th June the amount must be raised chiefly from the available rich men of Bombay and Calcutta, i.e. those who feel for the Movement and believe in it.

There should be not only no bother about collecting the crore, but there should be certainty of Swaraj in a month, if all the rich men of India could realize that their safety lies, not in fearing the existing Government but in fearlessly helping the Movement. Today, if they are making millions, they are sending billions out of the country, i.e. they are taking the millions and assisting to take the billions out of the mouths of their poor, and in many cases starving countrymen. Today, they, more than the other classes, are supporting a top-heavy administration, which is keeping up a ruinous military expenditure in order to be able to hold India in the last resort by Dyerism and O'Dwyerism.

But we must take the facts as they are. The richest men are afraid to incur the displeasure of collectors and commissioners. Some of them honestly fear the success of non-cooperation. They believe that its success means chaos and destruction of life and property at least for the time being. We must win these over by patiently persevering to impregnate the atmosphere with the spirit of non-violence in thought, word and deed.

Meanwhile, let us realize that the few rich men and the many well-to-do men and women we have with us, have to sacrifice more than they are ordinarily used to, if we are to make up the deficiency. A happy beginning has already

been made in Bombay. Earnest workers themselves endowed with riches, are working night and day to make large collections. They are meeting with ups and downs. But they are dauntlessly pursuing their even course.

We must get rid of the habit of waiting to be coaxed. Why should not the moneyed men of Bombay volunteer their assistance and send their gifts? Why should they wait till some one else has begun?

And what of those who cannot give lacs or thousands each? They can still do much to reduce the burden of the few rich. Let them not wait for a summons from any society. Let each group, each caste, each trade-guild automatically set about collecting and sending to the provincial centres. The remaining days must be utilized for that purpose and no other by those who have any ability for collection.

It is a shame that the total possible collection of the provinces cannot be more than forty lacs. There is still time to wipe out the reproach, by each province producing selfless workers for the week of Grace and Privilege, who would concentrate their energies on collections.

Seeing that so many of the moneyed men are abstaining, and seeing that we have not succeeded in organizing collections among the masses, it follows that some must give their all. I know four Gujaratis, themselves workers of standing and ability, who have given their all. One has died, leaving over Rs. 25,000, the whole of his savings to the Swaraj Fund. I hope the example of the four workers will prove infectious. One loses nothing by giving in the cause of freedom.

If we are to achieve Swaraj during this year, the least we can do is to complete the Bezwada programme by the time fixed. The collection of the crore will be a most visible token of its fulfilment.

Young India, 22-6-'21, p. 196

52. OUR BURDEN

It is not enough that we have secured the crore. We should know how to make a good use of it. We should know to keep clean and complete accounts. We are not going to put the crore out at interest. We have collected it for our *immediate needs*. We have to elevate national life by means of it. We must boycott foreign cloth, we must introduce a system of national education. We must ameliorate the wretched condition of the suppressed classes. We must free the nation from the clutches of drink. We must banish for ever the spectre of famine from our country. The crore could be used up for all these things. For this, we need honest workers. Our accounts should be open for inspection even to a child. All hopes for assistance in the future, must naturally depend upon a proper administration of the present trust. We have got in our collections the priceless ornaments of sinless sisters. Many girls have given up all such jewellery as was so dear to them. I know the names of some but I do not care to publish them. They have not cared for publicity. I think them to be so holy that I would not like to take their names in vain. They have given only for the joy of giving. One widowed sister gave me all the pearls and rubies that still remained with her. My heart wept within me, as I accepted them. Are we fit recipients of gifts like these? A widow never likes to part with her ornaments, she holds them with all the greater tenacity. I put this sister on her guard. I asked her to have them back if there was the least hesitation or bashfulness in the act of giving. She did not withdraw, she was already fully determined on the step she took. What, if we use money thus obtained negligently, foolishly or dishonestly? We should not only be disappointed in our hope of Swaraj. We should become the ever hopeless denizens of the darkest hell. I trust that the purity of these sisters—their religious fervour—will keep us on the straight path, will not allow our honour to be tarnished and will lead to the fulfilment of all our desires and aspirations.

Young India, 6-7-'21, p. 213

53. TILAK SWARAJ FUND

(From "Notes")

What use has been made of this fund is a question that still continues to worry people. A Punjabi correspondent says that in the course of his khaddar tour he finds people inquiring about the disposal of the fund. I have repeatedly stated in these columns that full and certified balance-sheets have been published from time to time. Let the public also realize that the fund was distributed among twenty-one provinces and that several lacs were earmarked. Not only has the A.I.C.C. published an All-India balance-sheet, but the provinces too, have done likewise. Though there has been here and there misapplication of the funds and even defalcation, on the whole I am satisfied that the money has been spent for the purpose intended. Any patient student of Congress affairs can, whenever he wishes, study the printed figures and find out for himself how the money was used.

Young India, 18-6-'25, p. 210

54. THE ALL-INDIA TILAK MEMORIAL FUND

The Honorary Treasurers have issued an exhaustive statement of the All-India Tilak Memorial Fund up to the end of 30th September 1925. The statement is audited by Messrs. Dalai and Shah. The auditors who are Incorporated Accountants (London) state:

"We visited all the Provincial Committees except the C.P (Hindustani), C.R (Marathi), Berar, Burma and Assam Committees. Although we visited the Kerala Provincial Committee, the accounts being not ready at the time of our visit we could not examine same. The accounts, however, of the C.P (Hindustani), Berar, Assam, and Burma Provincial Congress Committees have been forwarded by the secretaries duly audited by the auditors to these committees and are annexed herewith.

"We have verified the Investments and Securities on hand. We could not however verify the cash on hand as we visited the centres sometime after the close of the year.

"It will be seen that this year also many committees have failed to prepare Balance-sheets and Income and Expenditure Accounts, and have submitted only Receipts and Disbursements Statements. In many cases we found that as no balances of Assets and Liabilities from previous periods are being brought forward, it was not possible for Balance Sheets to be prepared. Receipts and Disbursements Statements would not in the absence of Balance-sheets show the state of affairs of committees from year to year. Assets are likely to be lost sight of this way.

"Khadi Departments according to a resolution of the All-India Congress Committee have been separated in some cases. In the case of other committees they will be, we are informed, transferred this year, to the Provincial Bodies of the All-India Spinners' Association.

"Large amounts have been invested in the Khadi Departments of the various committees, but we find that a considerable part of these amounts is irrecoverable and does not represent anything in the form of Assets or Stock in hand. These amounts or the part of amounts not represented by any reliable Assets and irrecoverable should be written off. In this connection we did draw the attention of the committees concerned at the time of our visit.

"Also advances to workers and District Committees which are not recoverable or are by way of allowances not repayable should be written off to revenue, and not shown as Assets as is done in several cases.

"A combined statement showing Receipts and Disbursements of all the Provincial Committees has been prepared by the All-India Treasurer's office and is included herein.

"As to the system of Accounts we intend addressing a separate letter, and hope that suggestion made will be carried out from the current year."

The present statement is quite apart from the statement previously issued of the Tilak Memorial Fund from its foundation. The present statement brings up the accounts to-date not only in charge of the All-India Congress Committee but also of the Provincial Congress Committees. The Balance-sheet gives the position up to 30th November 1925.

It is to be hoped that the instructions of the auditors will be carried out by the Provincial Committees. Nothing can more secure the stability of the Congress organization than the accuracy with which the finances are kept by the Central as well as the Provincial Offices. There are, in the statement which contains 64 foolscap folios, accurately kept and certified accounts by various Provincial Congress Committees. Those who are interested in the Congress finances cannot do better than to secure a copy from Sjt. Revashankar Jagjivan Zaveri, Hon. Treasurer, A.I.C.C., Zaveri Bazar, Bombay by sending two annas postal stamp per copy.

Young India, 29-7-'26, p. 269

55. TILAK SWARAJ FUND

(From "Notes")

During the Maharashtra tour at one or two meetings I was asked what had become of the crore collected for Tilak Swaraj Fund. The questioners had every right to put this question even though they might not have contributed a pie to the fund. A public fund becomes public property and therefore every member of the public is entitled to know in detail the administration of such funds. I, therefore, answered the question fairly exhaustively. The gist of my answer will bear repetition although the question has been answered in these pages already.

The accounts have been published regularly by the All-India Congress Committee. Copies of the audited account can be had at any time from the Congress secretaries or treasurers. Every pie has been accounted for. There is no doubt that in some instances those to whom funds were entrusted were not

faithful to the trust, but that is as much as to say that the Congress like all human institutions is an imperfect body having in its fold all sorts of men. I know of no institution in the world which does not | have dishonest agents. The Congress is no exception. But I can say this that no loss has been sustained beyond what a most careful merchant suffers. The little loss that had been sustained! is due not to negligence, but has occurred in spite of vigilant inspection and auditing. It should be further borne in mind that the Congress has had in Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and in Sethi Jamnalal Bajaj an incorruptible working secretary and an incorruptible working treasurer respectively. Moreover '75 per cent of the funds were administered locally by local representatives who had assisted in raising the funds and who were trusted by the people. Lastly, the largest amounts were mostly earmarked and controlled by the donors, subject no doubt to the conditions that they were to be used only for purposes coming within the programme on non-co-operation and the accounts were to be open to inspection by Congress agents. Personally, I have absolutely no regret about having raised the fund and my conscience is clear as to its administration. Everything that was humanly possible to guard against fraud, maladministration or misappropriation was done. The fund has served an immense national purpose. The tremendous organization that came into being all of a sudden could not have been created without this great national fund to which both rich and poor contributed so handsomely.

Young India, 24-2-'37, p. 61 at p. 62

56. WHY IS BOMBAY BEAUTIFUL?

(Some extracts from the article "Bombay the Beautiful" are given below.)

Bombay is beautiful, not for its big buildings for most of them hide squalid poverty and dirt, not for its wealth for most of it is derived from the blood of the masses, but for its world renowned generosity. The Parsis set the tone, and Bombay has ever lived up to her reputation. Bombay's charity has covered a multitude of her sins. In respect of the Tilak Swaraj Fund Bombay has beaten her past records. Between the sixteenth and thirtieth June, she subscribed at

the rate of two lacs and a half per day. She enabled. India to keep her promise. And I have no doubt, Chittaranjan Das will allow Bombay's claim to the honour of having infected Bengal and let her become the rescuer. For, if Bengal had not leapt from three lacs to twenty-five, in spite of the herculean labours of Bombay's choicest workers India would have failed to raise the crore. Bombay, then, is beautiful because of her charities.

* * *

India has honoured the late Lokamanya, as she has not honoured any other son before. But the crore is but foundation of the monument that we are raising to the memory of the deceased patriot. Swaraj is the crown. No monument less than Swaraj can revere a memory so great.

Let us however not deceive ourselves. To be true to the spirit of the memorial resolution, each province and each district should have subscribed at least its numerical proportion. Two pice per head was not a contribution beyond the means of the average man or woman. And I hope, that every province will strive to make up its quota as early as possible.

Young India, 6-7-'21, p. 212

57. PUBLIC FUNDS

I have critics who see nothing but flaws in everything I say or do. I profit by their criticism sometimes. But I have also the good fortune to have friends who may be described as guardians of my virtue. They would have me to become a perfect man, and therefore, feel agitated when they think that I have erred, or am likely to err in anything I may say or do. One such well-wisher, whose caution has before now proved to be of the greatest value to me, writes to the following effect:

"Within my experience, you have been responsible for collecting subscriptions for several funds, such as for Jallianwala, Satyagraha Sabha, Swadeshi, Swaraj, and now you have fixed yourself up in Bengal for Deshabandhu Memorial Fund. Are you satisfied that the previous

funds have been well managed, and now the Deshabandhu Memorial Fund will also be properly managed? You owe it to the public to render a full explanation." The correspondent might have added the Tilak Swaraj Fund, and also the Flood Relief Fund in the South.

The question is pertinent. Even in course of my collections for the Deshabandhu Memorial, those who have paid me handsomely, have given me the caution. My general rule is that I never identify myself with any fund where I do not know those who are to operate upon it, and where I am not satisfied about their honesty. The first three funds were raised not by me, or on the strength of any reputation I possess, but they were raised by Mr. Banker, whom even then I knew well and who had a perfect right to use my name. I know, too, that he could have raised all the money that was received on the strength of his own! undoubted reputation and service rendered. Fullest accounts were kept of the receipts and disbursements, and were published also, if my recollection serves me right. But, in any event, these are very small accounts.

I have referred to the Tilak Swaraj Fund, although my correspondent has not. I have heard repeated complaints about it. It was the biggest public fund ever raised. I have the clearest] conscience about it. The closest scrutiny of the disposal of that fund will show that generally there has been no laxity about its administration, and that there have been far less losses than are incurred by commercial firms. The latter generally write off 10 p.c. as their book-debts. I have known big South African firms writing off so much as 25 p.c. as a normal thing. In the transactions on the Tilak Swaraj Fund we have not lost anything near 10 p.c. I doubt if the total losses would amount to 2 p.c. The working treasurer: insisted upon vouchers for everything. The accounts have been audited from time to time. They have been published. This is not to say that in some cases there has not been gross misappropriation by Congress workers who were entrusted with funds. This is inevitable where moneys have to be disbursed through hundreds of channels. All that is possible is to ensure against the looseness or carelessness on the part of top-men. The wonder to me is, that on the whole, it is possible to show as clean a record as we have.

Then take the Jallianwala Bag Fund. Here again there is accurate-account-keeping. The accounts have been published also from time to time. The place is well looked after. Pandit Malaviyaji may be considered to be the soul of that fund. The place is kept beautifully clean, and from a dung heap it has been turned into a garden. Complaints, however, have been made that no fitting memorial has been yet raised, and the money is allowed to lie idle. If it is a charge, I must confess that I am perhaps more answerable for it than the others. Even plans have been prepared, but I felt that conditions of the time when the fund was raised were altered immediately after. The *Bag* itself has been, in some way or other, a bone of contention between different parties. I do not know that we have seen the last of it. The Memorial was to be, as it should be, a memorial of solid communal unity—a triumph out of a tragedy. Hindu, Musalman and Sikh blood that flowed on that fateful 13th in a mingled stream, was to signify an unbreakable union. Where is that union today? It will be time to think of building a memorial when we stand united. For the present, so far as I am concerned, it is enough that the *Bag* stands, as a little fit of a lung in crowded Amritsar, with its narrow, tortuous and dirty lanes.

Now, I come to the Deshabandhu Memorial Fund. The treasurer of the fund is a host in himself. But I know that he will not be forever possessed of it. It will ultimately vest in the trustees. The five original trustees are nominees of the deceased patriot. Every one of them has a status in society, and a reputation to lose. Some of them are moneyed men. These five original trustees have added two more. One of them Sir Nilratan Sircar, is the premier physician of Calcutta and the other, Mr. S. R. Das, the first cousin of the deceased, is the Advocate General of Bengal. If these seven trustees are not capable of rendering a good account of themselves, and doing justice to the trust reposed in them, I should despair of any trust succeeding in India. The mansion is there and I know that Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, another medical trustee and a physician of the first rank is busy evolving plans for putting it to the use for which it is intended. It has been whispered to me that possibly Mr. S. R. Das, being the Advocate General of Bengal cannot be trustee. I do not know the law in the matter. I knew that he was Advocate General of Bengal when he undertook the trust; but

if it is an over-sight there will be a trustee appointed in his place, who will be equal in reputation to him. If Mr. S. R. Das can remain a trustee, I was privileged to know enough of him to be able to assure the readers that he will neglect nothing to make the administration of the trust a thorough success. Up to the moment of his departure for England it occupied his care and attention. But I feel sure that every one of the original trustees will be as jealous of the memory of the deceased as any can be, and that they will make the proposed hospital and nurses' training institution worthy of his memory. So much for the All-Bengal Deshabandhu Memorial Fund.

About the All-India Memorial Fund, I am myself one of the trustees. The object of the memorial is nearest to my heart. My fellow-trustees are as well known to the public as any public man. The secretary is a seasoned soldier, and so is the treasurer,—both respectively secretary and treasurer of the Congress also.

Let me, however, in conclusion, warn the public that the safety of the public fund lies more even in an intelligent vigilance of the public than in the strict integrity of those who are in charge of funds. Absolute honesty of the trustees is a necessity, but public inertia is a crime. Ignorant criticism must not be mistaken for intelligent vigilance. What I have found generally is ignorant criticism. What I would love to see is, that some public men, with a knowledge of account-keeping, make it a point, now and again, of overhauling the administration of public funds, and bringing the administrators to book.

Young India, 20-8-'25. p. 289

58. CARPING CRITICISM

(Originally appeared in the columns of "Notes" under the above title.)

Often do young men criticize the conduct of leaders without just cause. The latest instance which has come to my notice is rather striking. A special train was arranged for a visit to Mirpur Khas from Hyderabad during my recent visit to Sindh. This was too much for a correspondent. He thought that the leaders had indulged in a waste of national funds. I had not stopped to inquire the

reason why the special was arranged. He advised me to cancel the special and give a day more to Sindh and save the money. If he had inquired into the matter, the friend would have discovered that without the special it was impossible to take me to Mirpur Khas, that I could not have given a day more to Sindh without disturbing the rest of the programme, that it was necessary for me to go to Mirpur Khas and that the expense was comparatively small.

Criticism of public men is a welcome sign of public awakening. It keeps workers on the alert. Those who pay have a right to ensure economy. There is undoubtedly an extravagance often noticed about popular demonstrations, much money is spent in tinsel splendour. The expense is often thoughtless. And we are likely to gain by fearless criticism of public expenditure or general conduct of public men. But all such criticism must be well informed and thoughtful. All carping criticism must be avoided.

Whilst on the question of railway travelling, I must remark that there is still noticeable a desire to avoid 3rd class travelling. I am sorry to say that, being no longer physically able to travel 3rd class, I am deprived of the inestimable experiences of third class railway travelling. It affords an opportunity of contact with the national mind which nothing else does. It enables one to render service which cannot be otherwise rendered. I would therefore urge all workers to avoid 2nd class travelling save in rare cases. No one perhaps knows better than I do the discomfort of 3rd class railway travelling. I put it down partly to callous railway management and partly to bad national habits that ignore the convenience of the neighbours. Observant workers travelling 3rd class would efficiently deal with the disregard both of the management and the passengers. There is no doubt that 2nd class travelling is not within the reach of the masses. And national servants may claim no privileges not enjoyed by the latter.

Young India, 11-5-'21, p. 145 at p. 146 59

59. ON FINANCING ORGANIZATION AT LOCAL LEVEL

(Originally appeared in "Notes" under the title "Financial")

Though the All-India Congress Committee has a fair balance still at hand, the provinces undoubtedly will have used up the moneys left with them. They have an automatic source of income. Every Congress member is liable to pay four annas per year to enable him to retain his or her vote. If therefore each province has its quota of members, it must be able to collect at least Rs. 50,000/- counting two lacs to be the least number on the roll of membership. I have been told that this is merely a mirage, that it costs more to collect the amount than it is worth. A government that spends more than it earns is a despotic or corrupt government. The Congress is claimed to be a voluntary organization. And if we are unable to collect our subscriptions at a nominal cost, we have no right to exist. Under Swaraj we shall expect to get our revenue at no more than 2½% cost and then not by force but by the free will of the people. The least therefore that we are entitled to expect is that every province must now be able to finance itself. It ought not to be difficult again to get at least one crore members i.e. twenty- five lacs of rupees throughout all India for membership. Indeed if we are a growingly popular organization, say government, we should be able to double our membership. We should be able to have enough number of unpaid honest volunteers to do just this one work of collection and no more. If we have not them, we must declare our bankruptcy. If we represent a healthy and natural growth, we must be able to collect this nominal personal annual tax without any effort whatsoever. And as with the Congress organizations, so with its many institutions, colleges, schools, weaving factories, etc. No institution is worth keeping that does not command local support by reason of its own moral strength. Only that institution is a necessity in a district which is supported by its inhabitants. The biggest missionary institutions financed from America or England are a super imposition and have nowhere been assimilated by the people. If the missionaries had from the very commencement relied purely upon the good-will and support of the people,

they would have rendered infinitely greater service to India. Even so if Congress organizations and institutions are supported from the central body, they are likely to become foreign growths and hardly beneficial to the people. It may be laid down as a general rule that no local institution should exist which is not locally supported. Self-reliance is the surest test of capacity for self government. It is possible that there are places or provinces which have not yet become self-conscious. They will need to be developed and helped in the initial stages. They cannot today be counted in any scheme of battle we may devise. In this swift struggle we must rely only upon those places that have developed political consciousness. It must therefore be in the rarest cases that the central body may be expected to finance local effort.

Young India, 5-1-'22, p. 1 at p. 2

60. FRAUD BY CONGRESSMEN

(From "Notes")

In poor Orissa some so-called Congressmen are reported to have misappropriated Congress funds to the extent of several thousand rupees. One man had adopted the role of an ascetic and appeared to be working so zealously that he began to command influence and confidence till at last he was appointed to a position of trust. The question of dealing with the fraud became very serious and still remains so. The matter was referred to me and I had no hesitation in advising proceedings and suggesting that the Congress official who trusted the defaulter should after finishing the case resign office if necessary for breach of the boycott resolution. This boycott of law courts cannot be allowed to be used by so-called Congressmen to defraud the Congress itself. Private parties if they are non-co-operators may beware of engagements that may involve them in law suits. But as between Congressmen and as regards Congress affairs, in other words in matters of trust, it will defeat the very purpose of the boycott if unscrupulous people under cover of the boycott sought by belonging to the Congress to defraud the institution itself. At the risk therefore of being considered inconsistent I have no hesitation

whatsoever in advising the Congress officials in Orissa to take legal proceedings against the culprits for the recovery of trust funds and then tendering resignation, if need be. If I were president of the Congress Committee I should not only authorize the official concerned to take legal proceedings but after his resignation endeavour to have the official reinstated for zealous discharge of his duty. The saving of Congress funds is as much a duty as the retention of the boycott of law courts. As a matter of fact the Congress official who may be the plaintiff or complainant in his representative capacity commits no personal breach of the boycott resolution. It is the Congress that does it. And the Congress has a perfect right to break its own laws in its own favour. In a well-ordered state the maxim, 'The King can do no wrong', has a legitimate purpose and place.

Young India, 11-9-'24, p. 297 at p. 299

61. WHAT OF PURSES?

(From "Notes")

The . . . Punjabi correspondent asks how the purses presented to me at the different places are utilized. As a rule, the money is left at the places where it is given with instructions for its use in the khaddar propaganda. Only, where I find no one whom I want to entrust with the use of the money given, I keep it with me and use through the Ashram for khaddar propaganda. Where the money is earmarked, naturally, I have nothing to do but to hand the contents for the earmarked purpose to the persons concerned.

Young India, 18-6-'25, p. 210

62. ON USE OF PUBLIC FUNDS

(From an address dated 12-8-1928 by Gandhiji to the volunteers of Bardoli Taluka which appeared under the title "Work As You Have Fought".)

Then I should like to know how your volunteers here have handled funds, like a spendthrift or like a miser. Have they been able to remain free from the but common weakness of being lax with regard to the use of public funds? I take it that there has been no extravagance or wreckless expenditure in your case. But what we need is Spartan simplicity. I shall be only too glad to be told that the strictest standard of economy was observed throughout. Nothing will give me greater satisfaction than to find that you have learnt to do better in this respect than is usual with volunteers in general.

We must learn to make our expenditure commensurate with the national resources, not with what generous donors may give us.

Young India, 13-9-'28, p. 310 at p. 311

63. ACCOUNT FOR EVERY PICE

I

(A few extracts from Gandhiji's speech at Bhatgam in Surat District on 29th March, 1930 which appeared under the title "Turning the Search-light Inward" are given below.)

These lights are merely a sample of the extravagance I have in mind. My purpose is to wake you up from torpor. Let the volunteers account for every pice spent. I am more capable of offering satyagraha against ourselves than against the Government. I have taken many years before embarking upon civil resistance against the Government. But I should not take as many days for offering it against ourselves. The risk to be incurred is nothing compared to what has to be incurred in the present satyagraha.

Therefore in your hospitality towards servants like us, I would have you to be miserly rather than lavish. I shall not complain of unavoidable absence of things. In order to procure goat's milk for me you may not deprive poor women of milk for their children. It would be like poison if you did. Nor may vegetables and milk be brought from Surat. We can do without them if necessary. Do not resort to motor cars on the slightest pretext. The rule is, do not ride, if you can walk. This is not a battle to be conducted with money. It will be impossible to sustain a mass movement with money. Any way it is beyond me to conduct the campaign with a lavish display of money.

Extravagance has no room in this campaign. If we cannot gather crowds unless we carry on a hurricane expensive propaganda, I would be satisfied to address half a dozen men and women. Success depends not upon our high skill. It depends solely upon God. And He only helps the vigilant and the humble.

Young India, 3-4-'30, p. 113 at p. 114

II

(The following paragraph which appeared under the caption "Necessity of Purity in Account Keeping" is reproduced below.)

Simple people are in pure faith pouring in their copper, silver and paper coins into the bowls of volunteers who sell salt or otherwise collect money. No unauthorized volunteers should make collections or sell salt at fancy prices. Accounts should be accurately kept and frequently published. Books should be weekly examined by auditors. It will be well if moneyed men of proved honesty were to constitute themselves treasurers to take charge of and collect funds and work in full co-operation with Congress volunteers. Active workers are being quickly picked up and it may be difficult before long for local organizations to hold funds and keep proper accounts. As it is the public have everywhere taken over the financing of the movement. Let it be done responsibly and methodically.

Young India, 24-4-'30, p. 141

64. IS IT CRIMINAL?

Nowhere have the Reception Committees been so extravagant as in Travancore in the matter of reception expenses. In some places, it seems the expenses have been almost half of the purses collected. I had a memo of expenses already from two places. As usual I have asked for detailed and audited account of expenses. I have the fear that even the cost of printing addresses has been set against the purses. If so, it amounts in my opinion to criminal misappropriation of purse funds. The purses belong to Harijans. The cost of collection may be a proper charge against them where the committees are composed of poor people. In every case the purses should be handed intact. The expenses that may be passed will be refunded to the committees concerned. This was the practice followed in Andhra. In C.P, so far as I am aware, entertainment expenses were in every case borne by private persons. The following rules should be borne in mind by the committees in future:

1. The fewest number of volunteers should be employed.
2. Motor hire for local purposes should be minimized.
3. Motor hire for the party should be separately shown, so as to enable one to collect from those who are travelling at their own expense.
4. Printing charges should be incurred only when absolutely necessary.
5. No decoration charges can be allowed to be debited against the purse.
6. On no account can address expenses be paid out of the purse fund. I have repeatedly said that addresses need not be presented at all. I know that they have, when they are spontaneous, a propaganda value of the right sort. But if addresses continue to be presented thoughtlessly, the sacrifice of propaganda value may have to be made. The burden, therefore, rests upon Reception Committees of permitting only those addresses that are spontaneous and leave a value in terms of the Harijan cause.
7. Accounts for feeding the party should be separately rendered when they are meant to be a charge against the purse. I must say in fairness to the Committees that outside Travancore I have not known committees having to

defray the feeding expenses. And seeing that my party is very big, consisting of 15 persons, even providing one meal is no light task in a country like India. Travancore is still comparatively a new field and, being the home of orthodoxy, I and my party naturally became untouchables among orthodox people, who were before good enough to have me in their homes. Add to this the fact that the Government circulars, warning their servants against their countenancing me or the movement, and possibly similar instructions from the Travancore authorities frightened even moneyed laymen from having any dealings with me. The wonder to me is that, in spite of the vague or justified fear of the high placed, the common people flocked to the meetings, even in Travancore, as never before. I am not, therefore, surprised that the poor members of Reception Committees in some places in Travancore had to find feeding expenses from the purse. But, in every such case I must scrutinize the bill of fare as I would if it was rendered by a hotel keeper. The committees know by this time that the simplest food only is expected. No sweets, no elaborate dishes, no spices are required. The largest item, I fear, is goat's milk and fruit. These ought not to be provided at every place. As usually the three meals are taken at three different places, milk and fruit may be provided once for all at the morning meal. Fruit should be only local season's fruit and oranges. Fruit is unfortunately a medical necessity for several members of the party. Reception Committees are not to be expected to provide these through private individuals, nor may they be allowed to spend what they like from the purses. Thakkar Bapa, who is in charge of the party, should be left to decide what the bill of fare should be. Local committees would be expected to see that honest dealers provide the necessaries at market prices.

The thing to remember is that all of us working for the cause are trustees for the moneys collected and, therefore, have to spend like misers, taking greater care of the trust funds than we would of our own. If, as against this, it is said that without spectacular displays and demonstrations no money is to be got, my answer without hesitation would be that we must do without it. Either the moneys given are an earnest of reparation or they are not. If they are such an

earnest, they will come spontaneously after conviction is brought home to the would be donor. My experience of begging for public causes covers a period of now over 40 years. I cannot recall a single occasion when I have had to resort to spectacular displays. It was done by hard work, concentrated, patient and gentle arguments and unshaken faith in the cause. And of all the causes for which I had the privilege of collecting, the Harijan cause undoubtedly is the noblest, because it affects the most suppressed part of humanity on the face of this globe. It will prosper if it has true men and women behind it. The needed money will come without much effort. Honest and selfless work is the truest prayer. And no such prayer has ever gone unanswered.

Harijan, 9-2-'34, p. 4

65. DONATION OF TAINTED MONEY

(From "Question Box")

Q. Supposing a man has earned millions by exploiting millions of his poor brethren and made a gift of them to a Mahatma like you, and supposing you use that money for the benefit of humanity, is the exploiter absolved from sin? Does not some blame attach to you too for having accepted this ill-gotten wealth? How can one remain blameless in this unending vicious circle? How is ahimsa to cope with this immoral exploitation?

A. Let us assume for the purpose of this riddle that I am really a Mahatma, and then try to solve it. The gift of what you assume to be ill-gotten gains cannot lessen the guilt of the exploiter. If he had kept the money for himself, that would have been an additional count against him. If instead he makes a gift of it to me from pure motives, he escapes the additional sin. It is also likely that a good use of his gift may wean the exploiter from immoral means of making money.

But no blame attaches to me for having accepted the gift. As the foul waters from drains flowing into the sea partake of its purity, even so does tainted wealth become pure when put to the purest use. There is one condition,

however, that we have assumed, viz. that the gift is made and accepted out of pure motives.

Exploitation of the poor can be extinguished not by effecting the destruction of a few millionaires, but by removing the ignorance of the poor and teaching them to non-co-operate with their exploiters. That will convert the exploiters also. I have even suggested that ultimately it will lead to both being equal partners. Capital as such is not evil; it is its wrong use that is evil. Capital in some form or other will always be needed.

Harijan, 28-7-'40, p. 217 at p. 219

66. PURSES FOR PUBLIC MEN

An interesting case of the use of purses presented to a public person has recently come under my observation. I receive many purses from the public. Thus, during my recent tour, donations covering over two lakhs were given to me between Calcutta and Madura. Some of them were anonymous, some earmarked, and some donors said, when asked, that I was to use the money in any manner I liked. I have kept no property which I can call my own. Am I entitled to use those donations or a part of them for personal needs? During the whole of my career I have never made any such use and have always advised friends to do likewise. I hold that there is no other course open to persons who enjoy public confidence and to whom the public give donations, fully believing that the money will be used more judiciously and carefully than by themselves for some public purpose. It would be a terrible thing if the trust reposed in one were abused for personal purposes. Ruinous consequences of such use can be better imagined than described. Public service must be, like Caesar's wife, above suspicion.

Bombay, 19-2-'46

Harijan, 24-2-'46, p. 23

PART VI: ERADICATION OF CORRUPTION

67. CORRUPTION?

(From "Notes")

Whilst I am discussing the doings of the Swarajists I would like to advert to the charge of corruption brought against them. Some distinguished public men came to me and warned me against playing into the hands of the Swarajists and urged me to use my influence to purify the political life of Bengal. I told the gentlemen that I had no reason to believe the charges they were making, but that, if they would give me chapter and verse and be prepared to substantiate them, I would gladly investigate and, if I found them to be true, I should have no hesitation in denouncing the party. I told them, too, that I had heard of these charges before and that I had brought them to the notice of Deshabandhu Das who had assured me that there was no truth in them, and that if my informants could produce names and specific charges, he, Deshabandhu, was perfectly willing to have them investigated. The gentlemen told me that the belief about corruption was common property, but that it was not always possible to give legal proof. I told them that in that case we must follow the golden rule of not believing what could not be proved. If we did not follow the rule, no public man's reputation would be safe.

After this interview I had forgotten all about the charges. Hardayal Babu, however, returned to the charge with double fury at Chandpur. But I could not treat his denunciation seriously, nor did he expect me to. Although he and I belong to the same school, our methods of looking at public men and activities are different. Behind my non-co-operation there is always the keenest desire to co-operate on the slightest pretext even with the worst of opponents. To me, a very imperfect mortal, ever in need of God's grace, no one is beyond redemption. Behind Hardayal Babu's non-co-operation there is fierce distrust and disinclination for reverting to co-operation. He wants mighty signs whereas a mere gesture suffices me.

But I had the charge repeated in an unexpected quarter. I pricked up my ears and became serious. I began a little gentle inquiry. I was, however, relieved on my reaching Calcutta by Babul Nalini Sircar, the chief whip of the Swaraj Party, Babu NirmaH Chandra, Babu Kirenshekhar Ray and Babu Hirendranath Das Gupta, coming to me and offering unasked to answer any questions I might have about the Swaraj Party's doings in any manner whatsoever. I thereupon mentioned all the charges I had heard. They were able to give me complete satisfaction about them and invited me to investigate further and even to inspect their books. But I told them that I could not possibly inspect their books unless there was more authentic information about the charges. As it was, I had nothing beyond unsupported allegations. They assured me that there was not a vestige of truth in the charge of bribery and corruption.

I appeal to those who are ready to make charges to be chary of believing the stories that may be brought before them regarding their adversaries. Do we not know the Government has been badly sold by its informants? Do they not know that even Ranade and Gokhale were shadowed for a long time? Do they not know what scandals were talked about the late Sir Pherozeshah and even Sir Surendranath Banerjee? Even the G.O.M. was not beyond the reach of calumny. A gentleman in London once gave me such details that he at least required me to approach the great patriot whom I worshipped. Well, I did approach him with trembling and fear. I sat down at his feet and I remember the occasion as I looked into his benign face and pleadingly asked whether what was said to be could be true. It was a garret which the G.O.M. was occupying as his office in Brixton. I shall never forget the scene. I came away knowing that the charge brought against him was a simple calumny. What would happen to me if I were to believe all I have been told about the 'selfishness and perfidy' of the Ali Brothers whom I believe to be above corruption and perfidy? There are enough differences to divide us, but why accentuate them by giving a ready ear to every charge of baseness brought against opponents? I find enough justification for honest differences. Let us then honour our opponents for the same honesty of purpose and patriotic motive that we claim for ourselves. One gentleman who spoke about the so-called Swarajist corruption was candid enough to tell

me that in spite of it all there was no leader in Bengal but Chittaranjan Das. There is room enough for all to serve. There is no room for jealousy when all wish to serve. I believe in trusting. Trust begets trust. Suspicion is foetid and only stinks. He who trusts has never yet lost in the world. A suspicious man is lost to himself and the world. Let those who have made of non-violence a creed beware of suspecting opponents. Suspicion is of the brood of violence. Non-violence cannot but trust. I must at any rate, refuse to believe anything against anybody, much less against my honoured fellow-workers, unless I have absolute proof. But Hardayal Babu will say, 'Do you want us to disbelieve the testimony of our eyes and ears?' I say, yes and no. I have known people whose eyes and ears have deceived them. They see and hear only what they would like to see and hear. To these I say, 'Do not believe even your eyes and ears when you have unbiased testimony to the contrary.' But there are others who have seen, heard and known but have not been able to impart the truth to others. They must persist in their belief even though the whole world may be against them. Only before them I shall plead for a little toleration for those like me, who, in spite of all their desire to see the pure truth, fail to see it in the light the others see. I am yet unconvinced about the corruption ascribed to the Swarajists. And those who believe the contrary must bear with me till they convince me.

Young India, 4-6-'25, p. 193

68. CONGRESS CORRUPTION

(From "Notes")

I receive letters every week complaining that corruption and indiscipline have crept into the Congress ranks, that people have got into the Congress whó seek to exploit it for their own private ends. Here is the latest typical letter duly signed:

"... President, Congress Committee . . . enlisted about 1300 members for the Congress but the subscriptions are not forthcoming from him, nor has he submitted any accounts.

"With characteristic lack of scruples the Secretary and . . . are not convening the long overdue annual meeting lest; they might be turned out of office. In contravention of rules . . . has been making payment without sanction. ... is a notorious character who collected money which he never accounted for to the authorities."

There are also several other charges mentioned in the foregoing indictment. The complaint too has been received that the Congress Committees in several parts of India have been using moneys received by them for purposes, other than those for which they were earmarked. I hope that responsible Congressmen's will look into their respective organizations and wherever any corruption or misappropriation is discovered they will not hesitate to denounce such corruption and remove it.

Young India, 30-7-'25, p. 261 at p. 262

69. CORRUPTION IN THE CONGRESS

I

It is difficult to cope with the correspondence that I am having from several places about violence, untruth and corruption in the Congress. Whilst I must continue to publish typical correspondence about the weaknesses of Congressmen, I must issue a warning against hasty deduction being drawn that all is ill with the Congress. I know it is not. But it is true that¹ violence, untruth and corruption have made inroads enough to warrant drastic measures in order to prevent decay overtaking the great organization.

Here are extracts from two typical letters:

(1) "Perhaps you are aware how the enrolment of bogus Congress members is going on unimpeded everywhere, and how rich and unscrupulous persons are controlling the affairs of the Congress organization, keeping skilfully the

genuine and devoted workers out of their way. Some are paying the membership subscription of annas 4 for others under their control out of their own pockets, and some are going a step forward and are not paying a single pie to the Congress Committees and instead making the Primary Committees under their clutches prepare false accounts of their apparent collections and thereby evading the supervising eye of the sub-divisional as well as District Committees..

"Primary Committees having less than 25 members are not required, under the rules framed by it, to pay anything to higher committees out of the membership fee. The result is that a good many paper committees are being set up with less than 25 members to deprive the sub- divisional and District Committees of their quota of the membership subscription as also to secure a larger proportion of representation in these committees."

(2) "It is my duty to bring to your notice the open and scandalous corruption in enrolling Congress members.

The Congress authorities here, especially the Executives, know this state of things well, but it is difficult to know why the necessary steps are not being taken. If steps are not taken, things will go from bad to worse and the whole Congress Institution will be disgraced and the hold on people will be lost.

- (i) "Every party is trying to capture the Congress office—whether Primary, Sub-divisional, District or Provincial. And for this purpose bogus members are being enrolled by practically every group.
- (ii) "There are a good many names of persons on the Congress rolls, but on scrutiny it can be easily found out that there are no such persons in existence at all. During election time the same group of persons is mobilized at elections of Primary Congress Committees of different wards.
- (iii) "The members are enrolled sometimes without their own signatures on application forms and in most cases without taking payment of the annual subscription of four annas.
- (iv) "The question arises how the account of collection of subscription by the Primary, Sub-divisional and District Congress Committees is maintained. In

almost all cases where a group is in possession of the office and necessarily | the office account, collection of the annual subscription for i all the bogus members is shown to the credit side, and at the same time nearly the whole amount is shown to the debit m side on the different heads of expenses, such as travelling. expense, meeting expense, allowance expense, etc. Really they do not collect the subscription and maintain a false account.

"I do not know how all these corruptions can be stopped. There will be, I hope, changes of rules at the next A.I.C.C. meeting at Delhi. Some steps should be immediately taken to stop the corruption. Identification of Congress members, signatures of the members on the application forms, actual realization of subscription from the members and true accounts should be enforced." These statements have been made by responsible parties. The letters are meant for publication. But I have purposely suppressed the names of my correspondents as also of the | province in which the corruption is said to exist.

It is to be hoped that the Working Committee and the A.I.C.C. will deal with this as well as the other serious questions that will come up for discussion and decision. It would be al tragedy if the session of the A.I.C.C. were to be frittered away in orations or mutual wranglings.

Harijan, 24-9-'38, p. 263



(Originally appeared under the title "Congress Corruption")

A U. P. correspondent writes:

"I have carefully gone through your statement in *Harijan* and read your recent speech before the Congress Working Committee regarding the corrupt practices among Congressmen and the committees.

"I have myself on many occasions noticed such corrupt practices as mentioned in the letter published by you, namely, the enrolment of bogus members, paying from one's own pocket the enrolment fees of members, and even forging signatures. The pity is that such things are even done by responsible office-

bearers of the Congress committees. In certain places such cases have come to the notice of the Provincial Committee officially, but these things were taken very lightly by the authorities. With the little experience I have of the Congress work in these provinces, I can say that this is true of many of the district and city committees.

"My humble reading of the situation is that such things are generally practised by that section which wants to capture the committees and retain power in their hands. Further, these things have enormously increased with the coming of the parliamentary programme in the Congress. The decision of the Congress to capture the local boards and the provincial legislatures has attracted towards it a big group of men who are anxious to get into these bodies at any cost. It is this group which, failing to get the spontaneous support of the genuine Congressmen, brings mercenaries and bogus members, who but for personal attachment to the gentleman who enrolls them have nothing in common with the Congress. Even among the old members of the Congress some have been taken in by the temptation of offices and power and they readily join hands with the new mercenaries. It is therefore that such corrupt practices and grouping of parties, without any fundamental difference in principles, is seen just on the advent of elections.

"I therefore humbly suggest that the parliamentary section of the Congress be kept away from the committees, and those who wish to enter the local boards or the legislatures should not be allowed to hold any offices in the committees, or the office-bearers of the committees should not be permitted to seek elections to any of these bodies. Such a provision in the Congress constitution may do away with the necessity of corrupt practices. It would further give more time to the members of the committees to do the constructive work of the Congress, which is at present being neglected on account of legislative work, and may enhance their prestige among the public as selfless workers." The suggestion made by the correspondent has been made by several other Congressmen. It has much to commend itself. If members of legislatures and local boards are chosen from outside Congress office-bearers, there is less

danger of manipulation. It would be necessary in such a case to reduce the membership of committees. The members should then be only those who would practically be full-time workers having no time or thought for any work or office outside their own committees. This is a change every Provincial Congress Committee can make without any change being required to be made in the Congress constitution.

Another suggestion, which ought to have occurred to me and the members of the Working Committee was made to me by a business organizer. He said, "Why are you thinking of heroic measures? Why would you not advise the Working Committee to copy what business houses do who have numerous branches? There should be strict inspection and auditing of all Congress committee books, not merely books dealing with finance but books containing names of members, etc. All registers which do not, contain complete identification and other particulars about members should be mercilessly rejected. And if the books are according to patterns, inspection and examination become easy. All the Working Committee has to see to, is that there are enough auditors and inspectors who know their job and can be trusted to do it thoroughly and honestly. And if you pay the price it should not be difficult to get capable, men with common honesty." I have expanded the argument that was advanced in the course of a conversation. The suggestion is absolutely sound and can be, like the previous one, enforced without any change in the constitution. All that is wanted is the will to clear the Congress of Augean stables. But if the heads of Congress committees are indifferent or supine, the corruption cannot be dealt with. "If the salt loses its savour wherewith shall it be salted?"

Harijan, 22-10-'38, p. 299

70. DEMON OF CORRUPTION

(From "Gandhiji's Post-Prayer Speeches")

The subject of corruption referred to by the correspondent is not new. Only it has become much worse than before. Restraint from without has practically gone. Corruption will go when the large number of persons given to the unworthy practice realize that the nation does not exist for them but that they do for the nation. It requires a high code of morals, extreme vigilance on the part of those who are free from the corrupt practice and who have influence over corrupt servants. Indifference in such matters is criminal. If our evening prayers are genuine, they must play no mean part in removing from our midst the demon of corruption.

Harijan, 1-2-'48, p. 10 at p. 15

VII : ON ORGANIZING OF TOURS, DEMONSTRATIONS AND MEETINGS

71. TO THE ORGANIZERS OF BENGAL TOUR

(Originally appeared in "Notes" under the title "The Bengal Tour")

This . . . brings me to the Bengal tour. Telegrams before me tell me that the programme extends to five weeks. I hope that the organizers have taken the Mondays into account. These are days of obligatory silence and freedom from movement as a rule. But I would like the organizers, if possible, to leave Wednesdays too for silence so as to enable me to cope with all the writing I have to do from week to week. It was my wont to carry a spinning wheel with me. I have now altered the arrangement and ask those who feed me to provide me with a wheel too in working order. I find that the new arrangement enables me to examine the local wheels and as generally my host tries to provide me with the best working wheel, it enables me to gauge the capacity of the place visited for yarn production. For, when I find the best available wheel to be an indifferent piece of furniture, I know that the production is poor. I hope therefore that at every place the host will kindly provide me with the best wheel available in it and find me time for spinning. Thirdly, I hope that instructions will be issued to the crowds of people gathering not to shout or make noise and to keep a clean passage to the platform. Often there is a frightful waste of time in passing through these vast crowds. When volunteers have to form themselves into chains, it shows that the people have not yet been disciplined to obey the rules regulating crowds. I know that it is possible to discipline the crowds if leaflets giving detailed instructions are distributed beforehand and instructions are given repeatedly *by word of mouth from the platform before the commencement of meetings.

Crowds should also be instructed not to touch my feet. I have no desire for such homage. The homage I do desire is, for people who wish to honour me to practise what they profess to like of my preaching. It is enough if they stand

erect with their chests forward and salaam, or bow, if they wish to, with folded hands. If I could have my way I would discard that too. There is no difficulty in reading affection in the eyes. No further gesture is necessary. But what I would love to see is that the crowds I expect to see in Bengal will be all clad in khaddar. Not that a single person who is not so clad should be turned out. Those who do not believe in khaddar may come in their foreign or mill-spun and mill-made cloth by all means. But the vast majority who I understand believe in khaddar should at least practise what they believe. Let them demonstrate their belief in their own persons. Lastly, I hope that all parties will attend these meetings. I would love to see people belonging to all the different schools and different races not excluding Englishmen. May I also add that it will be better if the local organizers will arrange more for personal and private (not secret) chats than for huge gatherings for speech-making? That spectacular part may be necessary, but it should occupy the least time. I would naturally meet the students. Ladies' meetings are a feature everywhere and I would now like a meeting of untouchables too in every place. And if, as in these parts of India, there are separate quarters for them in Bengal, I should like to visit them. In a word let the tour be a business tour and the mission one of peace and goodwill.

Young India, 16-4-'25, p. 131

72. ALMODA TOUR

(From "Notes")

I hope to leave Sabarmati for Almoda on 11th June. It is hardly necessary to remind the workers that:

1. There should be no show, no decorations causing expense,
2. No more than the absolutely required number of local volunteers should accompany me during the tour,
3. There will be subscriptions called for, for *Daridra- narayana*,

4. Nothing but simplest food should be provided for the party accompanying me,
5. I should have at least six hours during the day given to me for attending to editorial and correspondence work excluding the hours of feeding etc.,
6. If expenses of reception are to be deducted from the purses that may be collected, audited accounts should be submitted to me, and
7. My party will travel at its own expense, the reception committee kindly providing for transport facilities.

As this tour has been devised by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru for both rest and work, I am taking with me some who will not be required for the tour but who will accompany me for health's sake. They should in no way be a burden on the reception committee.

Young India, 30-5-'29, p. 181

73. PLEA FOR CATHOLICITY

During my frequent travels I have noticed that the reception committees are not too mindful of expense in catering for the wants of guests. They will insist on producing sweets or other delicacies and a multiplicity of dishes. I have firmly discountenanced these at all times, but this time when I am making collections for the Harijan cause, which I regard as a mission of penance and purification, I feel pained when there is any attempt at lavish hospitality. In two places I observed that Gujarati cooks were brought in to produce Gujarati dishes. I regard this as a wholly unnecessary procedure. I believe that we should be able to accommodate ourselves to the food eaten in the provinces other than our own. I know that this is not so simple a question as it appears. I know Southerners who have made a herculean effort to take to Gujarati food and failed. Gujaratis will not take to the Southern mode of cooking. Bengal produces dainties which the other provinces will not easily relish. If we would be national instead of provincial, we would have to have an interchange of habits as to food, simplify our tastes and produce healthy dishes all can take with impunity This means a careful study of the foods taken by different

provinces, castes and denominations. Unfortunately, or fortunately, there are not only different combinations in different provinces, but there are different styles in the same province, among the different communities. It is, necessary, therefore, for national workers to study the foods and the methods of preparing them in the various provinces and discover common, simple and cheap dishes which all can take without upsetting the digestive apparatus. In any case, it must be a matter of shame for workers not to know the manners and customs of different provinces and communities. In liberal households cooks ought to be able to cook foods eaten in the various provinces. Why should not a Gujarati be able to produce dishes which a Tamilian or an Andhra or a Bengali ordinarily eats? I know we cannot meet at the top. Nor is such a meeting necessary or desirable. Rich people will have not only provincial combinations but specialities designed for their own households. These cannot be universalized. What can be and should be aimed at are common dishes for common people. This I know is easily possible if we have the mind. But to make this possible, volunteers will have to learn the art of cooking and for this purpose they will have also to study the values of different foods and evolve common dishes easily and cheaply prepared.

I have strayed somewhat from my main purpose which is to ask organizers of the tours in the provinces not to pamper us but to be rigorously simple and economical in catering for us. We are, or profess to be, conducting a mission of self-purification and representing the cause of the outcastes of Hindu humanity. As such we have no right to the satisfaction of any but the barest wants and creature comforts. Fried things and sweets must be strictly eschewed. Ghee ought to be most sparingly used. More than one green vegetable simply boiled would be regarded as unnecessary. Expensive fruits should be always avoided. I know that I am the culprit in the matter of fruit. Friends would pamper me and go out of the way to procure the richest fruit for me. I can only assure them that I do not need any other fruit than oranges, which experience has proved to be necessary for me. In spite of all my vaunted abstinence, I know that of my party I am the costliest member to feed. I am sorry that it should be so, but mother goat to whose milk I owe my bodily

strength and sister orange which keeps me fresh cannot compete in cheapness with rice and wheat. Let not my numerous hosts, however, add to my indebtedness by importing tempting superfluities. Let them not pander to my weaknesses, if they will help me to do my duty towards Harijans.

Harijan, 5-1-'34, p. 4

74. ALL ABOUT VOLUNTEERS

(From "Notes")

No More Sticks

During our travels in Madras and the Ceded Districts as elsewhere, we found much dissipation of energy. Vast crowds gathering everywhere and waiting for hours in order merely to have a glimpse. The yelling and the noise were unbearable. We noticed, too, that wherever previous preparation was made as in Trichinopoly, Ghettinad, Tinevelly and other places, the order was all that could be desired, and we were able to go through a great deal of work without any difficulty. In the Ceded Districts, however, we saw the volunteers carrying bamboo sticks seven feet in length. These were meant to be used for forming chains to protect the guests from the crowds rushing towards them. I could see, that the sticks were a hindrance, interfered with easy movement and constituted a danger in the midst of crowds. I was myself in danger of having my eyes hurt more than once. And instead of feeling the protection of volunteers, I felt the danger of their long sticks causing me serious injury any moment. I showed the volunteers that strong ropes would serve their purpose much better than these sticks. Maulana Azad Sobhani saw the point of my remarks, and as sticks could never be used by the volunteers, under the pledge of non-violence, for causing hurt, he induced them at Tadpatri to put them away. I would suggest such a change to all volunteer corps. As our movement is avowedly peaceful, it is much better even to drop sticks. Soldiers of peace that we are, we should copy the ordinary as little as possible whether in point of uniform or otherwise.

Want of Training

It was painful to notice the want of training among the volunteers in many places. Except at the few places such as I have mentioned, they were always a hindrance in spite of the best of motives. They would insist on surrounding, if not mounting, the cars. They would insist on walking in front and obstructing the passage. They did not know how to march in step. They would not walk in twos. It was most difficult to pass instructions to them. It is high time they were thoroughly organized and were instructed to follow certain rules.

Chairs out of Place

As a rule now, one rarely sees chairs at public meetings. They are all in the open air. A little platform with or without canopy is generally improvised in the centre. As I cannot speak standing, a chair is as a rule provided for me, and therefore naturally for my companions. These chairs mar the harmony of the surroundings. I suggest the use of the simple old square table for me to speak from. We can certainly revive the old art in keeping with our simple and natural surroundings. I was pleased to observe throughout the tour, that for covering and decoration Khadi only was invariably used.

Young India, 6-10-'21, p. 314 at p. 315

75. VOLUNTEERS

(From "Notes")

I have been asked to give my impressions of the volunteers' work at Belgaum during the Congress week. I thought that I had already dealt with it in my Belgaum impressions. But I gladly respond. Their work will bear a fuller and separate treatment. In my opinion the volunteers reached at Belgaum comparatively the highest watermark in efficiency within my experience of four Congresses. They were hardworking, efficient and willing. I heard no complaint from the delegates about them. Physically too they appeared to me to be fit. Dr. Hardikar was good enough to take me through their camp which had a businesslike appearance and was, fairly tidy. I say fairly tidy for in my opinion a

volunteer camp must be a model of tidiness, not a thing being out of its place and every thing being not only in its own place but being in its place in a neat manner. For instance, a volunteer may have his bedding in its place and yet may have put it in a heap instead of having properly and neatly folded it in the prescribed manner. In point of sanitation too a volunteer camp must be perfect, not a scrap of paper or dirt should be found anywhere. I understand that Dr. Hardikar specially restricted the number of volunteers. They had therefore more than a fair share of work to do. During the time that the Congress was in session they had to work over sixteen hours per day, being on their legs practically the whole of that time. I must not omit to mention the lady volunteers. They were most helpful and attentive. They too had undergone previous training. Though we cannot manage a Congress session without the efficient help of volunteers, let me say that that work is the least part of a volunteer's training. Volunteers must be our greatest asset in winning Swaraj. This they can only be, if in addition to having a spotless character and the necessary training in drilling, sanitation and first aid to the injured, they know how to organize the nation for Swaraj. For this purpose therefore every volunteer must be an expert carder and spinner, and must be able in addition to doing his share of spinning, necessary for the franchise, to organize carding and spinning in his own district. It should be remembered that hand-spinning has been part of a volunteer's training since 1921.

Young India, 5-2-'25, p. 49 at p. 51

76. ON ORGANIZING BIG ORDERLY DEMONSTRATIONS IN HONOUR OF NATIONAL LEADERS

I

(Originally appeared under the title "Democracy v. Mobocracy")

Looking at the surface there is but a thin dividing line between mob-law and the people's law. And yet the division is complete and will persist for all time.

India is today quickly passing through the mob-law stage. The use of the adverb signifies my hope. It may be our misfortune to have to pass through that process even in slow stages. But it is wisdom to adopt every means at our disposal to have done with that stage as quickly as possible.

There is much tendency on our part to yield to the rule of the mob. There was mob rule at Amritsar on the 10th of April 1919. There was mob rule at Ahmedabad on the same fateful day. It represented undisciplined destruction and therefore it was thoughtless, profitless, wicked and harmful. War is disciplined destruction, much more bloody than any yet committed by mobs. And yet war has been apostrophized, because we have been deceived by the temporary but brilliant results achieved by some wars. So, if India has to achieve her freedom by violence, it will have to be by disciplined and honourable (in so far as it is possible to associate honour with violence) violence, named war. It will then be an act not of mobocracy but democracy.

But my purpose today is not to write of mobocracy of the Ahmedabad type. I intend to deal with the type with which I am more familiar. The Congress is a demonstration for the mob and in that sense and that only. Though organized by thoughtful men and women it may be called a mob-demonstration. Our popular demonstrations are unquestionably mob-demonstrations. During the memorable tour of the Khilafat mission through the Punjab, Sindh and Madras, I have had a surfeit of such demonstrations. I have been ashamed to witness, at railway stations, thoughtless though unwitting destruction of passengers' luggage by demonstrators who in their adoration of their heroes have ignored everything else and everybody else. They have made, much to the discomfort of their heroes, unmusical and harsh noises. They have trampled upon one another. They have elbowed out one another. All have shouted, all at the same time, in the holy name of order and peace. The volunteers have been heard to give the same order at the same time. Volunteers often become demonstrators instead of remaining people's policemen. It is a task often dangerous, always uncomfortable, for the heroes to be escorted through a broken chain of volunteers from the platform to the coach intended for them. Often it is a

process which, although it should occupy no more than five minutes, has occupied one hour. The crowd instead of pressing back presses towards the heroes and who therefore require to be protected. The coach is taken possession of by anybody who dares, volunteers being the greatest sinners. The heroes and other lawful occupants have to reason with the intruders that they may not mount the footboards in that summary fashion. The hood of the coach is roughly handled by the processionists. It is not often that I have seen hoods of motors left undamaged by crowds. On the route instead of crowds lining the streets, they follow the coach. The result is confusion worse confounded. Every moment there is danger of accidents. That there is rarely any accident at such demonstrations is not due to the skill of the organizers, but the crowd is determined to put up with all jostling and retain its perfect good humour. In spite of everyone jostling everyone else, one has the slightest wish to inconvenience one's neighbour. To finish the picture, there is the meeting, an ever-growing cause of anxiety. You face nothing but disorder, din, pressing, yelling and shouting there. A good speaker arrests the attention of the audience and there is order such that you can hear a pin drop..

All the same this is mobocracy. You are at the mercy of the mob. So long as there is sympathy between you and the mob, everything goes well. Immediately that cord is broken, there is horror. An Ahmedabad episode now and then gives you the mob psychology.

We must then evolve order out of chaos. And I have no doubt; that the best and the speediest method is to introduce the] people's law instead of mob-law.

One great stumbling block is that we have neglected music. Music means rhythm, order. Its effect is electrical. It immediately soothes. I have seen, in European countries a resourceful superintendent of police controlling the mischievous tendencies of mobs. Unfortunately like our *shastras*, music has been the prerogative of the few, either the better of prostitutes or high class religious devotees. It has never become nationalized in the modern sense. If I had any influence with volunteer boy scouts and Seva Samiti organizations, I would make compulsory a proper singing in company of national songs. And to

that end I should have great musicians attending every Congress or Conference and teaching mass music.

Much greater discipline, method and knowledge must be exacted from volunteers and no chance comer should be accepted as a full-fledged volunteer. He only hinders rather than helping. Imagine the consequence of the introduction of one untrained soldier finding his way into an army at war. He can disorganize it in a second. My greatest anxiety about non-co-operation is not the slow response of the leaders, certainly not the well-meant and even ill-meant criticism, never unadulterated repression. The movement will overcome these obstacles. It will go in even strength from them. But the greatest obstacle is that we have not yet emerged from the mobocratic stage. But my consolation lies in the fact that nothing is so easy as to train mobs, for the simple reason that they have no mind, no premeditation. They act in a frenzy. They repent quickly. Our organized Government does not repent of its fiendish crimes at Jallianwala, Lahore, Kassur, Akalgarh, Ram Nagar, etc. But I have drawn tears from repentant mobs at Gujranwala and everywhere a frank acknowledgment of repentance from those who formed the mob during that eventful month of April. Non-co-operation I am therefore now using in order to evolve democracy. And I respectfully invite all the doubting leaders to help by refusing to condemn, in anticipation of a process of national purification, training and sacrifice.

Next week I hope to give some illustrations of how in a moment order was evolved out of mob disorder. My faith in the people is boundless. Theirs is an amazingly responsive nature. Let not the leaders distrust them. This chorus of condemnation of non-co-operation when properly analysed means nothing less than distrust of the people's ability to control themselves. For the present I conclude this somewhat lengthy article by suggesting some rules for guidance and immediate execution.

1. There should be no raw volunteers accepted for big demonstrations. Therefore none but the most experienced should be at the head.
2. Volunteers should have a general instructions book on their persons.

3. At the time of demonstrations there must be a review of volunteers at which special instructions should be given.
4. At stations, volunteers should not all be centred at one point, namely, where the reception committee should be. But they should be posted at different points in the crowd
5. Large crowds should never enter the station. They cannot but inconvenience traffic. There is as much honour in staying out as in entering the station.
6. The first duty of the volunteers should be to see that other passengers' luggage is not trampled upon.
7. Demonstrators ought not to enter the station long before the notified time for arrival.
8. There should be a clear passage left in front of the train for the passengers.
9. There should be another passage if possible half way through the demonstrators for the heroes to pass.
10. There should be no chain formed. It is humiliating.
11. The demonstrators must not move till the heroes have reached their coach or till they receive a pre-arranged signal from an authorized volunteer.
12. National cries must be fixed and must be raised not any how, at any time or all the time, but just on the arrival of the train, on the heroes reaching the coach and on the route at fair intervals. No objections need be raised to this on the score of the demonstration becoming mechanical and not spontaneous. The spontaneity will depend upon numbers, the response to the cries, above all the general look of the demonstrators, not on the greatest number of noises or the loudest. It is the training that a nation receives which characterizes the nature of its demonstrations. A Mahomedan silently worshipping in his mosque is no less demonstrative than a Hindu temple-goer making a noise either through his voice or his gong or both.
13. On the route the crowd must line and not follow the carriages. If pedestrians form part of the moving procession, they must noiselessly and

in an orderly manner take their places and not at their own will join or abstain.

14. A crowd should never press towards the heroes but should move away from them.
15. Those on the last line or the circumference should never press forward but give way when pressure is directed towards them.
16. If there are women in the crowd they should be specially protected.
17. Little children should never be brought out in the midst of crowds.
18. At meetings volunteers should be dispersed among the crowd. They should learn flag and whistle signalling in order to pass instructions from one to another when it is impossible for the voice to carry.
19. It is no part of the audience to preserve order. They do so by keeping motionless and silent.
20. Above all, everyone should obey volunteers' instructions without question.

This list does not pretend to be exhaustive. It is merely illustrative and designed to stimulate thought and discussion. I hope that all the vernacular papers will translate this article.

Young India, 8-9-'20, p. 4

II

(Originally appeared under the title "Some Illustrations")

I promised in my article on "Democracy v. Mobocracy" to give some illustrations of my meaning out of my own experiences. I was however unable, owing to the protracted Congress proceedings, to give those illustrations last week. I do so now. When we reached Madras, a huge crowd awaited us at the station. Our compartment was detached and fortunately drawn up in front of a reserved platform. What would have happened, if we had to alight together with the other passengers can be better imagined than described. But even on the reserved platform we were not able to get out for some time. The volunteers were in the way. Instead of dispersing themselves among the crowd and

keeping it back, they clustered together to do us honour as they thought. The result was that the pressure was all directed towards where they and we were standing. And 'form a ring' has become the usual word of command. This forming a ring is a humiliating spectacle and yet it has become such an institution that even when there is no one else but volunteers 'a ring' is formed round the leader to be '.honoured'.

To proceed with my description, the crowd was large, the noises they made were so terrific that the directions given by the volunteers could not be heard at all. All was chaos. My poor toes were every moment in danger of being crushed to pulp. I often very nearly lost my balance through the jostling of the very volunteers who were trying to protect me. And but for the very great care with which they guarded me and the assistance rendered to them by the stalwart Maulana Shaukat Ali, I would have fared much worse than I did. The atmosphere was suffocating. Thus struggling it took us nearly three quarters of an hour to reach the motor car whereas ordinarily it need not have; taken three minutes to walk out of the station to the porch. Having reached the car it was no easy job to get into it. I had to be shoved into it in the best manner possible. I certainly heaved a sigh of relief when I found myself in the car, and I thought both the Maulana and I deserved the ovation we received from the; crowd after the dangerous exercise we had gone through. With a little forethought this mobocracy, for such it was, could have been changed into a splendidly organized and educative demonstration. And it could have been rendered free of all risk to life. The experience of Madras was typical of many. We had an extraordinary experience at Erode on our way to Salem. I was fairly fagged out. My voice had become hoarse with speaking. As at many stations there was here too a surging crowd. It was thoroughly disorganized, though like everywhere else perfectly good humoured and respectful. I appealed to them not to make all kinds of unmusical noises, told them to disperse in an orderly manner as they had already seen us. I told them too that if they intended to take their share in the Khilafat and the Punjab struggle, they were expected to undergo discipline. I was able to reach my voice to the most intelligent among them. I suggested; that they should quietly rise, turn towards the station

entrance and noiselessly retire. They listened, the rest followed and the station was cleared in two minutes' time. If the friends, who heard me, had haggled, argued, objected and insisted on shouting and remaining, the whole crowd would have done likewise and; there would have been a pandemonium throughout the long time I that the train stopped there.

I shall finish this description by giving the reverse of our experience at Jalarpet. We were travelling to Madras by the night train leaving Bangalore. We had been taking meetings at Salem during the day, motoring to Bangalore, a distance of 125 miles from Salem, taking there a meeting in drenching rain and thereafter we had to entrain. We needed night's rest but there was none to be had. At almost every station of importance, large crowds had gathered to greet us. About midnight we reached Jalarpet junction. The train had to stop there nearly forty minutes or stopped that night all those terrible minutes. Maulana Shaukat AH requested the crowd to disperse. But the more he argued, the more they shouted "*Maulana Shaukat Ali ki Jai*" evidently thinking that the Maulana could not mean what he said. They had come from twenty miles' distance, they were waiting there for hours, they must have their satisfaction. The Maulana gave up the struggle, he pretended to sleep. The adorers thereupon mounted the foot-boards to have a peep at the Maulana. As the light in our compartment was put out they brought in lanterns. At last I thought I would try. I rose, went to the door. It was a signal for a great shout of joy. The noise tore me to pieces. I was so tired. All my appeals proved fruitless in the end. They would stop for a while to renew the noise again. I shut the windows. But the crowd was not to be baffled. They tried to open the windows from outside. They must see us both. And so the tussle went on till my son took it up. He harangued them, appealed to them for the sake of the other passengers. He produced some effect and there was a little less noise. Peeping however went on to the last minute. It was all well-meant, it was all an exhibition of boundless love, yet how cruel, how unreasonable! It was a mob without a mind. There were no intelligent men of influence among them and so nobody listened to anybody.

Before we can make headway, we must train these masses of men who have a heart of gold, who feel for the country, who want to be taught and led. But a few intelligent, sincere, local workers are needed, and the whole nation can be organized to act intelligently, and democracy can be evolved out of mobocracy. This evolution is really the first step to successful, national non-co-operation.

Young India, 22-9-'20, p. 2

III

(Originally appeared under the title "Necessity of Discipline")

I have already remarked upon my experiences of want of method and discipline in Madras. The same want is being noticed during the tour in the Rohelkhund. Everywhere there is chaos and disorder not for want of men but because of volunteers without training. They are called upon to handle a situation and crowds that are unprecedented. There is more noise and bustle than work.

Maulana Shaukat Ali is the indefatigable organizer. He wants to satisfy all parties and therefore packs too many events in any programme he arranges. To take only one instance. He accepted for one single day a motor ride from Aligarh to Hathras, thence to Etah and from Etah to Kasgunj with the prospect of a slow night journey from Kasgunj to Cawnpore. The motor ride covered a distance of 90 miles. After a trying meeting of workers at Aligarh early in the morning, we got into our motors at 9.45 a.m. and reached Hathras at about 11 a.m. The sun was burning hot and fierce. The inevitable noisy procession was there. It was followed by a huge meeting involving an intolerable strain on the voice of the strongest speaker. We however got for our pains resignations of three honorary magistracies. We motored thence to Etah. There was a little more order there than at Hathras. Soon after finishing Etah we motored to Kasgunj. We had accidents during the journey, the cars refusing to move. With difficulty we reached Kasgunj, Maulana Shaukat Ali and his companions not reaching in time for the train. We had several resignations at Etah. The meeting at Kasgunj for its enormous size was well managed but not without difficulty. Touching the feet has become an uncontrollable performance

causing much waste of time and involving danger when it is resorted to in the midst of a large crowd.

But the most wretched experience was the night journey from Kasgunj to Cawnpore. It was made most uncomfortable by crowds attending at every station. They were everywhere insistent and assertive. The noises they made in order to wake me up were piercing and heart-rending. I was tired. My head was reeling and was badly in want of rest. In vain did Mrs. Gandhi and others plead with the crowds for self-control and silence. The more they implored, the more aggressive the crowds became. It was a tug of war between her and the crowds. The latter would put on the light as often as she put it off. If she put up the shutters the crowd immediately put them down. I was resting, did they want me to die a premature death? The answer was they had come many miles to have *darshan* and *darshan* they must have. I had hardened my heart and refused to move till it was daybreak.

But there was not a wink of sleep for any of us during the whole of that night. It was a unique demonstration of love run mad. An expectant and believing people groaning under misery and insult believe that I have a message of hope for them. They come from all quarters within walking reach to meet me.

As I do believe that I have a message of hope and certain deliverance but —?

Yes. It is a big BUT. There is no deliverance and no hope without sacrifice, discipline and self-control. Mere sacrifice without discipline will be unavailing. How to evolve discipline out of this habitual indiscipline? Not certainly by the British bayonet or the British hypocrisy. The British officials have no affection for this loving and phenomenal demonstration of a peaceful and peace-loving people. They would put it down if they could, by barbarous exhibition of force even as Sir Michael O'Dwyer tried and ingloriously failed.

But if this demonstration cannot be put down by force, it cannot also procure Swaraj for India unless regulated and harnessed for national good. There are in it all the elements of success as well as of self-destruction. It cannot lead to promised goal if the nation in extravagant affection wastes its servants by encroaching upon their hours of needed rest. We must therefore cease to hold

nocturnal demonstrations. We must have consideration for the feelings of the lowest of our fellow beings. We must not disturb the rest of a train load of passengers. We must learn to transmute our love for our heroes into unquenchable energy and useful action. Love that is satisfied with touching the feet of its hero and making noise at him is likely to become parasitical. Such love ceases to be a virtue and after a time becomes a positive indulgence and therefore a vice. The greatest task before the nation today is to discipline its demonstrations if they are to serve any useful purpose. Non-co-operation is not designed to create hatred but to purify the nation to the point of rendering it proof against injurious aggression whether from within or from without. Non-cooperation to be effective must be prevented by co-operation between all the units composing this great and ancient people. Let us begin by co-operating with our loved ones.

Young India, 20-10-'20, p. 2

IV

(From "Our Late Tour")

My experiences have become so much enriched by every tour that it is difficult for me to cope with them and give the results to the reader. I must therefore content myself with adding to the stock on the necessity of discipline and organization. I have dealt with our experiences up to the journey to Cawnpore. I was dreading our approach to Cawnpore—the Cawnpore of Maulana Hasrat Mohani and Dr. Murarilal. They are both great workers. The arrangements at the station were perfect. A large crowd awaited us at the station. But the discipline observed was so good that we were able to make our way through two solid rows of men without a single member moving before we had taken our seats in the cars. What might have meant a waste of thirty minutes was finished within five. The procession was happily abandoned... Lucknow was a contrast there was utter confusion at the station and a seething mass of humanity. It was a demonstration of undisciplined love. All were pressing forward to get at us. Not one of them realized that it was an impossible task. At last I refused to move unless the crowd had regained self-control. In a few

minutes the crowd understood what I had to say, and made way for us. There was a trying procession...

I must reluctantly omit the stirring events of Amritsar and Lahore and hasten to Bhiwani. At Amritsar there was a huge but unorganized crowd at the station. We evaded it by alighting at another platform. The demonstration at Lahore we evaded by motoring there.

The night journey to Bhiwani was perfectly restless. Crowds insisted on *darshan*. One man suggested that Mahatmas needed no rest and that it was their duty to give *darshan*. Some were really angry that we all stolidly refused to move out of our beds. Another remarked that we must be highly inconsiderate to respect the wishes of the people and get up to give *darshan*. At length tired and sleepless we reached Bhiwani. Probably fifty thousand people had gathered from surrounding villages. I was therefore afraid that we would be crushed to atoms. But to my agreeable surprise, I found perfect order there. There was no rush or noisy bustle at the station. All kept their respective places. The procession was comfortably managed in spite of a dense throng. . . .

Young India, 27-10-'20, p. 4

77. DISCIPLINE

(From "Notes")

It is high time that we disciplined ourselves. The demonstrations at railway stations are becoming a menace to the comfort of the travelling public. I am told that some railway passengers who, only a short time before a station demonstration were praising me, were, after one or two demonstrations at intermediate stations, heard to curse me. I sympathize with them. I had a fellow-passenger with me during the Allahabad journey. Owing to the pressure of the crowds that besieged the station, he was unable to get a cup of tea or go out for his refreshments. I should not at all be surprised if he considered me to be a plague. On my way back from Allahabad, there was an unmanageable

crowd on the Cawnpore platform, yelling the national cries, pressing towards my compartment and making everybody uncomfortable. The noise continued the whole time. The leaders were with difficulty able to make the crowd sit, but it could not be made to stop shouting and yelling. I was asked to stand near the door to give *darshan*. Much to the disappointment of the friends who urged me, I resolutely refused to stir out of my seat, unless there was perfect silence.

This din, noise and bustle was due purely to want of forethought, management and organization. It is best now to avoid all demonstrations at stations. We must consult the convenience of the passengers. If there must be a demonstration, national cries must be regulated, every facility must be provided for the easy movement of passengers. The nation must be disciplined to handle mass movement in a sober and methodical manner. This means previous training of volunteers and previous discipline of the masses. It is not impossible to give an elementary training in a few days. Wherever the people have been previously instructed, they have responded wonderfully well. Without this training, we never know when there might be an accident. It is the innate good nature of the people that has saved us hitherto from mishaps. But under proper training, we should be able to feel absolutely safe and comfortable in the midst of the biggest demonstrations. We cannot afford to be hysterical or mad.

Young India, 18-5-'21, p. 153 at p. 154.

78. THAT UNBECOMING DEMONSTRATION

The first I heard of the black flag demonstration against Subhas Babu on his visit to Patna was through a courteous letter received from the Secretary of the Bengali Association of Bankipore. I then saw a notice of it in the Press. To make myself sure of what had happened I wired to Shri R R. Das for an authentic and up-to-date account. He replied from Dhanbad saying he was away from the scene and knew nothing. The newspapers reported that there was stone-throwing and hurling of shoes resulting in injuries to Swami Sahajanand and others.

Allowing for exaggerations, if any, there seems to be little doubt that there was a hostile demonstration of an unseemly nature which brought no credit to the Congress.

I have read Rajendra Babu's eloquent statement on the unhappy incident. It is so true and so heart-stirring that it admits of no addition or embellishment. I endorse every word of that noble pronouncement. It is reproduced below this article.¹

The demonstrators showed an unworthy intolerance. Subhas Babu has a perfect right to agitate against the action of the Working Committee and canvass public opinion against it. The disciplinary action frees him from any liability for restraint save what every Congressman, pledged to the credal constitution, is bound to put on himself. That action should save him from any further demonstration of public displeasure. And those who disapprove of the action of the Working Committee are certainly entitled to join any demonstration in favour of Subhas Babu. Unless this simple rule is observed we shall never evolve democracy. In my opinion the black flag demonstrators have rendered a disservice to the cause of freedom. It is to be hoped that the Patna demonstration will prove to be the last of such acts by Congressmen. The question may be asked, "How are those who endorse the action of the Working Committee and disapprove of Subhas Babu's propaganda to show their disapproval?" Certainly not through black flags and disturbing of meetings in honour of Subhas Babu. They can express their disapproval by holding counter meetings, not at the same time as the others but either before or after them. These meetings, both for and against, should be regarded as a means of educating public opinion. Such education requires calm surroundings. Black flags, noisy slogans, and hurling of stones and shoes have no place in educative and instructive propaganda.

Apropos of the ugly demonstration I must refer to a complaint I have received that some Congress committees have threatened action against those Congressmen who may take part in receptions to Subhas Babu. I hope that the complaint has no foundation in fact. Such action will betray intolerance and

may even be a sign of vindictiveness. Congressmen who dislike the Working Committee's action are bound to take part in receptions to Subhas Babu. It is impossible to gag them by threats of disciplinary measures. Such action loses its value if it is resorted to on the slightest pretext. If it is true as it is true, that no organization can do without such powers, it is equally true that no organization that makes free use of such powers has any right to exist. It cannot. It has then obviously lost the public backing.

Harijan, 9-9-'39, p. 264

1. Omitted from this collection.

79. THREE NATIONAL CRIES

During the Madras tour, at Bezwada I had occasion to remark upon the national cries and I suggested that it would be better to have cries about ideals than men. I asked the audience to replace "*Mahatma Gandhiki Jai*" and "*Mahomed Ali Shaukat* „*Aliki Jai*" by "*Hindu-Musalmanki Jai*". Brother Shaukat Ali, who followed, positively laid down the law. In spite of the Hindu-Muslim unity he had observed that if Hindus shouted *Bande Mataram*, the Muslims rang out with "*Allah-o-Akbar*" and vice versa. This he rightly said jarred on the ear and still showed that the people did not act with one mind. There should be therefore only three cries recognized, "*Allah-o-Akbar*" to be joyously sung out by Hindus and Muslims showing that God alone was great and no other. The second should be "*Bande Mataram*" (Hail Motherland) or "*Bharat Mataki Jai*" (Victory to Mother Hind). The third should be "*Hindu-Musalmanki Jai*" without which there was no victory for India, and no true demonstration of the greatness of God. I do wish that the newspapers and public men would take up the Maulana's suggestion and lead the people only to use the three cries. They are full of meaning. The first is a prayer and a confession of our littleness and therefore a sign of humility. It is a cry in which all Hindus and Muslims should join in reverence and prayerfulness. Hindus may not fight shy of Arabic words when their meaning is not only totally inoffensive but even ennobling. God is no respecter of any particular tongue. "*Bande Mataram*", apart from its wonderful associations,

expresses the one national wish—the rise of India to her full height. And I should prefer "*Bande Mataram*" to "*Bharat Mataki Jai*" as it would be a graceful recognition of the intellectual and emotional superiority of Bengal. Since India can be nothing without the union of the Hindu and the Muslim heart, "*Hindu-Musalmanki Jai*" is a cry which we may never forget.

There should be no discordance in these cries. Immediately some one has taken up any of the three cries the rest should take it up and not attempt to yell out their favourite. Those who do not wish to join may refrain, but they should consider it a breach of etiquette to interpolate their own when a cry has already been raised. It would be better too, always to follow out the three cries in the order given above. Nor should cries be incessantly shouted. One often hears an incessant yell when a popular leader is passing through a station. I doubt if this incessant noise does the slightest good to the nation except to provide an indifferent exercise for one's lungs. Moreover, it is necessary to think of our hero's nerves and time. It is a national waste to keep him occupied in gazing at a crowd and hearing a cry in his praise or any other for full thirty minutes. We must cultivate the sense of proportion.

Young India, 8-9-'20, p. 6

80. ABOUT PUBLIC MEETINGS

(Originally appeared in "Notes")

A Simple Suggestion

During my tour I observe that at some of the meetings volunteers thoughtlessly begin distribution of papers, such as copies of addresses etc. just after the guest has arrived and the address has begun to be read. They do not realize that this creates a fresh disturbance in already noisy and restless meetings. If papers are to be distributed, they should always be distributed before the proceedings commence. It is not even realized that if papers are distributed, they should be distributed to all who want them. In mass meetings such distribution is impossible unless thousands of copies are available. In my

opinion this would mean an utterly useless waste of public money. Whatever is absolutely necessary will surely be printed by local papers and the public should be satisfied with what the papers give. If they are unable to follow the proceedings without the papers it would not be a bad plan to sell such papers when there would be no question of favouritism. All those who wish to possess copies can have them for a trifling charge to cover printing expenses and a small addition so as to form a contribution, however small, to the expense of organizing meetings.

Stewards of the Nation

Much trouble, time and money can be saved by a little forethought. As it is, I often notice a reckless waste of public funds in connection with these meetings. Let all organizers of all meetings, but especially of Khadi meetings, realize that we are the poorest country in the world, millions of whom are semi-starved, if only because their earnings are less even than three pice per day. Let organizers therefore understand as stewards for the nation it is their duty to spend public funds like misers and never to spend a pie without thought and without necessity. Organizers of Khadi meetings should further realize that every pice collected is a pice meant for the starving millions and so one pice means often a day's earning for a widow. They must not therefore spend where they need not. For instance, they spend money in paper decorations. This is no time for decorations. Let them save as much as they can by avoiding all decorations save only those which may be required to attract people's attention. In that case they can think of several artistic things which cost nothing or very little. Thus they can have flags and buntings out of waste khaddar. We are now going in for extensive tailoring in connection with khaddar sales. There is always much waste material in a tailor's shop which he throws away. Now every part of this waste can be used for buntings which unlike paper buntings can be preserved for further use.

Write Your Addresses

Flowers may be avoided altogether and yarn garlands may be presented. Yarn must not be damaged by being tied into knots. It can be presented in its natural

condition so that it can be subsequently used for weaving or any similar purpose. Money can also be saved by avoiding the printing of addresses. The best calligraphist among the organizers can write out the address on simple handmade paper and the paper can be nicely sewn on to a piece of khaddar, or if a little volunteer boy or girl would embroider the letters on a piece of khaddar it would be still better, the thread for embroidery too being handspun. Such work will be at once artistic and even valuable. I have stolen the idea from the remarkable way in which Babu Mahendra Prasad's daughter Rama had embroidered for her father the address presented by the Chapra municipality of which he is Chairman. It cost the municipality nothing and I have become possessor of a work of art which will adorn the museum which Adhyapak Malkani has brought into being in the Gujarat National College.

Avoid Silver Gaskets

Expensive caskets are not required, for I have no use for them nor have I any room to keep them in. Latterly I have been putting to auction every expensive casket received by me and handing the proceeds to the All-India Deshabandhu Memorial Fund. Although these auctions have invariably proved profitable in that they have fetched much more than their intrinsic value it will not be proper to present caskets for the purpose of securing fancy prices. It will be a good exercise for organizers if they must give their khaddar addresses in caskets to find out something cheap, local and artistic.

Not a Pleasure Trip

Well has Gangadharrao said that mine is not a pleasure trip, but a business tour during which I expect to do substantial business for my principal *Daridranarayan*. Every function therefore should be in fitting with that setting. I have observed that often more local men travel with me than are necessary for the purpose of the mission and that motor cars are hired without due regard to economy. Every item of expenditure should be previously and carefully thought out. Unless we do so we shall not raise into being an efficient economical organization calculated to serve the starving millions and we shall be guilty of the same charge, no matter on however small a scale, of

extravagance that we legitimately bring against the Government. Kitson burners should be avoided whenever possible. I notice, too, a lavish expenditure on feeding. Those who travel with me do not do so to be entertained. It is enough to provide clean lodging and clean food. Indeed I often feel like copying for the whole of my company the excellent example of Mr. Bharucha who always insists on carrying his own food with him. We spend much, too much, money and time upon food. It grieves me to see people sending for parcels of fruit from Bombay or Calcutta. Much of this expense is wholly unnecessary. Some fruit is no doubt an essential part of my dietary and unless obtainable locally, something has no doubt to be imported. But I am sure that the expense incurred in bringing fruit can at least be reduced by 75%. 'But', argue over-zealous friends, 'why should not people who love you express their regard in some such loving act of service? They will not spend money otherwise, nor will they give you all the money that they spend for your personal comfort. Let them therefore have the joy of spending some little money for you.' The argument is no doubt flattering, but wholly unconvincing.

Transmutation into Service

If those who love cannot transfer their love to the thing for which I stand, their love is blind and of little value. I do not know if one should live to provide more enjoyment for friends. Friendship means loving mutual service, and sometimes it is a positive disservice to indulge one's friends and to expose them to temptations. And if there are friends who would spend lavishly for providing luxuries for me, but would not spend for the causa I espouse, it is my clear duty to resist such luxuries. Friends to be friends must first provide me with necessities of life before they think of indulging me with luxuries and khaddar work is a vital necessary of life for me, more vital than food. Reception Committees please note.

Auction of Garlands

The foregoing paragraphs were written, or rather dictated at the halts before we reached Ahmednagar at which latter place there was an imposing meeting where there were several addresses presented, the Municipal address being in a

beautiful silver cylinder. The representatives of each body brought also expensive flower garlands. Mr. Firodia who presented the inevitable purse excused himself for its smallness by saying that Ahmednagar was a famine-ridden tract. When therefore I began my reply I could not help noticing the contrast between the palatial surroundings, the expensive ceremonial and the statement of famine conditions. I told the audience that what was true of Ahmednagar was true of the whole of India. Was not India famine-ridden land? But the fact did not prevent accumulation of wealth on the part of a few. We the city dwellers lived upon the exploitation of the famine-stricken villagers and the khaddan movement was intended somewhat to redress the wrong and to make some slight return to the millions whom we were exploiting. I therefore suggested that the acknowledgement of the fact that Ahmednagar was a famine area made it doubly the duty of its well-to-do citizens to give more rather than less. I told them also that it would ill become me to accept for myself such caskets and rich floral tributes. I told them further that believing as I did that plants were as much endowed with life as we were ourselves I did not like the unnecessary plucking of a single flower. But in a place, like Ahmednagar my dislike was heightened by the reminder that I was a self-chosen representative of the very famine-stricken millions whom Mr. Firodia had mentioned. Every rupee spent upon unnecessary things meant a deprivation of the livelihood of 16 famishing women and I therefore suggested that they should auction the silver casket as also the flowers, and if my remarks went home they would pay not the market value of the casket and the flowers but they would pay for the sentiment that the things would carry with them. The auctioning was entrusted naturally to the Chairman of the Municipality Khan Bahadur Dorabseth. The casket was knocked down to Seth Magniramji the local philanthropist for Rs. 1,001 and the garlands and the bouquets were auctioned separately under the same able management and they fetched in all Rs. 502. The result of my appeal went beyond the meeting and the citizens seemed to catch the spirit of my address to them, and the purse of Rs. 1,700 for which Mr. Firodia had apologized went up to nearly Rs. 6,000 apart from a brisk sale of Khadi at the meeting. Future organizers beware! I warn them that

they need not present me with flowers and rich caskets, but if they do I shall assume that they are presented for the purpose of being auctioned and in order that their contribution to the poor people's fund may be substantially increased.

Young India, 24-2-'27, p. 61

81. A TRAGEDY

Throughout a life of continuous bustle lived among crowds for nearly thirty years I cannot recall a serious accident though I can many narrow escapes. But in Almoda on the day of my entry, i.e. 18th instant, and after a crowded meeting, as I was returning to my host's house, a villager named Padamsingh who came rushing as villagers do to the car for *darshan* met with what proved to be a fatal accident. He could not dodge the car in time, fell and the car ran over him. He was quickly carried by kind bystanders to the hospital where he received the utmost attention and hope was entertained that he would survive. He was strongly built and brave. He lived for two days, his pulse was good, he was taking nourishment. But the heart suddenly stopped on 20th instant at 3-15. Padamsingh died leaving an orphan boy 12 years old.

Death or lesser accidents generally do not give me more than a momentary shock, but even at the time of writing this I have not recovered from the shock. I suppose it is because I feel guilty of being party to Padamsingh's death. I have found chauffeurs to be almost without exception hot-tempered, easily excitable and impatient, as inflammable as the petrol with which they have to come in daily contact. The chauffeur of my car had more than a fair share of all these shortcomings. For the crowd through which the car was struggling to pass he was driving rashly. I should have either insisted on walking or the car proceeding only at a walking pace till we had been clear of the crowd. But constant motor riding had evidently coarsened me, and freedom from serious accidents produced an unconscious but unforgivable indifference to the safety of pedestrians. This sense of the wrong is probably responsible for the shock. It is well with Padamsingh. Pandit Govind Vallabh Pant has assured me that the

son will be well looked after. Padamsingh received attention at the hospital which moneyed men might have envied. He was himself resigned and at peace. But his death is a lesson to me as, I hope, it would be to motorists. Although I may be twitted about my inconsistency, I must repeat my belief that motoring in spite of ail its advantages is an unnatural form of locomotion. It therefore behoves those who use it to restrain their drivers and to realize that speed is not the *summom bonum* of life and may even be no gain in the long run. I have never been clear in my mind that my mad rush through India has been all to the good. Anyway Padamsing's death has set me thinking furiously.

Young India, 27-6-'29, p. 212

82. THE LESSON OF MADURA

The crowd in Madura could not have been less than five lacs and may have been even six. Human faces were to be seen as far as the horizon. It was a veritable sea of human faces. The long route to the race course was lined by people who were all to swell the crowd in the prayer ground. They must push on as much as they could. I doubt if the people on the bridge could even see me, much less hear me or any one else, even though loud-speaker arrangements were good and the rostrum high enough. The volunteers were not used to manage such vast crowds. People had come from distant villages where the Congressmen had not worked habitually, if at all. Such being the case the-din and noise and jostle were unavoidable. And then the crowd had to deal with a satyagrahi in me. But my satyagraha for the first time failed. The peoples' was bound to fail. They showed the greatest forbearance whilst I was passive. The vast multitude in front of me and on either side sat noiseless and motionless, in spite of the pressure from behind. But the jostling and noise from behind the rostrum continued unabated. I, therefore, cleared the dais and asked the women members of my party to go. Only Rajaji, Kanu Gandhi and Ramkrishna Bajaj remained. The latter said the way was clear, but as I appeared the people became restive. I addressed the people in front and at the sides and pleaded with them to go away as I did not propose to speak. They remained silent but

would not leave. So I thought I would rest where I was for the night till the crowd had either dispersed or made a way for me. Kanu Gandhi the tempter came again and said the people would make a passage and let me go. The car would wait for me at a distance from the crowd. In a weak moment I yielded. I went down the few steps of the improvised strong ladder only to meet the same pressing and noisy crowd as before, though considerably thinned. It was not a safe passage through a noiseless, disciplined crowd for which I was pleading and waiting. It was neither a mischievous crowd. Making noise and pressing forward towards the idol was the only way of expressing their love towards it. Here was a living idol made of the same clay as they. And this idol could not and would not appreciate their loud demonstration. But I proved, an impatient and inefficient teacher. Had I waited, I believe this particular crowd would have learnt the value of silent and knowing love, probably of discipline requisite for Swaraj. I shall know much better next time if such ever comes. Anyway it is legitimate to ask whether the exemplary behaviour at Palni was a result of the imperfect lesson of the previous night at Madura. In any case, no blame attaches to anybody in the dramaj and nobody has any cause for shame.

En route to Wardha, 5-2-1946

Harijan, 10-2-'46, p. 5

83. FOR ORDERLY ORGANIZATION OF MEETINGS

(From "Weekly Letter" by M. D.)

Ahmedabad went wild with joy during the two days Gandhiji spent there on return from Delhi. Their jubilation might have been tempered by the thought that Gandhiji would not go to the Ashram, though he had consented to break journey at Ahmedabad. But their mad joy knew no bounds and made an orderly meeting or function impossible. If it had not been for the wonderfully successful reception that the Labour Union, which is the pride of Ahmedabad, gave him, the visit to Ahmedabad would have been one full of unmixed grief. Accidents do happen where vast masses of people assemble but the deaths, due to the victims being trampled upon, that occurred at the women's meeting,

ought not to have occurred with a little more careful organization. That such a thing should have happened at a women's meeting organized exclusively by women makes the tragedy all the more deplorable. But perhaps the two deaths were sacrifices at the altar of the stupendous mass awakening among women that, has swept over the land. In order to avoid these mishaps Gandhiji has suggested a few rules for the orderly organization of meetings which I translate from the *Navajivan*.

1. The meeting should be always held in the open when thousands are expected to attend. It should be circular in shaped the centre containing the dais to be reached by ways protected by strong wooden fences, running radius-like to the centre.
2. The dais should be made up of planks, and strong enoughs to support several people.
3. The ways to the dais should be clear of spectators and guarded at each end by volunteers.
4. The fence should be so constructed as to leave no room for, ingress through the fencing.
5. The leaders when they enter should not be surrounded by cordons of volunteers.
6. The volunteers should stick to their posts firm as a rock.
7. The way should be absolutely clear before leaders are taken to the dais.
8. Volunteers should be posted at fixed places in the meeting. They should not stand, but their presence should be indicated by flags held in their hands.
9. Volunteers ought to know flag signalling.
10. If the meeting is held in an enclosed space, it should have a sufficient number of exits, and, the attendance should be strictly limited by the capacity of the space.
11. Leaflets of instructions should be distributed at every meeting.

12. The organizer should read aloud to the meeting these instructions before the proceedings begin.
13. Water and other emergency accessories ought to be available whenever needed.
14. If there is a large attendance and people arrive long before the hour of the meeting, there should be arrangement for *Rama-dhun* (repetition *en masse* by the meeting of God's name) and for preliminary lectures.
15. Proper care should be taken to prevent people from rushing to the dais. They should not be allowed to push in to get a nearer seat, but should be asked to stay where they are.

The rules are by way of illustration and may be supplemented where necessary. In remarkable contrast to the arrangements in Ahmedabad, those in Surat were a marvel of organization, for most of these rules had been scrupulously observed there. There were several meetings there—of *vanars*, of women, and the general meeting attended by over fifty thousand people—but all were in perfect order. There was a procession too, but instructions had been issued betimes asking the spectators to keep on either side of the road, and they were strictly carried out.

Young India, 19-3-'31, p. 43 at .p. 44

84. THINGS TO REMEMBER

During the past month of touring there has been a great deal of waste of time, a great deal of anxiety to the organizers and a great and unnecessary strain on my very limited physical resources, owing to the mad rush at the stations on my arrival and equally mad rush made towards the passing car. I cannot recall occasions when people near me have not trodden on my naked toes or scratched my legs. God has saved me from serious injury hitherto. But the crowds can take no credit for the immunity. Their affection is mad. And madness can do nobody any good. The thing can be easily managed if the volunteers will act in a business-like manner and will not themselves, like the

crowds, go mad as they often do. People cannot be instructed on anything all of a sudden. Leaflets containing detailed instruction should, therefore, be issued to the public and read and explained to them by volunteers as they come to the venue of meetings. The very best arrangement of the kind was made at Harda. Although the party was taken through a crowded and decorated bazar, it took no more than ten minutes to pass through. In other places the same distance has often taken more than half an hour! Success at Harda was due not merely to previous preparations but also to volunteers with one continuous rope held by them being posted at regular intervals, thus making it impossible for anyone to break through the lines. Let me now without further comment tabulate the instructions which I suggest for general adoption.

1. Leaflets containing detailed instructions should be issued to the villagers in simple language easily to be understood by them. These should be read to the parties as they stream in from villages.
2. Crowds that gather at stations awaiting my arrival should stand in rows upon rows without causing inconvenience to the passengers and without moving from their places when the train steams in.
3. A few minutes before the arrival time, volunteers should be posted in front of the crowd with a continuous rope held waist high in their hands in order to avoid the people behind unconsciously moving towards me and the train.
4. Volunteers should on no account fall prostrate before me.
5. Volunteers should never lead or take part in the various cries. Apart from its interfering with efficient service, their leading or participating in them robs cries of spontaneity.
6. Volunteers should not shout their instructions to the public, but should pronounce them with deliberation and gentleness. Only one volunteer detailed for the purpose should pronounce them.
7. The public should be requested not to crowd round the cars.
8. Volunteers should not board my or any other car, except when asked to do so by a responsible member of the Reception Committee.

9. The public should not gather at the stations which I may be passing through between 8 p.m. and 6 a.m. and in no case should they shout the usual cries at night. Such shouting during night betrays want of consideration for the passengers and the party whom they profess to respect.

Harijan, 15-12-'33, p. 5

85. HINTS TO THE ORGANIZERS OF MEETINGS

(From "Our Late Tour")

Order observed at the pandal was still more striking. It was a huge artistic but non-pretentious structure. There was not a single chair—not even for the President. Distinguished visitors were seated on a substantial and commodious platform erected in the midst of the pandal. Although there was accommodation for 12,000 people, the pandal appeared to be roomy. The approaches were wide. The ground was excavated to slope towards the centre. All therefore had a perfect view of the centre. The only suggestion I have to make is that a semi-circle is a better arrangement. There should be no seats at the back of the platform. The Sindh arrangement referred to in these columns, of T inverted as \perp is therefore better from an acoustic standpoint.

Let Bhiwani and Hyderabad (Sindh) present a lesson to the approaching Congress. The Reception Committee will save a few thousand rupees and much space if they will dispense with chairs whether on the platform or below. We must cater more and more for the masses and their leaders. We, the educated few, hope to control them only through the leaders of the masses who are as simple as the masses themselves. It is cruel to impose chairs on the many, because the few seem to want them. I hope too, that the Nagpur volunteers will be trained from now on for their respective duties so that we may have perfect arrangements regarding every little detail.

Young India, 27-10-'20, p. 4

86. A MOVING PLATFORM FOR MEETINGS

(From "Andhradesh")

I may draw the attention of workers to the moving platform which I may claim to have discovered. It is not a discovery of, intelligence but of necessity, which is the mother of most inventions and discoveries. I have a weak body which objects strongly to rise and sit to dictation. To get off cars and push; through admiring and shouting crowds, mount platforms sometimes threatening to give way and at times making good the threat, to dismount, push again through more pressing crowds and with difficulty to remount the car and finally to sink in the seat to be again called upon fifteen minutes after to go through, the same ceremony is more than my body would now undertake. I therefore suggested to my head gaoler that the car should be brought to the centre and should serve as platform. I should sit on the edge of the back of the car and address meetings therefrom. He readily agreed. The contrivance saved time, energy, space and money. No platform, no chairs, no decorations save the decorated hearts of the people. The arrangement proved to be perfect. And where many meetings have to be addressed, I suggest it for adoption by organizers.

Young India, 30-5-'29, p. 182 at p. 183

87. THE CHEAPEST PLATFORM

(From "Notes")

In discussing the economics of public tours, in which vast crowds have to be considered, workers have suggested that platforms alone cost Rs. 50 at the least computation. This need not be. Provision for vast crowds presupposes that the cause is popular and that, therefore, there will be voluntary help forthcoming. In such favourable atmosphere it should not be difficult to borrow bricks. Labour should be voluntary. Mud should be used in the place of mortar. A solid platform can thus be made for a rupee or thereabout. No skilled labour

is necessary for erecting such a platform. The only expense to be incurred will be that of carting bricks to and fro. But even such a platform can be dispensed with. If a ring is kept in the middle of the audience, large enough for a motor to turn round comfortably, and a broad passage left for it to pass through to the ring, the motor can be used as a solid platform. This was successfully tried at Sivaganga and Manamadura. If a higher platform is needed, the top of a motor lorry makes a platform high enough for the largest audience. This, too, I have tried successfully in previous tours. The fence of the ring should be fairly strong. Strong wooden posts and stout cords can be borrowed for the purpose, and the ring can be erected inside of two hours if sufficient voluntary labour is available. Volunteers worth the name should be able to prepare these things without fuss and without any strain.

Harijan, 2-2-'34, p. 2

88. GARLANDS

(From "Notes")

It is devoutly to be wished that organizers will wean people from presenting me with garlands of flowers. If garlands must be presented, they should be of Charkha-spun, even, strong and fine yarn which can be used without difficulty for weaving purposes. Garlands are not produced without money, or which is the same thing, labour. All the money and all the labour available is required for Harijan service. And, in any case, I cannot afford to have labour or money spent for my pleasure, vanity or glorification. The showering of flowers is an injurious custom. The hard stems of yellow flowers, when they are thrown from a distance are calculated to break eye glasses, and injure the eyes. My eyes have more than once, narrowly escaped damage from these stems.

Let the money thus saved be used for adding to the purses collected. Indeed, I notice that there is room for economy in most arrangements. Motor cars are used too lavishly. Only those of the local persons whose presence is necessary should accompany me from place to place. Workers are trustees for the Harijan

cause, and as such they are expected to guard the Harijan chest with greater care and vigilance than they would bestow upon their own.

Harijan, 22-12-'33, p. 6

89. WREATH OR GARLAND?

(From "Notes")

I have observed in many parts of India but in Bengal especially the custom of garlanding guests with wreaths instead of beautiful bona fide Swadeshi *mala*. I suppose it is considered more dignified to offer wreaths because they are much more expensive than the *malas*—garlands. Wreaths are an importation from the West. So far as I am aware they are used for decorating coffins. The flowers are held together with a wire which often hurts. I am one of such individuals who have been hurt by the wires of wreaths which have been forced upon me by over-zealous admirers. It is difficult to carry a wreath in one's hand for fear of getting hurt. A wreath being stiff instead of adorning the body, in my opinion, disfigures it. Whereas a *mala* strung together beautifully on a piece of string hangs loosely round the neck and causes no discomfort. Will Reception Committees please note?

Young India, 6-8-'25, p. 269 at p. 270

90. HOW AN ANNUAL SESSION OF THE CONGRESS SHOULD BE ORGANIZED

(Originally appeared under the title "Belgaum Impressions")

When there are too many impressions all clamouring for expression, the registrar's task becomes unenviable. Such is my position as I take up the pencil to register my impressions of Belgaum. I can but try.

Gangadharrao Deshpande and his band of workers rose to the highest height. His Vyayanagar was a triumph—not of Swaraj—but certainly of organization. Every detail was well thought out. Dr. Hardikar's volunteers were smart and attentive. The roads were broad and well kept. They could easily be broader

for the convenience of the temporary shops and the easy movement of thousands of sight-seers. The lighting arrangement was perfect. The huge pavilion with a marble fountain in front of it seemed to invite all who would enter it. The capacity of the pavilion could not be less than seventeen thousand. The sanitary arrangements though quite good needed still more scientific treatment than what they had. The method of the disposal of used water was very primitive. I invite the Cawnpore people who have the honour of holding the Congress session of 1925 to study the most effective methods of camp sanitation now and not leave this very important part to the eleventh hour.

Whilst I am able to give ungrudging praise for the almost perfect organization that one could see in the Congress camp, I cannot help remarking that Gangadharrao could not escape the temptation of making the outside look lavish and in following the traditional custom of going in for extravagant luxuries for the 'people at the top'. Take the presidential 'hut'. I had bargained for a khaddar hut; but I was insulted with a khaddar palace. The floor space reserved for the President was certainly quite necessary. The fence round the 'palace' was an absolute necessity for my protection from embarrassingly admiring crowds. But I am sure that, had I been contractor, I would have given the same space and the same comfort to the President at half the expense. This however is only one instance of the many I can quote of lavish expenditure. The refreshments supplied to the members of the Subjects Committee and others were unnecessarily lavish. There was no sense of proportion observed as to the quantities served. I am finding fault with nobody. The extravagance came from a generous heart. It was all well meant. Forty year's tradition cannot be undone in a day, especially if no one likely to gain a hearing will repeatedly criticize it. I know, when I suggested to Vallabhbhai in 1921 that he should make a beginning, he retorted by saying that whilst he would try to attain simplicity and avoid extravagance, he would not allow his pet Gujarat to be considered miserly. I could not persuade him that if he did not have a temporary fountain costing several thousand rupees he would not be considered miserly. I told him too that whatever he did was bound to be copied

by his successors. Vallabhbhai would not take the odium of being considered miserly. I advise Cawnpore to lead the way. The miserliness of Cawnpore may be considered the extravagance of tomorrow. There were many things Vallabhbhai did discard. I did not hear any remarks about the disappearance of the things that were really not a felt want.

Let us remember that the Congress is intended to represent the poorest toilers who are the salt of India. Our scale must be so far as possible adjusted to theirs. We must therefore be progressively economical without being inefficient and stingy.

In my opinion the charges for accommodation and food are much too heavy. We may do worse than take a lesson from the book of Swami Shraddhanandji. I remember the sheds he built for his guests who came for the Gurukul anniversary in 1916. He built grass sheds for them at a cost (I think) of about Rs. 2000. He invited contractors to open restaurants on the ground and made no charge for the accommodation. No one could complain of the arrangement. They knew what they were to expect. Nearly 40,000 people were thus accommodated on the Gurukul ground without the slightest difficulty and with practically no expense. And what is more each visitor received what he wanted and was at liberty to live cheaply or extravagantly.

I do not say that the Swami's plan should be copied in its entirety. But I do suggest that better and cheaper plans are imperatively necessary. The reduction of the delegate's fee from Rs. 10 to 1 was universally acclaimed. The reduction of lodging and dining charges would be I am sure still more appreciated.

The source of income should be a small entrance fee levied from every spectator. The Congress must be an annual fair where visitors may come and get instruction with amusement. The deliberative part should be an item round which the demonstrative programme should turn. It therefore should take place in decent time, as this year, and the appointments must be religiously observed.

I am not sure that the packing of all other conferences serves any national purpose. In my opinion only those conferences should take place during the Congress week that aid and strengthen the Congress. The President and his 'cabinet' must not be expected to give their attention to anything but Congress work. I know that, if there had been no other call upon my time, I could have better attended to the charge entrusted to me. I had not a moment left to me for contemplation. I was unable to frame the necessary recommendations for making the franchise a success. The fact is that the organizers of various conferences do not take their tasks seriously. They hold them because it has become the fashion to do so. I would urge workers in various directions to avoid the annual dissipation of energy.

The exhibition of indigenous arts and industries is an institution that should grow from year to year. The musical concert was a treat that thousands must have enjoyed. The lantern lectures tracing the tragic history of the ruin of the greatest national industry and the possibilities of its revival were apposite, instructive and amusing. I tender my congratulations to Satishbabu upon the thoughtful and thorough manner in which he organized these lectures. The spinning competition must also be a permanent feature. Its popularity is evinced by the number of competitors, the brilliance of results and the number of donors. This spinning movement is bringing out women from their seclusion as nothing else could have done. Of the 11 prize winners, 4 belonged to the gentle sex. It has given them a dignity and self-confidence which no university degree could give them. They are realizing that their active assistance is just as indispensable as that of men and, what is more, such assistance can be as easily rendered by them as, if not more easily, than by men.

One thing I must not omit before I close these impressions. There were nearly seventy-five volunteers, mostly Brahmans who were engaged in conservancy work in the Congress camp. The Municipal *bhangis* were indeed taken, but it was thought necessary to have the volunteers also. Kaka Kalelkar who was in charge of this corps tells me that this part of the work would not have been done as satisfactorily as it was, if the corps had not been formed. He tells me

too that the volunteers worked most willingly. Not one of them shirked the work which ordinarily very few would be prepared to undertake. And yet it is the noblest of all from one point of view. Indeed sanitary work must be regarded as the foundation of all volunteer training.

Young India, 1-1-'25, p. 1

PART VIII: MISCELLANEOUS

91. NO BLIND FOLLOWING

(From "To Correspondents")

I wish I could publish your letter if only for its brilliance. But I am afraid it will be misunderstood. There is altogether too much blind following in the country. The instances you quote are inapplicable to the present movement which essentially consists in making everyone think for himself. My conception of Swaraj is not that of many blindly following one man. The poet has rightly protested against that tendency and not against enlightened obedience to chosen leadership.

Young India, 3-11-'21, p. 351

92. CAUTION AGAINST PERSONALITY CULT

(From "A Heart Searcher")

I do not like, have never liked, this reliance on me for everything. It is the very worst way of managing national affairs. The Congress must not become, as it has threatened to become, one man's show, no matter how good or great that one man be. I often think that it would have been better for the country and for me if I had served the full term of my imprisonment. The country would by that time have settled down to a programme which could be called its own. Today it is difficult to say whose the Congress programme is. It cannot be the country's if workers have every time to refer to me for guidance. It cannot be mine, for alone I can work no programme. The writer's reliance is not peculiar but typical. Another friend, after objecting to almost everything in the programme, says, "But in spite of all this, my reverence and affection for you are sufficiently deep to make me do anything you may want me to do, whether I agree with you or not." This friend goes further than the first. The latter at

least agrees with the programme and wants advice. The former opposes and still wants to submit. All such devotion may flatter my vanity but most certainly retards our progress towards our goal. We must dare to act according to our honest convictions even though there may be danger of our making terrible mistakes. Swaraj is a way of government by tests, trials and mistakes. It is a thousand times better that we are undone through our mistakes than that we avoid them through the perpetual guidance of a man be he ever so wise. It has become a serious question with me whether it would not be in the best interests of the country for me to retire altogether from all public activity and simply devote myself to my own chosen profession of spinning and weaving and playing with the children at the Satyagraha Ashram so long as personal friends care to support the Ashram. Any way my strong advice to friends and fellow-workers is never to accept my word as law. My advice is always at their disposal. But even that should be most sparingly sought.

Young India, 8-5-'24, p. 152

93. BLIND ADORATION IS VALUELESS

(From "Notes")

The scene in Serajganj Conference over attaching 'Mahatma' to my name has caused deep pain to me. Those who out of their infatuation for the application of the title 'Mahatma' to me either howled down the gentleman who would not use the name or who implored him to do so, rendered no service to the cause or to me. They harmed the cause of non-violence and pained me. What relish could they have in a person using a title from compulsion? I congratulate the gentleman upon his courage in having withdrawn from the Conference rather than use a title under compulsion. He showed, in my opinion, a truer appreciation of what I stand for than my blind admirers. I assure all my admirers and friends that they will please me better if they will forget the Mahatma and remember Gandhiji as the gentleman in question quite courteously did or think of me simply as Gandhi. The highest honour that my friends can do me is to enforce in their own lives the programme that I stand

for or to resist me to their utmost if they do not believe in it. Blind adoration, in the age of action, is perfectly valueless, is often embarrassing and equally often painful.

Young India, 12-6-'24, p. 197

94. HOW TO MEET BASE INNUENDOES

(Translated from *Navajivan* by Pyarelal)

"What should a public worker holding a responsible position in public life do if he is subjected to dishonest and malicious innuendoes or is falsely accused of misappropriation of public funds? Should he bring an action for libel against his calumniator in law court? Will it not be his duty as a responsible public worker to do so, and is it not likely that if he fails to do so some unwary people would be deceived? And if one may in no circumstance bring an action in a law court is there not a real danger that unscrupulous persons might take shelter behind a brazen silence and defy public scrutiny into their malpractices while pretending to follow your advice? Again if recourse to law courts must be ruled out altogether does it not follow that some other remedy against the evil of unrestrained libel should be found?" These are some of the questions arising out of the case of a prominent public worker that I have been called upon to answer. My reply is that slander and misrepresentation have always been the lot of public men. The way to overcome the opponent is by non-resistance and that is the remedy needed in the present case. Nor is a successful action in the law court by any means a conclusive proof of a man's innocence, for do we not meet every day instances of scoundrels who use the certificates of law courts as a cloak to hide their sins and to continue with impunity their practices? Again can any penalty that a law court may inflict stop the poison of evil tongues from spreading? Would not what was said openly before be now, for fear of penalty, propagated secretly and in whispers and thus be rendered all the more insidious? My advice, therefore, generally speaking, is that one should take no notice of baseless and malicious imputations, but pity the calumniator and always hope and pray for his ultimate conversion. As for the public it can

always take care of itself against dishonest servants. Corruption will be out one day however much one may try to conceal it, and the public can, as it is its right and duty, in every case of justifiable suspicion, call its servants to strict account, dismiss them, sue them in a law court, or appoint an arbitrator or inspector to scrutinize their conduct as it likes. Therefore instead of suing one's calumniator in a law court for false allegations of corruption, the best and the only right course would be for the public to prevent actual corruption from taking place by maintaining a sleepless vigilance and for the servant to keep the public on the *qui vive*.

If this course is found to be insufficient and some further action is felt to be necessary, the author of a libel can be called upon to bring his charge before a Panchayat. The aggrieved party can offer at the same time to appear before it to vindicate its position. Of course this remedy would be useless when the calumniator is an altogether unscrupulous person. For he will never agree to appear before the Panchayat. But where allegations are made by respectable persons offering to produce evidence in support, reference to a Panchayat would be found to be most useful.

"But what about the villain who fakes a silent *hauteur* to mask his villainy?" one may ask. My reply is that if the people are vigilant and wide awake such a person will not be able to maintain his mask for long, while, if on the other hand they allow their vigilance to go to sleep not all the law-courts in the world will be able to prevent the practice of villainy. For we daily see how law is unable to touch gentlemen rascals dressed in spotless white, and going about in motor cars. The fact is, as Carlyle has observed, that the fool and the scoundrel go always hand in hand. Where there is one the other is bound to be. But a true and just man need not worry on that account. Let him remember and ponder over what Dadu has sung:

"My reviler is like a respected and
dear brother unto me.

He labours for my good for nothing,

And helps to purge me of my countless sins
And comes to my aid without
expectation of reward. He loses his own soul but that of
others he saves;
He is my dear friend—my saviour;
Oh Ramdev, pray to God for his
long life—may he live for ever.
My reviler is my greatest benefactor,
says Dadu,
For he brings home to me my littleness."

It is enough if one is true to one's own self: one can then safely let the 'turbid streams of rumour flow'.

Young India, 6-12-'28, p. 405

95. DOMESTIC CHAPTER

A Vakil from Lyallpur sends the following letter addressed to the Editor, *Young India*:

"About three or four years ago, a company 'All India Stores Ltd.' was started at Calcutta with Mr. H. M. Gandhi, son of our Mahatmaji, as one of the directors, as advertised by a representative of the said company at Rawalpindi. A client of mine was persuaded to pay certain sums to the said representative and also to the company in pursuance of his having been so persuaded to become a shareholder. I have written to the known and notified address, 22, Amartalla Street, Calcutta, of the Company and so has my client. My client fears that perhaps it was a bogus affair and he has been done out of his money. In the interests of your (Mahatma's) good name and the economic welfare of this poor country, I fondly hope and wish and even pray, my client's fears may be unfounded. The post-

office has returned all our letters back through the Dead Letter Office. So, some ground at least exists for my client suspecting that the company is no more. Is it a fact that Mahatmaji's son was a Director in it, and is it a fact that such a company came into being and is still existing, and where?

"Please excuse my writing to you about it. My client who is a Mohamedan gentleman and whose respect for Mahatmaji led him to become a shareholder in the company, wants to verify these facts. Hence the query." But for some important principles involved in the letter, I would have satisfied myself with a private reply, though the letter is meant for publication. It was necessary to publish it also because; it is highly likely that many shareholders feel like the vakil's client. They too should have such satisfaction as I could render to them I do indeed happen to be the father of Harilal M. Gandhi. He is my eldest boy, is over 36 years old and is father of four children, the eldest being 19 years old. His ideals and mine having been discovered over fourteen years ago to be different, he has been living separately from me and since 1915 has not been supported by or through me. It has been my invariable rule to regard my boys as my friends and equals as soon as they completed their sixteen years. The tremendous changes that my outer life has undergone from time to time were bound to leave their impress upon my immediate surroundings—especially on my children. Harilal who was witness to all the changes, being old enough to understand them, was naturally influenced by the Western veneer that my life at one time did have. His commercial undertakings were totally independent of me. Could I have influenced him, he would have been found associated with me in my several public activities and earning at the same time a decent livelihood. But he chose, as he had every right to do, a different and independent path. He was and is still ambitious. He wants to become rich and that too, easily. Possibly he has a grievance against me that when it was open to me to do so, I did not equip him and my other children for careers that lead to wealth and fame that wealth brings. He started the stores in question without any the least assistance of any kind whatsoever from me. I did not lend my name to them. I never recommended his enterprise to anybody either

privately or openly. Those who helped him did so on the merits of the enterprise. No doubt his sonshn must have helped him. As long as the world lasts, and in spite of its protests against *varnashram*, it will give credit to heredity. Being my son, he must be good and straight, cautious in his pecuniary affairs and as reliable as his father. So must many have argued. They have my sympathy, but beyond that nothing more. I must disclaim all responsibility, moral or otherwise, for the doings of even those who are nearest and dearest to me except those wherein they act with me or I permit them to act in my name or with my certificate. I have enough to be responsible for myself. I alone know my sorrows and my troubles in the course of the eternal duel going on within me and which admits of no truce. I ask the reader to believe me when I say that it taxes all my energy, and if I feel as a rule stronger for the combat, it is only because I remain wide awake. I make the reader a present of the thought that even my Swaraj activity has a bearing on that duel. It is for the supreme satisfaction of my soul that I engage in it. 'This is selfishness double distilled' said a friend once to me. I quickly agreed with him.

I do not know Harilal's affair. He meets me occasionally, but I never pry into his affairs. I do not know how his affairs stand at present, except that they are in a bad way. If he is honest, limited or unlimited though his stores were, he will not rest till he has paid all the creditors in full. That is my view of honest trade. But he may hold different views and seek shelter under the law of insolvency. Sufficient for me to assure the public that nothing crooked will have countenance from me. For me, the law of satyagraha, the law of love, is an eternal principle. I co-operate with all that is good. I desire to non-co-operate with all that is evil, whether it is associated with my wife, son or myself. I have no desire to shield any of the two. I would like the world to know the whole of the evil in us. And in so far as I can, with decency, I let the world into all the domestic secrets so-called. I never make the slightest attempt to hide them, for I know that concealment can only hurt us.

There is much in Harilal's life that I dislike. He knows that. But I love him in spite of his faults. The bosom of a father will take him in as soon as he seeks

entrance. For the present, he has shut the door against himself. He must still wander in the wilderness. The protection of a human father has its decided limitations. That of the Divine father is ever open to him. Let him seek it and he will find it.

Let the vakil and his client know that my good name is not worth keeping, if it suffers because of the errors of a grown up boy who has no encouragement from me in them. 'The economic welfare of this poor country' will be fairly safe in spite of failures of private firms, if the President for the time being of the Congress and the members of the various organizations remain true to their trust and never mishandle a single pice. I pity the client who, out of respect for me, became a shareholder in, a concern whose constitution he evidently never cared to study. Let the client's example be a warning against people being guided by big ruames in their transactions. Men may be good, not necessary their children. Men may be good in some respects, not necessary therefore, in all. A man who is an authority on one matter is not, therefore, an authority on all matters. *Caveat emptor*.

Young India, 18-6-'25, p. 213

96. LEADERS MUST LEAD

(Originally appeared in "Notes" under the above title)

A Cutch worker came in yesterday and said, "Some leader in Cintch are telling the people there that but for your stopped civil disobedience they would today be enjoying responsible government or something near it." I must deny having stopped civil disobedience in Cutch or for that matter elsewhere. All I gave was my opinion. I had told Shri Mulraj who had come to consult me that the workers should weigh my opinion in the light of their own personal experience of things and adopt it only if it coincided with their own experience. It should be noted that my opinion was not given publicly. If it was not acceptable to the local leaders, it need never have been published. Even now in Cutch as elsewhere responsible leaders are free to act according to then own judgment. We should

never develop the requisite qualities leadership, unless leaders should shoulder responsibility and even dare to commit mistakes in acting contrary to the advice of person like me. Here there would be no question of indiscipline for I am not in active command anywhere. I give advice as an expert when reference is made to me. Those who seek my advice will wrong themselves and those whom they lead, if they will suppress their own judgment when it seems contrary to mine, especially when mine is not based on direct local knowledge.

Harijan, 10-6-'39, p. 160

97. NATIONAL WEAKNESS FOR TESTIMONIALS

(From an article by Gope Gurbaxani which originally appeared under the title "Bapuji and Testimonials")

I was deeply interested to read Shri Devdas Gandhi's article "Our Nationals Abroad" in the *Hindusthan Times* dated the 10th October, 1948, and specially the following remark of Bernard Shaw:

"I am also pestered by Indians who ask me for testimonials to India. I reply that India is not a patent medicine on sale, and that until Indians give up cadging for foreign testimonials, they will be ranked in the West as childish beggars. If they must have Messiahs, let them look for them, at home. If they must have temples and idols, let them be to Gandhi and Tagore and not to British Tom, Dick, and Harry."

In this connection I remember, how once I had expressed my desire to have a testimonial from Bapuji at Sevagram where Bapuji gave me and my wife day to day instructions, to train us up in the various activities of the Ashram, so that we could be of some service to our motherland. Bapuji, who was observing silence, wrote the following loving letter, which might be of general interest in this connection.

"Sevagram, 27-3-1945

"Dear Gurbaxani,

"Along with is Amrit Kaur's letter. Why do you want a certificate? To the truthful, truth itself is a certificate. To ask for a certificate is a bad habit. I kept it myself for a short time, but it is for 55 years now that I have left it. Not only don't take mine, don't take anybody else's. Don't ask for it. Have faith in your truth and non-violence.

"Bapuke Ashirvad"

And that is how with Bapuji's own handwritten letter of introduction to Rajkumari, we left for Simla on the day Bapuji left for Bombay.

Harijan, 21-11-'48, p. 319

98. SELF-RELIANCE IN MATTER OF FOOD STUFFS

(From "Question Box")

My optimism is irrepressible but I admit that nothing will be possible without whole-hearted co-operation on the part of both the Government and the public. Without it, even the imported foodstuffs may be squandered and maldistributed. Besides, we are not yet independent. Relying on outside help will make us still more dependent. If, however, without relying on them, we do get imports of foodstuffs, we shall gratefully accept and make the best use of them. While it is the duty of the Government to try to get food from outside, I do not think it is good for us to look either to them or to other countries. What is more, disappointment from that direction will be positively harmful for the morale of our people in these hard times. But if the people become united and determined to look to none save God for help and do not oppose such governmental measures as they find useful, there will be no cause for disappointment. Such action will enable the people to emerge stronger from the ordeal and foreign countries will think of their duty to send us food of their own accord wherever they can spare it. God helps those who help themselves. How can others withhold help from the self-reliant?

Harijan, 24-2-'46, p. 22

99. ONENESS OF COSTUME A CURE?

"In these last four weeks, I have seen so much bloodshed and firing that it has left a bitter taste in my mouth. Every day since the riots started. I have' been on duty as a magistrate trying to maintain the peace. Now more than ever before, I am convinced of the necessity that we should insist on every Indian wearing the same nationalist dress—as you remember I had broached the subject before but at the time you had not approved of the idea. Why is it that none of the stabbings have been of the people wearing a shirt and pant? This should be conclusive proof that the dress causes the difference in religion to be accentuated. Your reply to this through the *Harijan* for others like me who think that communal riots would disappear within a short time on our wearing the same kind of dress would be most appreciated."

I publish this as from a well-versed, well-meaning friend. These three qualities combined do not necessarily make for clearness of thought. What is wanted is not oneness of costume but oneness of hearts. We have only to look at Europe to demonstrate the emptiness of the idea that oneness of costume will enable us to get out of the mess we are in. Ill will is like an ill wind. It must go and be replaced by the fresh and bracing wind of good will.

Harijan, 20-10-'46, p. 368

100. CRAZE FOR BLESSINGS

(Originally appeared under the title "When Blessing Becomes a Curse")

In declining to give a blessing I said the following to a friend.

"No one who wants to start a worthy enterprise should ever wish to have any body's blessings, not even of the highest in the land. A worthy enterprise carries its own blessing. On the other hand, if an unworthy project receives any blessing from outside, it becomes, as it should become, a curse. Indeed, I have come to the conclusion that a blessing

from outside interferes with the even progress of one's enterprise, because it very often induces a false hope and turns one away from the industry and watchfulness required for the success of the cause."

Though I have often said some such thing to many persons, it is best that this considered opinion is reproduced for the benefit of those who continue to ask for a blessing for their enterprises. Thus, I have been asked to bless memorials about great men and I have felt compelled to give much the same answer as above.

New Delhi, 11-11-1947

Harijan, 23-11-'47, p. 420

101. RULES FOR THE SEVAGRAM ASHRAM

(M. K. G.)

Life members of the Ashram are those who believe in the necessity of keeping the eleven observances, and endeavour to do so to the best of their ability, and who will stay in the Ashram even after Gandhiji's death and render lifelong service through the activities of the Ashram.

The names of those who come under this category should be placed on record. They should sign the following pledge:

"We the undersigned believe in the necessity of keeping the eleven observances, and will endeavour to do so to the best of our ability. We will live in the Ashram till death even when Gandhiji is no longer with us in the flesh and will perform the duties assigned to us."

The second class of inmates is those who have joined the Ashram for service. They are non-permanent members. And the third class is visitors and guests, who come to the Ashram for a short time.

One of the life members shall be the manager. He will be selected by Gandhiji. After his (Gandhiji's) death, and on the manager ceasing for some reason to hold that office, the life members shall elect a new manager.

The manager shall have charge of the entire administration of the Ashram and assign to the inmates their respective duties. As far as possible, the manager will try to obtain the consent of the life members in doing this.

The Ashram account shall be duly kept, and audited once a year. The statement of accounts shall be sent to the trustees of the Ashram and to the President of the Gandhi Seva Sangh.

The rules deducible from the observances and essential for a well-regulated Ashram life are as follows:

All members—whether permanent or otherwise—will turn every minute of their time to good account. They will take part in every corporate activity of the Ashram. When free from Ashram work they will spin or carry out some other process connected with cotton. They will prosecute their private studies from 8 to 9 p.m., or during day time, when they have no Ashram work to do and have spun for at least one hour.

They may not spin when they are ill or otherwise unable to spin owing to circumstances beyond their control.

No one should talk idly or in a loud voice. The Ashram must bear the impress of perfect peace as well as of truth. Our relations with one another must be characterized by affection and restraint, and with guests and visitors by courtesy. Whether a visitor is dressed in rags or in gorgeous robes, we should treat him with uniform respect. We must not make any distinction between the rich and the poor, the noble and the simple. This does not mean that we may expect a delicately nurtured guest to live as simply as ourselves. That is to say, in waiting upon guests, we must always take into consideration their habitual mode of life. This is true courtesy. If an unknown visitor arrives at the Ashram, we must ask him the purpose of his visit, and if necessary take him to the manager.

Our every word and every act should be well thought out. Whatever we do we must do with a will and complete identification with what we are doing at the moment. For instance we must not talk at meals or while cutting vegetables.

Food must be taken like medicine, under proper restraint, only for sustaining the body and keeping it a fit instrument for service. We must therefore take food in moderation or even abstemiously. We must be content with what food we get. If the food is insufficiently or badly cooked, we must not talk about it at meals, but courteously speak about it later to the manager of the kitchen. Bad or imperfectly cooked food should not be eaten.

We must not smack the lips while eating. We must eat our food slowly, decorously and neatly in a spirit of thankfulness to God.

Every one must wash his own dish thoroughly and keep it in its place.

Guests and visitors are requested to bring their own plate, drinking pot, bowls and spoon, as well as lantern, bedding, mosquito net and napkins. They must not have more clothes than necessary. Their clothes should be made of Khadi. Other things must be as far as possible village-made or at least Swadeshi.

Everything must be kept in its proper place. All refuse must be put into the dust bin.

Water must not be wasted. Boiled water is used for drinking purposes. Pots and pans are finally washed with boiled water! Unboiled water of the Ashram wells is not safe to drink. It is necessary to learn the distinction between boiling water and hot water. Boiling water is that with which pulses are cooked; and which gives out lots of steam. No one can drink boiling water.

We should not spit or clean the nose on the road, but only in an out of the way place where no one is likely to walk.

Nature's needs must be attended to only at the appointed place. It is necessary to clean oneself after answering both the calls of nature. The receptacle for the solid contents is as it should always be different from that for the liquid contents of latrines. After a visit to the latrine, we must wash our hands with pure earth and pure water, and wipe them with a clean napkin. The night soil must be fully covered with dry earth so as not to attract flies and in such a way that nothing but dry earth is visible.

One must sit carefully on the latrine seat, so that the seat does not get dirty. A lantern must be carried if it is dark.

Everything which can attract the fly, should be properly covered.

The teeth must be cleaned with care at the proper place. The end of the twig must be well chewed into a soft brush, and the teeth and the gums must be brushed with it both ways. The saliva discharged during brushing must be spat out. After the teeth are well brushed the twig must be split into two to clean the tongue with. Then the mouth should be carefully washed. The split twigs should be washed well, and collected in a pot. When they dry up they should be used for starting a fire, the idea being that nothing which can be used should be thrown away.

Waste paper, which cannot be used for writing on the other side, should be burned. Nothing else should be mixed with it.

The fragments of vegetables must be kept separate and converted into manure.

Broken glass should be thrown into a hollow at safe distance from houses.

(Translated from the original in Hindustani)

Harijan, 31-10-'48, p. 299

SECTION TWO NATIONAL UNITY AND INTEGRATION

PART 1 : THE INDIAN PRINCES

1

TO THE PRINCES

I

Several persons interested in the States have asked me what in my opinion is the minimum that all States should guarantee in order to come in a line with the enlightened opinion in what is called British India. I cannot vouch for what the Congress would say if it had to give any such opinion. Perhaps it would be wrong for the Congress to have or to give such opinion. A democratic body can only pronounce opinion on events as they happen. Be that as it may, the opinion I am about to give is only my own and binds no one but me.

The minimum then that all States great and small can give is:

1. Full civil liberty, so long as it is not used to promote violence directly or indirectly. This includes freedom of the Press and freedom to receive newspapers which do not promote violence.
2. Freedom to the people of the States to form associations and educate public opinion in favour of establishing responsible Government in their own States.
3. Freedom for Indians outside particular States to enter them without let or hindrance so long as their activities are not directed towards the destruction of the States in question.
4. The privy purse should be limited so as not to exceed one-tenth of the income where it ranges between Rs. 10 to 15 lakhs per year, and in no case should the purse exceed Rs. 3 lakhs per year, and should include all

the private expenses of the ruler (e.g. palace expenses, cars, stables, the Ruler's guests) except those which have reference to performance of public duty which should be clearly defined.

5. Judiciary to be independent and permanent and free of all interference. In order to ensure uniformity of practice and strict impartiality there should be an appeal to the High Court of the Province within which the State in question is situated. This may not be possible without a change in the law governing the High Courts. It can, I imagine, be easily altered if the States agree.

I have purposely avoided reference to constitutional reform. This will depend upon the situation as it exists in every State. I should assume that where local public opinion demands it, the Ruler is bound to respond.

The most contentious part of my minimum is perhaps the right of appeal to the High Courts. And yet unless some such arrangement is made, pure justice cannot be guaranteed in the States whatever may be said to the contrary. This is one institution which the British have built up with patient care. No doubt the High Court procedure is expensive and far from expeditious. The poor of the land cannot reach it. The processes are cumbersome. Often the unscrupulous win. With all their faults, however, and except where high politics have come in, the decisions of High Courts have been just and fearless. I can think of no easy and ready-made check save that of the High Courts on the vagaries, and sometimes subservience to the executive, of the judiciary in our States. But I am not wedded to my solution. If something else equally effective can be devised, I should have no objection.

One thing seems to me to be clear. If the transfer of power from the Princes to the people is to take place without violence, and if the Princes are to live as such, they will have to adapt themselves to the changed circumstances. Very few people have faith in my plan, viz., the plan of Princes voluntarily parting with power and becoming real trustees. The critics say it is Utopian and against human nature. I must advocate it so long as I believe in its practical possibility. The world is inevitably moving to self-destruction or to a non-violent solution

of all its ailments, moral, social, economical and political. The threatened world war will bring us nearer the desirable solution if a respectable part of it survives the impending catastrophe. Whoever recognizes that the only escape from the impending fate is a non-violent solution will, therefore, apply it to his own problems, whether they are domestic, communal or any other. Non-violence is a universal law acting under all circumstances. Disregard of it is the surest way to destruction. It is only a question of time.

The Princes would not solve the riddle by the proposed combination with Girasias, Muslims, Scheduled Classes, and their own subjects who are too cowed down to resist. It is a combination that is bound to break under its own weight. It is itself an inflammable mixture. And a combination against whom the Congress which seeks to represent all these, not excluding the Princes themselves? The Congress will die a natural death when it ceases to be national in every sense of the term. It has that unbroken tradition for the past fifty years. Whatever transformation it undergoes, it is the only constitution that will succeed British Imperialism whose days as imperialism are numbered. British politicians realize this. They would not resist do not want to resist, its transformation or destruction. The imperialism is increasingly becoming a dead weight only because it is based on highly organized violence. The Princes may ignore the Congress for a time. But they cannot for all time. Some are reported to have said that after all it was composed of Banias who would show the white feather on a few knock-out blows on the head by the strong combination pictured above. I would like respectfully to point out that the Congress is not composed of Banias who can be counted on one's finger-tips. The millions who took part in the civil disobedience fights were not Banias. I do not thereby mean to imply that they were desirous of giving blow for a blow. Many could. But they had forsworn violence. Many Congress heads were broken by something severer than knockout blows. All I wish to imply is that the Congress is not composed of mere cowards. Non-violence and cowardice go ill together. I can imagine a fully armed man to be at heart a coward. Possession of arms implies an element of fear, if not cowardice. But true non-violence is an impossibility without the possession of unadulterated fearlessness.

I beseech the Princes not to underrate the Congress as a force in the country. Its policy still remains non-violent. I admit it is fast tending towards violence. I and a few of my companions are putting forth every effort in favour of non-violence. I ask the Princes, for their own sake and for the sake of the country that has given them birth, to throw in their weight in favour of nonviolence. It seems to be touch-and-go with the Congress. It will either become growingly non-violent or will presently become a violent organization, not necessarily doing immediate deeds of violence but preparing itself for ultimate violence. It would not harbour cowards. If it does, it will cease to be the power it has become. Every Indian, high or low, (there is no high and no low for the Congress) has to make his choice.

Harijan, 15-7-'39, p. 200

II

Whatever may be said to the contrary I must continue to claim to be a friend and well-wisher of the Princes. For, my picture of free India has a definite place for them. And hence it is that I have been drawing attention to the weakness of their position as it exists today. The small Princes will do well to abdicate the powers they should never have possessed, and the powers of the bigger ones should be regularized. I have also ventured to suggest the minimum required.

No one in his wildest imagination thinks that the people of the States will for ever remain what they are. They will fight for their rights either non-violently or violently. In any case, the Princes cannot hold, out against millions who have become conscious of their power, whether spiritual or physical.

Harijan, 16-12-'39, p. 378

2. THE PRINCES' DETERMINATION

(From "Question Box")

Q. The Princes seem to be determined to maintain their privileges even after the departure of the British. Therefore there is need for a plain declaration that they would have no place in a free India. My feeling is that you have so far shown them more consideration than they deserve.

A. If you are right in your judgment, the privileges themselves will destroy the Princes. Privileges that service of the people bestows will always persist. But most of the paraphernalia that "pomp and circumstance" account for will most certainly go.

But I cannot make the declaration you will have me to make. It is contrary to the spirit of non-violence which seeks not to destroy but to purify. That which is beyond purification dies without any outside effort even as a body which has become wholly diseased dies.

If after the total withdrawal of the British Power, there is found to be no awakening among the masses India will be split up into so many feudal strongholds each striving to swallow the small fry and some bidding for overlordship. What I am hoping and striving for is an irresistible mass urge on the part of the people: and an intelligent response on the part of all privileged classes to the popular demand. But because I know that this picture is for the time being imaginery, I am quite prepared for the worst. Hence my statement that I would end the present state of things even at the risk of anarchy reigning supreme in the land.

Sevagram, 5-6-'1942

Harijan, 14-6-'42, p. 189

3. FOR THE PRINCES

A kind of nervousness creeps over me as I think of the Princes of India, although I have the privilege of knowing many and some even intimately. My nervousness arises from the painful knowledge that they are a creation of the British rulers. Though some of them pre-existed before the British advent their existence thereafter depended solely on British good-will, which in its turn depended upon the price the then incumbents paid for that commodity. The present incumbents are sole creation of the Imperial Power. Its simple frown can undo them.

But they need not feel so helpless if they could consider themselves as an integral part of the nation instead of being, as they are, an integral part of the Imperial machine. If the machine topples they may disappear unless they become part of and J depend upon the nation.

The Empire is going either by the will of the British people or by the force of circumstances beyond their control. India shall not always be a slave country. Will the Princes march with the times or must they remain tied to the Imperial chariot wheel? If they take their courage in both their hands and make common cause with the nation they can run the risk of dispossession.

This I admit is a heroic step. They can adopt the middle course. They may earn the good-will of their people by sharing their powers with them. They will never be able to retain their absolutism for all time. But they may certainly hope to retain much if they can secure the contentment and active cooperation of the people within their jurisdiction, in the administration of their own affairs. I think it is wrong of the Princes to let their critics say of their people that they are too backward to deserve freedom. It is a reflection on them. The people in the States belong to the same stock as those outside their borders. The Princes can lose nothing by being liberal. And they can lose everything by holding on to their autocracy.

For my part I desire not abolition but conversion of their autocracy into trusteeship, not in name but in reality. The arbitrary powers they enjoy should go. The liberty of the people should not depend upon the will of an individual however noble and ancient may be his descent. Nor can any person, whether prince or a princely zamindar or merchant, be the sole owner and disposer of possession hereditary or self-acquired. Every individual must have the fullest liberty to use his talents consistently with equal use by his neighbours but no one is entitled to the arbitrary use of the gains from the talents. He is part of the nation or say the social structure surrounding him. Therefore he can only use his talents not for self only but for the social structure of which he is but a part and on whose sufferance he lives. The present inequalities are surely due to people's ignorance. With a growing knowledge of their natural strength, the inequalities must disappear. If the revolution is brought about by violence the position will be reversed, but not altered for the better. With non-violence, i.e. conversion the new era which people hope for must be born. My approach and appeal are in terms of non-violence pure and undefiled. The French have a noble motto in Liberty, Equality, Fraternity. It is a heritage not for the French only but for all mankind.

What the French never realized it is open to us to do. Will the Princes and the princely landholders and merchants take the lead? It is for them to take the lead, not for the 'have-nots', who have nothing to share with anybody except their pauperism and abjectness. I am addressing weekly appeals to the British Power. They are made exactly in the same friendly spirit as this is. The British may not respond. If the 'haves', who are in fact the pillars on which the mighty British Power rests, can realize their obvious duty, the British Power must yield. It was because I had despaired of response from the pillars, that I have thought of moving the masses on whom the pillars rest. I may not leave a single stone i unturned to avoid, if I can, what is undoubtedly a great risk.' Hence this appeal.

Sevagram, 27-7-1942

Harijan, 2-8-'42, p. 249

4. DECCAN CHIEFS IN CONFERENCE

(By Pyarelal)

The plan for the formation of a Deccan States' Union has; been occupying the attention of the Chiefs of the Deccan States for some time past. The Raja Saheb of Aundh with Appasaheb Pant, his Prime Minister, Shri Shankerrao Deo and some others saw Gandhiji in this connection recently during his stay at Panchgani. They invited Gandhiji to meet the Chiefs of the Deccan States later in an informal conference. Gandhiji consented. The meeting took place on Sunday, July 28, in the Servants of India Society's Library Hall. Among those present were the Rajas of Aundh, Phaltan, Bhor, Miraj (Senior), Jamkhandi and Kurundwad (Senior), Appasaheb Pant and Shri I Satwalekar from Aundh, Shris Kore, Sathe and Thomre from Sangli, the Dewan of Bhor and representatives from Budhgaon and Ramdurg. Tatyasaheb N. C. Kelkar and Shankerrao Deo were also present on the occasion by special invitation.

Correct Attitude

Gandhiji being invited to address the distinguished gathering said that it was a great pleasure to him to be able to meet the Deccan Princes. He had read the papers and the note prepared for his edification by the Raja Sahib of Phaltan. He did not wish to speak on the papers. It was a good thing that the Princes were seriously thinking in terms of the whole of India, rather than of themselves and of the protection they had all these years, thought they were getting from the Paramountry of the British Power. Only a few years ago the Princes felt that they could not be safe except under the Paramountcy of the British Crown. It seemed to have dawned on most of them that that was not the correct attitude. This was but natural, for they were after all sons of the soil. He, the speaker, had said openly on another occasion that the people of the States were slaves of slaves which the Princes were. They exercised their authority within their own principalities, so long as they were in the good books of the British Government. They were made or unmade at the pleasure of the British Crown. The Princes who had eyes opened to that vital fact were desirous

of Indian independence equally with the people of India. If then they felt that need, they did not want a union of the States but each State had first to form a union with its own people. Their people were the real power on whom they were to depend for their status. It became trusteeship if they became servants of their own people. If they took that attitude, they needed no terms with the Congress or with any other organization. The immediate need was an understanding with their own people.

He made bold to take up that attitude, though his might be a lonely voice. In his opinion, the Princes, as servants and trustees of their people were worthy of their hire. It would then (but not before) be time to consider whether they and their people wanted a union among themselves. Such a union would be of a wholly different type from what they had conceived.

Creation of British Rulers

The speaker had a serious suspicion that the present proposal was a creation of the British Rulers, meaning the Political Agents. No blame need be imputed to them, if they advised such a union. They were brought up in no better tradition. They thought that when the British Power was not in India, the Princes would fight amongst themselves. That fear was wholly unjustifiable. They honestly believed that before they retired, as they must within perhaps a few months, owing to forced of circumstances, they should enable the Princes to consolidate their power by organizing them into a union.

It was his belief that if India was not merely to be independent of British control, but was to enjoy real freedom which their country, by virtue of its ancient culture and tradition, was entitled to, it should grow from the bottom upwards, not be imposed from above. Otherwise, it would be a question of change of masters only. Instead of the English, there might be the Allied Powers or whosoever could impose himself on them. He did not look forward to that time. He looked forward to a time when India would come into her own because of her intrinsic merit. To that consummation the Princes could make a most handsome contribution.

If the Deccan Princes played their part and set a solid example, they would follow. For that purpose the speaker repeated, they did not need the suggested union. If, on the other hand, at the back of their minds they had the idea that they would give the so-called responsible Government to the people to the ear and break it to the heart, then the proposed union would be a kind of military combination, after the manner of the European Powers. It would be used against the people despite their protestations. That power would be useless against a first-class military power. They would be the first to lay down their arms before a venturesome aggressor. The British had taken good care not to give them training that might enable them to resist a Power like themselves by force of arms.

What applied to the States applied to the whole of India. She would have to serve a long period of tutelage at the feet of the Western nations before she could become a first-class military power. A quarter of a century's effort that the Congress has spent in teaching the country non-violence would in that event have been utterly wasted. That was not a prospect to which he could look forward with equanimity.

He had suggested to the Raja Saheb of Aundh that the Princes should, with necessary changes, copy the constitution of Aundh, if they wanted to take their due share in building up of a free India. That constitution was designed for the people. He, the speaker, would have liked it to go much further in such matters as the amount and control of the privy purse, etc. But all that had to come naturally, it could not be imposed. The working of that constitution he added had made considerable progress—though not all the progress—which the Raja Saheb of Aundh, his Prime Minister or he, would have liked.

After Gandhiji had finished, a discussion followed and questions were asked. "Unless we unite, not a single State would have survival value", remarked one of them and asked for Gandhiji's opinion on that point.

Gandhiji replied, "I am prepared to join issue on it though mine is perhaps a solitary voice. Every village has a survival value. Why should not your villages and hence you, the Princes, if you will be part of the people? Aundh, one of the

smallest among you, has a greater survival value than many of you. It depends upon you. So far as the people are concerned, they are one with the rest of India already.

"In an article that I have written for the *Harijan*, you will see my picture of independence. In that picture, the unit is the village community. The superstructure of independence is not to be built on the village unit so that the top weighs down on and crushes the forty crores of people who constitute the base.

"But we shall ask our people to draw up their own constitution. The plan of union that we have drawn up, is only intended as a blue-print for their consideration", explained another. .

"With the best intention in the world," replied Gandhiji, "you will not be able to do that. You are brought up in a different tradition. Therefore, I suggest you should see Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru about it, if you will really let the people judge. He is the proper person to deal with this question as the President of the States' People's Conference. You should not be afraid to go to the States' People's Conference with your suggestions. Let the Conference decide finally. Their present policy is sound and not hostile to you, considered as servants and trustees of your people."

Q. "We are anxious to serve our mother country. But, we are so small that we cannot serve unless we merge into a union."

A "Not in my picture of independent India", replied Gandhiji. "A village unit as conceived by me is as strong as the strongest. My imaginary village consists of 1,000 souls. Such a unit can give a good account of itself, if it is well organized on a basis of self-sufficiency. Do not, therefore, think that, unless you have a big union, you will not be able to give a good account of yourself. If Princes are all of one mind and the interest of the people is first and themselves last, theirs will be a more solid union than the one now proposed."

Village Republics

Q. "What would you say if the States organized themselves on the basis of village republics first and then formed them into a union?"

A "That would be excellent, but then you will speak a different language and proceed to work in an altogether different way."

Q. "But that may take a long time and unless it is done by people outside first, our people will not take to it."

A "I have said that the States can make the finest contribution to the building of India's future independence if they set the right example in their own territories. They as individual States being compact, homogeneous units can well afford to make experiments in government. As it is, the Princes have taken the lead orily in copying the bad points of the British System. They allow themselves to be led by the nose by their Ministers, whose administrative talent consists only in extorting money from their dumb, helpless subjects. By their tradition and training they are unfitted to do the job you have let them do. Therefore, my advice to you is: Make Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru your Chief Minister, if you are in earnest. Let him present you with an outline. He will naturally consult the people."

Q. "We want to organize ourselves into a union so that our people may have Swaraj first without waiting for the labours of the Constituent Assembly to be finished, which may take time."

A "That is the wrong way of going about the thing. If you are solicitous of the welfare of the people and want them to come into their own, give them the fullest liberty straightaway. By the time you have done that, the Constituent Assembly will have finished its work. The constitution which it will frame will not be for British India merely, but for the whole of India. That constitution will necessarily provide for a State union or unions, if it is desirable. You should assist them instead of anticipating them by forming your own union. Begin with the individual and you will not then go wrong."

"Are you," asked Tatyasaheb N. C. Kelkar, "opposed to the union, because it is suspect in your eyes?"

Gandhiji: "I began with that. But I do not oppose it on the ground of my suspicion. I suspect not you—A, B or C, but the circumstances. You do not know the danger and mischief you are running into. Hence my advice to you to hasten slowly."

Q. "If you stretch your argument, would it not apply equally to the district and taluq organization in the provinces? Why do not you ask for their dissolution?"

Gandhiji: "I am not asking you to dissolve anything that already exists—not that I am enamoured of the machinery of administration set up in British India. History tells us, it was devised mainly to facilitate revenue collection. You will follow it only at your cost. My point just now is: Do not do anything in the shape of unions. Leave that work to be done by the Constituent Assembly. As a Sanskrit poet says, अनारम्भो हि कार्याणां प्रथमं बुद्धिलक्षणम् | (Not to run into new enterprises is the first mark of wisdom.)

Harijan, 4-8-'46, p. 250

5. TOO LATE IN THE DAY

(Originally appeared under the title "Travancore")

Though I have been apparently silent about Travancore the workers may rest assured that I have not been neglectful. Sometimes silence is more telling than speech. All I am free to say is that I have been usefully silent. I am sorry that all has not gone well. I had hoped that when the State Congress withdrew the allegations against the Dewan things would run smooth and the movement for responsible Government would be allowed full play. But the bulletin¹ reproduced elsewhere shows that there is no such luck for the Travancoreans. The unseating of 19 prominent members of the Travancore Assembly seems to be vindictive. Have they done anything dishonourable? Not that I know of.

I have before me a letter describing the ill-treatment of Shrimati Akkamma Cherian, a political prisoner. If what she declared in court is true, her treatment was surely disgraceful. She is a cultured woman. She gave up the

head-mistressship of a school in order to join the struggle for liberty. It hurts one to think that in an advanced State like Travancore, which boasts an enlightened Prince, an equally enlightened Maharani, his mother, and an experienced Dewan, liberty is being choked by rude repression.

But another letter tells me that this repression is taking place in the name of Hinduism and for the sake of saving a Hindu State! It has been suggested that the idea is to repress the Christians who are playing a prominent part in the struggle for freedom.

It is surely late in the day to talk of Hindu States and Muslim States. And what is the test? Is Kashmir a Hindu State because a Hindu Prince happens to rule a territory which has an overwhelming majority of Muslims as its inhabitants? Or is Hyderabad with its overwhelming Hindu population a Muslim State because a Muslim Prince rules their destiny? I regard this kind of talk as a libel on nationalism. Is India a Christian State because a Christian King rules over her destiny? But if India is Indian no matter who rules, the States are also Indian no matter who happens to be the ruler. And the present Rulers and their successors will rule only by the grace of an awakened people. The awakening that has taken place has come to stay. Every day quickens the pace. The Rulers and their advisers may succeed for the time-being in suppressing the spirit of the people. They will never succeed in killing it. To succeed would be to kill the spirit of the people of India. Is anyone in India so short-sighted as to feel that independence is not coming soon? And is it possible to conceive that an independent India will for one moment tolerate repression in any single spot, be it ever so big or ever so small? There is room in my conception of an independent India, for States with Princes as constitutional trustees, as in Aundh. There is room for Englishmen as fellow-servants of the people, never as masters. Therefore, the only way in which the Princes can live in a free India is for them now to recognize the time spirit, bow to it and act accordingly. Let it be the boast of the Hindu Prince, his Hindu mother and their Hindu Dewan that they were not afraid of their Christian citizens. Supposing there was responsible Government in Travancore, what could the Christians or the Hindus or the

Muslims do? Whoever the legislators, they will be responsible to the voters. There is no room for fear, there is no hitch in the process. But in the present repression, there is much to fear and there are many hitches.

Harijan, 18-2-'39, p. 16

1. Omitted from this collection.

PART II : LINGUISTIC INTEGRATION

6. PROVINCIAL AUTONOMY OR PROVINCIAL JEALOUSY

Shri Jamshedji Mehta writes:

"After the introduction of provincial autonomy one isfl pained to observe the growth of provincial exclusiveness and jealousies in matters big or trivial. I often wonder if provincial autonomy has not come upon us as a curse rather than a blessing. Instead of the nationalistic spirit having increased, provincial exclusiveness seems to have flourished. Before autonomy 'my country' used to mean India. Now it means 'my province'. Will you not warn the country against the danger before it becomes too deep rooted to be dealt with?"

The letter is naturally in Gujarati. I have given a very free rendering of the thought and the grief running through the original. Shri Jamshedji's complaint has justification for it. Provincialism of a healthy type there is, and always will be. There is no meaning in having separate provinces, if there were no differences, though healthy, between them. But our provincialism must never be narrow or exclusive. It should be conducive to the interest of the whole country of which the provinces are but parts. They may be likened to tributaries of a mighty river. The tributaries promote its mightiness. Their strength and purity will be reflected in the majestic stream. It must be thus with the provinces. Everything that the provinces do must be for the glory of the whole. If the great contribution of Rabindranath glorifies Bengal, it glorifies also India. Does not his influence pervade the whole of India? Dadabhai lived not merely for the Parsis, not merely for Bombay, but for the whole of India. There is no room for exclusiveness or jealousy between province and province, unless India is to be dismembered into warring countries each living for itself and if possible at the expense of the rest. The Congress will have lived in vain if such a calamity descends upon the country. Every attempt at dividing the country into watertight compartments must be resisted. India's destiny is to

become a strong independent nation making her unique contribution to the world's progress. Our patriotism is at no stage exclusive. We do not desire prosperity at the expense of the other nations of the earth. A time must come when we will be able to say, "We are no less citizens of the world than we are citizens of India." But the time will never come unless we know the art of being citizens of an independent India. We cannot learn the art if we develop poisonous provincialism. The right national life has to begin with the individual. I wish to be strong and free so that not only I but my neighbour also may benefit by my strength and freedom. We as individuals or provinces must bring our best fruit to the altar of the motherland.

Harijan, 22-7-'39, p. 208

7. NO NARROW PROVINCIALISM

(From "Question Box")

Q. There are in certain places, some people who have come from other provinces but who have practically settled in those places. There is already a feeling in certain provinces that when times were good these people came from outside, earned, and enjoyed themselves, but that when danger is drawing near and when their help and assistance would be needed by the residents of the province, they are thinking of fleeing to their 'homes'. Should you not advise such people to stay where they are and not to give vent to any narrow provincialism?

A. This question has come to me in various forms. It comes from Bengal and Assam. Merchants from other provinces have settled there for generations. Though they went to the respective provinces for their own sakes, they supplied a want, often useful. There is no doubt that their sudden withdrawal must hit hard those who have been hitherto used to make their daily purchases from these merchants. They cannot be easily and suddenly replaced, especially at a critical time like this. Therefore for these merchants to wind up their business would certainly amount to desertion of duty, if they do not, before

leaving, ensure the continuance of their shops by proper substitute. It would be a different thing, if the customers themselves evacuated and the merchants had to follow. The situation that faces the country is so novel that no opinion or solution can claim infallibility, nor can judgment be pronounced without carefully weighing all the facts. But it seems to me to be the duty of mercantile organizations to examine the situation and give guidance to the merchants affected.

Harijan, 3-5-'42, p. 137

8. THE BANE OF OUR LIFE-EXCLUSIVE PROVINCIALISM

(Originally appeared under the title "Bihar for Biharis and India")

Bihar is undoubtedly for Biharis but it is also for India. What is true of Bihar is equally true of all the provinces in the Union. No Indian can be treated as a foreigner in Bihar as he may be treated in Pakistan of today and vice versa. It is necessary to bear this difference in mind if we are to avoid difficulties and heart-burn.

Though then every Indian of the Union has a right to settle in Bihar, he must not do so to oust the Biharis. If the qualification was not actively operated, it is possible to conceive such an inrush of non-Bihari Indians as to flood out the Biharis. We are thus forced to the conclusion that a non-Bihari who settles in Bihar must do so to serve Bihar, not to exploit it after the manner of our old masters.

This way of examining the proposition brings us to the question of the Zamindars and the ryots. When a non-Bihari enters Bihar for the sake of making money, he will in all probability do so to exploit the ryot in league with the Zamindars. If the Zamindars really became the trustees of their *zamindari* for the sake of the ryots, there never could be an unholy league as has been here conceived. There is the difficult *zamindari* question awaiting solution in Bihar. What one would love to see is proper, impartial and satisfactory understanding between the Zamindars, big and small, the ryots and the Government so that

when the law is passed it may not be a dead letter nor need force be used against the Zamindars or the ryots. Would that all changes, some of which must be radical, take place throughout India without bloodshed and without force! So much for the new-comer from the other provinces of India.

What about the services? It seems that if the provinces are all to make equal progress in all directions, the services should be largely confined to the inhabitants of the province concerned for the sake of India as a whole. No province and no tribe or clan can be kept backward if India is to stand up erect before the world. It will never do so through its arms of which the world is sick. It must shine through its innate culture expressed in every citizen's life and in the socialism I have recently described in these columns. That means elimination of all force for the sake of popularizing one's doctrines or schemes. A thing which is truly popular rarely, if ever, requires force save that of public opinion to make itself acceptable to all. Therefore the ugly scenes of violence by individuals witnessed in Bihar and Orissa and Assam should never have been. Popular Governments are functioning to redress any irregularity or encroachment by persons from other provinces. The provincial Governments are bound to give full protection to all the comers from outside their provinces. "Use what you consider yours so as not to injure others", is a famous maxim of equity. It is also a grand moral code of conduct. How apposite today?

Hitherto I have dealt with the question of new arrivals. What of those who were on 15th of August in Bihar—some in Government employment and some otherwise employed? So far as I can see, they should be on the same footing as the Biharis unless they make another choice. Naturally, they should not form a separate colony as if they were foreigners. "Live in Rome as the Romans do", is a sound commonsense maxim so long as it does not apply to Roman vices. The process of progressive blending must be one of rejecting the bad and absorbing the good. As a Gujarati in Bengal, I must quickly absorb all that is good in Bengal and never touch that which is bad; I must ever serve Bengal, never selfishly exploit it. The bane of our life is our exclusive provincialism, whereas

my province be co-extensive with the Indian boundary so that ultimately it extends to the boundary of the earth. Else, it perishes.

On the train to Delhi, 8-9-1947

Harijan, 21-9-'47, p. 332

9. WHEN CAN LINGUISTIC REDISTRIBUTION COME INTO BEING?

(Originally appeared under the title "Linguistic Redistribution")

Acharya Shriman Narayan Agarwal writes to me a letter published in the columns of the *Harijansevak*. Its purport is that new universities should not be established before the propose linguistic redistribution of provinces. The following is the rendering of his argument.

"I have read your remarks in the *Harijan* about 'New Universities'. I believe that such a project will present great' difficulties, if it comes into being before linguistic] redistribution. I cannot understand why the Congress should take any time in accomplishing this linguistic redistribution. The Congress has held since 1920 that this is necessary for the good government of India. And now that we are free to have this redistribution, efforts are being made in some quarters to defeat the purpose. In the Constituent Assembly too, the matter seems to have been shelved. Without redistribution, it would be very difficult to enforce all teaching through provincial languages in our schools and colleges and it would not be easy to oust English from the position it unlawfully occupies today. Bombay, Madras and C.P will bear out my contention. Any delay would but increase inter-provincial jealousy. We see the danger of tinkering in the terrible form that the Hindu-Muslim quarrel has assumed. If partition had to be accepted on any account whatsoever, how nice it would have been if we had accepted it sooner? Shall we not learn the lesson from these disturbances that if linguistic redistribution is good, delay in carrying it out is fraught with evil consequences?"

I entirely endorse the suggestion underlying the foregoing letter, viz., that what is proper to be done should not be delayed without just cause, and that what is improper should not be conceded under any circumstances whatsoever. There can be no compromise with evil and since linguistic redistribution is desirable from almost every point of view, all delay in carrying out the project should be avoided.

But the reluctance to enforce linguistic redistribution is perhaps justifiable in the present depressing atmosphere. The exclusive spirit is ever uppermost. Everyone thinks of himself and his family. No one thinks of the whole of India. The centripetal force is undoubtedly there, but it is not vocal, never boisterous, whereas the centrifugal is on the surface, and in its very nature makes the loudest noise, demanding the attention of all. It manifests itself most in matters communal. This has given rise to fear in other fields. The history of the quarrel between Orissa and Andhra, Orissa and Bihar and Orissa and Bengal is fresh in our minds. The whole of it has not died out even now. This is but an illustration of an almost accomplished fact. The other provinces were never redistributed in law though they were in 1920 when the Congress had a brand new constitution enabling it to put up a life and death struggle with perhaps the greatest empire that has ever been. How will Madras, though divided by the Congress divide itself into four provinces, and Bombay do likewise in law? Many other claimants have come to the fore. They are not recognized by the Congress but they are not less vocal or less insistent. The Congress does not command the prestige and authority it found itself in possession of in 1920. Despair has given place to hope. Now, when we have freedom, we seem not to know what to do with it. It is almost mistaken for suicidal anarchy. Even zealous reformers would postpone controversial issues to a more hopeful time when, in the interest of the country, the virtue of 'give and take' would be freely recognized and all sectional interests would be subordinate to the one interest of the good of India, which will include the good of all. Therefore, those who, like me, want constructive suggestions to come into play at this very moment, have to work to bring about a healthy atmosphere, promoting concord in the place of discord, peace in the place of

strife, progress in the place of retrogression and life in the place of death. That happy day will be most manifest when the communal strife has died out. Meanwhile, will the Southern linguistic groups settle their disputes and boundaries, will Bombay produce an agreed scheme of redistribution according to language, and will the new candidates withdraw their claims at least for the time being? Then linguistic redistribution can come into being today without the slightest difficulty or fuss.

Let there be no undue strain upon the Congress, whose foundations have been shaken to their roots. It is ill-equipped today either for arbitrating between rival claimants or imposing its will upon recalcitrants.

New Delhi, 23-11-'47

Harijan, 30-11-'47, p. 436

10. WARNING AGAINST SEGREGATION OF THE SOUTH FROM THE NORTH

(Originally appeared under the title "A Non-Brahmin's Complaint")

To The Editor,

Young India,

Sir,

Mr. Gandhi made some remarks regarding Brahmins] and non-Brahmins in the course of his lecture at the Beach in Madras last Friday His speech has caused great pain to the non-Brahmin nationalists of Madras. It would have been highly preferable if Mr. Gandhi had not at all touched on this point; for from his speech it was evident that he was completely ignorant of Dravidian civilization, religion, culture, and the inner meaning and causes of the present non-Brahmin movement. He does not seem to have recognized the special features of Dravidian civilization which marks off South India, from the rest of India. In praising the Brahmins for their contribution to the religion and civilization of India probably he means North India, he has involuntarily cast a slur on the

non-Brahmins whose ancestors have also contributed as much as, if not more than, the Brahmins to the glory of South India as seen in their literature, religion and philosophy.

It need hardly be pointed out that nothing can offend a whole community like a slur of the above kind, even though it may be done unwittingly by one whose heart is overflowing with love, and for whom the community has the highest regard. Further, the object of Mr. Gandhi's recent visit and proposed long tour in the South in the middle of the next month is, we may take to strengthen the cause, and propagate the movement of non-co-operation.

Surely, making hasty and flippant remarks about a highly vexed question, is likely to weaken the cause he advocates and, estrange the sympathies of a vast majority of the masses who feel strongly on the matter.

If he really wants to bridge the gulf unhappily widening between the Brahmins and non-Brahmins of South India, let Mr. Gandhi take up the question in right earnest with an entirely blank and open mind, and then he may in all probability be in a position, after careful study to find out a solution for the problem. Otherwise he will do well in the interest of the great non-co-operation movement to leave severely alone the Brahmin and non-Brahmin controversy, in the course of his forthcoming long tour in South India.

Madras, 11th April, 1921

C. Kandaswamy

[I have received more letters in a similar strain. The correspondents have clearly misunderstood me. I have not seen the report of my speech. I do not therefore know whether it lends itself to misinterpretation. But I claim that the Brahmin's service to Hinduism or humanity is unaffected and undiminished by the achievements of the Dravidian civilization which nobody denies or disputes. I warn the correspondents against segregating the Dravidian South from the Aryan North. The India of today is a blend not only of two but, of many other, cultures. —M. K. G.]

11. THE GOANESE UNDER SWARAJ

(From "Notes")

A Goan friend asks, "What would be your attitude and that of all Indians towards the Goanese who reside and earn their living in this country when Swaraj is attained?" In briefest terms; the answer is, that the attitude towards the Goanese will be: exactly the same as towards any other Indian, for the Goanese are as much inhabitants of India as the inhabitants of any other part. That they are under another foreign Government can make no difference in their treatment. If the fear underlying this question is due to difference of religion then it has been repeatedly stated in these columns that Swaraj is not intended for any one religion only but for all and that those who are not born or domiciled in India would be fully protected, as fully as under the present Government, where they are not unduly favoured. That is the Swaraj of my conception. What it is ultimately going to be depends upon what thinking humanity in India does in the long run. The Goanese population has the making of the India of the future as much in their hands as any other group. No one need therefore ask what will become of him under Swaraj because no one but idiots and the imbecile will live on sufferance. Each one will guard his own individual liberty, if the State encroaches upon it. Not until many people acquire that power of resistance will India obtain real freedom.

Young India, 22-10-'25, p. 358 at p. 359

12. "THE COOLIE PROBLEM OF ASSAM"

While I was touring in Assam, a correspondent sent me his outpourings under the above heading. From this letter I take the following:

"The unobtrusive coolie, the poverty-stricken, drunken illiterate outcaste of the Hindu society, is, indeed presenting a baffling problem. Left to himself, he will go on, as he has: gone on for the past half

century and over, slaving for his master like a team-bull, dragging on a pitiful existence and drowning his sufferings in liquor. But we can no longer afford to ignore him. He has come to stay, has taken root in our soil and has multiplied so numerous as to constitute an important factor in the social, economic and political; structure of the province.

"It will not do to dismiss the coolie as an outsider and treat him as a foreign element unworthy of our notice. Our indifference towards him in the past has been but a testimony to our short-sightedness. It will not do to look on with apathy at this vast mass of helpless Hindus, to whom life is but drudgery and drink and no more. The time has come when we must take a broad view of the matter and regard the coolie as a member of our own community, a permanent element of our body politic. The time really has come when we must go to him and lift the veil of ignorance from him and point the way to progress through education and industry.

"The coolies have come to Assam from almost all provinces of India. Most of them would be regarded as untouchables in their provinces of origin. By their aloofness, their habits and customs, and linguistic differences and low economic condition, they constitute a distinct class in Assam which is as bad as untouchable.

"Our activities should aim at absorption of the coolie into our society, by making him give up his unclean habits, by providing him with facilities to come more and more in touch with the indigenous people, by inducing him to adopt the religious and social customs of the Hindus, and, last but not the least, by spreading education amongst them.

"The coolies are hard-working. Given proper facilities, they can earn enough; but they are much addicted to drinking. Vigorous propaganda against this drink habit must be organized.

"Although his stay in our midst is all too brief, yet it is hoped that Gandhiji will give his thoughts to the helpless coolies and see for himself the conditions in which they live, move and have their being. What little time he will devote to the coolies will reveal to his vigilant eyes a world

of information. Gandhiji will no doubt appreciate the many difficulties that stand in our way, the chief among these being want of funds. He will, it is hoped, evolve a scheme of work as well as devise ways and means to work it out.

"It will not be out of place to mention here many other hapless masses of people whose lot is as dark as, may be, even darker than that of the coolies: the Miris, Mikirs, Nagas, etc. These also demand attention.

"I do not, however, suggest that all these depressed sections of the peoples of Assam should come under the purview of the Harijan Sangh. Some may not even fall within the definition of Harijan, particularly the hill tribes. But, surely, that will not shut them out from Gandhiji's consideration.

"Note: According to the last census, the total population of Assam Valley Division is 48,55,711 and the total coolie population is 10,50,000 including the ex-garden coolies, who having secured their discharge from the garden work, have settled down in the land with no thought of returning to their provinces of origin. There is no exact figure showing the total of these coolie settlers."

I can agree from personal experience with much of what the writer has to say. The very word coolie is a misnomer and reminds one of what happens in South Africa. Instead of meaning a labourer or a porter, the word came to be applied in South African to designate the bearer's nationality, and became a word of reproach. An Indian merchant, barrister or doctor was known as a coolie merchant, etc. So, in Assam, the Indian who went from another province to work on the estates remained a coolie even after the termination of his contract as a labourer and even though he ceased to be a labourer and became a land-owner. But being industrious, he has multiplied in Assam and yet remains in perfect isolation and ostracism. It is a suicidal policy that keeps him so. He cannot be driven out of Assam. Being grossly neglected, he has become an economic waste. If these men were properly taken care of, they would become an asset of first-class importance. It is up to the educated people of Assam to

study this problem and solve it to the benefit of all concerned. It does not require an outlay of money so much as it requires an outlay of intelligence and industry.

Harijan, 1-6-'34, p. 122

PART III : RIGHTS AND INTERESTS OF MINORITIES

13. INTEREST OF MINORITIES

(From "Notes")

The final question of this searching examiner is, "What guarantee is there that when Swaraj is obtained the smaller communities such as the Parsis will not be ruled out by the larger? We often talk of our noble relations, but what crucial test is there that in the Swaraj Parliament racial prejudice will not assert itself?"

The movement is its own test. It is a movement of free growth of opinion. It is one of purification, and a nation purified will deserve the curse of mankind, if it allows petty prejudices to rule its deliberations. Moreover, the methods being pursued by us provide every interest with power of self-defence. It is the secret of non-co-operation, that it arms the weakest of the community with the power of self-determination and protection.

Young India, 10-11-'21, p. 357 at p. 360

14. PROTECTING THE RIGHTS OF MINORITIES

I

(Originally appeared in the columns of "Notes" under the title "Rights of Minorities")

Unless therefore we remove the last trace of ill-will against Parsis, Christians or Jews, we shall fail in our purpose. The condition of such protection is not that minorities accept our political or other opinion. That would be no protection. Protection to be true has to be given in spite of the dissent, even opposition of minorities. Indeed, we must jealously guard the rights of minorities if we are to have perfect freedom of opinion in thej country. Even a child must be able to express its opinion freely. The rule of majority would be a barbarous imposition, if it were] utilized to crush the minority. What we want in a free

India is not a dead level but a variety of opinion and conduct in which the sanest will prevail by the weight not of might but of right. We have been groaning too long under the weight of authority. And] the weight of majority can be as brutal as that of the bullets of a minority. We must therefore be patient with our Parsi or Christian brother if we will be free. I see in the blind prejudice against the Parsis and the Christians a menace to Hindu-Muslim unity itself. If we cannot tolerate Parsi or Christian difference, what guarantee is there that Hindus, if they felt the superiority of their brute strength would not impose their will upon the Musalman minority, or the Musalmans, if they believed themselves to be capable of wielding of superior brute strength, would not crush the weak Hindu in spite of his numerical; superiority?

Young India, 1-12-1921, p. 387 at p. 389



(From the paragraphs which originally appeared in the columns of "Notes" under the title "An Echo from Bengal")

The protection of the rights of minorities means, the protection of the weak. And protection of the weak means protection of old men, children and women and all those who may be helpless. And if today the united strength of Hindus and Musalmans is used against Parsis and Christians, tomorrow this unity will break under the strain of cupidity or false religiosity, is not a delectable picture of Swaraj by any means. For India, there is no alternative to non-violence complete and true if she is to be free. Non-violence then must not be used as a preparation for violence. To realize this is to realize Swaraj and religion. Let the! Hindus and the Musalmans beware of misreading their Gita or Koran. And by way of trial let them use their joint strength to protect the minorities and they will learn to protect one another.

Young India, 1-12-'21, p. 387 at p. 389

15. MY APPROACH TO MINORITIES

(From "Power Not An End")

My implicit faith in non-violence does mean yielding to minorities when they are really weak. The best way to weaken communalists is to yield to them. Resistance will only rouse their suspicion and strengthen their opposition. A satyagrahi resists when there is threat of force behind obstruction. I know that I do not carry the Congressmen in general with me in this what to me appears as very sensible and practiced point of view. But if we are to come to Swaraj through non-violent means, I know that this point of view will be accepted.

Young India, 2-7-'31, p. 161

16. THE SACRED TRUST OF PROTECTING MINORITIES

(From "In Delhi" by S.N.)

Another correspondent has written a letter saying that whenever the Viceroy invited leaders from the Interim Government for discussion, he invited the Hindus, the Muslims and the Sikhs. Were there no other communities in India? What about the Parsis, the Christians, Jews and others? They had been with the Congress. Were they to be suppressed by the vociferous elements? The Sikhs were a brave race. The Muslims had raised a hue and cry for years and so they were being consulted. Were the quiet citizens to have no voice in shaping the destiny of the country?

The question was relevant and important, said Gandhiji. If the Sikhs and the Hindus and the Muslims thought themselves to be the only people that mattered and the rights of the other communities were in any way less than their own, they would prove themselves utterly unworthy. The curses of the innocent would destroy them. Such a Government would never be Ramarajya or the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth.

It was the duty of every citizen to treat the lowliest on a par with the others. If some persons became mad, that was no justification for others to follow suit. If Indians decided to live independently, Gandhiji urged, none in the world, not even a combination, of powerful nations could thwart them.

New Delhi, 29-5-'47

Harijan, 8-6-'47, p. 177 at p, 179

17. UNITY V. JUSTICE

I

A visitor came the other day and said, "You have done an irreparable injury to India by saying that there is no Swaraj without communal unity. You should say instead that there is no Swaraj without justice between and to the different communities." I reasoned with my visitor but he would not be consoled. He said, "You have offered to sell your soul to win the favour of your Muslim friends." I protested and said, "Surely you know, the world knows, that I would not sell my soul to buy India's freedom. And if I want Muslim friendship, it is not for personal gratification but for India's sake. You are unjust to me." My visitor retorted with some passion, "I know your love for the country. If I had not known it, I would not have come to you specially. But your love has blinded you to the mistake you have made and are making. You do not know what Hindus say and do. For fear of offending Muslims, they suffer because they believe in you. I do beseech you to replace 'unity with justice'." It was no use my arguing with my friend. And I had no time. I promised to deal with the question in these columns. The promise soothed him. I do not know that my answer will.

My belief is unshaken that without communal unity Swaraj cannot be attained through non-violence. But unity cannot be reached without justice between communities. Muslim or any other friendship cannot be bought with bribery. Bribery would itself mean cowardice and therefore violence. But if I give more than his due to my brother, I do not bribe him nor do I do any injustice. I can disarm suspicion only by being generous. Justice without generosity may easily

become Shylock's justice. I must, however, take care that the generosity is not done at the expense of the very cause for which it is sought to be done.

I cannot, therefore, drop the idea of unity or the effort for it. But what is wanted is not so much justice as right action. Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah's reply to me, as published in the press, however, dashes to the ground all hope of unity if he represents the Muslim mind. His repudiation of the natural meaning I put upon his action in making common cause with the different political groups has created a unique situation. His picture of India as a continent containing nations counted according to their religions, if it is realized, would undo the effort the Congress has been making for over half a century. But I hope that Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah's opinion is a temporary phase in the history of the Muslim League. Muslims of the different provinces can never cut themselves away from their Hindu or Christian brethren. Both Muslims or Christians are converted from Hinduism or are descendants of converts. They do not cease to belong to their provinces because of change of faith. Englishmen who become converts to Islam do not change their nationality. I hope Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah does not represent the considered opinion even of his colleagues.

Harijan, 27-1-'40, p. 429



(From "Question Box")

Q. In your article 'Unity v. Justice' you say that, if you give more than his due to your brother, you neither bribe him nor do you do an injustice. You say: "I can disarm suspicion only by being generous. Justice without generosity is done at the expense of the very cause for which it is sought to be done." I submit that justice and generosity cannot go hand in hand. As Dryden has rightly observed, "Justice is blind, it knows nobody." Besides, you can be generous to the weak, meek and the humble, not to one who in the arrogance of his strength seeks to coerce you into submission. To give more than his due to such a person is not generosity but cowardly surrender. Though Hindus are numerically stronger, their majority, as you yourself have pointed out, is only fictitious and actually they are the weaker party. Besides, if generosity is to be shown to the Muslims,

the only organization that is competent to offer it is the Hindu Mahasabha. What right has a third party to be generous to one of the two parties to a dispute at the other party's expense?

A In my article referred to by you I have dealt with general principles, not with particular minorities. Even as justice to be justice has to be generous, generosity in order to justify itself has got to be strictly just. Therefore, it should not be at the expense of any single interest. Hence there cannot be any question, of sacrificing some minority or minorities, for the benefit of any minority. You are right again in contending that generosity has to be shown to the weak and the humble, and not to the bully. Nevertheless I would say, on behalf of the bully, that even he is entitled to justice, for immediately you brush aside the bully and be unjust to him you justify his bullying. Thus the only safe—not to put it higher—rule of conduct is to do generous justice, irrespective of the character of the minority. I am quite sure that where there is strictest justice the question of majority and minority would not arise. The bully is a portent and is an answer to some existing circumstance, as for instance cowardice. It is often forgotten that cowardice can be unjust. The fact is that cowards have no sense of justice. They yield only to threat, or actual use, of force. I do not know that there is any question of choice between a coward and a bully. The one is as bad as the other, with this difference that the bully always follows the coward in point of time.

In a previous issue I have admitted that the proper organization to enter into settlements is the Hindu Mahasabha, so far as Hindus are concerned, or any such organization. The Congress endeavours to represent all communities. It is not by design, but by the accident of Hindus being politically more conscious than the others, that the Congress contains a majority of Hindus. As history proves the Congress is a joint creation of Muslims, Christians, Parsis, Hindus, led by Englishmen, be it said to the credit of the latter. And the Congress, in spite of all that may be said to the contrary, retains that character. At the present moment a Muslim divine is the unquestioned leader of the Congress and for the second time becomes its president. The constant endeavour of

Congressmen has been to have as many members as possible drawn from the various communities and therefore the Congress has entered into pacts for the purpose of securing national solidarity. It cannot, therefore, divest itself of that function, and therefore, although I have made the admission that the Hindu Mahasabha or a similar Hindu organization can properly have communal settlements, the Congress cannot and must not plead incapacity for entering into political pacts so long as it commands general confidence.

Harijan, 24-2-'40, p. 9

18. PROPOSED COMMUNAL SOLUTION

The scheme¹ prepared by the Working Committee and suggested for adoption by the whole country is the result first of the incessant labours of Dr. Ansari and then of the subcommittee consisting of Pandit Malaviyaji, Dr. Ansari and Sardar Sardul Singh. I have never known Dr. Ansari so identified with and absorbed in anything as he has been about the communal question. He loves his profession and is content to live for it. If one finds him in politics or even as President of the Congress, he is there because friends have dragged him to the position. He is too noble and too patriotic to resist them. But the solution of the communal question he has made his first love. May these efforts be crowned with success! Even the noblest of virtues need to incarnate in human flesh before they can act.

Intrinsically considered the scheme appears to me to be sound, if the necessity for a communal solution be admitted. If we were pure nationalists, no scheme would be required. By religion we may be different, as a nation we should be one and indivisible. We will choose our legislators and appoint servants for their merits irrespective of their religion or race. Judged by that standard, the scheme is a fall. But we *are* fallen. We suspect and fear one another and yet we want Swaraj, for it is our birthright. And so the Congress has offered a compromise. Maulana Shaukat Ali when he was with the Working Committee angrily said, 'Why do you continually ask me what I want? I have told you what I want. Why don't you tell me what you would give!' The sting went home. The

Congress formula of pure nationalism was useless. His claim to represent Musalmans as a whole was rejected. He was therefore entitled to know what the Congress could offer. The Congress could offer nothing that nationalistically inclined Sikhs, Musalmans and Hindus were not prepared to agree to. Hence the sub-committee and then the scheme as hammered into shape by the Working Committee.

The Working Committee can have no desire to force it down unwilling throats. But nationalists belonging to the three communities have now something to work by and upon. Let them; unobtrusively cultivate opinion in their respective communities.

I begin with the Hindus. We are an overwhelming majority. If we feel physically dwarfs before the Musalman and the Sikh giants, we shall never grow through the legislatures. We shall grow by shedding fear, not by straining our limbs. Courage has never been known to be a matter of muscle, it is a matter of the heart. The toughest muscle has been known to tremble before an imaginary fear. It was the heart that set the muscle a trembling. Let us take heart and endorse what the Musalmans and the Sikhs; ask. This is just, weighed in the scales of ahimsa otherwise spelt love. If this scheme results in opening the eyes of us Hindus, it would be well even though non-nationalist Sikhs and Musalmans; may reject it.

If we accept this scheme without demur, we should be ready to accept any other that may be acceptable to all Sikhs and Musalmans. But let me not frighten us away from this scheme by pledging ourselves to any other in advance. My mind as an individual is made up and has been often expressed. But I do dare, to ask the Hindus to accept this scheme because it is charged with the blessings of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviyaji and Sjt. Madhavrao Aney, not to speak of the other Hindu members of the Working Committee.

Young India, 16-7-'31, p. 179

1. Reproduced at the end of the article.

CONGRESS SCHEME

However much it may have failed in the realisation, the Congress has, from its very inception, set up pure nationalism as its ideal. It has endeavoured to break down communal barriers. The following Lahore resolution was the culminating point in its advance towards nationalism:

"In view of the lapse of the Nehru Report it is unnecessary to declare the policy of the Congress regarding communal questions, the Congress believing that in an independent India communal questions can only be solved on strictly national lines. But as the Sikhs in particular, and the Muslims and the other minorities in general, had expressed dissatisfaction over the solution of communal questions proposed in the Nehru Report, this Congress assures the Sikhs, the Muslims and other minorities that no solution thereof in any future constitution will be acceptable to the Congress that does not give full satisfaction to the parties concerned".

Hence the Congress is precluded from setting forth any communal solution of the communal problem. But at this critical juncture in the history of the nation, it is felt that the Working Committee should suggest for adoption by the country a solution though communal in appearance, yet as nearly national as possible and generally acceptable to the communities concerned. The Working Committee therefore after full and free discussion unanimously passed the following scheme:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Working Committee has adopted the foregoing scheme as a compromise between the proposals based on undiluted communalism and undiluted nationalism. Whilst on the one hand the Working Committee hopes that the whole nation will endorse the scheme, on the other, it assures those who take extreme views and cannot adopt it that the Committee will gladly, as it is bound to by the Lahore resolution, accept without reservation any other scheme if it commands the acceptance of all the parties concerned.

Young India, 16-7-'31, p. 179

19. IS CONGRESS A HINDU ORGANIZATION?

Evidently we have not heard the last of Lord Zetland's charge that the National Congress is an organization representing Hindus and therefore national only in name but in reality communal. There cannot be a grosser libel on the Congress than this. From its inception it has been national. Its originator was an Englishman. The late A. O. Hume was long its Secretary. It has always had one or two Muslim Secretaries. It has had Muslim, English, Christian and Parsi Presidents. Dadabhai was, till he became invalided, the soul of the Congress. His was the guiding and the directing brain in everything. Sir Pherozeshah Mehta was the uncrowned King of the Bombay Presidency. He was the maker of Presidents both of the Congress and of the Bombay Corporation. Badruddin Tyabji was for years a decisive factor in the deliberations of the Congress. Who does not know that whilst Hakim Saheb Ajmal Khan was alive nothing could be done by the Congress if it had not his *imprimatur*? Dr. Ansari was for years Joint General Secretary. The readers know the influence that the Ah Brothers exercised over the Congress during the Khilafat days. Today the Working Committee does not move without Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's co-operation and wise guidance. His is the decisive voice on Hindu-Muslim questions. Through its whole history now running into the second half of a century the Congress has

ever striven to represent the whole of India in a manner no other organization has done. Every victory scored by the Congress has benefited all communities.

"If such is really the case why has the Congress usurped the function that belongs to the All-India Hindu Mahasabha?" ask some angry correspondents. The *Tribune* has also pointed out what has appeared to the Editor the illogicality of the Congress. The illogicality has to be admitted. But neither life nor institutions are governed by logic. Obviously the Congress felt the necessity of a communal adjustment for the political advancement of the country, and the Congress-League Pact of 1916 was born. Ever since that time the Congress has made communal unity a plank in the Congress programme. Though the function should logically belong to communal organizations, a mass organization like the Congress cannot look on if communities quarrel and when in the national interest a solution becomes necessary. Thus the Congress could not shirk what came to it as a clear call to duty. The Congress is and should be the organization to take a purely nationalistic and impartial view on communal questions. Whatever may be said to the contrary, I maintain that the Congress embodies the hope and aspirations of India. It can conclude no pact with any person if it does not represent the whole of India in so far as her political aspirations are concerned. Its traditions unfit it to represent Hindus as against Muslims or vice versa. It is fit to represent the common interest of all sons of Hindustan. I can see nothing wrong in the Congress trying to arrange pacts with men or their organizations for the furtherance of common interest. Needless to say they must be all mutually helpful, never contradictory. It is a difficult task no doubt. But if people and organizations extend their good-will to the Congress, the task is not beyond its scope or capacity. It does not inspire that all-round trust today. It may therefore have to wait for that day. If some other organization does it, Congressmen will welcome it.

Harijan, 18-11-'39, p. 341

IV : ANGLO-INDIANS AND OTHER MINORITIES

20. ANGLO-INDIANS

I observe that some writers have laughed at the suggestion made by me to Mr. Moreno that Anglo-Indians like every other Indian should spin and wear khaddar. It is easy enough to laugh at the suggestion but I have confidence in my remedy and I know that the ridicule will very soon give place to warm approval. As I entertain no ill-will against Anglo-Indians and as my conception of Swaraj provides for them just as much as any other born in India, or who have adopted India as their home, I know that Anglo-Indians will not misunderstand me in the end, even if some may do so for the time being. Not making any distinction between Indians and Indians, I have the good fortune to meet many poor- class Anglo-Indians. To live at all comfortably they must make common-cause with the other poor Indians. They must share their sorrows and, so far as may be, live their lives. Surely, khaddar can be common to all, and why should they not spin side by side with the others? There is no shame in adopting that one visible universal bond of sympathy between the poor of the land and themselves. Why should the Anglo-Indian be behind-hand in identifying himself with the poorest of the land of his birth? It is the false sense of superiority which he has been taught to adopt for himself over the ordinary Indian that has really made him a comparative stranger in his own land. And he cannot possibly be assimilated with the English. It is impossible for him to regard any other country as his home. If he attempted to emigrate to any of the colonies he will share the same fate and the same disabilities as the ordinary Indian settler does. I have therefore said in all humility, but in absolute sincerity which comes from deep conviction, that he should revise his ideas of life. He should be, what in reality he is, one among the millions. He will then, having a due sense of proportion, adopt the virtues of both his parents and render an immense service to himself, to his country as also to his European parent. Occupying a position that most: becomes him, he will be able

to speak to Englishmen with effects and from vantage-ground of personal experience. I do not suggest and did not suggest, to Mr. Moreno that Anglo-Indians, even the poorest among them, might be satisfied with spinning as a means of livelihood. But there is no reason whatsoever why the highest among them should not spin from the national standpoint. I have of course no hesitation to suggest that some of them who are poor may become accomplished weavers. It is an additional calling which those who are adapted for it may learn for the sake of earning an honest livelihood. Because those who become accomplished and artistic weavers can earn as much as forty to fifty rupees per month.

Young India, 4-6-'25, p. 190

21. ADDRESS TO THE ANGLO-INDIANS

(Some relevant excerpts from a report of Gandhiji's 'conversation' with the Anglo-Indians as edited by M.D. are reproduced hereinbelow.)

I have come here this evening in a spirit of utter humility and in a spirit of absolute friendship and good-will towards you. During my incessant wanderings I have come in contact not merely with Hindus, not merely with Musalmans, but I have come deliberately in contact with all sorts and condition of people I hope I have made myself accessible to anybody who has wanted to see me but I have even gone out of my way to search out the minorities. As the Musalmans are the big minority, I as I representing the majority of India, think it is my duty to befriend them even though they may reject my advice. You do not occupy even that numerical position and, therefore, I have not, wherever I found opportunities to approach you, hesitated to meet you. But I am here to confess to you that the Anglo-Indians have not freely reciprocated that feeling.

My largest contact with the Anglo-Indians has been on the railway trains because they have somehow or other fought shy of the public meetings, perhaps because of the notion that these meetings were meetings of

disloyalists. And as you have made loyalty your creed, naturally these meetings have repelled you. On the trains, however, I have sought you out.

An Untrue Life

As an instance of how the Anglo-Indians have isolated themselves from the Indians, Mr. Gandhi gave a vivid narrative of his meeting with some Anglo-Indian youngsters who travelled with him in the same train from Ajmer. He had an occasion to listen to their profuse vocabulary of slang until they recognized him, shed their naturalness and put on manners. And the behaviour of even those boys afforded ample proof of their isolation. One of them liked Indian sweets. But he dare not purchase them when others saw him. 'I eat the sweets only when no one sees me,' he said. He was not an Indian, he thought, and did not want to be observed by Indians. This, Mr. Gandhi said, was due to their schooling. "Though you have got Indian blood of which you need be proud—you need not be ashamed of that—I know when you receive a reminder of it you are pained." Mr. Gandhi next told them the story of a young Anglo-Indian who opened his heart to him, who though getting Rs. 400 was scarcely able to make the two ends meet, who had to live beyond his means, because 'I must look a European every inch of me.' "I was stabbed" said Mr. Gandhi, "to listen to his story. This is doing violence to humanity, I said to myself. He was a Christian, there was nothing wrong in his demeanour and in spite of the surface polish there was the canker eating into his vitals that he was leading an untrue life."

Cast in Your Lot with Masses

"Well, I have given you two telling instances. You have to make a choice. What shall you do? Will you attempt the impossible or will you be what you should be, every inch of you an Indian? Let me tell you one thing more. If you go to South Africa or Australia or any Dominion, you know that the same thing which is in store for me is in store for you. You will be classed among the coloured men and you will have no status. Those of you who may possess a white skin may deceive the Immigration Officer, but your relatives and sons may betray you. That is the position. The colour bar is too terrible there. You also will be counted among moral lepers. Mr. Malan now says he would not drive us out, he

would starve us out of South Africa, and would practise hypocrisy double-distilled. The 'bar sinister' as Lord Morley put it, applies to us even in England. Now it is your privilege to fight this. If you cast in your lot with the masses of India from which you have sprung there is nothing but hope for you, me and even for Government to whom you think you are bound to be loyal."

Abandon Aping Habit

"You can become a bridge so that all Indians and all Englishmen may cross to and fro without either feeling injured or hurt or feeling any degree of inconvenience. But if you want to aspire after the heights of Simla, well, those heights are unattainable and therefore poverty must be your lot, and also the lot of India. An important community like the Anglo-Indians brave, resourceful, you are going to perdition simply because you would not see the plain truth, but persist in an impossible attempt. In this process you are cutting yourself away from the masses. Thus you have been ostracized by Indians and Europeans both."

He gave another anecdote of a very cultured Anglo-Indian in Kathiawad trying to live the European way of life being ostracized everywhere. "The picture of that tragedy still rises"; before me," he said.

Make Your Choice

"I do want to tell you at this critical moment of our national life, 'Anglo-Indians, make your choice with determination and courage, whether you want to go away from the nation and whether you want to live up to the style of Europeans.' Mind you I am not asking you to cut yourselves adrift from Englishmen. They are far more precious to me today than they were before, because today I am leading the natural life. There was a time when I was also aping the Europeans. Little things guided my life then. But at a precious moment of my life, I threw them into the Indian ocean, and turned my back on them. 'No more this life for me,' I said, 'no more shall I consent to become the "blotting-sheet of civilization", to use Sidgwick's picturesque phrase. Hence I have become more lovable, more approachable. I had never before in my life so many friends in Europe as I have today. That is because I have shed all un-

naturalness. I may be blunt, but bluntness is better than put-up courtesy. I would therefore ask you to shed this aping habit, to think for the masses, merge yourselves into the masses so that they can be lifted and we can show to the world a beautiful specimen of Indian humanity in which all races can blend and mingle, each retaining its special admirable characteristics, each keeping every bit of what is best in it. That is your privilege, if you will exercise it.

The Indians' Duty

"I have talked to you about your duty. Well, if I became the Viceroy of India, which I think is never coming to pass, I would simply give you and the other minorities the choice and ask you to take what you want. I would call all the leaders of the parties and tell them my proposal. Then I would call such of you as are numerically weakest to come first and to ask what you want. In services I would insist on a decent examination test, i.e. I would only ask a candidate, 'How much of a man or woman you are? Have you got the ability to rise to the occasion?' Provided he or she passes these tests, I would select first the one who belongs to the least numerical section. I would thus give preference to all minorities along just lines, consistent with the welfare of India. When I use this phrase I assure you I am not doing any verbal jugglery. It will be none of my object to see that only Hindus can come in. Welfare of India means welfare of India as a whole, not of Hindus and Musalmans or of a particular community. I would not flatter you or pamper you but give you your due."

* * *

Scheme of Indianization

Mr. Gandhi then invited questions. Dr. Moreno was the first questioner: "What would be your attitude if, as it appears, in the scheme of Indianization Anglo Indians would be adversely affected?"

Answer: I would not oust a single Anglo-Indian if it was in my hands.

* * *

"No Special Privileges"

Another friend asked as to what Mr. Gandhi would suggest in the transition stage, if, for instance, they dropped the prefix 'Anglo' and joined the Congress. They would lose some of the trifling privileges they enjoy, and would get nothing to compensate for them.

"That", said Mr. Gandhi, "was the fairest of questions. For some purpose, you say, you are classed with Europeans. I have asked you to shed those privileges. You have mentioned the eligibility to the Indian Auxiliary Force. I would suggest that you will proudly say, 'We will have none of these special privileges. They demoralize and pauperise us.' I want you to think in the terms of the masses and not in the terms of the hierarchy and priesthood of Anglo-India. The upper section amongst you wants to be absorbed by Europeans—an impossible ambition—and the lower would be absorbed in the Indians in spite of itself. This involuntary merging can do no good. How then, you will ask, is it possible for you to be absorbed voluntarily? Well, I would not want you to be lulled into a false sense of security, but I would ask you to unhesitatingly shed the unnatural life you lead. If after becoming Indians, you are betrayed by Indians themselves, you will turn rebels against the Indians, but refuse to aspire to be Europeans again. I ask you not to be cowed down by the thought of a small minority. It is sometimes a privilege. I have so often said that I would live to be in the minority of one, because this artificial majority, which is the result of the masses' reverence for me, is a clog in my progress. But for the clog, I would hurl defiance today. I can neither be quickened into vanity by blind adoration, nor shall I sacrifice a tittle of my principle for mass adoration. The Englishmen are a microscopic minority. They do not fear that they would be engulfed. Of course at the back of their security is the force of the bayonet. But it will some day ruin them if they are not warned betimes. You may rely either on your soul-force or sword-force. But in no case would you put up with the present degradation."

Young India, 13-8-'25, p. 277

22. THE ANGLO-INDIAN

Some Anglo-Indian friends have often complained to me that I do not give the Anglo-Indian friends sufficient notice in these columns. I have always repudiated the charge. It is not my lukewarmness towards them that I do not often mention them in *Young India*. Indeed I have the honour to have many friends among them. My conception of Swaraj requires the same consideration for them as for any other group. Only they stand in little need of any advocacy in these columns. Those who are despised in the country, those who are neglected by the Government or those whose interests are hostile to those of the Government claim a lien upon these columns. Just as Englishmen do not need the protection of these columns, so do the powerful Anglo-Indian interest stand in no need of it. I can mention several such indigenous interests that stand in little need of the assistance of *Young India*. But this general assurance I have tendered more than once that in these columns there never would be any sacrifice advocated or encouraged of a single legitimate interest.

I note in the constitution of the Anglo-Indian League the definition of the phrase Anglo-Indian community which I had not known hitherto. It "means and includes:

"(1) All persons of mixed European and Indian descent whose father, grandfather or more remote lineal ancestor in the paternal line shall have been of European, American or Colonial birth, and

"(2) Europeans, Colonial British subjects of European descent, and Americans domiciled in India."

In the circumstances these friends of the League really need not only no advocacy from these columns, but they have ranged themselves against the millions of India in so far as the European interest may be regarded as against that of India. If the half borns claim the rights and privileges of the ruling race, theirs is an interest which as the occasion may demand will, if the ruling race can help it, override that of the indigenous inhabitants whenever the latter is

in conflict with theirs. These columns stonily resist such usurpation, no matter by whom advanced. At any/ rate the Anglo-Indian of the League may regard himself as well protected as the ruling race.

But I know that the Anglo-Indian not represented by the League is in an overwhelming majority. He does claim my sympathy, friendship and even pity in several cases. The half born who takes the hue of his Indian parent and has no money is in a most unenviable condition. His political right is in no danger. It is his social status which is non-existent. He frets over his Indian parentage and he is disowned by the European race. He is therefore between Scylla and Charybdis. I often meet him. He is washed out in the process of living above his means and trying to live the European life and look like Europeans. I have pleaded with him to make his choice and to throw in his lot with the vast multitude. If these men and women will have the courage and the foresight to appreciate this very simple and natural position, they, will serve themselves, they will serve India and they will be spared the galling position in which they find themselves. The greatest problem before the dumb Anglo-Indian is that of determining his social status. He is saved, the moment he recognizes himself as an Indian and lives like one.

To the vocal Anglo-Indian of the League I submit that the activities of the League are a mere tinkering with the gravel problem. The League should, if it will truly represent the bulk of the Anglo-Indian community revise its policy radically, change the definition to which I have adverted and step forward boldly and; unequivocally on behalf of the glorious battle for India's freedom. Today in my opinion the League is attempting the impossibles.

Young India, 29-8-'29, p. 284

23. ANGLO-INDIANS

Dr. H. W. B. Moreno writes:

"There is a good deal of discussion and you are rightly taking a prominent part, as to the welding of the various communal interests in India in order to advance the future status of the country. One hears a good deal, especially, of the Hindu-Muslim Settlement, one, however, hears little of the part Anglo-Indians will play in this All-Party Settlement so much talked of. Knowing as I do from personal conversation with you, of the deep and abiding interest you take in the Anglo-Indian community as one of the permanent communities settled in India, I make bold to write to you. All that my community should seek from you is that their legitimate interests be not overlooked. By this time I know the Anglo-Indians have realized that they are one with their sister communities in India, although they may preserve their own traditions. In order to clear the ground in the light of recent movements for the inauguration of a new Constitution for India in which all minorities shall find their rightful place, I write to you inviting your frank opinion as to the position the Anglo-Indian community will hold along with the other communities, the leaders of whom you have met and to whom you have already expressed your views."

I can only say that every community would be on a par with every other under the Swaraj Constitution. I invite the attention of all the minorities concerned to the Fundamental Rights Resolution of the Congress. So far as the Working Committee could, it took care to see that the rights of minorities were fully secured under that resolution. That resolution is now before the Congress Committee with a view to strengthening it. All those who have useful suggestions should send them to the Committee for consideration.

But I know that this is not what Dr. Moreno wants. He wants to know where the Anglo-Indians will come in specifically. My answer is they would come in where their merit would take them. There would most decidedly be nothing to

prevent them from occupying the highest position that any other Indian may be capable of occupying. The fact however is that the Anglo-Indians a class have occupied or attempted to occupy the position of rulers. They have not as a class taken part in the national Movement. They have isolated themselves in their isolated favoured position. Under Swaraj there will be no favoured position for anybody. Hence like the Englishman whose cry for equality means retention of favoured position the Anglo-Indians may feel aggrieved that they would be at a disadvantage under Swaraj if they did not have the present favoured position guaranteed.

I hope however that Dr. Moreno has no such favouritism in view. If I know him correctly, I expect he seeks information about the submerged Anglo-Indians. Of them I can say with confidence that I should be surprised if they did not in common with the submerged of the other communities find themselves in a better position than they are in today. Any way, there are enough Congressmen who are pledged to the abolition of all Unjust privileges, all unnatural inequalities. If the condition of the masses is found to undergo rapid improvement under Swaraj, the Anglo-Indian poor must share it to the fullest extent possible. The Congress aims at Swaraj for the whole nation and not a section. And it will fight on till that end is achieved. I therefore invite all the minorities to join the national movement and to hasten the advent of the happy day. Let it not also be said of any of them that in the hour of the nation's trial, they stood aside and came in to enjoy, their share of the happiness. They will get the share but they will not relish it even as a man who has not toiled for his meal cannot enjoy it though it is placed before him.

Young India, 14-5-'31, p. 108

24. LET GOD BE WITNESS OF THE BOND

(Originally appeared under the title, "God and our Bond". In response to a pressing invitation Gandhiji addressed a crowded gathering of the Sikhs of Delhi in the Sisganj Gurudwara on the sixth instant. The speech though mainly devoted to the Sikh question presented in a nut-shell. Gandhiji's view on the question of the rights

of minorities in a general and as such will repay careful perusal by all those who are interested in a solution of this vexed question. The following is a condensed translation of it.)

I have followed with painful interest the details of police firing into the sacred precincts of this Gurudwara that have been narrated by the previous speaker and I assure you that my grief and resentment at the outrage are not less than yours. But as I told my Sikh brethren at the time of Nankana Sahib tragedy when I visited Nankana Sahib in company with Mr. Abul Kalam Azad in 1921, we are today fighting not for one Gurudwara but for the bigger Gurudwara, which is the common sacred possession of all of us, viz., *Purna Swaraj*— '*Purna*' complete because it is as much for the prince as for the peasant, as much for the rich landowner as for the landless tiller of the soil, as much for the Hindus as for the Musalman, as much for the Parsis and Christians as for the Jains, Jews and Sikhs, irrespective of any distinction of caste or creed or status in life. The very connotation of the word and the means of its attainment to which we are pledged—truth and non-violence preclude all possibility of that *Swaraj* being more for some one and prejudicial to the other. Truth and non-violence leave no room for fraud or falsehood. . . . The world has so far been familiar with only one method of achieving freedom and that by the use of physical force. But . . . India has launched on the method of non-violence and truth for the attainment of its independence. . . . *Swaraj* under this method, 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. That being so how can the Congress want to keep even a child out of its own?

The beauty of non-violence is that it carries within it its own security.

I venture to suggest that the non-violence creed of the Congress is the surest guarantee of good faith and our Sikh friends have no reason to fear that it would betray them. For the moment it did so, the Congress would not only thereby seal its own doom but that of the country too. Moreover the Sikhs are a

brave people. They will know how to safeguard their rights by the exercise of arms if it should ever come to that.

Sardar Madhusudan Singh in his speech has asked for an assurance that the Congress would do nothing that might alienate the sympathies of the Sikhs from the Congress. Well, the Congress in its Lahore Session passed a resolution that it would not endorse any settlement with regard to the minority question that failed to satisfy any of the minorities concerned. What further assurance can the Congress give you to set you at ease I really fail to understand.

* * *

The Sikhs have given their loyal and unstinted co-operation' to the Congress in many parts in India. ... A brave man always gives credit to the other party for its bonafides. Why won't you have faith? If the Congress should play false afterwards you can well settle scores with it, for you hold the sword. I would ask you therefore to cast out suspicion and distrust from your mind and to plunge into this sacred *yajna* of freedom wholeheartedly. You will find that when you are ready to make the extreme sacrifice you' will disdain to ask for guarantees. It will be for others to look up to you as the champions of their rights as it will be for you to fulfil their expectations. I hold Grantha Sahib in high reverence! Several parts of it have passed into our daily speech. So far as my reading of it goes it inculcates faith, valour and an invincible belief in the ultimate triumph of right and justice. I would like you to derive your inspiration and guidance from it.

I ask you to accept my word and the resolution of the Congress that it will not betray a single individual much less a community. If it ever thinks of doing so, it will only hasten its own doom. No nation, determined to immolate itself at the altar' of freedom can be guilty of breach of faith. My life has been, an open book. I have no secrets and I encourage no secrets. I pray] you, therefore, to unbosom yourselves of all your doubts and apprehensions and I shall try to meet you as best I can. What more shall I say? What more can I say this that let God be witness of the bond that binds me and the Congress with you?

Young India, 19-3-'31, p. 42

25. INDIAN CHRISTIANS

(Originally appeared in "Notes" under the title "Christians and 3 Non-co-operation")

An Indian Christian from Basrah North writes:

"I am sorry to say that you do not take us Indiafi Christians as the people of India, as I have seen many timeeffl *Young India* mentioning Musalmans, Hindus, Sikhs, etc., but omitting the Christians.

"I should like you to believe that we Indian Christian are also the people of India, and take much interest in India's own affairs.

"I am sure, there are very few who have followed N.C.O. as Indian Christians have. I have much sympathy for my motherland's affairs. I am also a follower of N.C.O.

"I promise to give some news about the state of Indians in Mespot now and then."

I assure the correspondent and other Indian Christians that non-co-operation is no respecter of creeds or races. It invites and admits all to its fold. Many Indian Christians have contributed to the Tilak Swaraj Fund. There are some noted Indian Christians as non-co-operators in the front rank. There is constant mention of Musalmans and Hindus, as they have hitherto regarded one another as enemies. Similarly there always has been some cause when any race has been specially mentioned in these columns.

Young India, 25-8-'21, p. 267

26. TO THE PARSIS

Dear Friends,

I know that you are following with considerable interest the present non-co-operation movement. You may know, too that all thoughtful non-co-operators are anxiously waiting to see what part you are going to play in the process of purification through which the whole country is passing. I, personally, have every reason to have full faith in your doing the right thing when the moment for making the final choice comes to you. And I address these few words to you because I feel that, probably, that moment has now arrived.

Apart from your being fellow-countrymen, I am bound to you by many sacred ties. Dadabhai was the first patriot to inspire me. He was my guide and helper when I did not know any other leader. It was to him that I bore when yet a boy, a letter of introduction. It was the late uncrowned king of Bombay who led me in 1896 and showed me the way to work. It was he who, when I wanted to give battle to a Political Agent as far back as 1892, restrained my youthful ardour and taught me the first practical lesson in ahimsa in public life. He taught me not to resell personal wrongs if I would serve India. A Parsi merchant Durban, Rustomji Ghorkhadoo, was among my most valued clients and friends in South Africa. He gave freely to the public cause, and he and his brave son were the first among my fellow prisoners. He gave me shelter when I was lynched, and now, tod, he is following the Swaraj movement with considerable intered and has just donated Rs. 40,000 to it. In my humble opinion probably the first woman in India today is a Parsi woman genthi as a lamb, with a heart that holds the whole humanity. To have her friendship is the rarest privilege of life. I would love to multiply these sacred memories, but I have given you enough of them to enable you to understand and to appreciate the motive this letter.

You are a very cautious community. You are compact, and you rightly insist on abundant proof of the stability and thefl morality of any movement before you would take to it. But therfl is now danger of your becoming over-cautious, and your success in trade may make you obvious of the wants and aspirations of the

multitude of your countrymen. I dread the Rockefeller spirit that seems to be overtaking the great House of the Tatas. I dread to think of the consequences of their appropriating poor peopled properties for the doubtful benefit of making India industrial. But I do believe that this is a passing phase. Your shrewdness will show you the suicidal nature of such enterprises. Your quick wit will tell you that what India needs is not concentration of capital in a few hands, but its distribution so as to be within easy reach of the 7½ lakhs of villages that make this continent 1900 miles long and 1500 miles broad. I know, therefore, it is a question of time when you will throw in your lot as a community with the reformers who are hungering to free India from the curse of an Imperialism which is bleeding her to death.

But there is one thing for which it will be criminal to wait. A temperance wave is passing over India. The people want voluntarily to become teetotallers. Society is fast developing a public opinion that would consider drinking an unpardonable vice. Many Parsis make a living by running liquor shops. You if whole-hearted co-operation can sweep out of existence many of these plague spots in the Bombay Presidency. The Local Governments almost all over India are making a discreditable attempt to thwart the movement which bids fair to succeed even to the point of destroying the whole of the Abkari revenue. Will you help the Governments or the people? The Bombay Government has not yet been seized by the panic. But I can hardly imagine that it will have the courage and wisdom to sacrifice the drink-revenue. You have to make your immediate choice. I do not know what your scriptures say about drink. I can guess what the Prophet, who separated good from evil and sang the victory of the former over the latter, is likely to have said. But apart from your own religious belief, you have to make up your mind as to whether you will forward the cause of temperance in a whole-hearted manner or whether you will supinely and philosophically watch developments, I shall hope that you as a practical community of India will actively and thoroughly associate yourselves with the great temperance movement which bids fair to outshine every such movement in the world.

*I am,
Your faithful friend,
M. K. Gandhi*

Young India, 23-3-'21, p. 92 27

27. THE MORAL ISSUE

As soon as we lose the moral basis we cease to be religious. There is no such thing as religion overriding morality. Man for instance cannot be untruthful, cruel or incontinent and claim to have God on his side. In Bombay the sympathizers of non-cooperation lost the moral balance. They were enraged against the Parsis and the Christians who took part in the welcome to the Prince and sought to 'teach them a lesson'. They invited reprisals and got them. It became after the 17th a game of see-saw in which no one really gained and everybody lost.

Swaraj does not lie that way. India does not want Bolshevism. The people are too peaceful to stand anarchy. They will bow the knee to anyone who restores so-called order. Let us recognize the Indian psychology. We need not stop to inquire whether such hankering after peace is a virtue or a vice. The average Musalman of India is quite different from the aver Musalman of the other parts of the world. His Indian association have made him more docile than his co-religionists outside India. He will not stand tangible insecurity of life and property for anl length of time. The Hindu is proverbially, almost contempt mild. The Parsi and the Christian love peace more than strife Indeed we have almost made religion subservient to peace. This mentality is at once our weakness and our strength.

Let us nurse better, the religious part of this mentality If ours. 'Let there be.no compulsion in religion. Is it not religion with us to observe Swadeshi and therefore wear Khadi? But Jf the religion of others does not require them to adopt Swadeshi, we may not compel them. We broke the universal law restated in the Koran. And the law does not mean that there may, be compulsion in

other matters. The verse means that if it is bad to use compulsion in religion about which we have definite convictions it is worse to resort to it in matters of less moment

We can only therefore argue and reason with our opponents. The extreme to which we may go is non-violent non-co-operate with them even as with the Government. But we may not non-co-operate with them in private life, for we do not non-co-operate with the men composing the Government, we are non-cooperating with the system they administer. We decline to render official service to Sir George Lloyd the Governor, we dare not withhold social service from Sir George Lloyd the Englishman.

The mischief, I am sorry to say, began among the Hind and the Musalmans themselves. There was social persecution, there was coercion. I must confess that I did not always condemn it as strongly as I might have. I might have dissociated myself from the movement when it became at all general. We soon mended our ways, we became more tolerant but the subtle coercion was there. I passed it by as I thought it would die natural death. I saw in Bombay that it had not. It assumed a virulent form on the 17th.

We damaged the Khilafat cause and with it that of the Punjab and Swaraj. We must retrace our steps and scrupulously insure minorities against the least molestation. If the Christian wishes to wear the European hat and unmentionables, he must be free to do so. If a Parsi wishes to stick to his *fenta* he has every right to do so. If they both see their safety in associating themselves with the Government, we may only wean them from their error by appealing to their reason, not by breaking their heads. The greater the coercion we use the greater the security we give to the Government, if only because the latter has more effective weapons of coercion than we have. For us to resort to greater coercion than the Government will be to make India more slave than she is now.

Swaraj is freedom for everyone, the smallest among us, to do as he likes without any physical interference with his liberty. Non-violent non-co-operation is the method whereby we cultivate the freest public opinion and get it

enforced. When there is complete freedom of opinion that of the majority must prevail. If we are in a minority, we can prove worthy of our religion by remaining true to it in the face of coercion. The Prophet submitted to the coercion of the majority and remained true to his faith. And when he found himself in a majority he declared to his followers that there should be no compulsion in religion. Let us not again either by verbal or physical violence depart from the injunction, and by our own folly further put back the hands of the clock of progress.

Young India, 24-11-'21, p. 385

PART V : HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

28

HINDU-MAHOMEDAN UNITY

Mr. Candler some time ago asked me in an imaginary interview whether if I was sincere in my professions of Hindu- Mahomedan unity, I would eat and drink with a Mahomedan and give my daughter in marriage to a Mahomedan. This question has been asked again by some friends in another form. Is it necessary for Hindu-Mahomedan unity, that there should be interdining and intermarrying? The questioners say that if the two are necessary, real unity can never take place because crores of Sanatanis would never reconcile themselves to inter-dining, much less intermarriage.

I am one of those who do not consider caste to be a harmful institution. In its origin caste was a wholesome custom and promoted national well-being. In my opinion the idea that interdining or intermarrying is necessary for national growth, is a superstition borrowed from the West. Eating is a process just as vital as the other sanitary necessities of life. And if mankind had not, much to its harm, made of eating a fetish and indulgence, we would have performed the operation of eating in private even as one performs the other necessary functions of life in private. Indeed the highest culture in Hinduism regard eating in that light and there are thousands of Hindus still living who will not eat their food in the presence of anybody. I can recall the names of several cultured men and women who ate their food in entire privacy but who never had any illwill against anybody and who lived on the friendliest terms with all.

Intermarriage is a still more difficult question. If brothers' and sisters can live on the friendliest footing without ever thinking of marrying each other, I can see no difficulty in my daughter regarding every Mahomedan brother and vice versa. I hold strong views on religion and on marriage. The greater the restraint we exercise with regard to our appetites whether about eating or marrying, the better we become from a religious standpoint. I should despair of ever

cultivating amicable relations with the world, if I had to recognize the right or the propriety of any young man offering his hand in marriage to my daughter or to regard it as necessary for me to dine with anybody and everybody. I claim that I am living on terms of friendliness with the whole world, I have never quarrelled with a single Mahomedan or Christian, but for years I have taken nothing but fruit in Mahomedan or Christian households. I would most certainly decline to eat cooked food from the same plate with my son or to drink water out of a cup which his lips have touched and which has not been washed. But the restraint or the exclusiveness exercised in these matters by me has never affected the closest companionship with the Mahomedan or the Christian friends or my sons.

But interdining and intermarriage have never been a bar to disunion, quarrels and worse. The Pandavas and Kauravas flew at one another's throats without compunction although they interdined and intermarried. The bitterness between the English and the Germans has not yet died out.

The fact is that intermarriage and interdining are not necessary factors in friendship and unity though they are often emblems thereof. But insistence on either the one or the other can easily become and is today a bar to the Hindu-Mahomedan unity. If we make ourselves believe that Hindus and Mahomedans cannot be one unless they interdine or intermarry, we would be creating an artificial barrier between us which it might be almost impossible to remove. And it would seriously interfere with the growing unity between Hindus and Mahomedans if, for example, Mahomedan youths consider it lawful to court Hindu girls. The Hindu parents will not, even if they suspected any such thing, freely admit Mahomedans to their homes as they have begun to do now. In my opinion it is necessary for Hindu and Mahomedan young men to recognize this limitation.

I hold it to be utterly impossible for Hindus and Mahomedans to intermarry and yet retain intact each other's religion. And the true beauty of Hindu-Mahomedan unity lies in each remaining true to his own religion and yet being true to each other. For, we are thinking of Hindus and Mahomedans even of the

most orthodox type being able to regard one another as natural friends instead of regarding one another as natural enemies as they have done hitherto.

What then does the Hindu-Mahomedan 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. A common goal we have. We wish this great country of ours to be greater and self-governing. We have enough sorrows to shared And today seeing that the Mahomedans are deeply touched on the question of Khilafat and their case is just, nothing can be so 1 powerful for winning Mahomedan friendship for the Hindu as to give his whole-hearted support to the Mahomedan claim. No amount of drinking out of the same cup or dining out of the same bowl can bind the two as this help in the Khilafat question.

And mutual toleration is a necessity for all time and for all races. We cannot live in peace if the Hindu will not tolerate the Mahomedan form of worship of God and his manners and customs or if the Mahomedans will be impatient of Hindu's idolatry or cow-worship. It is not necessary for toleration that I must approve of what I tolerate. I heartily dislike drinking, meat-eating and smoking, but I tolerate all these in Hindus, Mahomedans and Christians even as I expect them to tolerate my abstinence from all these although they may dislike it. All the quarrels between the Hindus and the Mahomedans have arisen from each wanting to *force* the other to his view.

Young India, 25-2-'20, p. 2

29. HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

Let me summarize the long statement issued last week on this the greatest question of all questions for the Indian patriot. The posterity will judge both the faiths by the manner in which the followers of each acquit themselves in the matter. However a good Hinduism or Islam may be in the abstract, the only

way each can be judged is by the effect produced by each on its votaries considered as a whole.

The following then is the summary of the statement:

Causes

1. The remote cause of the tension is the Moplah rebellion.
2. The attempt of Mr. Fazl Hussain to rearrange the distribution of posts in the education department consistently with the number of Musalmans in the Puqjab and consequent Hindu opposition.
3. The shuddhi movement.
4. The most potent being tiredness of non-violence and the fear that the communities might by a long course of training in non-violence forget the law of retaliation and self-defence.
5. Musalman cow-slaughter and Hindu music.
6. Hindu cowardice and consequent Hindu distrust of Musalmans.
7. Musalman bullying.
8. Musalman distrust of Hindu fair-play.

Cure

1. The master-key to the solution is the replacement of the rule of the sword by that of arbitration.

Honest public opinion should make it impossible for aggrieved parties to take the law into their own hands and every case must be referred to private arbitration or to law courts if the parties do not believe in non-co-operation.

2. Ignorant fear of cowardly non-violence, falsely so called, taking the place of violence should be dispelled.
3. Growing mutual distrust among the leaders must, if they believe in unity, give place to trust.

4. Hindus must cease to fear the Musalman bully and the Musalmans should consider it beneath their dignity to bully their Hindu brothers.
5. Hindus must not imagine they can force Musalmans to give up cow sacrifice. They must trust by befriending Musalmans, that the latter will of their own accord, give up cow sacrifice out of regard for their Hindu neighbours.
6. Nor must Musalmans imagine they can force Hindus to stop music or *arati* before mosques. They must befriend the Hindus and trust them to pay heed to reasonable Musalman sentiment.
7. Hindus must leave to the Musalmans and the other minorities the question of representation on elected bodies, and gracefully and whole-heartedly give effect to the findings of such reference. If I had my way I should appoint Hakim Saheb Ajmal Khan as the sole referee leaving him free to consult Musalmans, Sikhs, Christians, Parsis etc. as he considers best.
8. Employment under national government must be according to merit to be decided by a board of examiner representing different communities.
9. *Shuddhi or tabligh as such cannot be disturbed but either must be conducted honestly and by men of proved character. It should avoid all attack on other religions. There should be no secret propaganda and no offer of material rewards.*
10. Public opinion should be so cultivated as to put under the ban all the scurrilous writings principally in a section of the j Punjab Press.
11. Nothing is possible without the Hindus shedding their timidity. Theirs is the largest stake and they must be prepared to sacrifice the most.

But how is the cure to be effected? Who will convince the Hindu maniac that the best way to save the cow is for him to do his duty by her and not goad his Musalman brother? Who will convince the Musalman fanatic that it is not religion but irreligion to break the head of his Hindu brother when he plays music in front of his mosque. Or again who will make the Hindu see that he will lose nothing by the minorities being even over-represented on the elective

public secular bodies? These are fair questions and show the difficulty of working out the solution,

But if the solution is the only true solution, all difficulties must be overcome. In reality the difficulty is only apparent. If there are even a few Hindus and a few Musalmans who have a living faith in the solution, the rest is easy. Indeed even if there are a few Hindus only, or a few Musalmans only with that faith, the solution would be still easy. They have but to work away single-heartedly and the others will follow them. And the conversion of only one party is enough because the solution requires no bargain. For instance, Hindus should cease to worry Musalmans about the cow without expecting any consideration from the latter.. They should yield to the Musalman demand whatever it may be regarding representation again without requiring any return. And if the Musalmans insist on stopping Hindu music or *arati* by force, the Hindus will continue playing it although every single Hindu should die at his post but without retaliation. The Musalmans will then be shamed into doing the right thing in an incredibly short space of time. Musalmans can do likewise, if they choose, and shame the Hindus into doing the right thing. One has to dare to believe.

But in practice it will not be thus; on the contrary both will act simultaneously as soon as the workers become true to themselves. Unfortunately they are not. They are mostly ruled by passion and prejudice. Each tries to hide the shortcomings of his co-religionists and so the circle of distrust and suspicion ever widens.

I hope that at the forthcoming meeting of the All-India Congress' Committee, it will be possible to find out a method of work which will bring a speedy end to the tension.

It has been suggested to me that the Government are fomenting these dissensions. I should hope not. But assuming that they are, surely it is up to us to neutralize such efforts by ourselves acting truly and faithfully.

Young India, 5-6-'24, p. 188

30. HINDU-MUSLIM TENSION—ITS CAUSE AND CURE—I

Hindu Indictment

Pandit Banarsidas Chaturvedi brought a message from a Hindu residing in Tangaika to the following effect: "Tell Gandhi he is responsible for the Muslim atrocities in Multan." I did not print the message before, as I was not ready to write then upon the question of questions. But many letters have since been received by me some from well-known friends telling me that I was responsible even for the alleged Moplah atrocities, in fact for all the riots in which Hindus have or are said to have suffered since the Khilafat agitation. The argument is somewhat this: 'You asked the Hindus to make common cause with the Musalmans in the Khilafat question. Your being identified with it gave it an importance it would never have otherwise received. It unified and awakened the Musalmans. It gave a prestige to the Maulvis which they never had before. And now that the Khilafat question is over, the awakened Musalmans have proclaimed a kind of *jihad* against us Hindus. I have given the purport of the charge in readable language. Some letters contain unprintable abuse. So much for the Hindu part of the indictment against me.

Musalman Indictment

A Musalman friend says:

"The Moslem community being a very simple and religious community were led to believe that the Khilafat was in danger and that it could be saved by the united voice of Hindus and Mahomedans; these innocent people believing your very eloquent words showed great enthusiasm with the result that they were the first to boycott schools, law courts, councils, etc. The most famous institution of Aligrah, which Sir Syed had built by the labour of his life-time, and which was justly the first institution of its kind, was utterly spoilt. I shall be very much obliged if you will kindly point out that the Hindu community had a similar institution, and it met with the same fate. I know of scores of boys who

could have taken the University degree with credit to themselves and the community to which they belonged, but they were induced to leave studies on religious grounds, with the result that they were utterly ruined. On the contrary very few Hindu boys left, and those who did so for the time being instantly joined, as soon as they found that the movement was tottering to pieces. Similar was the case with lawyers. In those days, you brought about a sort of unity between the two communities and advertised it far and near that it was a solid one. The simple-minded Mahomedans again believed it with the result that they were brutally treated at Ajmer, Lucknow, Meerut, Agra, Saharanpur, Lahore, and other places. Mr. Mahomed Ah, who was a born journalist of a very high type, and whose wonderful paper *The Comrade* was doing such solid work for the Muslim community, was won over to your side, and he is now a loss to the community. Your Hindu leaders in the guise of *shuddhi* and *sangathan* are trying to weaken the Muslim community. Your short-sighted decision to prevent people from entering the councils has acted most unfairly on this community as the majority of able men refrained from entering the councils because of the so-called *fatwa*. Under the circumstances, do you not honestly think that you are doing a great harm to this community by keeping the Mahomedans, a few of them of course, still in your camp."

I have not given the whole of the letter. But the extract represents the gist of the Muslim indictment against me.

Not Guilty

I must plead not guilty to both the charges, and add that I am totally unrepentant. Had I been a prophet and foreseen all that has happened, I should have still thrown myself into the Khilafat agitation. In spite of the present strained relations between the two communities, both have gained. The awakening among the masses was a necessary part of the training. It is itself a tremendous gain. I would do nothing to put the people to sleep again. Our wisdom consists now in directing the awakening into the proper channel. What

we see before us is sad but not disheartening, if we have faith in ourselves. The storm is but the forerunner of the coming calm that comes from a consciousness of strength, not from the stupor of exhaustion and disappointment.

The public will not expect me to give judgment upon the riots in the different places. I have no desire for giving judgments. And even if I had, I have not the facts before me.

Moplahs

I will say a word as to the causes.

The Malabar happenings undoubtedly disquieted the Hindu mind. What the truth is no one knows. The Hindus say that the Moplah atrocities were indescribable. Dr. Mahmud tells me that these have been grossly exaggerated, that the Moplahs too had a grievance against the Hindus, and that he could find no cases of forcible conversions. The one case that was reported to him was at least 'non-proven*'. In his findings, Dr. Mahmud says, he is supported by Hindu testimony. I merely mention the two versions to ask the public to conclude with me that it is impossible to arrive at the exact truth, and that it is unnecessary for the purpose of regulating our future conduct.

Multan etc.

In Multan, Saharanpur, Agra, Ajmer etc. it is agreed that the Hindus suffered most. In Palwal it is stated that Hindus have prevented Musalmans from turning a *kuchha* mosque into a *pukka* one. They are said to have pulled down part of the *pukka* wall, driven the Muslims out of the village, and stated that the Muslims could not live in the village unless they promised not to build any mosque and say *azan*. This state of things is said to have continued for over a year. The driven Musalmans are said to be living in temporary huts near Rohatak.

In Byade in Dharwar District, my informant tells me, on Muslims objecting to music being played before their mosque, the Hindus desecrated the mosque, beat the Musalmans and then got them persecuted.

Here again I cite these two instances, not as proved facts, but to show that the Musalmans too claim to have much to complain of against Hindus.

And it can certainly be fairly added that where they were, manifestly weak and Hindus strong as in Kartarpur and Arrah years ago they were mercilessly treated by their Hindu neighbours. The fact is that when blood boils, prejudice reigns: supreme; man, whether, he labels himself Hindu, Musalman, Christian and what not, becomes a beast and acts as such.

The Seat of the Trouble

The seat of the trouble, however, is in the Punjab. The Musalmans complain that the Hindus have raised a storm of protest on Mr. Fazl Hussain trying very timidly to give a fair proportion of Government employment to Musalmans. The letter from which I have already quoted complains bitterly that wherever a Hindu has been the head of a department, he has carefully excluded Musalmans from Government posts.

The causes for the tension are thus more than merely religious. The charges I have quoted are individual. But the miss mind is a reflection of individual opinion.

Tired of Non-violence

The immediate cause is the most dangerous. The thinking portion seems to be tired of non-violence. It has not as yet understood my suspension of satyagraha after Ahmedabad and Viramgam tragedies, then after the Bombay rowdyism, and lastly after the Chauri Chaura outrage. The last was the last straw. The thinking men imagined that all hope of satyagraha, and therefore of Swaraj too in the near future, was at an end. Their faith in nonviolence was skin-deep. Two years ago a Musalman friend said to me in all sincerity, "I do not believe your non-violence. At least I would not have my Musalmans to learn it. Violence is the law of life. I would not have Swaraj by non-violence as you define the latter. I must hate my enemy." This friend is an honest man. I entertain great regard for him. Much the same has been reported of another very great

Musalman friend of mine. The report may be untrue but the reporter himself is not an untrue man.

Hindu Repugnance

Nor is this repugnance to non-violence confined to Musalmans. Hindu friends have said the same thing, if possible with greater vehemence. My claim to Hinduism has been rejected by some, because I believe and advocate non-violence in its extreme form. They say that I am a Christian in disguise. I have been even seriously told that I am distorting the meaning of Gita, when I ascribe to that great poem the teaching of unadulterated non-violence. Some of my Hindu friends tell me that killing is a duty enjoined by the Gita under certain circumstances. A very learned Shastri only the other day scornfully rejected my interpretation of the Gita and said that there was no warrant for the opinion held by some commentators that the Gita represented the eternal duel between forces of evil and good, and inculcated the duty of eradicating the evil within us without hesitation, without tenderness.

I state these opinions against non-violence in detail, because it is necessary to understand the solution I have to offer.

What I see around me today is, therefore, a reaction against the spread of non-violence. I feel the wave of violence coming. The Hindu-Muslim tension is an acute phase of this tiredness.

I must be dismissed out of consideration. My religion is a matter solely between my maker and myself. If I am a Hindu, I cannot cease to be one even though I may be disowned by the whole of the Hindu population. I do however suggest that nonviolence is the end of all religions.

Limited Non-violence

But I have never presented to India that extreme form of non-violence, if only because I do not regard myself fit enough to redeliver that ancient message. Though my intellect has fully understood and grasped it, it has not as yet become part of my whole being. My strength lies in my asking people to do nothing that I have not tried repeatedly in my own life. I am then asking my

countrymen today to adopt non-violence as their final creed, only for the purpose of regulating the relations between the different races, and for the purpose of attaining Swaraj. Hindus and Musalmans, Christians, Sikhs and Parsis must not settle their differences by resort to violence and the means for the attainment of Swaraj must be non-violent. This venture to place before India, not as a weapon of the weak, but of the strong. Hindus and Musalmans prate about no compulsion in religion. What is it but compulsion, if Hindus will kill a Musalman for saving a cow? It is like wanting to convert a Musalman to Hinduism by force. And similarly what is it but compulsion, if Musalmans seek to prevent by force Hindus from playing music before mosque? Virtue lies in being absorbed in one's prayers in the presence of din and noise. We shall both be voted irreligious savages by posterity if we continue to make a futile attempt to compel one another to respect our religious wishes. Again a nation of three hundred million people should be ashamed to have to resort to force to bring to book one hundred thousand Englishmen. To convert them, or, if you will, even to drive them out of the country, we need, not force of arms, but force of will. If we have not the latter, we shall never get the former. If we develop the force of will, we shall find that we do not need the force of arms.

Acceptance of non-violence therefore for the purpose mentioned by me, is the most natural and the most necessary condition of our national existence. It will teach us to husband our corporate physical strength for a better purpose, instead of dissipating it, as now, in a useless fratricidal strife, in which each party is exhausted after the effort. And every armed rebellion must be an insane act unless it is backed by the nation. But almost any item of non-cooperation fully backed by the nation can achieve the aim without shedding a single drop of blood.

I do not say eschew violence in your dealing with robbers or thieves or with nations that may invade India. But in order that we are better able to do so, we must learn to restrain ourselves. It is a sign not of strength but of weakness to take the pistol on the slightest pretext. Mutual fisticuffs are a training not in violence but in emasculation. My method of 'non-violence can never lead to loss

of strength, but it alone will make it possible, if the nation wills it, to offer disciplined and concerted violence in time of danger.

Not Truly Non-Violent

If those who believe that we were becoming supine and inert because of the training in non-violence will but reflect a little, they will discover that we have never been non-violent in the only sense in which the word must be understood. Whilst we have refrained from causing actual physical hurt, we have harboured violence in our breast. If we had honestly regulated our thought and speech in the strictest harmony with our outward act, we would never have experienced the fatigue we are doing. Had we been true to ourselves we would have by this time evolved matchless strength of purpose and will.

I have dwelt at length upon the mistaken view of non-violence, because I am sure that if we can but revert to our faith, if we ever had any, in non-violence limited only to the two purposes above referred to, the present tension between the two communities will largely subside. For, in my opinion, an attitude of non-violence in our mutual relations is an indispensable condition prior to a discussion of the remedies for the removal of the tension. It must be common cause between the two communities that neither party shall take the law into its own hands, but that all points in dispute, wherever and whenever they arise, shall be decided by reference either to private arbitration, or to the law courts if they wish. This is the whole meaning of non-violence, so far as communal matters are concerned. To put it another way, just as we do not break one another's heads in respect of civil matters, so may we not do even in respect of religious matters. This is the only pact that is immediately necessary between the parties, and I am sure that everything else will follow.

The Bully and the Coward

Unless this elementary condition is recognized, we have no atmosphere for considering the ways and means of removing misunderstanding and arriving at an honourable, lasting settlement. But assuming that the acceptance of the elementary condition will be common cause between the two communities, let

us consider the constant disturbing factors. There is no doubt in my mind that in the majority of quarrels the Hindus come out second best. My own experience but confirms the opinion that the Musalman as a rule is a bully, and the Hindu as a rule is a coward. I have noticed this in railway trains, on public roads, and in the quarrels which I had the privilege of settling. Need the Hindu blame the Musalman for his cowardice? Where there are cowards, there will always be bullies. They say that in Saharanpur the Musalmans looted houses, broke open safes and in one case a Hindu woman's modesty was outraged. Whose fault was this? Musalmans can offer no defence for the execrable conduct, it is true. But I as a Hindu am more ashamed of Hindu cowardice than I am angry at the Musalman bullying. Why did not the owners of the houses looted die in the attempt to defend their possessions? Where were the relatives of the outraged sister at the time of the outrage? Have they no account to render of themselves? My non-violence does not admit of running away from danger and leaving dear ones unprotected. Between violence and cowardly flight, I can only prefer violence to cowardice. I can no more preach non-violence to a coward than I can tempt a blind man to enjoy healthy scenes. Non-violence is the summit of bravery. And in my own experience, I have had no difficulty in demonstrating to men trained in the school of violence the superiority of non-violence. As a coward, which I was for years, I harboured violence. I began to prize non-violence only when I began to shed cowardice. Those Hindus who ran away from the post of duty when it was attended with danger did so not because they were non-violent, or because they were afraid to strike, but because they were unwilling to die or even suffer any injury. A rabbit that runs away from the bull terrier is not particularly non-violent. The poor thing trembles at the sight of a terrier and runs for very life. Those Hindus who ran away to save their lives would have been truly non-violent and would have covered themselves with glory and added lustre to their faith and won the friendship of their Musalman assailants, if they had stood bare breast with smiles on their faces, and died at their post. They would have done less well though still well, if they had stood at their post and returned blow for blow. If

the Hindus wish to convert the Musalman bully into a respecting friend, they have to learn to die in the face of the heaviest odds.

The Way

The way however does not lie through *Akhadas*, not that I mind them. On the contrary, I want them for physical culture. Then they should be for all. But if they are meant as a preparation for self-defence in the Hindu-Musalman conflicts, they are foredoomed to failure. Musalmans can play the same game and such preparations secret or open do but cause suspicion and imitation. They can provide no present remedy. It is for the thoughtful few to make quarrels impossible by making arbitration popular and obligatory.

The remedy against cowardice is not physical culture but the braving of dangers. So long as parents of the middle class Hindus, themselves timid, continue to transmit their timidity by keeping their grown-up children in cotton-wool, so long will there be the desire to shun danger and run no risks. They will have to dare to leave their children alone, let them run risks and even at times get killed in so doing. The puniest individual may have a stout heart. The most muscular Zulus cower before English lads. Each village has to find out its stout hearts.

The Goondas

It is a mistake to blame the *goondas*. They never do mischief unless we create an atmosphere for them. I was eye witness to what happened in Bombay on the Prince's day in 1921. We sowed the seed and the *goondas* reaped the harvest. Our men were at their back. I have no hesitation in holding the respectable Musalmans (not all in any single case) responsible for the misdeeds in Multan, Saharanpur and elsewhere as I have none in holding respectable Hindus responsible for the misdeeds in Katarpur and Arrah. If it is true- that at Palwal we have prevented the erection of a *pukka* mosque in the place of a *kachcha* one, it is not the *goondas* who are doing it, it is the respectable Hindus who must be held accountable. We must resolutely discountenance the practice of absolving the respectable class from blame.

Therefore, I hold that Hindus will commit a grave blunder if they organize Hindu *goondas* for defence. From the frying pan they will jump into fire. The Bania and the Brahmin must learn to defend himself even violently, if not non-violently, or surrender his womenfolk and possessions to the *goondas*. They are a class apart, whether they are labelled Musalman or Hindu. It was said with gusto that protected by untouchables (for they feared not death) a Hindu procession (playing triumphant music) quite recently passed a mosque unhurt.

It is a very mundane use to make of a sacred cause. Suchj exploitation of our untouchable brothers can neither serve' Hinduism in general nor the suppressed classes in particular. A few processions so doubtfully protected may pass a few mosques' safely. But it can only aggravate the growing tension, and degrade Hinduism. The middle class people must be prepared for a beating, if they wish to play music in the teeth of opposition, or they must befriend Musalmans in a self-respecting manner.

The Hindus have to do penance for the past and still- continuing disabilities imposed by them upon the suppressed brothers. There can be no question therefore of expecting any return from them for a debt we owe them. If we use them to cover our cowardice, we shall raise in them false hopes we shall never be able to fulfil and if the retribution comes, it will be a just punishment for our inhuman treatment of them. If I have any influence with Hindus, I would beseech them not to use them as a shield against anticipated Musalman attack.

Growing Distrust

Another potent cause of the tension is the growing distrust even among the best of us. I have been warned against Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviyaji. He is suspected of secret motives. It is said that he is no friend of the Musalmans. He is even credited with being jealous of my influence. I have the privilege of knowing him intimately ever since my return to India in 1915. I have had the privilege of closest communion with him. I regard him as one of the best among Hindus, who though orthodox holds most liberal views. He is no enemy of Musalmans. He is incapable of jealousy of any one. He has a heart large enough to accommodate even his enemies. He has never aimed at power. And what he

has, is due to a long period of unbroken service of the motherland, such as very few of us can boast. He and I are temperamentally different but love each other like brothers. There never has been even so much as a jar between us. Our ways being different, there can be no question of rivalry and therefore of jealousy either.

Another one distrusted is Lala Lajpatrai. I have found him to be frank as a child. His record of sacrifice is almost unequalled. I have had not one but many a chat on the Hindu-Muslim question with him. He is no enemy of the Musalman. But I confess that he has his doubts about the immediate attainment of unity. He is seeking light from on High. He believes in that unity in spite of himself because, as he told me, he believes in Swaraj. He recognises that without that unity there can be no Swaraj. He only does not know how and when it can be attained. He likes my solution but doubts if the Hindus will understand and appreciate its nobility (as he calls it). Let me say in passing I do not call my solution noble. I hold it to be strictly just and the only feasible solution.

Swami Shraddhanandji is also distrusted. His speeches I know are often irritating. But even he wants Hindu-Muslim unity. Unfortunately he believes in the possibility of bringing every Muslim into the Aryan fold, just as perhaps most Musalmans think that every non-Muslim will some day become a convert to Islam. Shraddhanandji is intrepid and brave. Single-handed he turned a wilderness into a magnificent boarding college on the banks of the sacred Ganges. He has faith in himself and his mission. But he is hasty and easily ruffled. He inherits the traditions of the Arya Samaj. I have profound respect for Dayanand Saraswati. I think that he has rendered great service to Hinduism. His bravery was unquestioned. But he made his Hinduism narrow. I have read *Satyarth Prakash* the Arya Samaj Bible. Friends sent me three copies of it whilst I was resting in the Yeravda Jail. I have not read a more disappointing book from a reformer so great. He has claimed to stand for truth and nothing less. But he has unconsciously misrepresented Jainism, Islam, Christianity and Hinduism itself. One having even a cursory acquaintance with these faiths could

easily discover the errors into which the great reformer was betrayed. He has tried; to make narrow one of the most tolerant and liberal of the faiths on the face of the earth. And an iconoclast though he was, he has succeeded in enthroning idolatry in the subtlest form. For he has, idolized the letter of the Vedas and tried to prove the existence in the Vedas of everything known to science. The Arya Samaj flourishes in my humble opinion not because of the inherent merit of the teachings of *Satyarth Prakash* but because of the, grand and lofty character of the founder. Wherever you find Arya Samajists, there is life and energy. But having the narrow outlook and a pugnacious habit they either quarrel with people of other denominations and failing them, with one another. Shradhdhanandju has a fair share of that spirit. But in spite of all these drawbacks. I do not regard him as past praying for. It is possible that this sketch of the Arya Samaj and the Swamiji will anger them. Needless to say, I mean no offence. I love the Samajists for I have many co-workers from among them. And I learnt to love the, Swamiji, even while I was in South Africa. And though I know him better now, I love him no less. It is my love that has spoken.

The last among the Hindus against whom I have been warned are Jeramdas and Dr. Choithram. I swear by Jeramdas. Truer men I have not had the honour of meeting. His conduct in the jail was the envy of us all. He was true to a fault. He is not anti-Musalman. Dr. Choithram though I began to know him earlier I do not know so well. But from what I do know of him, I decline to think of him anything but a promoter of Hindu-Muslim unity. I have by no means exhausted the list. All I feel is that if all these Hindus and Samajists have still to be won over to the side; of unity, the word unity has no meaning for me, and I should despair of achieving unity in my life-time.

Bari Saheb

But the suspicion against these friends is not its worst part. I have been warned against Musalmans just as much as I have been warned against Hindus. Let me take only three names. Maulana Abdul Bari Saheb has been represented to me as an anti-Hindu fanatic. I have been shown some writings of his which I do not understand. I have not even worried him about them. For, he is a simple child

of God. I have discovered no guile in him and He often speaks without thinking and often embarrasses his best friends. But he is as quick to apologize as he is ready to say things offensive. He means all he says for the time being. He is as sincere in his anger as he is in his apology. He once flared up at Maulana Mahomed Ali without just cause. I was then his guest. He thought he had said something offensive to me also. Maulana Mahomed Ali and I were just then leaving his place to entrain for Cawnpore. After our departure, he felt he had wronged us. He had certainly wronged Maulana Mahomed Ali, not me. But he sent a deputation to us at Cawnpore asking us to forgive him. He rose in my estimation by this act. I admit however that the Maulana Saheb can become a dangerous friend. But my point is that he is a friend. He does not say one thing and mean another. There are no mental reservations with him. I would trust such a friend with my life because I know that he will never stab me in the dark.

The Ali Brothers

A similar warning has been given to me about the Ali Brothers. Maulana Shaukat Ali is one of the bravest of men capable of immense sacrifice and equally capable of loving the meanest of God's creatures. He is passionately fond of Islam but he is no hater of other religions. Mahomed Ali is his brother's *alter ego*. I have not seen such implicit faithfulness to an elder brother as in Maulana Mahomed Ali. He has reasoned out for himself that there is no salvation for India without Hindu-Muslim unity. Their pan-Islamism is not anti-Hindu. Who shall quarrel with their intense desire to see Islam united against attack from without and purified from within? One passage in Maulana Mahomed Ali's Cocanada address was pointed out to me as highly objectionable. I drew his attention to it. He immediately acknowledged that it was an error. Friends have told me there is something to object to even in Maulana Shaukat Ali's address to the Khilafat conference. I have the address by me but I have not had the time to study it. I know that if there is anything offensive in it, he is the man the readiest to make amends. The Brothers are not faultless. Being full of faults myself, I have not hesitated to seek and cherish their friendship. If they

have some faults, they have many virtues. And I love them in spite of their faults. Just as I cannot forsake the Hindu friends I have mentioned above and effectively work among Hindus for Hindu-Muslim unity, neither can I work to that end among the Musalmans without the Musalman friends, such as I have mentioned. If so many of us were perfect beings, there would be no quarrels. Imperfect as we are, we have to discover points of contact and with faith in God work away for the common end.

In order to purify the atmosphere of distrust of even the best of us, I had to deal with some of the principal characters. I may not have convinced the reader of the correctness of my estimate. Anyway it was necessary that he knew mine even if his was different from it.

Illustration from Sind

This intense distrust makes it almost impossible to know the truth. I have received from Dr. Choithram the alleged facts of an attempted forcible conversion of a Hindu in Sindh. The man is said to have been done to death by his Musalman companions because he will not accept Islam. The facts are ghastly if they are true. I straightway wired to Sheth Haji Abdulla Harun inquiring about the matter. He very kindly and promptly wired to say that it was reported to be a case of suicide but that he was making further inquiries. I hope that we shall succeed in knowing the truth about it. I simply point out the difficulty of work in the midst of suspicion. There is one other Sind incident which I hesitate to report till I have fuller and more authentic particulars. I simply beseech those who hear about any such incidents, whether against Hindus or Musalmans, to keep themselves cool^r and pass on simply facts which can be sustained. I promise on my part to inquire into the most trifling of cases and do whatever is possible for a single individual to do. Before long I hope we shall have an army of workers whose one business will be to investigate all such complaints and do whatever is necessary to see thdfl justice is satisfied and cases for future trouble are avoided.

From Bengal

The tales that are reported from Bengal of outrages upon Hindu women are the most disquieting if they are even half true. It is difficult to understand the cause of the eruption of such crimes at the present moment. It is equally difficult to speak with restraint of the cowardice of Hindu protectors of these outraged < sisters. Nor is it easy to characterize the lust of those who become so mad with it as to take liberties with innocent women. It is up to the local Musalmans and the leading Musalmans in general of Bengal to find out the miscreants, not necessarily with a view to get them punished but with a view to preventing a recurrence of such crimes. It is easy enough to dig out a few criminals from their hiding places and hand them over to the police, but it does not protect society against the repetition of them. It is necessary to remove the causes by undertaking a thorough process of reform. There must arise in Islam as well as in Hinduism men who being comparatively pure in character would work among such men. Much the same may be said of the Kabuli terror. This has no bearing on the Hindu-Muslim tension. But we have to deal with such cases too if we are not to be helplessly relying purely upon the police.

Shuddhi and Tabligh

That however which is keeping up the tension is the manner in which the *Shuddhi* or conversion movement is being conducted. In my opinion there is no such thing as proselytism in Hinduism as it is understood in Christianity or to a lesser extent in Islam. The Aiyā Samaj has I think copied the Christians in planning its propaganda. The modern method does not appeal to me. It has done more harm than good. Though regarded as a matter of the heart purely and one between the Maker and oneself, it has degenerated into an appeal to the selfish instinct. The Arya Samaj preacher is never so happy as when he is reviling other religions. My Hindu instinct tells me that all religions are more or less true. All proceed from the same God but all are imperfect because they have come down to us through imperfect human instrumentality. The real *Shuddhi* movement should consist in each one trying to arrive at perfection in his or her own faith. In such a plan character would be the only test. What is

the use of crossing from one compartment to another, if it does not mean a moral rise? What is the meaning of my trying to convert to the service of God (for that must be the implication of *Shuddhi* or *Tabligh*) when those who are in my fold are every day denying God by their actions? "Physician heal thyself" is more true in matters religious than mundane. But these are my views. If the Arya Samajists think that they have a call from their conscience, they have a perfect right to conduct the movement. Such a burning call recognizes no time limit, no checks of experience. If Hindu-Muslim unity is endangered because an Arya Samaj preacher or a Musalman preacher preaches his faith in obedience, to a call from within, that unity is only skin-deep. Why should we be ruffled by such movements? Only they must be genuine. If the Malkanas wanted to return to the Hindu fold they had a perfect right to do so whenever they liked. But no propaganda can be allowed which reviles other religions. For that would be negation of toleration. The best way of dealing with such propaganda is to publicly condemn it. Every movement attempts to put on the cloak of respectability. As soon as the public tear that cloak down, it dies for want of respectability. I am told that both Arya Samajists and Musalmans virtually kidnap women and try to convert them. I have before me volumes of Aga Khani literature which I have not yet had the time to study carefully, but I am assured that it is a distortion of Hinduism. I have seen enough of it to know that it describes H.H. the Aga Khan as a Hindu *avatar*. It would be interesting to learn what the Aga Khan himself thinks of all this literature. I have many Khoja friends. I commend this literature to their attention. A gentleman told me that some agents of the Aga Khani movement lend money to poor illiterate Hindus and then tell them that the debt would be wiped out if the debtor would accept Islam. I would regard this as conversion by unlawful inducements. But the worst form is that preached by a gentleman of Delhi. I have read his pamphlet from cover to cover. It gives detailed instructions to preachers how to carry on propaganda. It starts with a lofty proposition that Islam is merely preaching of the unity of God. This grand truth is to be preached according to the writer, by every Musalman irrespective of character. A secret department of spies is advocated whose one business is to pry into the privacy of non-

Muslim households Prostitutes, professional singers, mendicants, government servants, lawyers, doctors, artisans are pressed into the service. If this kind of propaganda becomes popular, no Hindu household would be safe from the secret attention of disguised misinterpreters (I cannot call them missionaries) of the great message of the Prophet of Islam. I am told by respectable Hindus that this pamphlet is widely read in the, Nizam's dominions and that the methods advocated in it are extensively practised in the Nizam's dominions.

As a Hindu I feel sorry that methods of such doubtful morality should have been seriously advocated by a gentleman who, is a well-known Urdu author and has a large circle of readers. My Musalman friends tell me that no respectable Musalman approves of the methods advocated. The point however is not what the respectable Musalmans think. The point is whether a considerable number of Musalman masses accept and follow them. A portion of the Punjab press is simply scurrilous. It is at times even filthy. I have gone through the torture of reading many extracts. These sheets are conducted by Arya Samajists or Hindu and Musalman writers. Each vies with the other in using abusive language and reviling the religion of the opponent. These papers have I understand, a fairly large circulation. They find place even in respectable reading rooms.

I have heard it said that the Government emissaries are at the back of this campaign of calumny. I hesitate to believe it. But even assuming the truth of it, the public of the Punjab should be able to cope with the growing disgrace.

I think I have now examined all the causes, both original and continuing of the tension between the two communities. It is now time to examine the treatment of two constant causes of friction.

Cow-slaughter

The first is cow-slaughter. Though I regard cow-protection as the central fact of Hinduism, central because it is common to classes as well as masses, I have never been able to understand the antipathy towards the Musalman on that score. We say nothing about the slaughter that daily takes place on behalf of Englishmen. Our anger becomes red-hot when a Musalman slaughters a cow. All the riots that have taken place in the name of the cow have been an insane

waste of effort. They have not saved a single cow, but they have on the contrary stiffened the backs of the Musalmans and resulted in more slaughter. I am satisfied that during 1921 more cows were saved through the voluntary and generous effort of the Musalmans than through the Hindu effort during all the previous twenty years (say). Cow-protection should commence with ourselves. In no part of the world perhaps are cattle worse treated than in India. I have wept to see Hindu drivers goading their jaded oxen with the iron points of their cruel sticks. The half-starved condition of the majority of our cattle are a disgrace to us. The cows find their necks under the butcher's knife because Hindus sell them. The only effective and honourable way is to befriend the Musalmans and leave it to their honour to save the cow. Cow-protection societies must turn their attention to the feeding of cattle, prevention of cruelty, preservation of fast disappearing pasture land, improving the breed of cattle, buying from poor shepherds and turning *pinjrapoles* into model self-supporting dairies. Hindus do sin against God and man when they omit to do any of the things I have described above. They commit no sin, if they cannot prevent cow-slaughter at the hands of Musalmans, and they do sin grievously when in order to save the j cow, they quarrel with the Musalman.

Music

The question of music before mosques and now even *arati* in Hindu temples, has occupied my prayerful attention. This is a sore point with the Musalmans as cow-slaughter is with the Hindus. And just as Hindus cannot compel Musalman to refrain from killing cows, so can Musalmans not compel Hindus to stop music or *arati* at the point of the sword. They must trust to the good sense of the Hindus. As a Hindu, I would certainly advise Hindus, without any bargaining spirit, to consult the sentiment of their Musalman neighbour, and wherever they can, accommodate him. I have heard that in some places, Hindus purposely and with the deliberate intention of irritating Musalmans, perform *arati* just when the Musalman prayers commence. This is an insensate and unfriendly act. Friendship pre-supposes the utmost attention] to the feelings of a friend. It never requires consideration. But Musalmans should never expect to

stop Hindu music by force. To yield to the threat or actual use of violence is a surrender of One's self-respect and religious conviction. But a person, who never will yield to threat, would always minimize and, if possible, even avoid occasions for causing irritation.

Pact

In view of what I have said above, it is clear that we have not even arrived at the stage when a pact is even a possibility. There can be, it is clear to me, no question of bargain about cow-slaughter and music. On either side it must be a voluntary effort and therefore can never be the basis of a pact.

For political matters a pact or an understanding is certainly necessary. But in my opinion the restoration of friendly feeling is a condition precedent to any effectual pact. Are both parties sincerely willing to accept the proposition that no disputes, religious or otherwise, between the communities should ever be decided by an appeal to force, i.e., violence? I am convinced that the masses do not want to fight if the leaders do not. If, therefore, the leaders agree that mutual vows should be, as in all advanced countries, erased out of our public life as being barbarous and irreligious, I have no doubt that the masses will quickly follow them.

So far as the political matters are concerned, as a non-co- operator I am quite uninterested in them; but for the future understanding I hold that it is up to the Hindus as the major party not to bargain but leave the pen in the hands of, say, Hakim Saheb Ajmal Khan and abide by his decision. I would similarly deal with the Sikhs, the Christians and the Parsis and be satisfied with the residue. It is, in my opinion, the only just, equitable, honourable and dignified solution. Hindus if they want unity among different races must have the courage to trust the minorities. Any other adjustment must have a nasty taste in the mouth. Surely the millions do not want to become legislators and municipal councillors. And if we have understood the proper use of satyagraha, we should know that it can be and should be used against an unjust administrator whether he be a Hindu, Musalman or of any other race or denomination, whereas a just administrator or representative is always and equally good whether he be a

Hindu or Musalman. We want to do away with the communal spirit. The majority must therefore make the beginning and thus inspire the minorities with confidence in their bona fides. Adjustment is possible only when the more powerful take the initiative without waiting for response from the weaker.

So far as employment in the Government departments is concerned, I think it will be fatal to good government, if we introduce there the communal spirit. For administration to be efficient, it must always be in the hands of the fittest. There should be certainly no favouritism. But if we want five engineers we must not take one from each community but we must take the fittest five even if they were all Musalmans or all Parsis. The lowest posts must, if need be, be filled by examination by an impartial board consisting of men belonging to different communities. But distribution of posts should never be according to the proportion of the numbers of each community. The educationally backward communities will have a right to receive favoured treatment in the matter of education at the hands of the national Government. This can be secured in an effective manner. But those who aspire to occupy responsible posts in the government of the country, can only do so if they pass the required test.

Trust Begets Trust

For me the only question for immediate solution before the country is the Hindu-Musalman question. I agree with Mr. Jinnah that Hindu-Muslim unity means Swaraj. I see no way of achieving anything in this afflicted country without a lasting heart unity between Hindus and Musalmans of India. I believe in the immediate possibility of achieving it, because it is so natural, so necessary for both and because I believe in human nature. Musalmans may have much to answer for. I have come in closest touch with even what may be considered a "bad lot". I cannot recall a single occasion when I had to regret it. The Musalmans are brave, they are generous and trusting, the moment their suspicion is disarmed. Hindus living as they do in glass houses have no right to throw stones at their Musalman neighbours. See what we have done, are still doing, to the suppressed classes! If 'Kaffir' is a term of opprobrium, how much more so is 'Chandal'? In the history of the world religions, there is perhaps

nothing like our treatment of the suppressed classes. The pity of it is that the treatment still continues. What a fight in Vaikom for a most elementary human right! God does not punish directly. His ways are inscrutable. Who knows that all our woes are not due to that one black sin? The history of Islam, if it betrays aberrations from the moral height, has many a brilliant page. In its glorious days it was not intolerant. It commanded the admiration of the world. When the West was sunk in darkness a bright star rose in the Eastern firmament and gave light and comfort to a groaning world. Islam is not a false religion. Let Hindus study it reverently and they will love it even as I do. If it has become gross and fanatical here let us admit that we have had no small share in making it so. If Hindus set their house in order, I have not a shadow of doubt that Islam will respond in a manner worthy of its past liberal traditions. The key to the situation lies with the Hindus. We must shed timidity or cowardice. We must be brave enough to trust, and all will be well.

[The readers of *Young India* will pardon me for devoting practically the whole of *Young India* to the question of Hindu-Muslim unity. He will readily do so if he holds with me that there is no question more important and more pressing than this. In my opinion it blocks all progress. I, therefore, invite the reader to peruse the statement most carefully and favour me with views or information (not necessarily for publication) that may throw additional light on the question or correct any errors of fact or opinion—M.K.G.]

Young India, 29-5-'24, p. 173

31. HINDU-MUSLIM TENSION- ITS CAUSE AND CURE—II

(The following articles and comments by Gandhiji on the reactions provoked by his article "Hindu-Muslim Tension—Its Cause and Cure—I", are given below :)

(1) The Arya Sanuyists

A storm of indignation on the part of Arya Samajists is blowing against me. I have letters and telegrams of energetic protest against my references to the Samaj, its illustrious founder, Swami Shradhdhanandji and the *Shuddhi*

movement. They are from Ghaziabad, Multan, Delhi, Sukkur, Karachi, Jagraon, Secunderabad, Lahore, Sialkot, Allahabad, etc. I omit mention of individual letters. Probably all of them expect me to publish their protests; some have specially insisted upon my doing so. They will forgive me for not complying with their desire. The majority are worded after the fashion of the telegram I reproduced last week. All resent what they regard as an attack upon the Arya Samaj, the *Satyarth Prakash*, Rishi Dayanand, Swami Shraddhanandji and the *Shuddhi* movement. I am sorry to have to say that my position still remains unaltered. I have read with careful attention the argumentative correspondence received by me.

Those who have attributed my statement to my ignorance have done so probably to leave me an open door for a safe retreat. Unfortunately for me, I have left no such chance for myself. I cannot plead ignorance of the *Satyarth Prakash* or the general teachings of the Arya Samaj. I cannot even say that I might have been prejudiced against the Arya Samaj. On the contrary I approached it with the greatest veneration. I had, as I still have, profound regard for the personal character of Rishi Dayanand. His *brahmacharya* was an object of emulation for me. His fearlessness commanded my admiration. And my provincialism, if I have any in me, was flattered by the fact of the Rishi being of the same little Kathiawad as myself. But I could not help myself. The conclusion I came to was in spite of myself, and I published it only when its publication became relevant. Its suppression would have been a cowardly omission on my part. Instead of becoming enraged against me for an honest expression of opinion, I appeal to them to take my criticism in good part, examine it, try to convince me and pray for me if I cannot be convinced. Two letters have challenged me to substantiate my conclusion. It is a fair challenge and I hope before long to produce from the *Satyarth Prakash* passages in its support. My friends will not engage me in a religious discussion with them. I shall content myself with giving them the grounds of my opinion. So far as Swami Shraddhanandji is concerned there is no question of] substantiating my opinion. My critics will oblige me by leaving him and me to ourselves. In spite of my opinion I shall notj quarrel with the Swamiji. Mine is the criticism of a

friend. As for *Shuddhi* the critics in their blind fury have forgotten the qualification as it is understood in Christianity or to a lesser] extent in Islam. This is quite different from saying that there is no proselytism in Hinduism. Hinduism has a way all its own of *Shuddhi*. But if the Arya Samajists differ from me they may still allow me to retain my opinion. If they will reread the statement, they will discover that I have said that they have a perfect right to carry on their movement if they like. Toleration is not a coinciding of views. There should be toleration of one another's views though they may be as poles asunder. Lastly I have not said that Arya Samajists or Musalmans do kidnap women. I have said, 'I am told'. By repeating what I was told, I have given both the parties an opportunity of repudiating the charge. Was it not better that I should publish what was being said, so that the atmosphere might be cleared? Let me point out to my Arya Samaj friends that their protests betray want of toleration. Public men and public institutions cannot afford to be thin-skinned. They must stand criticism with good grace.

And now for an appeal to them. They have almost all entered their protests. I do not mind them. I assure them that I share their sorrow. It pained me when I wrote my criticism. It pains me now to know that it has hurt them. But I am not their enemy. I claim to be their friend. Time will prove my friendship. They do not want to quarrel with anybody or any faith. That is what almost all have said in their letters. Let them take to heart the tribute I have paid to the Samaj, its founder and to Swami Shradhdhanandji. I know the purifying work that the Arya Samaj has done. I know that it has laid its finger on many abuses that have soiled Hinduism. But no one can live on his capital. I want them to outlive the latter and extend the spirit of their reform. In spite of their denial I repeat that their *Shuddhi* propaganda savours of the Christian propaganda. I would like them to rise higher. If they will insist upon reform from within it will tax all their energy and take up all their time. Let them Hinduize the Hindu if they believe with me that Arya Samaj is a part of Hinduism. If they consider it as distinct from Hinduism, I fear it will be a hard task for them to convert the Hindus. Let them ascertain where they stand. I have criticized because I want them to help the great national and religious movement that is going on. The

Samaj has a great future if it can outgrow what has appeared to me its narrowness. If the Samajists think there is no room for expansion I shall feel sorry. I ask them in that case not to be irritated because I cannot see their liberalism. They should charitably overlook my blindness and patiently endeavour to remove it.

Young India, 12-6-'24, p. 196

(2) The Agakhani Khojas

(From "Notes")

It is my misfortune not merely to have offended the Arya Samajists but also others. I had a visit from five Khoja friends. They were deeply hurt and possibly enraged by my references to the Khoja activities. I was glad however that instead of writing to me they visited me. I was able to understand them. They think that I should have said nothing without first seeing them. I told them that I had to state both the sides and that wherever I had no knowledge, I had simply said what was charged by others against the parties. I have assured them that I would study their literature and give my opinion upon it. If as a result I find that my informants have misled me, I shall make the admission and apologize. But if the impression left on my mind by the literature is the same as that given me by my informants, they must not take it ill, if I confirm the informants' opinion. I have also told them that I cannot subscribe to the belief that H.H. The Aga Khan is an *avatar* in the Hindu sense. I have also told them that the use made by them of the mystic syllable "Om" and the form given to it by them is in my opinion taking liberty with things of the Hindu faith.

"But" they say, "what are we to do if we honestly hold such belief?" I have told them that they should then hold fast to their belief and give me the liberty to say and write what I believe to be right. They further repudiated with great emphasis the charge that they converted by giving worldly temptations. I was very glad to have the repudiation. I told them that I would tell my informants of the repudiation and that if they could not substantiate their statements, I would publish the fact in the pages of *Navajivan*. These friends further told me the readers of *Navajivan* were likely to infer from my writing that the 'Khoja

belief about Nakalanki *avatar* was a new belief among the Khojas whereas it was an old established belief which was fortified by evidence.

The foregoing is a literal translation of what appears in the current issue of *Navajivan*. I now invite the correspondents to support what they have written to me about worldly inducements said to have been offered by Khoja preachers to those who would be converted to their faith.

Young India, 12-6-'24, p. 197 at 198

(3) Partial to Musalmans

(From "Notes")

The charge against me of partiality to Musalmans is being renewed with redoubled vigour. My critics say in effect, 'You exaggerate the Hindu blemishes and underrate the Musalman's'. I gladly subscribe to the charge in a way. If we are to give a correct judgment we should follow the excellent natural rule of seeing things in their proper perspective. Habit has made us reverse the natural process. We belittle our own faults and exaggerate the opponent's. That develops the attitude of intolerance. If we would be charitable and tolerant, we would endeavour to see our opponents as they see themselves. We shall never completely succeed in our endeavour but it will give us the true perspective. What therefore appear to be my exaggerations of Hindu blemishes are only seemingly so. 'But', says a critic, 'you do not want us to believe that Maulana Abdul Bari is such a simple child of God as you make him out to be. We in the U.P find him to be vain, untruthful and unreliable.' I can only assure them that if I had found the Maulana Saheb as they said he is, I would not have hesitated to say so. I have said the utmost I know against him when I say that he is a dangerous friend. I have not found him to be untruthful. The critics must not think as some of them do that I am flattering the Musalmans for gaining a political end. Such a thing is impossible for me, because I know that unity cannot be achieved by flattery. Courteousness must not be mistaken for flattery nor impudence for fearlessness.

Young India, 12-6-24, p. 197 at p. 198

(4) A Musalman Outburst

(From "Notes")

Here are some extracts from a Musalman letter on the Hindu-Muslim statement. " 'Am more ashamed of Hindu cowardice... Why did not the owners of the houses looted die in the attempt to defend their possessions, etc.' These sentences are likely", says the writer, "to excite the Hindus. I regret very much that you should have written such thing... what your writing will do is dangerous to think."

I fail to see anything dangerous in my writing. I should be glad indeed, if my statement energizes the Hindus to *defend* themselves in the face of danger. We may not expect unity before we cease to fear one another. The writer has not suggested an alternative. What am I to say to a Hindu who lives in the fear of a neighbour if I am not to tell him that he should know how to die in the attempt to defend himself against his neighbour either non-violently by simply standing at his post or violently by returning blow for blow. This friend says again, "No wise man, Hindu or Musalman, will accept your judgment that Pandit Malaviyaji is 'no enemy of Musalmans'. He is an open enemy, as open as daylight. I am sure even Hindus will not believe you in this. Lala Lajpat Rai stands in the category with Pandit Malaviyaji. Re. Jeramdas and Choithram you are doing only injustice to yourself. Their conduct towards the Musalmans is as clear as daylight to every reader of newspapers... Let me assure you that you will not advance the Hindu-Muslim problem by an inch by praising these Hindu leaders and condemning the Muslim leaders." The Hindu friends tell me that unity is impossible so long as I trust the Ah Brothers and Maulana Bari Saheb. All these friends should know that if neither the present Hindu nor the present Musalman leaders are to be trusted unity can be achieved, if at all, only after their death. The friend proceeds, "Why do you refer to the Aga Khan literature and *Tabligh*. No harm, not a bit, is done by them to the national movement. They are carrying on their *Tabligh* in the most peaceful manner. You are referring to the worst form of Moslem's preaching. What about the *Shuddhi* movement. You have run a great risk by mentioning that the methods advocated in the

pamphlet are extensively practised in the Nizam's dominions. By this you have unconsciously attacked a Muslim State..." This writer's is an attitude typical of a growing class of workers namely that we should not speak as we think but hush up everything. I can understand the necessity of not washing every rag of dirty linen in the open but we cannot afford to slur over things that stare us in the face and of which everybody thinks. In the heat of his passion the writer has forgotten to note that I have delivered no attack upon a Muslim State. I have said 'I am told' that the questionable *Tabligh* referred in my statement is extensively practised in the Nizam's dominions.

The writer says further, "I cannot understand how cow-slaughter and music stand on the same platform. Musalmans are enjoined by the Quran to sacrifice cows whereas Hindus are not enjoined to play music before a mosque. Hindus have to stop their music before government hospitals and offices but their obduracy ' does not allow them to do the same before a mosque." The writer should know that Musalmans are not enjoined by the Quran to sacrifice a cow They *are* said to be enjoined to sacrifice certain animals including the cow on stated occasions. The sacrifice of a cow is not therefore obligatory. But seeing that it is permissible, it becomes obligatory when a third party claims to force a Musalman to refrain from cow-slaughter. Similarly while there is no obligation upon a Hindu to play music before mosques it does become an obligation immediately. Musalmans claim to stop Hindu music before mosques by force of arms. Both these things must therefore be left to voluntary adjustment.

Young India, 12-6-'24, p. 197 at p. 198

(5) What May Hindus Do?

I have received many communications on the Hindu-Muslim statement, but there being nothing new or striking in them, I have not published them. But I gladly print Babu Bhagwandas' letter and answer his questions.

Regarding the first two questions the writer has answered them himself. In my opinion, they are only partly true. Though the majority of Musalmans of India and the Hindus belong to the same 'stock', the religious environment has made them different. I believe and I have noticed too that thought transforms man's

features as well as character. The Sikh are the most recent illustration of the fact. The Musalman being generally in a minority has as a class developed into a bully. Moreover, being heir to fresh traditions he exhibits the virility of a comparatively new system of life. Though in my opinion non-violence has a predominant place in the Koran, the thirteen hundred years of imperialistic expansion has made the Musalmans fighters as a body. They are therefore aggressive. Bullying is the natural excrescence of an aggressive spirit. The Hindu has an ages-old civilization. He is essentially non-violent. His civilization has passed through the experiences that the two recent ones are still passing through. If Hinduism was ever imperialistic in the modern sense of the term, it has outlived its imperialism and has either deliberately or as a matter of course given it up. Predominance of the non-violent spirit has restricted the use of arms to a small minority which must always be subordinate to a civil power highly spiritual, learned and selfless. The Hindus as a body are therefore not equipped for fighting. But not having retained their spiritual training, they have forgotten the use of an effective substitute for arms and not knowing their use nor having an aptitude for them, they have become docile to the point of timidity or cowardice. This vice is therefore a natural excrescence of gentleness. Holding this view, I do not think that the Hindu exclusiveness bad as it undoubtedly is, has much to do with the Hindu timidity. Hence also my disbelief in *Akhadas* as a means of self-defence. I prize them for physical culture but, for self-defence, I would restore the spiritual culture. The best and most lasting self-defence is self-purification. I refuse to be lifted off my feet because of the scares that haunt us today. If Hindus would but believe in themselves and work in accordance with their traditions they will have no reason to fear bullying. The moment they recommence the real spiritual training the Musalman will respond. He cannot help it. If I can get together a band of young Hindus with faith in themselves and therefore faith in the Musalmans, the band will become a shield for weaker ones. They (the young Hindus) will teach how to die without killing. I know no other way. When our ancestors saw affliction j surrounding them they went in for *tapasya*—purification. They realized the helplessness of the flesh and in their

helplessness they prayed till they compelled the Maker to obey their call. 'Oh yes,' says my Hindu friend, 'but then God sent some one to wield arms.' I am not concerned with denying the truth of the retort. All I say to the friend is that as a Hindu he may not ignore the cause and secure the result. It will be time to fight, when we have done enough *tapasya*. Are we purified enough I ask? Have we done willing penance for the sin of Untouchability, let alone the personal purity of individuals? Are our religious preceptors all that they should be? We are beating the air whilst we simply 'concentrate our attention upon picking holes in the Musalman a conduct. As with the Englishmen, so with the Musalman. If our professions are true, we should find it infinitely less difficult to conquer the Musalman than the English. But Hindus whisper to me that they have hope of the Englishmen but none of the Musalman. I say to them, 'If you have no hope of the Musalman, your hope of the Englishman is foredoomed to failure.'

The other questions can be briefly answered. The *goondasa* came on the scene because the leaders wanted them. The leaders distrusted one another. Distrust never comes from well-defined causes. A variety of causes more felt than realized, breeds distrust. We have not yet visualized the fact that our interests are identical. Each party seems vaguely to believe that it can displace the other by some kind of manoeuvring. But I freely confess as suggested by Babu Bhagwandas that our not knowing the kind of Swaraj we want has also a great deal to do with the distrust. I used not to think so, but he had almost converted me before I became Sir George Lloyd's guest at the Yeravda Central Prison. I am now a confirmed convert.

The 'points of contact' referred to by me is a phrase intended to cover all social, religious and political relations alike as between individuals and masses. Thus, for instance instead of accentuating the differences in religion, I should set about discovering the good points common to both. I would bridge the social distance wherever I can do so consistently with my religious belief. I would go out of my way to seek common ground on the political field.

As for the referee, I have named Hakim Saheb's name undoubtedly for the universal respect that it carries with it. But I would not hesitate to put the pen even in the hands of a Musalman who may be known for his prejudices and fanaticism. For as a Hindu, I should know that I have nothing to lose even if the referee gave the Musalmans a majority of seats in every province. There is no principle at stake in giving or having seats in elective bodies. Moreover experience has taught me to know that undivided responsibility immediately puts a man on his mettle and his pride or God-fearingness sobers him.

Lastly, no proclamation or any such thing will avail unless some of us began to act up to the proclamation even though we may be the fewest possible.

Young India, 19-6-'24, p. 205

(6) Dr. Mahmud and Forcible Conversions

(From "Notes")

Numerous letters, some angry and some even abusive, have been received by me regarding my reference to forcible conversions in the statement on Hindu-Muslim tension. One of them was a dispassionate and reasoned letter from Mr. Madhavan Nair protesting against the statement attributed by me to Dr. Mahmud. I forwarded the letter to Dr. Mahmud for reply, so that I could give the reader his version. But before my letter could reach Dr. Mahmud, he had already posted one to me on the very thing, he having received many protests himself. I now give from Dr. Mahmud's letter, which is in Urdu, a translation of the relevant part as follows:

"Quite a number of Hindu friends have written to me letters accusing me of having given you inaccurate information with regard to the affairs in Malabar. Some of them have even treated me with round, mouth-filling abuse. I feel that their resentment is just. There seems to have been some misunderstanding. What I said was that no instances of conversion by circumcision could be found. Only one such case had been reported, the one which Mr. Andrews had witnessed, and even that could not be properly investigated into. As for instances of conversion by being made

to wear *fez* cap, or shirt in case of women, or by clipping off the *choii*, they could be cited, in any number. I had mentioned this point in my statement to, Shwaib also, please do publish the necessary correction in *Young India* or it might give rise to a fresh controversy in the press."

I see that I have done an injustice to Dr. Mahmud. I was thinking of forcible conversions only by circumcispn. It was that which had most shocked the Hindu sentiment. Any way it was that which had affected me more than anything else.

The following is the statement referred to by Dr. Mahmud.

"Forced conversion—

- (a) By circumcision. No eye-witness. No direct evidence available. No case pointed out. Reliable persons amongst Hindus allege that three or four cases occurred. The only direct evidence of a case of this nature is that Mr. Andrews is reported to have seen one person who was circumcized. Have not got it confirmed.
- (b) Repetition of *Kalma*—(1) Forced; (2) Through fear without actual use of force.
- (c) Gutting of *choti*.
- (d) Making Hindus (men) wear caps.
- (e) Making Hindu women wear bodices or blouses.

The total number of conversions under (b) to (e) are estimated between 1800 to 2000 (Hindu version). Muslims j put it at a few hundred."

I had thought that my statement was clear. Though I had not mentioned Mr. Andrews' name, it was common knowledge that he had referred to a case of forcible circumcision which had come under his own personal observation. Bearing that in mind, there could be no mistaking my meaning. But I now see that I compromised Dr. Mahmud by exposing him to the charge of partiality by an apparent under-statement of forcible conversions. I am sorry for the unintended inaccuracy. In times of high tension one cannot be too careful or

too accurate. In trying to be fair to Dr. Mahmud, I have succeeded in being unfair to him. I assure the reader that in every case I have kept closest to facts and shorn them of all colouring. The papers in my possession make out a much more terrible case against all parties. But I have in each case toned down the charges and, where I had no opinion of my own, merely stated on behalf of the parties concerned the charges thus toned down.

Young India, 26-6-'24, p. 213

(7) Not in Nizam's Dominions

(From "Notes")

In my statement on Hindu-Muslim tension I said I was told that the pernicious propaganda pamphlet referred to was taken up in the Nizam's Dominions. Khwaja Saheb Hassan Nizami, on reading the statement, forwarded the following telegram to me. "For the sake of Islam, Hindu-Muslim unity, and your beloved personality, I am ready to accept your advice regarding the contents of my pamphlet *Dai Ye Islam* about which you have complained in your press message provided it does not affect the work of preaching Islam, uplifting, reforming and organizing the Musalmans and counteracting the open and secret efforts of Arya Samaj, which work I am religiously bound to carry on. I had already taken off much of the lo-called objectionable matter from the later editions of the pamphlet and am willing now to still more improve the future editions in reverence to your wishes. Kindly let me know your suggestions after reading the, latest Urdu edition of the pamphlet carefully and not its Hindi translations which have been published only to create misapprehension and to secure sympathies." He followed up the wire with a letter couched in similar terms; and last week he paid me the honour of visiting me and tendering a personal explanation. He told me that all the charges levelled against him as to kidnapping of children etc. were totally without foundation and that his motive in publishing the pamphlet was not as I had interpreted it. Unfortunately the visit happened to be when I was observing silence. I was, therefore, unable to give him my opinion on his pamphlet. The Khwaja Saheb was most anxious that I should publish his assurance about the propaganda in His Exalted Highness's

Dominions. I have therefore gladly published the telegram and the purport of the interview. I must, however, state that the information about the alleged propaganda was given to me by reliable men. I have received also letters confirming the same information. And my assistants tell me that allegations of the same nature constantly appear in the vernacular press. In the absence, therefore, of any direct knowledge of the state of affairs in the Nizam's Dominions, I can but give both the versions without committing myself to any opinion. I shall certainly publish with pleasure anything the authorities in H.E.H.'s Dominions may have to say in the matter.

So far as the Khwaja Saheb's pamphlet is concerned, while it is admirable that he is ready to make such revision as may be consistent with his faith, what is wanted is something more and something different. In spite of Khwaja Saheb's repudiation of bad motives, the pamphlet which I have read in the original does lend itself to the construction I have placed upon it. The Musalman friends to whom I have shown the pamphlet agree with my interpretation. It is therefore not enough that even if I was so-minded the Khwaja Saheb should amend his pamphlet as I may suggest. What is required is for him to see the error of this thought and to recognize that he has really done an ill-service to Islam by suggesting questionable methods of propaganda. He should therefore revise the pamphlet radically in the light of what is permissible and praiseworthy in Islamic propaganda. Needless to say that I appreciate the readiness with which the Khwaja Saheb has come forward with his explanation and vowed his solicitude for Hindu-Muslim unity.

Young India, 26-6-'24, p. 213

32. MY POSITION

Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan has, in his criticism of my reply to Quaid-i-Azam, put some questions which I gladly answer. I must adhere to my statement that I have never spoken to anybody on the communal question as a Hindu. I have no authority. Whenever I have spoken to anybody I have spoken as a Congressman, but often only as an individual. No Congressman, not even the President, can always speak as a representative. Big things have always been transacted on this planet by persons belonging to different organizations coming together and talking informally in their non-representative capacity. I fear that even the answer I am about to give must be taken as representing nobody but myself. In the present instance I have reason to say that probably I do not represent any single member of the Working Committee. I am answering as a peace-maker, as a friend (and may I say, brother) of the Musalmans.

As a man of non-violence I cannot forcibly resist the proposed partition if the Muslims of India really insist upon it. But I can never be a willing party to the vivisection. I would employ every non-violent means to prevent it. For it means the undoing of centuries of work, done by numberless Hindus and Muslims to live together as one nation. Partition means a patent untruth. My whole soul rebels against the idea that Hinduism and Islam represent two antagonistic cultures and doctrines. To assent to such a doctrine is for me denial of God. For I believe with my whole soul that the God of the Koran is also the God of the Gita, and that we are all, no matter by what name designated, children of the same God. I must rebel against the idea that millions of Indians who were Hindus the other day changed their nationality on adopting Islam as their religion.

But that is my belief. I cannot thrust it down the throats of the Muslims who think that they are a different nation. I refuse, however, to believe that the eight crores of Muslims will say that they have nothing in common with their Hindu and other brethren. Their mind can only be known by a referendum duly made to them on that clear issue. The contemplated Constituent Assembly can

easily decide the question. Naturally on an issue such as this there can be no arbitration. It is purely and simply a matter of self-determination. I know of no other conclusive method of ascertaining the mind of the eight crores of Muslims.

But the contemplated Constituent Assembly will have the framing of a constitution as its main function. It cannot do this until the communal question is settled.

I still believe that there can be no Swaraj by non-violent means without communal unity. The eight crores of Muslims can certainly bar the way to peaceful freedom.

If then I still talk of civil disobedience, it is because I believe that the Muslim masses want freedom as much as the rest of the population of this country. And assuming that they do not, civil disobedience will be a powerful means of educating public opinion whether Muslim, Hindu or any other. It will also be an education of world opinion. But I will not embark upon it unless I am, as far as is humanly possible, sure that non-violence will be observed both in spirit and in the letter. I hope the Nawabzada has no difficulty in believing that whatever is gained by civil disobedience will be gained for all. When India gets the power to frame her own constitution, the Muslims will surely have a decisive voice in shaping their own future. It will not be, cannot be, decided by the vote of the majority.

Lastly, I suggest to the Nawabzada that he wrote in haste the lines about the President of the Congress. For they are contrary to the history of our own times. And he was equally in haste in suggesting that "the sole objective of the Congress under Mr Gandhi's fostering care has been the revival of Hinduism and the imposition of Hindu culture on all and sundry". My own objective is not the issue in the terrible indictment. The objective of the Congress is wholly political. Nothing is to be gained by making statements that are incapable of proof. So far as my own objective is concerned, my life is an open book. 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.

Sevagram, 9-4-1940

Harijan, 13-4-'40, p. 92

33. AN ENGLISH SUGGESTION

An English friend writes thus:

"It is still reasonable at present to proceed on the assumption that the Muslims would accept something a good deal less than 'Pakistan'. But the trouble is that the longer the time that elapses without any compromise solution being reached, the stronger and more insistent will be the cry for 'Pakistan', so that in the end civil war or partition will be the only alternative. I think the view held by some that there is nothing to be done but to wait upon events is fatal. It is up to the British now to use all their powers of persuasion and statesmanship to *compel* the parties to settle.

"The crux of the matter is who is to control power at the centre—Hindus or Muslims? Over this the Congress must be prepared to make great concessions. The principles of parliamentary democracy and majority rule must be jettisoned. They are not applicable when two distinct civilizations have got to lie down together. Majority rule from the Muslim point of view will mean or, at any rate, contain the menace of the dominance of one civilization over the other. If the Congress do not recognize this quickly, I am afraid that partition will become, if not the only alternative, the best one—which will give you an idea of how bad the other alternatives will be!

"If the Congress can be brought to see the need for great concessions on this point, I am sure compromise solutions can be found. I hold this necessity to be vital."

Of course the British Government can do much. They have done much by force. They can make the parties come to a solution by force. But they need not go so far. What they have done hitherto is to prevent a proper solution. In proof of my statement I commend the esteemed correspondent to the columns of *Harijan*. The only thing the British Government have to do is to change their attitude. Will they? They can retain their hold on India only by a policy of divide and rule. A living unity between Muslims and Hindus is fraught with danger to their rule. It would mean an end of it. Therefore it seems to me that a true solution will come with the end of the rule, potentially if not in fact.

What can be done under the threat of Pakistan? If it is not a threat but a desirable goal, why should it be prevented? If it is undesirable and meant only for the Muslims to get more under its shadow, any solution would be an unjust solution. It would be worse than no solution. Therefore I am entirely for waiting till the menace is gone. India's independence is a living thing. No make-believe will suit. The whole world is in the throes of a new birth. Anything done for a temporary gain would be tantamount to an abortion.

I cannot think in terms of narrow Hinduism or narrow Islam. I am wholly uninterested in a patchwork solution. India is a big country, a big nation composed of different cultures, which are tending to blend with one another, each complementing the rest. If I must wait for the completion of the process, I must wait. It may not be completed in my day. I shall love to die in the faith that it must come in the fullness of time. I should be happy to think that I had done nothing to hamper the process. Subject to this condition, I would do nothing to bring about harmony. My life is made up of compromises, but they have been compromises that have brought me nearer the goal. Pakistan cannot be worse than foreign domination. I have lived under the latter though not willingly. If God so desires it, I may have to become a helpless witness to the undoing of my dream. But I do not believe that the Muslims really want to dismember India.

Sevagram, 29-4-1940

Harijan, 4-5-'40, p. 115

34. HINDU-MUSLIM TANGLE

The partition proposal has altered the face of the Hindu-Muslim problem. I have called it an untruth. There can be no compromise with it. At the same time I have said that, if the eight crores of Muslims desire it, no power on earth can prevent it, notwithstanding opposition violent or non-violent. It cannot come by honourable agreement.

That is the political aspect of it. But what about the religions and the moral which are greater than the political? For at the bottom of the cry for partition is the belief that Islam is an exclusive brotherhood, and anti-Hindu. Whether it is against other religions it is not stated. The newspaper cuttings in which partition is preached describe Hindus as practically untouchables. Nothing good can come out of Hindus and Hinduism. To live under Hindu rule is a sin. Even joint Hindu-Muslim rule is not to be thought of. The cuttings show that Hindus and Muslims are already at war with one another and that they must prepare for the final tussle.

Time was when Hindus thought that Muslims were the natural enemies of Hindus. But as is the case with Hinduism, ultimately it comes to terms with the enemy and makes friends with it. The process had not been completed. As if nemesis had overtaken Hinduism, the Muslim League started the same game and taught that there could be no blending of the two cultures. In this connection I have just read a booklet by Shri Atulanand Chakrabarti which shows that ever since the contact of Islam with Hinduism there has been an attempt on the part of the best mind of both to see the good points of each other, and to emphasize inherent similarities rather than seeming dissimilarities. The author has shown Islamic history in India in a favourable light. If he has stated the truth and nothing but the truth, it is a revealing booklet which all Hindus and Muslims may read with profit. He has secured a very favourable and reasoned preface from Shri Shafaat Ahmed Khan and several other Muslim testimonials. If the evidence collected there reflects the true evolution of Islam in India, then the partition propaganda is anti-Islamic.

Religion binds man to God and man to man. 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 or non-Muslims? Are eight crores of Muslims to be fed with this which I can only describe as poison? Those who are instilling this poison into the Muslim mind are rendering the greatest disservice to Islam. I know that it is not Islam. I have lived with and among Muslims not for one day but closely and almost uninterruptedly for twenty years. Not one Muslim taught me that Islam was an anti-Hindu religion.

Sevagram, 29-4-1940

Harijan, 4-5-'40, p. 117

35. HINDUS AND MUSLIMS NOT TWO NATIONS

(Originally appeared under the title "A Baffling Situation")

A question has been put to me: "Do you intend to start general civil disobedience although Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah has declared war against Hindus and has got the Muslim League to pass a resolution favouring vivisection of India into two? If you do, what becomes of your formula that there is no Swaraj without communal unity?"

I admit that the step taken by the Muslim League at Lahore creates a baffling situation. But I do not regard it so baffling as to make civil disobedience an impossibility. Supposing that this Congress is reduced to a hopeless minority it will still be open to it, indeed it may be its duty, to resort to civil disobedience. The struggle will not be against the majority, it will be against the foreign ruler. If the struggle succeeds, the fruits thereof will be reaped as well by the Congress as by the opposing majority. Let me, however, say in parenthesis that, until the conditions I have mentioned for starting civil disobedience are fulfilled, civil disobedience cannot be started in any case. In the present instance there is nothing to prevent the Imperial rulers from declaring their will in unequivocal terms that henceforth India will govern herself according to her own will, not that of the rulers as has happened hitherto. Neither the Muslim

League nor any other party can oppose such a declaration. For the Muslims will be entitled to dictate their own terms. Unless the rest of India wishes to engage in fratricide, the others will have to submit to Muslim dictation if the Muslims will resort to it. I know no non-violent method of compelling the obedience of 8 crores of Muslims to the will of the rest of India, however powerful a majority the rest may represent. The Muslims must have the same right of self-determination that the rest of India has. We are at present a joint family. Any member may claim a division.

Thus, so far as I am concerned, my proposition that there is no Swaraj without communal unity holds as good today as when I first enunciated it in 1919.

But civil disobedience stands on a different footing. It is open even to one single person to offer it, if he feels the call. It will not be offered for the Congress alone or for any particular group. Whatever benefit accrues from it will belong to the whole of India. The injury, if there is any, will belong only to the civil disobedience party.

But I do not believe that Muslims, when it comes to a matter of actual decision, will ever want vivisection. Their good sense will prevent them. Their self-interest will deter them. Their religion will forbid the obvious suicide which the partition would mean. The 'two nations' theory is an untruth. The vast majority of Muslims of India, are converts to Islam or are descendants of converts. They did not become a separate nation as soon as they became converts. A Bengali Muslim speaks the same tongue that a Bengali Hindu does, eats the same food, has the same amusements as his Hindu neighbour. They dress alike. I have often found it difficult to distinguish by outward sign between a Bengali Hindu and a Bengali Muslim. The same phenomenon is observable more or less in the South among the poor who constitute the masses of India. When I first met the late Sir Ali Imam I did not know that he was not a Hindu. His speech, his dress, his manners, his food were the same as of the majority of the Hindus in whose midst I found him. His name alone betrayed him. Not even that with Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah. For his name could be that of any Hindu. When I first met him, I did not know that he was a Muslim. I came to know his religion when I had his

full name given to me. His nationality was written in his face and manner. The reader will be surprised to know that for days, if not months, I used to think of the late Vithalbhai Patel as a Muslim as he used to sport a beard and a Turkish cap. The Hindu law of inheritance governs many Muslim groups. Sir Mahommed Iqbal used to speak with pride of his Brahmanical descent. Iqbal and Kitchlew are names common to Hindus and Muslims. Hindus and Muslims of India are not two nations. Those whom God has made one, man will never be able to divide.

And is Islam such an exclusive religion as Quaid-i-Azam would have it? Is there nothing in common between Islam and Hinduism or any other religion? Or is Islam merely an enemy of Hinduism? Were the Ali brothers and their associates wrong when they hugged Hindus as blood brothers and saw so much in common between the two? I am not now thinking of individual Hindus who may have disillusioned the Muslim friends. Quaid-i-Azam has, however, raised a fundamental issue. This is his thesis!

"It is extremely difficult to appreciate why our Hindu friends fail to understand the real nature of Islam and; Hinduism. They are not religious in the strict sense of the word, but are, in fact, different and distinct social orders and it is a dream that the Hindus and Muslims can ever evolve a common nationality. This misconception of one! Indian nation has gone far beyond the limits and is the cause of most of our troubles and will lead India to destruction if we fail to revise our notions in time.

"The Hindus and Muslims have two different religious philosophies, social customs, literatures. They neither intermarry, nor interdine together, and indeed, they belong to two different civilizations which are based mainly on conflicting ideas and conceptions. Their aspects on life and of life are different. It is quite clear that Hindus and Musalmans derive their inspiration from different sources of history. They have different epics, their heroes are different, and they have different episodes. Very often the hero of one is a foe of the other and, likewise, their victories and defeats overlap. To yoke together two such nations under a single State, one as a numerical minority and the other as majority, must lead

to] growing discontent and final destruction of any fabric that may be so built up for the government of such a State." He does not say some Hindus are bad; he says Hindus as such have nothing in common with Muslims. I make bold to say that he and those who think like him are rendering no service to India they are misinterpreting the message inherent in the very word! Islam. I say this because I feel deeply hurt over what is now going on in the name of the Muslim League. I should be failing in my duty, if I did not warn the Muslims of India against the untruth, that is being propagated amongst them. This warning is a duty because I have faithfully served them in their hour of need and because Hindu-Muslim unity has been and is my life's mission.

Sevagram, 1-4-1940

Harijan, 6-4-'40, p. 76

36. SELF-DETERMINATION

(From "Question Box")

Q. Are you right in conceding the right of self-determination to Muslims in a matter so vitally affecting others also, viz., Hindus, Sikhs, etc.? Supposing the majority of the Muslims decide in favour of partition in terms of the Muslim League resolution, what happens to the self-determination of Hindus, Sikhs, etc., who will be minorities in the Muslim States? If you go on like this, where will be the end to it?

A. Of course, Hindus and Sikhs will have the same right. I have simply said that there is no other non-violent method of dealing with the problem. If every component part of the nation claims the right of self-determination for itself, there is no one nation and there is no independence. I have already said that Pakistan is such an untruth that it cannot stand. As soon as the authors begin to work it out, they will find that it is not practicable. In any case mine is a personal opinion. What the vast Hindu masses and the others will say or do I do

not know. My mission is to work for the unity of all, for the sake of the equal good of all.

Harijan, 18-5-'40, p. 129 at p. 130

37. PARTITION AND NON-MUSLIMS

(From "Question Box")

Q. You have said in *Harijan* that "if the eight crores of Muslims desire partition, no power on earth can prevent it". Does it not strike you that 25 crores of non-Muslims too might have a say in the matter? Does not your statement imply that you put a premium on the opinion of the Muslims while underrating that of the Hindus?

A. I have only given my opinion. If the majority of Hindus or Christians or Sikhs or even Parsis, small though their number is, stubbornly resist the express wish of the duly elected representatives of eight crores of Muslims, they will do so at the peril of a civil war. This is not a question of majority or minority. If we are to solve our problems non-violently, there is no other way. I say this not because the eight crores happen to be Muslims. I would say the same if the eight crores were any other community.

Harijan, 25-5-'40, p. 137

38. COMMUNAL UNITY

Freedom will not come through parliamentary effort. Therefore communal pacts, whilst they are good if they can be had, are valueless unless they are backed by the union of hearts. Without it there can be no peace in the land. Even Pakistan can bring no peace, if there is no union of hearts. This union can come only by mutual service and co-operative work.

Separate electorates have resulted in the separation of hearts: If They presupposed mutual distrust and conflict of interests. They have tended to perpetuate differences and deepen the distrust.

How to get out of the tangle is the question. I want just now to confine myself to the four Muslim majority provinces. In them there is natural Pakistan in the sense that the permanent majority can rule the minority. I hold it to be utterly wrong thus to divide man from man by reason of religion which is liable to change. What conflict of interest can there be between Hindus and Muslims in the matter of revenue, sanitation, police, justice or the use of public conveniences? The difference can only be religious usage and observances with which a secular State has no concern.

Congressmen, if they are not to merge in the Hindus as Hindus, must rigidly abstain from the legislatures and local bodies governed by separate electorates. In these provinces the separate electorates must be taken to have come from the Hindu demand and in the supposed Hindu interest. But a Congress Hindu has no interest apart from his Muslim brother. Therefore he must not enter the electoral bodies where Hindu and Muslim interests are falsely regarded as separate and even antagonistic. If he enters these bodies, he can do so only to divide the majority members, i.e. to take sides with one Muslim Party or another. If I could make all Hindus Congress-minded, I would withdraw every Hindu member from these bodies and put the Muslim members on their honour. I would seek to influence them from outside these bodies by being friends with them and rendering disinterested service. I would be indifferent to their manning all the services. At the most an infinitesimal percentage can have a share in them. And it is a superstition to suppose that these services can oppress a people who have become conscious of human dignity and human rights and know how to enforce them. Since the vast majority of Congressmen are Hindus in at least three Muslim majority provinces, they have a rare opportunity of showing their non-violent strength, their disinterestedness, their utter freedom from the communal taint, and their ability to submit to the rule of their Muslim fellow-countrymen. They will do this not in a huff but as true nationalists and friends of the Muslims. Remaining outside they will probably better protect the just interests of Hindus as citizens. For a Congress Hindu is not any the less a Hindu because he claims to represent equally, as he must, all the other faiths in himself. For as I have said,

so far as the State is concerned, its capacity for service stops short of the service of the different faiths, and the services it can render apply to all irrespective of their faiths. Therefore Congressmen have a rare opportunity of showing undefiled nationalism in these provinces. They will incidentally show the other minorities that they have nothing to fear from the majorities if they know the true way. We must get out of the miasma of religious majorities and minorities. Why is a Parsi's interest different from a Hindu's or Muslim's so far as the State is concerned? Did not Dadabhai and Pherozeshah rule the Congress while they lived, not by Congress grace or patronage, but by right of service and merit? Did their rule injure any Hindu or Muslim interest? Were these interests ever in conflict on the Congress platform? And is not the Congress a voluntary State?

On the way to Kashi, 20-1-1942

Harijan, 25-1-'42, p. 13

39. UNITARY METHOD

I

(From "Question Box")

Q. You seem to be advocating what you call the unitary] method in the solution of many questions. Will you explain it a little more fully than you have done?

A. It is as simple as it is sure. A contract or pact is between two parties. There is also consideration passing from one to the other. Such was the Lucknow Pact between the Congress and the Muslim League. The same thing could have been accomplished by the unitary method. Only then there would have been no compromise dictated by fear and distrust. The Congress could have done according to its notion, absolute justice, i.e. yielded the maximum consistent with the welfare of the whole nation without the expectation of any consideration from the League. In a well-regulated family the relations are governed by the unitary method. Thus a father gives to his children not as a result of a pact. He gives out of love, a sense of justice without expecting any

return therefor. Not that there is none. But everything is natural, nothing is forced. Nothing is done out of fear or distrust. What is true of a well-regulated family is equally true of a well-regulated society which is but an extended family. My advice about the adoption of two scripts by Hindus and Muslims is based on the unitary method. My equal love for all communities dictates its adoption. Properly applied the method never fails. It disarms criticism and opposition. It presupposes a clean conscience and clean action. I propose to unfold in these columns the application of the method in all our communal relations. The views will be personal to me, as are all such since the Bardoli resolution. They will be addressed to Congressmen for adoption only in so far as they appeal to their reason.

Harijan, 1-2-42, p. 27

II

(Originally appeared in "Question Box" under the title "Torturing the Language?")

Q. Surely you are torturing the language when you use the word 'unitary' in the place of 'unilateral'. For that is obviously what you mean.

A. I must plead not guilty. 'Unilateral' has a definite legal meaning which does not fit in with what I am struggling to convey. It is not one-sidedness. It is no-sidedness. It has impartiality implied in it. But it is not the method of impartiality. It is something more. I represent a party, say the Congress. For the solution of the problem I apply a method whereby I seek to affect those who are estranged from me. I am not merely impartial, because I may or may not please them. Impartiality has to be felt by the aggrieved party. I go to the utmost length to placate the offended party, and trust my out and out pure conduct to affect them. I may not succeed at once. But if there is a real sense of justice in the method, it must succeed. For want of a better word I have called the method 'unitary'. The dictionary meaning satisfies my test which I have imperfectly described here.

Sevagram, 3-2-1942

Harijan, 15-2-'42, p. 38

40. AN APPEAL TO QUAID-I-AZAM

I have been painfully but regularly going through the English weeklies that come to me and that are devoted to the cause of the Muslim League. I read them so as to keep myself informed of what the Muslim mind as influenced by the Muslim League thinks. Not a week passes but these weeklies contain what to me appear to be distortions of truth and vilification of the Congress and Congressmen and Hindus. What has prompted me to write these lines is a virulent attack on Hinduism in one of the weeklies. Here is an extract from the article:

"Hinduism is the greatest curse of India, and it is based on intolerance and inequality. To call one's self a 'Hindu' is to confess that one is reactionary and narrow-minded. No decent, civilized, honest and sincere human being who knows what Hinduism is and what it stands for, would like to be known as a Hindu or join this faith of primitive barbarians. For it is on barbarity that this so-called religion is based. No other word can describe the state of 97 per cent of the population who have been decreed by the Gods and Goddesses of this precious religion as impure and unclean beings fit only to serve the remaining 3 per cent of the population. . . . We would far rather suggest to the students to prepare in their laboratories of the mind deadly bombs which would completely smash and destroy Hinduism, the greatest menace to India's welfare and well-being."

I hope I shall not be told that the article in question is taken from another newspaper. It has been taken in order to hold up Hinduism to scorn. Though the founder of this paper is Quaid-i-Azam himself and it is issued under the direction of Nawabzada Liaquat AH Khan, Hon. Secretary of the League, I fancy that they have not seen the article in question. What will be the state of Hindus under Pakistan? Will they be suppressed as barbarians? There is no attempt in the papers at looking at the other side. The policy adopted in the papers must lead to the promotion of bitterness and strife between the two

communities. If the end is to be attained through strife and force and not by persuasion and argument, I can have nothing to say. But I observe from Quaid-i-Azam's speeches that he has no quarrel with the Hindus. He wants to live at peace with them. I plead, therefore, for a juster estimate of men and things in papers representing the policy and programme of the Muslim League.

Sevagram, 2-3-1942

Harijan, 8-3-'42, p. 68

41. ONLY IF THEY WITHDRAW

"Till the last day you said there can be no Swaraj without Hindu-Muslim unity. Now why is it that you say that there will be no unity until India has achieved Independence", the Nagpur correspondent of the *Hindu* asked Gandhiji the other day.

Gandhiji replied, "Time is a merciless enemy, if it is also a merciful friend and healer. I claim to be amongst the oldest lovers of Hindu-Muslim unity and I remain one even today. I have been asking myself why every whole-hearted attempt made by all including myself to reach unity has failed, and failed so completely that I have entirely fallen from grace and am described by some Muslim papers as the greatest enemy of Islam in India. It is a phenomenon I can only account for by the fact that the third power, even without deliberately wishing it, will not allow real unity to take place. Therefore I have come to the reluctant conclusion that the two communities will come together almost immediately after the British power comes to a final end in India. If independence is the immediate goal of the Congress and the League then, without needing to come to any terms, all will fight together to be free from bondage. When the bondage is done with, not merely the two organizations but all parties will find it to their interest to come together and make the fullest use of the liberty in order to evolve a national government suited to the genius of India. I do not care what it is called. Whatever it is, in order to be stable, it has to represent the masses in the fullest sense of the term. And, if it is to be

broad-based upon the will of the people, it must be predominantly non-violent. Anyway, up to my last breath, I hope I shall be found working to that end, for I see no hope for humanity without the acceptance of non-violence. We are witnessing the bankruptcy of violence from day-to-day. There is no hope for humanity if the senseless fierce mutual slaughter is to continue.

Sevagram, 11-6-1942

Harijan, 21-6-'42, p. 198

42. UNSEEMLY IF TRUE

Asaf Ah Saheb, President of the Delhi P.C.C. writes:

"The enclosed complaint was first brought up before the Delhi Provincial Congress Committee. The writer has now secured two supporters. I know the writer personally as a truthful and unbiased nationalist and I believe his word.

"I have heard of the Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh and its activities; and I also knew that it was a communal organization. The slogan and the speech complained of have been brought to my notice for the first time. I can think of no means of counteracting the effect of such slogans and speeches on other communities except inviting your attention to them. Perhaps you will take notice of it in the *Harijan*."

The complainant's letter is in Urdu. Its purport is that the organization referred to in Asaf Ali Saheb's letter consisting of 3,000 members goes through a daily *lathi* drill which is followed by reciting the slogan, 'Hindustan belongs to Hindus and to nobody else.' This recital is followed by a brief discourse in which speakers say: 'Drive out the English first and then we will subjugate the Muslims. If they do not listen, we shall kill them.' Taking the evidence at its face value, the slogan is wrong and the central theme of the discourse is worse. I can only hope that the slogan is unauthorized and that the speaker who is reported to have uttered the sentiments ascribed to him was no responsible person. The slogan is wrong and absurd, for Hindustan belongs to all those who

are born and bred here and who have no other country to look to. Therefore, it belongs to Parsis, Beni Israels, to Indian Christians, Muslims and other non-Hindus as much as to Hindus. Free India will be no Hindu *raj*, it will be Indian *raj* based not on the majority of any religious sect or community but on the representatives of the whole people without distinction of religion. I can conceive a mixed majority putting the Hindus in a minority. They would be elected for their record of service and merits. Religion is a personal matter which should have no place in politics. It is in the unnatural condition of foreign domination that we have unnatural divisions according to religion. Foreign domination going, we shall laugh at our folly in having clung to 'false ideals and slogans.

The discourse referred to, is surely vulgar. There is no question of 'driving out' the English. They cannot be driven out except by violence superior to theirs. The idea of killing the Muslims if they do not remain in subjection may have been all right in bygone days; it has no meaning today. There is no force in the cry of driving out the English if the substitute is to be Hindu or any other domination. That will be no Swaraj. Self-government necessarily means government by the free and intelligent will of the people. I add the word 'intelligent' because I hope that India will be predominantly non-violent. Members of society based on non-violence must all be so educated as to be able to think and act for themselves. If their thought and action be one, it will be because they are directed both to a common goal and common result even as the thought and action of a hundred men pulling a rope in one direction would be one.

I hope that those in charge of the Swayam Sevak Sangh will inquire into the complaint and take the necessary steps.

Harijan, 9-8-'42, p. 261

43. BUTCHERY IN AHMEDABAD

(From *Harijanbandhu*)

Butchery has been going on in Ahmedabad for several days. It is difficult to say who is at fault. The policy of the Government is not to let the public know as to who has knifed whom. The Congress Government has adhered to this policy. So we should believe that there is good reason behind this hush. It may be that this is on a par with a thief's mother feigning grief over her son's theft. In Ahmedabad everyone must know who is the aggressor or who is more at fault. My job is not to find that out. Mine is comparatively easier work.

The golden path is that one of the parties to the mutual slaughter should desist. Then alone can true peace be established and madness come to an end. In my childhood I and a cousin of mine took *bhang* and like two mad men we went on laughing at each other. When the intoxication was over on the following morning, we were both ashamed of ourselves and could not face each other. The above incident was harmless in comparison. What is taking place in Ahmedabad is frightful.

Is it not enough that three young men have laid down their lives in the attempt to put down the flames? I spoke about it at the prayer meeting at Poona. Several friends have written to me about the three martyrs. If we were wise, these sacrifices would have quenched the fire. But that has not happened. It does not mean that the sacrifices have gone in vain. It only means that many more are necessary to extinguish such flames.

The alternative is that both must exhaust themselves; they must face police bullets. Some may be sent to jail and some mount the gallows before peace is restored. This is the wrong way. Fire put out in this fashion is bound to flare up again. This process does not reduce the poison. It is simply suppressed. It spreads through the whole body and causes more mischief.

Peace restored with the help of the police and its elder brother the military will strengthen the hold of the foreign government and emasculate us still further. Poet Iqbal has written the immortal line:

मजहब नहीं सिखाता आपसमें बैर रखना ।

"Religion does not inculcate mutual strife." Could there be a greater proof of our cowardice than fighting amongst ourselves? There is a method about everything—even mutual fight. If we must fight, why should we seek the help of the police and the military? The Government should clearly say that the military, whilst it is in India, will only be used for maintaining cleanliness, cultivating unused land and the like. The police will be used to catch bona fide thieves. Neither will be used to put down communal riots. .

Let Ahmedabad folk be brave enough to eschew the help of police and the military, let them not be cowards. Rioters are mostly hooligans who do their nefarious deeds in the dark. I am told that most of the stabbings have been in the back. Seldom or never have they been in the chest. Why should one be frightened of such people? One should rather brave death at their hands in the hope that the sacrifice will bring them to sanity. If one has not the requisite courage to face death, one must defend oneself by putting up a fight. The question may be asked as to how one should fight against those who stab you unawares from behind. It may not be possible to prevent such stabbings, but if the onlookers are not in collusion with the evil-doers and are not devoid of courage, they will catch hold of the culprit and hand over to the police or to the community to which he belongs. Or they can bring him before the people's Panchayat. Only they may not take the law into their own hands.

Panchgani, 22-7-1946

Harijan, 28-7-'46, p. 244

44. HEAL THYSELF

A correspondent has written to me about the butchery that is going on in Ahmedabad. I give below the relevant portions from his letter.

"I wish to write to you about the means to be employed for putting down riots. About two months ago you wrote an article on Ahimsak Seva Dal—non-violent volunteer corps. But looking to the situation in the country, the suggestion will not do. Just as you have taught us how to fight against the British Government non-violently, you should go to some place of riot and show us the way of quelling riots in a nonviolent manner by personal example. Supposing you were in Ahmedabad today and went out to quell the riots, any number of volunteers will join you. Two of our Congress workers Shri Vasantrao and Shri Rajabali went out in such a quest and fell a prey to the *goonda's* knife. They laid down their lives in the pursuit of an ideal and they deserve all praise. But no one else had the courage to follow in their footsteps. They have not the same self-confidence. If they had it, there would be no riots and, even if riots broke out, they would never assume the proportion and the form that the present day riots do. But the fact remains that such a state is merely an imaginary thing today.

"Your guidance and example can inspire many like me with courage and self-confidence. Once you have shown the way, the local workers will be able to follow it whenever occasion demands it. I feel that unless you set an example in action, your writings and utterances will not be of any use to the ordinary people, and even Congressmen, in organizing non-violent protection of society."

I like the suggestion mentioned above. People followed my advice and took to non-violent resistance against the British Government because they wanted to offer some sort of resistance. But their non-violence, I must confess, was born of their helplessness. Therefore, it was the weapon of the weak. That is why today we worship Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and his Azad Hind Fauj. We forget that Netaji himself had told his soldiers that on going to India, they must follow the way of non-violence. This I have from the leaders of the I.N.A. But we have lost all sense of discrimination. To restore it, the I.N.A. men will have to line up to the ideal placed before them by Netaji. The work of those who

believe in non-violence is very difficult in this atmosphere which is full of violence. But the path of true non-violence requires much more courage than violence. We have not been able to give proof of such non-violence. We might look upon the action of Shri Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi, Shri Vasantryao and Shri Rajabali as examples of the non-violence of the brave. But when communal feelings run high, we are unable to demonstrate any effect of the sacrifices mentioned above. For that, many like Shri Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi will have to lay down their lives. The fact that no one else in Ahmedabad has followed the example, set by Shri Vasantryao and Shri Rajabali shows that we have not yet developed the spirit of sacrifice to the extent of laying down our lives in non-violent action. The correspondent has rightly said that under these circumstances, I should act myself whether others join me or not. It will be disgraceful on my part to sit at home and tell others to go and lay down their lives. Such a thing cannot be an indication of non-violence. I have never had the chance to test my non-violence in the face of communal riots. It might be argued that it was my cowardice which prevented me from seeking such a chance. Be that as it may, God willing, the chance will still come to me, and by throwing me in the fire, He will purify me and make the path of non-violence clear. No one should take it to mean that the sacrifice of my life will arrest all violence. Several lives like mine, will have to be given if the terrible violence that has spread all over, is to stop and nonviolence reign supreme in its place. The poet has sung:

“हरिनो मारग छे शुरानो, कायरनुं काम जोने ।”

"The path of Truth is for the brave, never for the coward." The path of Truth is the path of non-violence.

Panchgani, 26-6-1946

Harijan, 4-8-'46, p. 248

45. HINDU AND MUSALMAN TEA ETC.

(From *Harijansevak*)

Hindu and Musalman tea is sold at railway stations. Separate arrangement for meals for the two communities are sometimes made and none seem to be there for Harijans. All this is a sign of our pitiable condition and constitutes a blot on British administration. One can understand their not interfering in religious matters but for them to allow separate arrangements for tea, water, etc. for the two communities is to set the seal of approval on separatism. Railways and railway travelling offer a golden opportunity which could be used for social reform and for educating the public in sanitation and hygiene, good manners and communal unity. Instead, however, an utter neglect of and indifference to these desiderata are shown. Railway travel serves to strengthen rather than mitigate evil customs and bad habits. First and second class passengers are pampered, luxurious habits encouraged. Third class passengers on whom the railway revenues largely depend are denied even elementary amenities and exposed to all kinds of hardships. In either case weakness is exploited. And when, in addition to this, separatism and Untouchability are recognized by the Railway authorities, it is the very limit. If any passenger wishes to impose restrictions on himself he is at liberty to do so at his own expense and suffer, may be, even hunger and thirst. But let him not demand special facilities for himself from Railway authorities.

That vegetarians and non-vegetarians should be catered for is another matter. That is already being done.

Poona, 7-3-1946

Harijan, 17-3-'46, p. 48

46. HINDU PAN! AND MUSLIM PANI

A stranger travelling in Indian trains may well have a painful shock when he hears at railway stations for the first time in his life ridiculous sounds about *pani*, tea and the like being either Hindu or Muslim. It would be repulsive now that the Government at the Centre is wholly national and a well-known Indian in the person of Asaf Ali Saheb is in charge of Transport and Railways. It is to be hoped that we shall soon have the last of the shame that is peculiarly Indian. Let no one imagine that the Railways being under a Muslim, Hindus may not get justice. In the Central and Provincial Governments, there is or should be no Hindu, Muslim or any other communal distinctions. All are Indians. Religion is a personal matter. Moreover, the members of the Cabinet have set up a wholesome convention that they should always meet at the end of the day's work and take stock of what each member has done. It is team work in which the members are jointly and severally responsible for one another's work. It is not open to any member to say that a particular thing is not his work because it is no part of his portfolio. We have a right therefore to assume that this unholy practice of having separate everything for every community at railway stations will go. Scrupulous cleanliness is a desideratum for all. If taps are used for all liquids there need be no compunction felt by the most orthodox about helping themselves. A fastidious person may keep his own *lota* and cup and receive his milk, tea, coffee or water through a tap. In this there is no interference with religion. No one is compelled' to buy anything at railway stations. As a matter of fact many orthodox persons fast for water and food during travel. Thanks we still breathe the same air, walk on the same mother earth.

All communal cries at least at railway stations should be unlawful.

As I have often said in these columns trains and steamers are the best media for the practical education of the millions of travellers in spotless cleanliness, hygiene, sanitation and camaraderie between the different communities of India. Let us hope that the Cabinet will have the courage to act up to their

convictions and may confidently expect the hearty co-operation of the Railway staff and the public in making this much needed reform a thorough success.

New Delhi, 12-10-1946

Harijan, 20-10-'46, p. 361

PART VI : INTER-CASTE UNITY

47. CASTE SYSTEM NO BAR TO NATIONAL UNITY

(From "The Caste System")

I consider the four divisions alone to be fundamental, natural and essential... The caste system is not based on inequality, there is no question of inferiority, and so far as there is any such question arising, as in Madras, Maharashtra or elsewhere, the tendency should undoubtedly be checked. But there appears to be no valid reason for ending the system because of its abuse. It lends itself easily to reformation. The spirit of democracy, which is fast spreading throughout India and the rest of the world will, without a shadow of doubt, purge the institution of the idea of predominance and subordination. The spirit of democracy is not a mechanical thing to be adjusted by abolition of forms. It requires change of the heart. If caste is a bar to the spread of that spirit, the existence of five religions in India – Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Zoroastrianism and Judaism—is equally a bar. The spirit of democracy requires the inculcation of the spirit of brotherhood, and I can find no difficulty in considering a Christian or a Mahomedan to be my brother in absolutely the same sense as a blood brother, and Hinduism that is responsible for the doctrine of the caste is also responsible for the inculcation of the essential brotherhood, not merely of man but even of all that lives.

Young India, 8-12-'20, p. 3

48. BRAHMINS AND NON-BRAHMINS

I

(From "Depressed Classes")

A quotation from my speech delivered at a private meeting in Madras has been torn from its context and misused to further the antagonism between the so-called Brahmins and the so-called non-Brahmins. I do not wish to retract a word of what I said at that meeting. I was appealing to those who are accepted as Brahmins. I told them that in my opinion the treatment of non-Brahmins by the Brahmins was as satanic as the treatment of us by the British. I added that the non-Brahmins should be placated without any ado or bargaining. But my remarks were never intended to encourage the powerful non-Brahmins of Maharashtra or Madras, or the mischievous element among them, to overawe the so-called Brahmins. I use the word 'so-called' advisedly. For the Brahmins who have freed themselves from the thralldom of superstitious orthodoxy have not only no quarrel with non-Brahmins as such, but are in every way eager to advance non-Brahmins wherever they are weak. No lover of his country can possibly achieve its general advance if he dared to neglect the least of his countrymen. Those non-Brahmins therefore who are coquetting with the Government are selling themselves and the nation to which they belong. By all means let those who have faith in the Government help to sustain it, but let no Indian worthy of his birth cut off his nose to spite the face.

Young India, 27-10-'20, p. 3

II

(Originally appeared under the title "Brahmins and Non-Brahmins")

When I wrote in *Young India* on the non-Brahmin question in Maharashtra, I little realized that the non-Brahmin case was largely, if not entirely, a political matter, and that the complaint was not so much against the Brahmins as a class by the non-Brahmins as a class, as by some educated non-Brahmins against the Nationalists, who were mostly Brahmins. Non-Brahmins include the Lingayats,

the Marathas, the Jains and the 'untouchables'. The latter, however, have a separate grievance against the other non-Brahmins, in that they are isolated as much by the non-Brahmins. The case for the educated non-Brahmins is again not common to all. It may however be stated in the following terms:

1. Educated non-Brahmins do not possess the same political power that the Brahmins possess.

The latter have the largest number of Government posts, and seats on representative bodies, although the former are numerically by far the strongest.

2. Some Brahmins debar the Lingayats from the inner sanctuary of temples, which the latter claim as their own; and this false (in their estimation) claim is supported by the Brahmins in general.
3. The Brahmins treat all non-Brahmins as Shudras, and treat them precisely as the British treat all Indians.

In my opinion the non-Brahmin case is exceedingly weak and is certain to disappear from the public life of Maharashtra, if the Brahmins of the Nationalist Party carry out the Congress non-co-operation programme in its entirety.

The movement owes its vitality, not to the religious or the social disability but to the political ascendancy of the Brahmins, which the latter undoubtedly enjoy by right of merit. That grievance must vanish if the Nationalist Brahmins, having evolved larger views about Swaraj, taboo all Government posts and boycott the Councils and nominated seats on municipalities. It is clear to me, that the Government in accordance with its confirmed policy will play the non-Brahmins against the Brahmins, even without the knowledge of the former, and endeavour to prolong its lease of life by fostering quarrels between the two, and holding out political inducements to the non-Brahmins.

It is clear, too, that the Brahmins will take the wind out of the non-Brahmin sail, and make that opposition innocuous by a right renunciation of every form of Government patronage.

The reason why the question has assumed a more acute form is that non-Brahmin leaders are trying to influence the electorate in their favour, and are

telling the electors that, the non-Brahmins being weak, they must seek the British alliance. Brahmin leaders are naturally trying to influence the same electors and dissuade them from using their vote. This gives rise to bad blood but not more than when the Moderates and the Nationalists are fighting. The most painful part of the situation however, is that the non-Brahmin leaders, who claim to represent the masses and to feel for them, will by their cooperation with the Government, or by seeking to better their condition by Government aid, will actually tighten the hold of the Government on the masses. And by their countenancing the Government aid they will make more difficult the remedy of the Punjab and the Khilafat wrongs. The non-Brahmin policy is thus demonstrably suicidal. Whatever their grievance against the Brahmins or the Nationalists, their remedy certainly does not lie through alliance with a Government whose creed is economic exploitation of the masses, and to that end also their emasculation. For this refusal to right the Punjab, and partly even the Khilafat wrong, is based upon the policy of keeping up the British prestige at any cost. One lac of Englishmen cannot keep under subjection thirty crores of human beings merely by brute force.

But it can, and does, consolidate its power, by making them progressively helpless, in a most subtle manner. I venture therefore to warn the non-Brahmin leaders against the danger of co-operation with the Government which is bound to hurt the very cause which they seek to espouse. They will not better the economic condition of the masses by gaining a few Government posts, or by being elected legislative councillors.

Judged by the economic standard, thirty-five years of our political activity have resulted in disaster. The masses of India today are less able to stand the ravages of famine and disease than they were fifty years ago. They are less manly than they were at any period in the history of the nation.

The impending calamity of the non-Brahmin leaders' running into the arms of the Government for the supposed betterment of their political condition can easily be averted by the great Brahmin party. It is intelligent, it is strong, it has the traditional prestige of authority. It can afford to stoop to conquer.

A whole-hearted acceptance of the non-co-operation programme does provide an automatic solution. But it is not enough.

Bitterness will still remain, unless the Brahmins extend the hand of fellowship to those who feel weak and injured. Complaints were made about nationalist papers in the Karnatak using offensive and haughty language towards non-Brahmins; of Nationalist Brahmins otherwise also belittling them and treating them with contempt. Their ignorant non-Brahmin countrymen have a right to expect courtesy and consideration from comparatively more enlightened Brahmins. The mass of non-Brahmins are still untouched by the anti-Brahmin prejudice. I have faith enough in the Maharashtra Brahmin to know that he will solve the non-Brahmin question in a manner befitting the traditions of Hinduism of which he is trustee.

Young India, 17-11-'20, p. 4

49. DEPRESSED CLASSES

Vivekananda used to call the Panchamas 'suppressed classes'. There is no doubt that Vivekananda's is a more accurate adjective. We have suppressed them and have consequently become ourselves depressed. That we have become the 'Pariahs of the Empire' is, in Gokhale's language, the retributive justice meted out to us by a just God.... Should not we the Hindus wash our blood-stained hands before we ask the English to wash theirs? This is a proper question seasonably put. And if a member of a slave nation could deliver the suppressed classes from their slavery without freeing myself from my own, I would do so today. But it is an impossible task. A slave has not the freedom even to do the right thing. It is right for me to prohibit the importation of foreign goods, but I have no power to bring it about. ... If I had a truly national legislature I would answer Hindu insolence by erecting special and better wells for the exclusive use of suppressed classes and by erecting better and more numerous, schools for them, so that there would be not a single member of the suppressed classes left without a school to teach their children. But I must wait for that better day.

Meanwhile are the depressed classes to be left to their own resources? Nothing of the sort. In my own humble manner I have done and am doing all I can for my Panchama brother.

There are three courses open to these downtrodden members of the nation. For their impatience they may call in the assistance of the slave-owning Government. They will get it but they will fall from the frying pan into the fire. Today they are slaves of slaves. By seeking Government aid, they will be used for suppressing their kith and kin. Instead of being sinned against, they will themselves be the sinners. The Musalmans tried it and failed. They found that they were worse off than before. The Sikhs did it unwittingly and failed. Today there is no more discontented community in India than the Sikhs. Government aid is therefore no solution.

The second is rejection of Hinduism and wholesale conversion to Islam or Christianity. And if a change of religion could be justified for worldly betterment, I would advise it without hesitation. But religion is a matter of the heart. No physical inconvenience can warrant abandonment of one's own religion. If the inhuman treatment of the Panchamas were a part of Hinduism, its rejection would be a paramount duty both for them and for those like me who would not make a fetish even of religion and condone every evil in its sacred name. But I believe that Untouchability is no part of Hinduism. It is rather its excrescence to be removed by every effort. And there is quite an army of Hindu reformers who have set their heart upon ridding Hinduism of this blot. Conversion, therefore, I hold, is no remedy whatsoever.

Then there remains, finally, self-help and self-dependence, with such aid as the non-Panchama Hindus will render of their own motion, not as a matter of patronage but as a matter of duty. And herein comes the use of non-co-operation. My correspondent was correctly informed by Mr. Rajagopalachari and Mr. Hanuiriantrao that I would favour well-regulated non-cooperation for this acknowledged evil. But non-co-operation means independence of outside help, it means effort from within. It would not be non-co-operation to insist on visiting prohibited areas. That may be civil disobedience if it is peacefully

carried out. But I have found to my cost that civil disobedience requires far greater preliminary training and self-control. All can non-co-operate, but few only can offer civil disobedience. Therefore, by way of protest against Hinduism, the Panchamas can certainly stop all contact and connection with the other Hindus so long as the special grievances are maintained. But this means organized effort. And so far as I can see, there is no leader among the Panchamas who can lead them to victory through non-cooperation.

The better way, therefore, perhaps, is for the Panchamas heartily to join the great national movement that is now going on for throwing off the slavery of the present Government. It is easy enough for the Panchama friends to see that non-cooperation against this evil Government presupposes co-operation between the different sections forming the Indian nation. The Hindus must realize that if they wish to offer successful non-co-operation against the Government, they must make common cause with the Panchamas, even as they have made common cause with the Musalmans. Non-co-operation when it is free from violence is essentially a movement of intensive self-purification. That process has commenced and whether the Panchamas deliberately take part in it or not, the rest of the Hindus dare not neglect them without hampering their own progress. Hence though the Panchama problem is as dear to me as life itself, I rest satisfied with the exclusive attention to national non-co-operation. I feel sure that the greater includes the less.

Young India, 27-10-'20, p. 3

50. THE DUTY OF HINDUS TOWARDS UNTOUCHABLES

(Originally appeared under the title "The Sin of Untouchability")

It is worthy of note that the Subjects Committee accepted without any opposition the clause regarding the sin of Untouchability. It is well that the National Assembly passed the resolution stating that the removal of this blot on Hinduism was necessary for the attainment of Swaraj. The devil succeeds only by receiving help from his fellows. He always takes advantage of the weakest

spots in our natures in order to gain mastery over us. Even so does the Government retain its control over us through our weaknesses or vices. And if we would render ourselves proof against its machinations, we must remove our weaknesses. It is for that reason that I have called non-cooperation a process of purification. As soon as that process is completed this Government must fall to pieces for want of the necessary environment, just as mosquitoes cease to haunt a place whose cesspools are filled up and dried.

Has not a just Nemesis overtaken us for the crime of Untouchability? Have we not reaped as we have sown? Have we not practised Dyerism and O'Dwyerism on our own kith and kin? We have segregated the 'pariah' and we are in turn segregated in the British colonies. We deny him the use of public wells; we throw the leavings of our plates at him. His very shadow pollutes us. Indeed there is no charge that the 'pariah' cannot fling in our faces and which we do not fling in the faces of Englishmen.

How is this blot on Hinduism to be removed? 'Do unto others as you would that others should do unto you. I have often told English officials that, if they are friends and servants of India, they should come down from their pedestal, cease to be patrons, demonstrate by their loving deeds that they are in every respect our friends, and believe us to be equals in the same sense they believe fellow Englishmen to be their equals. After the experiences of the Punjab and the Khilafat, I have gone a step further and asked them to repent and to change their hearts. Even so is it, necessary for us Hindus to repent of the wrong we have done, to alter our behaviour towards those whom we have 'suppressed' by a system as devilish as we believe the English system of the Government of India to be. We must not throw a few miserable schools at them: we must not adopt the air of superiority towards them. We must treat them as our blood- brothers as they are in fact. We must return to them the inheritance of which we have robbed them. And this must not be the act of a few English-knowing reformers merely, but it must be conscious voluntary effort on the part of the masses. We may not wait till eternity for this much belated reformation. We must aim at bringing it about within this year of

grace, probation, preparation and *tapasya*. It is a reform not to follow Swaraj but to precede it.

Untouchability is not a sanction of religion, it is a device of Satan. The devil has always quoted scriptures. But scriptures cannot transcend reason and truth. They are intended to purify reason and illuminate truth. I am not going to burn a spotless horse because the Vedas are reported to have advised, tolerated or sanctioned the sacrifice. For me the Vedas are divine and unwritten. 'The letter killeth.' It is the spirit that giveth the light. And the spirit of the Vedas is purity, truth, innocence, chastity, humility, simplicity, forgiveness, godliness, and all that makes a man or woman noble and brave. There is neither nobility nor bravery in treating the great and uncomplaining scavengers of the nation as worse than dogs to be despised and spat upon. Would that God give us the strength and the wisdom to become voluntary scavengers of the nation as the 'suppressed' classes are forced to be. There are Augean stables enough and to spare for us to clean.

Young India, 19-1-'21, p. 21

51. UNTOUCHABILITY MUST GO

(From "To Correspondents")

Untouchability cannot be given a secondary place on the programme. Without the removal of the taint Swaraj is a meaningless term. Workers should welcome social boycott and even public execration in the prosecution of their work. I consider the removal of Untouchability as a most powerful factor in the process of attainment of Swaraj.

Young India, 3-11-'21, p. 351

52. UNTOUCHABILITY

(From the text of the "Presidential Address" at the 39th Session of the Indian National Congress held at Belgaum)

Untouchability is another hindrance to Swaraj. Its removal is just as essential for Swaraj as the attainment of Hindu-Muslim unity. This is an essentially Hindu question and Hindus cannot claim or take Swaraj till they have restored the liberty of the suppressed classes. They have sunk with the latter's suppression. Historians tell us that the Aryan invaders treated the original inhabitants of Hindustan precisely as the English invaders treat us, if not much worse. If so, our helotry is a just retribution for having created an untouchable class. The sooner we remove the blot, the better it is for us Hindus. But priests tell us that Untouchability is a divine appointment. I claim to know something of Hinduism. I am certain that the priests are wrong. It is a blasphemy to say that God set apart any portion of humanity as untouchable. And Hindus who are Congressmen have to see to it that they break down the barrier at the earliest possible moment. ...

I would however warn the Hindu brethren against the tendency which one sees nowadays of exploiting the suppressed classes for a political end. To remove Untouchability is a penance that caste Hindus owe to Hinduism and to themselves. The purification required is not of untouchables but of the so-called superior castes. There is no vice that is special to the untouchables, not even dirt and insanitation. It is our arrogance which blinds us 'superior' Hindus to our own blemishes and which magnifies those of our downtrodden brethren whom we have suppressed and whom we keep under suppression. Religions like nations are being weighed in the balance. God's grace and revelation are the monopoly of no race or nation. They descend upon all who wait upon God. That religion and that nation will be blotted out of the face of the earth which pins its faith to injustice, untruth or violence. God is Light, not darkness. God is Love, not hate. God is Truth, not untruth. God alone is Great. We His creatures are but dust. Let us be humble and recognize the place of the lowliest of His

creatures. Krishna honoured Sudama in his rags as he honoured no one else. Love is the root of religion or sacrifice and this perishable body is the root of self or irreligion, says Tulsidas. Whether we win Swaraj or not, the Hindus have to purify themselves before they can hope to revive the Vedic philosophy and make it a living reality.

Young India, 26-12-'24, p. 419 at p. 423

53. SWARAJ AND THE SUPPRESSED CLASSES

(The following are portions from Gandhiji's speech at the Depressed Classes Conference held at Ahmedabad on 13th and 14th April 1921.)

I may here recall my proposition, which is this: So long as the Hindus wilfully regard Untouchability as part of their religion, so long as the mass of Hindus consider it a sin to touch a section of their brethren, Swaraj is impossible of attainment. Yudhishtira would not enter heaven without his dog. How can, then, the descendants of that Yudhishtira expect to obtain Swaraj without the untouchables? What crimes, for which we condemn the Government as satanic, have not we been guilty of towards our untouchable brethren?

We are guilty of having suppressed our brethren; we make them crawl on their bellies; we have made them rub their noses on the ground; with eyes red with rage, we push them out of railway compartments—what more than this has British Rule done? What charge, that we bring against Dyer and O'Dwyer, may not others, and even our own people, lay at our doors? We ought to purge ourselves of this pollution. It is idle to talk of Swaraj so long as we do not protect the weak and the helpless, or so long as it is possible for a single Swarajist to injure the feelings of any individual. Swaraj means that not a single Hindu or Muslim shall for a moment arrogantly think that he can crush with impunity meek Hindus or Muslims. Unless this condition is fulfilled we will gain Swaraj only to lose it the next moment. We are no better than the brutes until we have purged ourselves of the sins we have committed against our weaker brethren.

But I have faith in me still. In the course of my peregrinations in India I have realized that the spirit of kindness of which the Poet Tulsidas sings so

eloquently, which forms the cornerstone of the Jain and Vaishnava religions, which is the quintessence of the *Bhagvat* and which every verse of the Gita is saturated with, this kindness, this love, this charity, is slowly but steadily gaining ground in the hearts of the masses of this Country.

Many a fracas between Hindus and Musalmans is still heard of. There are still many of these who do not scruple to wrong one another. But as to the net result, I feel that kindness and charity have increased. The Hindus and Mahpmedans have become Godfearing. We have shaken ourselves free from the hypnotism of law-courts and Government schools, and no longer labour under many an other hallucination. I have also realized that those whom we regard as illiterate and ignorant are the very people who deserve to be called educated. They are more cultured than we, their hves are more righteous than ours. A little study of the present-day mentality of the people will show that according to the popular conception Swaraj is synonymous with Ramarajya— the establishment of the Kingdom of Righteousness on earth.

If it can bring any comfort to you, my untouchable brethren, I would say that your question does not cause so much stir as it used to do formerly. That does not mean that I expect you to cease to have misgivings about the Hindus. How can they deserve to be not mistrusted having wronged you so much? Swami Vivekananda used to say that the untouchables were not depressed, they were suppressed by the Hindus who in turn had suppressed themselves by suppressing them.

I suppose I was at Nellore on the sixth of April. I met the untouchables there and I prayed that day as I have done today. I do want to attain *moksha*. I do not want to be reborn. But if I have to be reborn, I should be born an untouchable, so that I may share their sorrows, sufferings and the affronts levelled at them, in order that I may endeavour to free myself and them from that miserable condition. I, therefore, prayed that if I should be born again, I should do so not as a Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya or Shudra, but as an *Atishudra*.

Young India, 4-5-'21, p. 143

54. IS SWARAJ WORTH HAVING?

The following letter will be read with painful interest:

"I am a native of Vikrampur, and my home is only a few miles away from the home of Deshabandhu. I belong to the Namashudra community, one of the so-called depressed classes—now some term it as suppressed.

"The clerks in the office, where I am working, numbering 50, are all so-called high caste Hindus and are natives of Bengal. Excepting only a few, all are men of my adjoining districts.

"I am living here in the staffs mess quarters. Being a member of the so-called lower caste, I am looked upon here as a despised insect. I am served my meals in a way which a self-respecting man cannot tolerate. Even the servant refuses to wash and clear away my plates after I finish my meals. Although in cleanliness and decency I am not in any way inferior to any of the members here, I must be looked as if I am inferior even to the servant working here. Sanctity of the mind has no place in the Hindu society.

"Will you tell me how long such a state of things will continue in this wretched land? Is Swaraj worth having when the mentality of the people is so cruel towards their fellow countrymen? Will not the treatment of the so-called higher classes who, occupy most of the top positions, towards the so-called lower classes be terrible when the power is in their hands? In this caste-ridden country, do you expect that better treatment will be meted out to them?

"I am in intense agony of mind, please reply sharp and also advise me what I am to do here."

As the writer does not wish to have his identity disclosed I have erased some parts of the letter. There is no doubt that what is happening to this Namashudra friend is the lot of many who are similarly placed. Though Untouchability is undoubtedly going, the suppressed classes who are daily

growing more and more conscious and naturally resentful of the terrible treatment meted out to them by the so-called higher classes are becoming restive. Their fear, too, that if the things remain as they are when Swaraj is attained, the reformer's may be a voice in the wilderness and blind orthodoxy may reduce to nought even the little progress that has been made, has a surface justification. I wish the 'suppressed' friends could be made to see that the fear is in reality groundless. They do not give sufficient credit to the reformers. It is not the quantity that will count when freedom is gained. It is the determination of the few that is going to be the deciding factor. Surely he who runs may see that in the forefront of the fight for freedom are to be found the reformers and not the reactionaries who even now seek the protection of the foreign power for sustaining their reactionary policy which they miscall religion. When therefore Swaraj is attained it will be the reformers who must have the reins of Government in their hands.

Again the suppressed classes should know that in any constitution that can be conceived there are bound to be full legal safeguards for their rights.

And lastly they may not feel helpless and dependent on the aid of reformers. They have a just cause and they have themselves to defend it. True meaning of Swaraj is that every member of the commonwealth, is capable of defending his liberty against the whole world. Swaraj is an inward growth. Their restiveness is the surest and the hopefulest sign of their and India's coming freedom. Healthy discontent is the prelude to progress. But meanwhile it behoves all the clerks and others who come in contact with these classes to treat them with exemplary consideration and courtesy.

Young India, 1-8-'29, p. 249

55. MISREPRESENTATION

(Originally appeared under the title "Untouchability")

As in the matter of Hindu-Muslim unity so has there been misrepresentation in the matter of Untouchability. It has been stated that I am sacrificing the interest of the untouchables for the sake of Swaraj. I know that the lacs of 'untouchables' will not believe any such thing of me. For me just as there is no Swaraj without communal unity, so is there no Swaraj without the removal of untouchability. He who runs may see that it is to the interest of the ruling caste to keep up the divisions among us. That caste is no more interested in Hindus and Musalmans coming together than in the removal of Untouchability.

In examining the sources of revenue I endeavoured the other day to show how the Government was built on an immoral foundation. Even so has it built itself upon our weaknesses and our vices.

Take the disgraceful Nasik quarrel. The Government knows that the Sanatanists are in the wrong. But what has it done? Because they represent a powerful interest, the untouchables have been sacrificed. It was open to the authorities to get together the Sanatanists and reason with them. It was open to them to reason with the 'untouchables' and ask them not to precipitate a fight. But this required an impartial mind, disinterestedness. But the Government is not disinterested. It rejoices to see the parties quarrel and then side with the strongest. I know that many good-natured but ignorant Englishmen will cavil at this opinion. I can only tell them that it is based on everyday experience. I do not suggest that every-time the action is deliberate. 'Might is right', 'divide and rule' have become the daily routine of the official world.

Such being my deep conviction, I would be wronging the minorities and wronging the 'untouchables' if I stopped the progress towards Swaraj by inaction. I hold that as soon as we have realized the power that is lying dormant in everyone of us, that very moment, we shall be free and we shall

feel the glow of real unity and 'untouchables' Will also feel an accession of power.

Let it be understood that everywhere the bands of civil resisters contain Musalmans, members of other faiths as also untouchables, be these ever so few. The fact is that the foundations of Swaraj are being laid by those who regard communal unity, equality of rights and opportunity and removal of Untouchability as articles of faith.

Let the 'untouchable' brethren not be" lured from the common goal because it was the presence of Englishmen that stimulated Hindu thought and brought to the 'untouchables' a sense of their rights. The fact is there. But the English did not descend upon India with any such benevolent motive. Their civilization or rather the western civilization does not recognize distinctions in the manner decayed Hinduism does. We could have profited by this excellence of theirs without having the infliction of their rule. 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. In some respects they are better, in some others they may be worse. But as rulers they are highly undesirable. As rulers they can do, have done, no good to any of us. They have pandered to, and accentuated our vices. And as we have developed the inferiority complex, their contact demoralizes us. I have watched ourselves acting one way in their presence, another way behind their backs. This is an unmanly and unmaning process; it is unnatural. 'The tallest of us,' said Gokhale 'has to bend before them.' When they come to their senses, they too will realize that their rule has no less debased them than us.

Now a word to the 'untouchables'. I have advised them and I repeat the advice that it is wholly unnecessary for them to seek to force entry into the orthodox temples even through the method of satyagraha. It is the duty of the 'touchable' Hindus to secure for the 'untouchables' the freedom of the temples. It is for the 'touchables' to offer satyagraha when the time is ripe. The 'untouchables' know that the Congress has appointed with Jamnalalji as the head a Committee for that very purpose. They know that very great progress has been made in the

matter of removal of Untouchability, they know that all over India are to be found hundreds of well-known believing Hindus who will lay down their lives to remove Untouchability. The reformers hold it to be their duty and penance to purge the Hindu society of this evil. Let the untouchables know that the vast majority of them are today engaged in this life and death struggle. If they realize the truth of the statements I have made, they will at least suspend the satyagraha pending the struggle even if the whole mass of them will not join it as some of them have already done. The Hindu reformers have undertaken the work not as patrons, not to do the favour to the untouchables, certainly not to exploit them politically. They have undertaken the task, because their conception of Hinduism peremptorily demands it. They have either to leave Hinduism or to make good the claim that Untouchability is no part of it but that it is an excrescence to be rooted out.

Young India, 17-4-'30, p. 129

56. WHAT I OPPOSE SEPARATE ELECTORATES FOR THE UNTOUCHABLES

I

(A gist of Gandhiji's speech at Indian Students' Majlis, London amplified by what he said about the same thing on other occasions as it originally appeared in "London Letter" by M. D. is given below.)

Muslims and Sikhs are well organized. The untouchables are not. There is very little political consciousness among them and they are so horribly treated that I want to save them against themselves. If they had separate electorates their lives would be miserable in villages which are the strongholds of Hindu orthodoxy. It is the superior class of Hindus who have to do penance for having neglected the untouchables for ages. That penance can be done by active social reform and by making the lot of the untouchables more bearable by acts of service, but not by asking for separate electorates for them. By giving them separate electorates you will throw the apple of discord between the untouchables and the orthodox. You must understand I can tolerate the

proposal for special representation of the Musalmans and the Sikhs only as a necessary evil. It would be a positive danger for the untouchables. I am certain that the question of separate electorates for the untouchable is a modern manufacture of a Satanic Government. The only thing needed is to put them on the voter's list, and provide for fundamental rights for them in the constitution. In case they are unjustly treated and their representative is deliberately excluded they would have the right to special Election Tribunal which would give them complete protection. It should be open to these tribunals to order the unseating of an elected candidate and election of the excluded man.

Separate electorates to the untouchables will ensure them bondage in perpetuity. The Musalmans will never cease to be Musalmans by having separate electorates. Do you want the untouchables to remain 'untouchables' for ever? Well the separate electorates would perpetuate the stigma. What is needed is destruction of Untouchability and when you have done it, the bar sinister which has been imposed by an insolent 'superior' class upon an 'inferior class' will be destroyed. When you have destroyed the bar sinister, to whom will you give the separate electorates? Look at the history of Europe. Have you got separate electorates for the working classes or women? With adult franchise, you give the untouchables complete security. Even the orthodox Hindus would have to approach them for votes.

How, then, you ask, does Dr. Ambedkar, their representative, insist on separate electorates for them? I have the highest regard for Dr. Ambedkar. He has every right to be bitter. That he does not break our heads is an act of self-restraint on his part. He is today so very much saturated with suspicion, that he cannot see anything else. He sees in every Hindu a determined opponent of the untouchables, and it is quite natural. The same thing happened to me in my early days in South Africa where I was hounded out by the Europeans wherever I went. It is quite natural for him to vent his wrath. But the separate electorates that he seeks will not give him social reform. He may himself mount to power and position, but nothing good will accrue to the untouchables. I can say all

this with authority having lived with the untouchables and having shared their joys and sorrows all these years.

Young India, 12-11-'31, p. 351 at p. 354

II

(From Gandhiji's speech at the last meeting of the Minorities Committee, at the Round Table Conference in London, which originally appeared under the title "Negation of Responsible Government".)

One word more as to the so-called untouchables.

I can understand the claims advanced by other minorities, but the claim advanced on behalf of the untouchables, is to me the 'unkindest cut of all'. It means the perpetual bar sinister. I would not sell the vital interests of the untouchables even for the sake of winning the freedom of India. I claim myself, in my own person, to represent the vast mass of the untouchables. Here I speak not merely on behalf of the Congress, but I speak on my own behalf, and I claim that I would get, if there was a referendum of the untouchables, their vote and that I would top the poll. And I would work from one end of India to the other to tell the untouchables that separate electorates and separate reservation is not the way to remove this bar sinister, which is the shame, not of them, but of orthodox Hinduism. Let this Committee and let the whole world know that today there is a body of Hindu reformers who are pledged to remove this blot of Untouchability. We do not want on our register and on our census untouchables classified as a separate class. Sikhs may remain as such in perpetuity, so may Muslims, so may Europeans. Will untouchables remain untouchables in perpetuity? I would prefer rather that Hinduism died than that Untouchability lived. Therefore, with all my regard for Dr. Ambedkar, and for his desire to see the untouchables uplifted, with all my regard for his ability, I must say, in all humility, that here is a great wrong under which he has laboured and, perhaps, the bitter experiences he has undergone have for the moment warped his judgment. It hurts me to have to say this but I would be untrue to the cause of untouchables, which is as dear to me as life itself, if I did not say it. I will not bargain away their rights for the Kingdom of the whole

world. I am speaking with a due sense of responsibility when I say it is not a proper claim which is registered by Dr. Ambedkar when he seeks to speak for the whole of untouchables in India. It will create a division in Hinduism which I cannot possibly look forward to with any satisfaction whatsoever. I do not mind the untouchables being converted to Islam or Christianity. I should tolerate that but I cannot possibly tolerate what is in store for Hinduism if there are two divisions set forth in the villages. Those who speak of political rights of untouchables do not know India and do not know how Indian society is today constructed. Therefore, I want to say with all the emphasis that I can command if I was the only person to resisting this thing I will resist it with my life.

Young India, 26-11-'31, p. 371 at p. 372

57. SOME QUESTIONS REGARDING UNTOUCHABILITY

In the course of an interview, Gandhiji answered the following among the questions put to him by the press representatives on the morning of 9-11-'33:

Q. How many years do you think it will take for complete removal of Untouchability at the, present rate of progress?

A. It is more than I can answer. It is a question of a change of the hearts of millions of human beings.

Q. Will you be prepared to receive Swaraj before this curse is removed?

A. The question is badly put. There is no meaning in asking whether I shall be prepared to receive Swaraj if Untouchability is not removed by then. Swaraj is not a matter of receiving or taking. It is one of evolution. We either grow to it from day to day or we go away from it; If we, as a nation, are becoming more and more conscious of ourselves, of the fundamental unity of millions, then we are certainly progressing towards it. Whereas, if we are dissolving, then we are receding from it.

Harijan, 1-12-'33, p. 1

58. JOINT OR SEPARATE?

Correspondents suggest that there should be separate temples, schools, wells, etc. for Harijans for the time being. A general adoption of the suggestion may easily be the way to perpetuate Untouchability, and we might as well have had separate electorates and elections for them, if we are to have everything else separate for them. I would certainly not have staked my life just to avoid separate electorates. I staked it, and it is still a stake, for the purpose of eradicating the present unnatural Untouchability from the religion itself. I rose against separate electorates, because it would have spelt an end to the effort for destruction of the canker. They would have meant an end to effective penance by the penitent caste-Hindu. With the Yeravda Pact, such penance is a possibility, whether the penitents are in the majority or the minority. That there is a mighty upheaval in Hinduism and that we have two well-defined divisions working actively for their respective objectives is the surest justification for the Yeravda Pact. As a result of it, the religious Untouchability goes or the reformer. If he is to be true to his pledge, the reformer has no other choice.

Therefore, separate temples and separate other services must be regarded with suspicion. Let us consider the limitations of the suggestion.

Till the legal obstacle in the way of opening public temples to untouchables is removed, the opening of existing temples on a large scale comes to a standstill. But the march of reform cannot be stayed. There are three ways of doing the thing.

- (a) Where public opinion and trustees are quite demonstrably in favour, of opening temples, trustees may open the temples under their charge and may take the risk of an injunction being issued against them.
- (b) Private temples should be opened where the owners are willing to open them.

- (c) Wealthy and spiritually minded people may open new temples under pure methods of consecration. (I add the adjective advisedly because I believe that all is not well with the existing temples.) These temples will be purposely designed for the Harijans as well as for the other Hindus. These must, therefore, be situated in such localities as are easily accessible to Harijans.

Common schools and wells should be opened where the existing ones are not available for Harijans either owing to the violent and successful opposition of the neighbours or some other unavoidable cause. Harijans cannot be left uncared for in matters of necessary services till public opinion has ripened. If there is a clearly awakened body of Hindus who have the same feeling towards Harijans as if they were their own kith and kin, they will not wait for public opinion to consolidate itself before taking action. They will do their best to supply pure water and good education to their own newly found kith and kin.

There is one special consideration in favour of opening what may be called preparatory schools for Harijan children. I cannot do better than quote the reason in the words of a co-worker who has gone to live in their midst and who writes:

"My school is conducted in a Harijan verandah. Some of my scholars are those whose noses are full of slime and eyes full of dirt. They spit where they squat. The condition of their bodies is in keeping with their eyes and noses. That of the clothes defies description. Some have bits of *roti* or sweets which they continually chew even whilst they are in the class. My lesson, therefore, begins with telling them how to keep clean, and behave. Whilst I am reciting the lesson, I do the cleaning myself. Lazy, talkative and quarrelsome, they provide me with a good lesson in patience. They are bad liars. Some of them are industrious and wise. I play with them and perhaps learn more than I teach. The attendance in my class varies. Sometimes I have only one youngster. The number has not yet gone beyond 15. Mind you, the school is only ten days old and I am new to it. I begin my class in the early morning. I sleep in a Harijan *dharmashala* about a furlong from the school. My work, therefore, begins as I

leave my sleeping room or whatever you may call it. I have to walk with my eyes open, broom in hand, cleaning the approach to the quarters which is all made dirty every morning with human excreta. It is very wonderful how the children or their mothers snatch the broom from me and help to clean what is apology for a road. I naturally sometimes enter their homes when they do not mind. Many of them are dark holes with inmates packed like matches. I observe these things and much more, but for the present I keep my lips sealed. For, I have not yet qualified myself by selfless service and love in order to be able to speak to them with authority. Truly, the Sun is the greatest scavenger in our country, or else some of the places, whether in Harijan quarters or in the quarters of the so-called superior castes, would be rightly uninhabitable even for those who are used to insanitary conditions. I can say at present that I rejoice in this new service and thank God that He has called me to it. But I am a novice. I know my limitations. I want to surmount them and, therefore, I often sing that beautiful verse at the Ashram, 'Thou hast not become a true Vaishnava, a true man of God, till. . . 'I long to fulfil God's conditions for becoming a true Vaishnava.'

This is but a sample of the condition of raw Harijan children. We want every one of these children to learn to live in a clean and decent manner. We want them all to attend the common public schools. Therefore, preparatory schools for them are an absolute essential if we mean honest business.

Harijan, 4-3-'33, p. 4

59. NATIONAL UNITY THROUGH SERVICE OF UNTOUCHABLES

(From "Towards the Brotherhood of Man", the title under which full text of Gandhiji's speech at a public meeting at Trichinopoly, appeared)

I may, in answer, give this absolute assurance ... to all whom it may concern, that in the evening of my life I am not likely to take up a sectional cause to the injury of the public cause. And if at the present moment I appear to be advocating a sectional cause, you may depend upon it that behind that

sectional cause lies deep down the desire that the whole of the public may benefit by it. For I do not believe that life is divided into separate air-tight compartments. On the contrary, it is an undivided and indivisible whole; and, therefore, what is or may be good for one must be good for all. Whatever activity fails to stand that unmistakable test is an activity that must be abjured by all who have the public weal at heart.

Having throughout my life believed in this doctrine of universal good, never have I taken up any activity—be it sectional or national—which would be detrimental to the good of humanity as a whole. And in pursuing that universal goal, I discovered years ago that Untouchability, as it is practised today among Hindus, is a hindrance not only to the march of Hindus towards their own good, but also a hindrance to the general good of all. He who runs may discover for himself how this Untouchability has taken in its snaky coil not merely caste-Hindus but all other communities representing different faiths in India, that is to say, Musalmans, Christians and others. In dealing with the monster of Untouchability, my own innermost desire is not that the brotherhood of Hindus only may be achieved, but it essentially is that the brotherhood of man—be he Hindu, Musalman, Christian, Parsi or Jew—may be realized.

Harijan, 16-2-'34, p. 5

60. SWARAJ AND UNTOUCHABILITY

(From "A Harijan's Questions Answered")

Q. Once you said that Swaraj can be attained the day Untouchability is removed. Is this present propaganda directed to that end? If so, are you going to give equivalent rights with other Hindus to our crores of untouchables?

Gandhiji: I should assert the statement again. But the present propaganda is directed only to the purification of caste-Hindus and, therefore, of Hindus. And when that purification is demonstrably attained, not only Swaraj but many other desirable results will follow, as day follows night. The word Swaraj as here used does not mean a mere legal status but something far better and more

lasting. I would call it an organic status evolved from within. Whatever meaning may be given to the word Swaraj, removal of Untouchability will be a fraud, if it does not carry with it the enjoyment by the freed Hindus of precisely the same rights as the other Hindus and all other communities may enjoy under it.

Harijan, 20-4-'34, p. 76