

1. SPEECH ON SWADESHI, BOMBAY¹

July 22, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi, who, on rising to speak, received an ovation, said that he had been addressing men and women everywhere in the city and he thought he would not be in a position to speak to them anything new on swadeshi. A gentleman had come to him from Lucknow who told him that something was going wrong in the United Provinces. A man had been incarcerated by Government for three days in a very dark cell for some trivial offence and was still in jail. The gentleman from Lucknow asked the speaker as to what a man in that position should do. He advised him to bear all hardships with patience. They should all create in their hearts the virtue of patience. He was not sure whether that story told by the gentleman was true or not, for it was very difficult to remain incarcerated for three days in a dark room. Of course, he had an experience of such an incident, because they had not forgotten as yet the cruelties perpetrated on Indians by foreigners in the Punjab. Therefore the story related to him might be true.

He would again tell them that, if they did not understand their duty towards the country, they were not then right in asking for freedom. He was going to speak to them on swadeshi that night. There were other stories related to him by someone that there were three persons arrested by Government. One of them was a Congress Secretary who on being arrested by Government apologized to the Government and the remaining two also apologized. They (the three men) had now given up the national cause and were remaining aloof from the movement. They should feel ashamed of such action. He would appeal to those present to be fearless as far as possible, for when their object was laudable, why should they care for the Government? If they were not willing to undergo hardships and troubles they should give up the movement at this stage. He, therefore, appealed to every man and women present in the hall to be ready for *dukha* (pain) at any time for the sake of their country.

They had opened a depot for foreign-made clothes, where they could send their clothes without any hesitation. If they did not succeed in boycotting foreign cloth by 31st July they would be put to great shame in the eyes of their fellow men and in the eyes of the world at large.

The Mahatma asked whether they had made any preparations for the 1st of August. There was no shame at all in sending away their clothes to that depot for foreign-made clothes. Some *bahens* (sisters) when asked to boycott their foreign made saris said that they were unwilling to do so. No doubt there were

¹ Held under the auspices of the "O" Ward Congress Committee at the Morarji Gokuldas Hall, at 9 p.m.

other women who were ever ready to wear the khadi dress. Whatever *pardeshi* (foreign) clothes a woman had at present, she should give them up in obedience to the call of the nation. If men and women present at the meeting were not willing to boycott their foreign-made clothes, they had no right, no claim whatever to swaraj.

Whatever he had got to say that night he had already said many times and he would now ask those who were willing to do what he desired to raise their hands. But before they raised their hands he must tell them that the so-called swadeshi cloth manufactured in mills should not at all be resorted to; for his advice to them was to avoid all machine-made cloth. The supreme virtue of khadi was that it was hand-spun and hand-woven.

Bezwada khadi saris, the speaker said, were now not available in large stocks but in their absence, they could very easily wear khadi saris and on the 1st of August they would see many women wearing khadi saris. He would again tell them that there was no shame at all in adopting that dress for it was their national dress. They should not keep *nirasha* (pessimism) in their mind, but they should be courageous in fighting the battle of Indian nationalism.

He then asked those men and women willing to dress themselves on the 1st of August and thereafter in khadi to raise their hands. At that request nearly all present in the hall raised their hands. Some women were found somewhat unwilling to raise their hands.

The Mahatma again appealed to them to boycott foreign-made clothes and wear khaddar dress without any fear or favour. Still he would ask them not to be led away by any threats . . .

Concluding, the Mahatma said he had nothing more to speak on the swadeshi movement, for he had been speaking constantly on the same theme for the last so many days. He had great faith in his countrymen and he therefore prayed to God that the great movement he had set on foot would bear good results in the end. (Prolonged cheers.)

The Bombay Chronicle, 23-7-1921

2. *SPEECH AT BOMBAY MEETING*¹

July 23, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi said before he commenced the proceedings of the meeting, he would read out a letter from Mr. Jayakar² who was laid up with fever and, therefore, had expressed his inability to attend the meeting and contribute his quota of tribute to the memory of the Lokamanya. He then requested Mr. Lalit to recite his song about the late Lokamanya.

In addressing the meeting, the Mahatma said that the work for which they had gathered was sacred. They had a long programme that afternoon. He would not detain them long.

Mr. Tilak was not noted for making long speeches. He was noted for brave deeds. The country loved him not for his oratory. It was possible to name some of his contemporaries who were better orators from the ornamental standpoint. He (Mr. Gandhi) therefore did not need to detain the audience with a long speech. He would draw their attention to some of the most marked qualities which made him the idol of the people, qualities which were so needed for the nation when it was making a supreme effort to obtain its emancipation during the year. The truest tribute they could render to the memory of the deceased was by imitating his qualities and weaving them into their own lives. One great quality that the country prized in the Lokamanya was his fearlessness. It was so marked a quality in him that some even accused him of rudeness. We know that he never spared the bureaucracy. He therefore roused its ire and was accused of raising hatred against Englishmen. He knew however that if Mr. Tilak was unsparing in his criticism of the bureaucracy, he was ready to give praise to its members when it was merited. He remembered, during the last Calcutta session, which the deceased attended, Mr. Tilak presiding at a Hindi Sammelan. He was coming from a strenuous discussion at the Congress session. But he was able to deliver a learned extempore speech at the Sammelan. He gave unstinted praise to English scholars for their service to the vernaculars. He said that future historians would acknowledge their service. That did not mean they had come to India for the purpose of benefiting the vernaculars but he said it would be unjust not to acknowledge the debt India owed to the many Englishmen who had helped them to

¹ Held at Empire Theatre, under the auspices of the Parsi Rajkiya Sabha. Marmaduke Pickthall, Mahomed Ali and Sarojini Naidu were among those present. A number of ladies in the audience, including Perin Captain, grand-daughter of Dadabhai Naoroji, were dressed in khadi. Money raised on admission to the function was set aside as help for the best biography of Tilak.

² M. R. Jayakar (1873-1959); Bombay lawyer and liberal leader, political negotiator and peace-maker

appreciate their own languages.

The second great quality which the country needed so much was Mr. Tilak's self-sacrifice. He never stinted himself for the service of his country. He did not bargain. For him sacrifice of self was a pleasure. The speaker said he did not need to give illustrations because the audience knew the examples of sacrifice better than the speaker. The third great quality was his extreme simplicity. Mr. Tilak had always observed swadeshi. If khadi had been manufactured in his time he would have unhesitatingly worn it. He could not believe him to be capable of seeking personal adornment. He appealed to the audience to copy Mr. Tilak's swadeshi spirit. They must not do it in a niggardly spirit. He had heard that ladies who had done so wonderfully in June were hesitating to part with their foreign saris. He could not forget the jewels a Parsi sister had sent at the Parsi meeting. He wanted the ladies to continue in the same spirit about swadeshi. If it was a difficult thing they must recall Mr. Tilak's example. This was no time for shedding tears over their wardrobes. He hoped that the citizens of Bombay would signalize the 1st of August by discarding all their foreign cloth and wearing khadi. He then called upon Shrimati Sarojini Naidu to speak.

The Bombay Chronicle, 24-7-1921

3. MY NOTES

DANGER FROM THIEVES AND ROBBERS

There is always danger from thieves and robbers in Kheda district. Such danger is there in other places, too, in greater or less degree. Swaraj also means being able to defend ourselves. It cannot be that others protect us and we enjoy swaraj. The people should possess the strength to protect themselves. Such strength may come in either of two ways. One is to permit thieves and robbers to do their work, that is, to own no property, and the other is to use force against them. All men are not willing to lose their belongings or to own none and so people devise means of intimidating thieves and robbers by force. Some employ watchmen and some fight themselves. One of the chief duties of a king is to protect his subjects from thieves and robbers. We can enjoy swaraj only if the people take over this duty themselves. We must, therefore, acquire this capacity. The job is not difficult. The residents of villages and towns should train their own volunteers and arrange for guard duty. Every village ought to have lights. If even this is done, the fear of thieves will largely disappear.

But, along with this, and with greater vigour, must proceed the work of reform. If it is important to protect oneself from a thief, it is

more important still to reclaim him. Theft and robbery are a kind of moral disease. We ought to have remedies for a disease. Thieves, too, should be regarded as part of society and efforts should be made to reform them. There is no reason to believe that they cannot be brought round, if only we meet them, explain things to them and try to educate them. We should have patience with them and love them. It is absolutely necessary for us to take up these two tasks.

THEFT ON RAILWAYS¹

There is no end of complaints about thefts and corruption on railways. If all these are true, they are a matter of deep national shame, especially at a time when the whole country is passing through the fire of purification. Government certainly have nothing to do with these malpractices; the responsibility is entirely ours. I have even heard that a bribe must be offered in times of famine when wagons are needed for the transport of grass. We may send anything we please by a railway parcel, but if it is at all vulnerable, its contents are bound to be tampered with. Only recently, a Bombay merchant received a parcel of khadi through the railway and found that part of it was stolen. If railway servants happen to see this, they will kindly consider this request of mine to have some regard for the public and to find out other and honest means of adding to their income. It is my advice to associations of railway servants that they may lay no less stress upon their members' performance of their duties than upon the vindication of their rights. If these complaints continue to exist even under swaraj, the administration then will be as costly as it is now. Swaraj can be maintained only where there is a majority of loyal and patriotic people to whom the good of the nation is paramount above all other considerations whatever, including their personal profit. Swaraj means government by the many. Where the many are immoral or selfish, their government can spell anarchy and nothing else. I am in this movement only as I believe that the many are good and true at the bottom, but, being cowardly and careless, are ignorant of their inherent qualities, and that when once they have realized the power of goodness, they will begin to practise it and succeed in the attempt.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 24-7-1921

¹ This translation appeared under Gandhiji's signature in *Young India*, 28-7-1921.

4. SPEECH AT SANTA CRUZ, BOMBAY

July 24, 1921

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I have come here today with a big hope in my heart. Brother Vithaldas told me yesterday that in Bombay foreign cloth was not being collected as speedily as money had been collected and, therefore, if a good beginning was made at some place, the work would proceed vigorously and the people, too, would respond well. In giving money, a beginning was made by Matunga but, in regard to foreign cloth, we have started with Santa Cruz in begging invitations. I myself sought this invitation.

Why do people feel that this work is something new we have taken up? The Congress passed the resolution on swadeshi last September. The Khilafat Committee had accepted it even earlier. From that time we have been propagating swadeshi jointly with Maulana Mahomed Ali. We have spoken about it wherever we have gone. If we succeed in securing a solution of the Khilafat problem, we shall have acquired the necessary strength for winning swaraj. But we cannot gain that strength except through a total adoption of swadeshi.

Swadeshi has two aspects:

- (1) boycott of foreign cloth and
- (2) production of other cloth in its place. It is my conviction that, if the mills alone produce all this cloth, India will not be able to win swaraj, or, having won it, will not be able to keep it. Until there is a spinning-wheel plying in every home in India, we shall not get swaraj.

Swadeshi, Hindu-Muslim unity and peace—these three are the main planks in our movement. This one [swadeshi] concerns all, Hindus, Muslims and Parsis.

If we had not forsaken swadeshi cloth when the East India Company came to India for trade and had not been tempted by the muslins and prints from England, our subsequent history would have been quite different. We can now win swaraj only if we adopt swadeshi once again. In the same manner, if we abandon Hindu-Muslim unity or peace, we shall lose swaraj as well. We have been so moulded that we are always inclined towards peace. It is not that after we have swaraj, no one will hurt another, but even so these are the

essential conditions for winning and maintaining swaraj.

It will be quite a different matter, in my view, if other States seek to conquer India with the sword. In any case, it cannot be denied that the bitterness between Hindus and Muslims is decreasing day by day. That is to say, this work [of bringing about unity between them] is proceeding and no particular effort is required for the purpose. As regards peace, too, no fresh effort is necessary. No sacrifice is involved in these two things. But swadeshi certainly requires sacrifices. We have to look after all the numerous communities with equal care. We cannot do without the services of cobblers, carpenters or blacksmiths. If we do not develop our strength as represented by each one of these, we shall certainly not succeed in getting swaraj. Swadeshi cannot be brought about by the efforts of one man alone. Money may be contributed by one person but to have one crore men and women as members of the Congress, that number of men and women are needed. Similarly, to turn the whole country swadeshi, each and every Indian must make himself so. For this work, thirty crores have to make sacrifices. Everyone must boycott foreign cloth with a clear understanding of the purpose. This was impossible a year ago. But now if we mean to, we can ensure complete boycott as early as this August. I have said that we can win swaraj within one month after we have ensured boycott of foreign cloth; in saying this I mean that, having done this job, we shall send an ultimatum to the Government. We have the capacity to produce cloth, but lack faith. The position in this matter is the same as with regard to food. There is an oven in the house and so food is no problem. Likewise, if there was a spinning-wheel lying in the house, we would certainly work on it and by and by get used to the work. The construction of our spinning-wheel is so beautifully simple that it is quite easy to make one. I believe we are in a position to boycott foreign cloth. There is a magic power in the spinning-wheel but, in order that this power may work, India needs to have faith. I think, however, that India has now acquired such faith.

India suffers from a disease. The love of fine cloth has not yet left the people. A khadi sari is too heavy for women in India, women who observe difficult vows! When I hear men and women say that they cannot give up fine cloth, I feel pity for them. If people tell me this, I shall say that we shall not get swaraj. If, even then, anyone offered it to us, I would decline to accept it. I would ask him if he knew what kind of people they were to whom he offered

swaraj. These people, I would say, have got indigestion. We have contracted tuberculosis, there is an unnatural flush on our cheeks. How strange that we do not like what is made in our country and like what is made elsewhere? Of how much worth is what you have given me today? I want what you have safely stored away. Understand your dharma and boycott all foreign cloth. What happiness have you found in this world? How can we bear to live under a Government based on a system which follows the very opposite of justice in everything? We must become swadeshi-minded. Swadeshi is both the means and the end. If you look upon foreign things as totally unworthy of use, give them away. This is not a kind of boycott in which, when conditions have changed, we may resume buying foreign cloth, for swaraj will be preserved only so long as we keep up the boycott. After we get swaraj, we may enter the councils and attend courts of law, but we certainly cannot start wearing foreign cloth. To think otherwise is to deceive ourselves. This work [of ensuring complete swadeshi] demands that all the crores in the country should act.

Please follow swadeshi completely. Cast off any foreign materials you have.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 31-7-1921

5. *SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BOMBAY*¹

July 26, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi said that the 1st of August was nearing and they had to do their duty to their country before that date. The witness of their duty was their own bodies; the signs of their duty and sacrifice were on their own bodies. It would not be necessary, then, to ask anyone if he had done his duty, for the signs would be apparent to everyone. Some people thought that by giving their quota towards the one crore already collected they had already done their duty. They should not think so. That fund was for the Tilak Memorial Swaraj Fund, and, as long as they had not gained swaraj, it could not be said they had done their duty to the great departed. It was not enough to collect money; they had to get swaraj. when they had complete swadeshi in this country, they could say they had swaraj. He did not mean by that that on the very day they had full swadeshi they could get swaraj. He had asked for a

¹ Held under the auspices of the Girgaum Congress Committee at the Marwari Vidyalaya Hall, Sarojini Naidu and Mahomed Ali also spoke.

month's time from the day they had complete swadeshi for getting swaraj. By adopting swadeshi they would be laying the foundation-stone of swaraj, and in a month's time they would get swaraj.

Instead of 20 lakhs of charkhas in the whole of India, Lala Lajpat Rai had assured him that in the Punjab alone there were forty lakhs. There were as many charkhas in every household there as there were women, and a Punjabi woman thought it an insult if she was asked whether she could spin. Women liked spinning, but it was the men who were responsible for its disuse in this country by adopting Manchester dhotis. Now that swadeshi was being adopted, the charkha had become popular all over the country. There was enough cotton in this country; there were enough men to spin. The only thing wanting was will on their part to utilize all these things. As it was the desire of all that they should be united into one nation whether they were Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Christians or Jews to attain swaraj, so it was essential that they should have complete swadeshi to win swaraj. Real swadeshi cloth would be made of Indian-spun yarn. There should not be the slightest trace of foreign yarn in it. Those saris which were made of foreign yarn must be discarded. Some men and women did not like to give up all their clothes at once; they wanted to keep back some, but by this means they would not fit themselves for swaraj. They had merely wasted their money in buying foreign cloth; they had kept a large number of their own countrymen in a condition of starvation. And those tainted clothes they must at once throw away. White khaddar must be worn not only on the 1st of August, but always after that.

The Bombay Chronicle, 27-7-1921

6. SPEECH ON SWADESHI, BOMBAY¹

July 26, 1921

Mahatmaji spoke on swadeshi and the immediate need of wearing khadi. He said it was through khadi we are to carry the programme of attaining swaraj in the near future; this was not the time for them to keep quiet, this was a time when we should all be awake and save our country from the hands of foreigners. Every year about 60 crores of rupees were being carried away from our country.

He put it to them what proportion of that went to benefit our countrymen? If two annas' cloth was bought, out of it 7 pice went into the pockets of foreign merchants. And if they bought khadi worth two annas, one or two pice went into the pockets of Indian merchants and the remainder went to our workers. When such was the case, they should all be ready by the 1st of August to burn all their foreign

¹ At a meeting held at Byculla under the auspices of the Byculla District Congress Committee

clothes, which he would repeat were nothing but full of sin. Let us do away with the sin by burning them at the sacred place where our great leader Lokamanya Tilak was cremated. If some of them were not prepared to burn them, they were welcome to send them to Smyrna. they would be failing in their duty to their departed leader Lokamanya if they could not make that work successful. He hoped to see them all on the Chowpatty sands on the 1st of August to do their sacred duty to their country.

In this connection, he would not omit to give some advice to the carpenter brethren of Byculla. He had not come there to accept a purse from them but to tell them to their face that the success of swadeshi was a part of their duty. Their duty was to make fine and cheap spinning-wheels—as many as possible to adorn every Indian home. He knew well that his carpenter friends were experts in making attractive almirahs and other pieces of furniture. But now they must not waste time in making such things. He appealed to them to produce thousands of spinning-wheels, which were the stepping-stones to swaraj. They should join hands and start making spinning-wheels from the following day. He hoped they would follow his advice.

The Bombay Chronicle, 28-7-1921

7. TELEGRAM TO HAKIM AJMAL KHAN

[Before July 28, 1921]¹

HAKIMJI AJMAL KHAN

DELHI

DEEPLY GRIEVED. ALL-INDIA COMMITTEE MEETS TWENTY-EIGHT BOMBAY CAN GO ALIGARH AFTER 1ST AUGUST. ORGANIZING BOYCOTT FOREIGN CLOTH WHICH WILL SUFFER CHECK IF YOU WANT ME ALIGARH THIS MONTH REPLY.

From a photostat: S. N. 7574

8. NOTES THE WHITE CAP

An employee of the British India Steam Navigation Company has been discharged for the effrontery to wear the khadi cap. Messrs Shaw Wallace and Co. set the ball rolling. This is an insult, the enormity of which we have not yet realized. We have stooped so low that we do not notice the curve. And yet, such insults are more humiliating for nations than physical blows delivered wilfully or in a

¹ The telegram was evidently sent before the meeting of the A.I.C.C. on 28-7-1921 at Bombay.

fit of anger. The crawling and rubbing the nose were physically less painful than the floggings,¹ and yet there are no two opinions that the former humiliated India more than the latter. What is there in a bow? And yet a Prince nearly lost the gadi because he had forgotten to bow at the correct angle and retire from a Viceroy's presence in the required manner.² It was the homage exacted by insolence for its sustenance. So have the two firms dismissed their poor clerks, because they had the manliness to wear their national dress or the insignia of their faith if you like. The proud firms could not brook an exhibition of manliness on the part of their clerks. The moment the men of India realize their manhood, and the women their womanhood, India becomes free. No power in the world can then keep freedom from her. These two dismissals, therefore, should have a world of meaning for us. And I must confess to a feeling of painful disappointment over the supineness of the employees of these firms. They should have shown at least the courage of the common labourer. India can show examples of a wholesale strike for the sake of an injured comrade. Have the clerks of these firms no feeling for their comrade? Can they claim kinship with the whole of India? What would they have done if a blood-brother had been so treated as these two brave young men? It is not yet too late for employees of these firms to make amends. they can still wear white khadi caps by way of protest and demand the reinstatement of their fellow clerks in their respective offices.

I venture, too, to warn the managers of the two great firms. Non-co-operators have steered clear of racialism. They are fighting against a vicious system with all their might. They have no quarrel with individual Englishmen. But if the latter take sides as the managers of the two houses have done, it will be difficult to avoid a racial outburst. There is danger of European firms being boycotted if the European merchants do not treat this matter as one of urgency and enforce rectification of the grievous mistake committed by the firms in question.

FISHING FOR APOLOGIES

The correspondence published in the *Independent* between

¹ The reference is to official excesses during the martial law regime in the Punjab in April 1919.

² The incident referred to relates to the conduct of Sayajirao Gaekwar, ruler of Baroda, during the King-Emperor's Durbar at Delhi in 1911.

Messrs Jawaharlal Nehru, Joseph and Ranga Iyer and the U.P. Government proves that my visit to the Viceroy and my advice to the Ali Brothers to apologize for some of their speeches was a blunder from a political standpoint. It is becoming more and more clear that, as Maulana Abdul Bari has said, whilst the harm done by the visit and the apology is patent, the good that they might have done is too latent to be seen by the public. Happily, I am not a politician. And I see the good hidden behind the discreditable use the U.P. Government have made of the Brothers' apology to lead Messrs Jawaharlal Nehru and his friends into a trap. The Government have even copied the phraseology of the Brothers' apology. Dirt is popularly and correctly described as matter misplaced. In precisely the same manner, whilst I hold that the Brothers' apology was an honourable transaction being in its place, the apology required by the U.P. Government would have been a dishonourable transaction being out of its place. But that Government had tough people to deal with. They were not to be duped by false analogies, nor frightened by threats of imprisonment. The Government, therefore, has before it the choice of further proving its incapacity and intolerance by launching prosecutions against the three public workers for speeches or writings which the public and they themselves had long forgotten. If it prosecutes the 'offenders', it will prove itself incapable of dealing with the root cause of the unrest, and it will prove itself intolerant of well-merited hostile criticism. To call a spade a spade may seem harsh to the spade, but the simple truth is more likely than anything else to go home. A Government that does harsh things cannot be truthfully described by sweet words. The publication of the correspondence therefore has been a great service to the cause of swaraj. It has cleared the atmosphere, and it serves as guidance for all who are placed in the same position as the three friends. A non-co-operator may not give an apology or undertaking to purchase freedom from prosecution. He must at the same time, whenever his attention is drawn to anything said by him which is calculated to incite to violence, immediately correct his error and keep himself true to his creed. If the Government wish honestly to deal with non-co-operators and wish to imprison them because they do not like non-co-operation even though it is and remains non-violent, it has only to charge them under Section 124A, and everyone of us must plead guilty, because it is our creed to harbour and to promote disaffection towards the Government as a system. We are out to destroy the system, and that, I am told, amounts

to sedition in terms of that section. If it is permissible in law to compass destruction of existing system, every non-co-operator is a pledged loyalist.

MISUSE OF JOURNALISM

It is something that *Capital* has apologized to Mr. Ganesh Damodar Savarkar for the remarks made by 'Ditcher' and referred to in these columns. The charge underlying 'Ditcher's remarks was so serious that it involved the brothers in serious trouble. Can an editor of a responsible newspaper when challenged claim immunity by hiding himself behind the fact that he had merely given currency to a rumour? Can he base an elaborate argument upon a rumour which for the wealth of details contained in the description almost amounts to a statement of facts? Can I, for instance, level all manner of charges against the King by prefacing them with a statement that they are based on a rumour? Can I after having made such charges draw elaborate inferences most damaging to His Majesty? I have only put the case in this blunt manner to show that I would be guilty of ungentle- manly conduct rendering me liable to summary dismissal from decent society for having in a cowardly manner sought to tarnish the reputation of the first gentleman in the Empire. Is the case any different when the objects of such insidious attacks happen to be two cultured and brave Indians, and the author of imputations a European journalist? Mr. Ganesh Savarkar has raised himself in the estimation of his countrymen by magnanimously waiving the right of prosecution for a foul imputation against his honour. But is journalistic honour satisfied by a mere apology, tendered as it appears to me in a half-hearted manner? The reply to Mr. Savarkar's solicitors starts with an excuse for conduct which is wholly inexcusable. No journal having the slightest regard for justice and fair play can afford to give currency to rumours, unless the editor has sifted them and believes them to be founded on fact. I do hope that both English and Indian newspapers will take serious notice of the matter and let the editor of *Capital* know that he has been guilty of conduct unworthy of an honourable journalist.

WHY BURN?

Critics have overwhelmed me with their rebuke regarding the burning of foreign cloth. After having considered every argument advanced against it, I cannot help saying that destruction is the best method of dealing with foreign cloth. The Provincial Congress

Committee has left it optional to the givers to choose between destruction and despatch to Smyrna or elsewhere. The discussion of the question therefore lacks the importance it would have had if destruction had been the only method prescribed for dealing with foreign clothes. The propriety of destruction depends upon the intensity of one's belief in the necessity of discarding foreign cloth. Just as a converted teetotaller will not hand the contents of his wine cellar to a needy neighbour, so would a votary of swadeshi, if he feels as keenly as the teetotaller, refuse to give to the poor the contents of his wardrobe. I hold that the wearing of foreign cloth in India is almost as bad as drinking. I am not sure that it is not even worse than drinking in some respects. For the last hundred and fifty years India has been importing foreign cloth at the expense of her great cottage industry, i.e., spinning. As Mr. Romesh Chandra Dutt¹ has pointed out in his study of the history of the deliberately planned destruction of the spinning and weaving industries of India, Bihar which was once one of the richest provinces of India was reduced to poverty by the systematic and cruel destruction of her flourishing industry of spinning and weaving. If we only realized the magnitude of the injury done by the East India Company and of the sin committed by us in yielding to the persecution of the Company's *gumastas*² or the temptations put in our way, we would hang our heads in shame. Our great national industry would not have perished, our women would not have been forced to labour on public roads, millions of our people would not have been obliged to remain a part of the year in enforced idleness if we could have retained swadeshi. In my humble opinion cloth which revives such black memories and is a mark of our shame and degradation is fit only to be destroyed. It certainly cannot be given to the poor. We should have much greater regard for their feelings and their national culture than to think that we serve them by giving them what to us is a mark of our slavery. Should not India's poor have a sense of patriotism? Should they not have feelings about dignity and self-respect in the same manner as we have? I would not have the meanest of us remain without a spirit of true patriotism. Just as we would or at least ought to recoil with horror from giving them rotten food or food we will not eat, so should we feel about giving

¹ 1848-1909; member of the Indian Civil Service; author of *The Economic History of India Since the Advent of the East India Company*, presided over the Lucknow session of the Congress in 1899

² Clerks

them foreign cloth. A moment's thought would also show that much of the finery we are throwing away is perfectly useless for the poor. Of what use can the dirty hats and caps stinking with our perspiration be to them, or the rich silk saris and the finest muslins that are being given up? They had no value except for the weavers who loved these things. They cannot clothe the famine-stricken. The things that are really useful to them are very few indeed. But I do not base my argument for destruction upon the uselessness of the clothing discarded. My argument goes much deeper if only because it is based upon a sentiment on which alone the noblest in us is and can be reared. Why should an Englishman resent an insult to a tattered flag? But he does, and rightly thinks that he must. What harm is there in gaining a million by concealing my faith for a moment? But I may not for the kingdom of the world. For exactly similar reasons we may not use foreign cloth for the poor in India. And it is after all making a convenience of an act of renunciation to send cloth thus discarded even to Smyrna or elsewhere abroad. But the moral objection to the despatch abroad is certainly not so strong as to its use at home.

FOREIGN YARN

The Indian Social Reformer objects to the exclusion of foreign yarn from the definition of swadeshi. It is impossible to retrace steps, to reform, to purity without some destruction and some hurt being caused somewhere. The weavers do not think that they will have to sit idle if they do not weave foreign yarn. They can without difficulty weave mill-spun yarn and exercise all their artistic talent upon it, if only for the time being we consent to be satisfied with less fineness. When foreign cloth and foreign yarn are not available in the Indian market, I can see no impediment to India's ability to reproduce the beautiful fabrics of old. The real art has died out, and tawdry things that pass for art have found a place in wealthy homes, because there are no patrons of real art. I look forward to the time, as soon as we reach normal conditions, when our rich men will have attached to their establishments houses for their special spinners and weavers whose business it will be to manufacture artistic cloth for the benefit of their patrons.

WOMEN AS PICKETS

A Parsi sister writes to say that when picketing is recommenced in Bombay, she is quite prepared to join any party that may be raised and she hopes that many other sisters will come forward. She is of opinion that if women respond in large numbers, their presence will

be an effective check on violence. I entirely endorse her remarks, and hope that many other sisters will send in their names to the Committee at Bombay as candidates.

DESECRATION OF GRAVES

A friend from Agra draws my attention to Mr. David's letter to the Press regarding the desecration of the graves of Christians in the Indian Presbyterian cemetery at Ajmer. I am sorry that the letter has escaped me. Mr. David rightly remarks that fanaticism and bigotry would mar the harmonious development of the Indian nation and are fatal to the growth of unity. Hindu-Muslim unity, as I have often said, means the unity of all those for whom India is their home irrespective of caste, creed or colour. Desecration of graves is a specially dastardly crime. Even laws of war respect the sanctity of graves. Only a depraved nature can delight in wicked desecration of graves. But the crime in question becomes still more wicked when we remember that at the present moment the nation is trying to harmonize all its discordant elements. There are many Christian sympathizers of our struggle. Mr. Andrews is a staunch Christian, and India has no truer worker than Charlie Andrews, rightly called the friend of the poor. I hope that the Congress Committee at Ajmer will look into the matter and help our Christian countrymen in every way.

Young India, 28-7-1921

9. NOBLE REPENTANCE AND ITS LESSON

I have just received the following pathetic letter from Mr. Yakub Hasan :

I now realize that I have committed a serious indiscretion in a moment of weakness. Ever since the significance of my folly had dawned on me, I am suffering excruciating pain in my heart which is nearly driving me mad. I owe an apology to you as the head of the movement, and I offer it in the most humble¹ manner possible. As my guide and leader, scold and chastise me as much as I deserve, but I hope you would for God's sake forgive me my sin. I would undergo a penance to make my peace with God and to undo any disservice that my action may have done to the holy cause that I sincerely and earnestly endeavoured to serve before this according to my lights.

The letter has a ring of sincerity about it which disarms all criticism. I have informed Mr. Yakub Hasan it is not for me to forgive

¹ The source has "humiliating"

him. Who knows that I should not prove as weak as he has in the face of danger ? God alone can forgive. For He alone knows us through and through. We have His promise through His word revealed in many lands and to many peoples that when a man confesses before Him his weakness with a pure and humble heart, He forgives. Being weak ourselves let us not throw a stone at a brother who has confessed his weakness.

But let Mr. Yakub Hasan's plight serve all of us as a danger signal. For though victory seems to be in sight, there is danger of our not being able to stand the last heat when it comes, as it must. Let us make up our minds that this Government will try us through and through before it really bends to the will of the people. We must be prepared in our thousands to fill the jails of India. We must be prepared not to mind cholera breaking out within their precincts. It is far more sufferable than the moral chronic cholera of slavery we are suffering from. Brave Sherwani has gone to jail without a fault, if the report of the farcical trial be true. Someone or other is daily going to jail in the United Provinces. Now comes a telegram from the Andhra Province to the effect that two important workers have been sentenced to one year's imprisonment at Guntur—one is a barrister. Mr. Venkatappaya, who sends the wire, says that more repression is expected. It was bound to come sooner or later. If we stand the fire without flinching, swaraj this year is a certainty.

But there is danger not only of weakness. There is danger too of people losing their heads under provocation and retorting. This danger of people going mad is more serious than inability or unwillingness to suffer. It is up to every worker throughout India that he prevent violence even at the risk of losing his life in the attempt.

The best answer that India can give to the impending universal repression is to perform the act of renunciation of all foreign cloth in utter disregard of the figures flung in our faces by wise economists. If we have the will, we can manufacture in three months' time all the cloth we need through hand-spinning and hand-weaving. Have we the will to be satisfied, pending attainment of swaraj, with khadi ?

Young India, 28-7-1921

10. HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

Everybody knows that without unity between Hindus and Mussulmans, no certain progress can be made by the nation. There is no doubt that the cement binding the two is yet loose and wet. There is still mutual distrust. The leaders have come to recognize that India can make no advance without both feeling the need of trust and common action. But though there is a vast change among the masses, it is still not a permanent quantity. The Mussulman masses do not still recognize the same necessity for swaraj as the Hindus do. The Mussulmans do not flock to public meetings in the same numbers as the Hindus. This process cannot be forced. Sufficient time has not passed for the national interest to be awakened among the Mussulmans. Indeed it is a marvel that whereas but a year ago the Mussulmans as a body hardly took any interest in Congress affairs, all over India thousands have registered themselves as members. This in itself is an immense gain.

But much more yet remains to be done. It is essentially the work of the Hindus. Wherever the Mussulmans are still found to be apathetic, they should be invited to come in. One often hears from Hindu quarters the complaint that Mussulmans do not join the Congress organizations or do not pay to the Swaraj Fund. The natural question is, have they been invited? In every district Hindus must make special efforts to draw out their Mussulman neighbours. There will never be real equality so long as one feels inferior or superior to the other. There is no room for patronage among equals. Mussulmans must not feel the lack of education or numbers where they are in a minority. Deficiency in education must be corrected by taking education. To be in a minority is often a blessing. Superiority in numbers has frequently proved a hindrance. It is character that counts in the end. But I have not commenced this article to lay down counsels of perfection or to state the course of conduct in the distant future.

My main purpose is to think of the immediate task lying before us. *Bakr-i-Id* will be soon upon us. What are we to do to frustrate the attempts that will then be made to foment quarrels between us—Hindus and Mussulmans? Though the situation has improved considerably in Bihar, it is not yet free from anxiety. Over-zealous and impatient Hindus are trying to force matters. They lend

themselves an easy prey to the machinations of mischief-makers not always prompted by the Government side. Protection of the cow is the nearest to the Hindu heart. We are therefore apt to lose our heads over it, and thus be unconsciously instrumental in doing an injury to the very cause we seek to espouse. Let us recognize that our Mussulman brethren have made great efforts to save the cow for the sake of their Hindu brethren. It would be a grave mistake to underrate them. But immediately we become assertive, we make all effort on their part nugatory. We have throughout all these many years put up with cow-slaughter either without a murmur or under ineffective and violent protest. We have never tried to deserve self-imposed restraint on the part of our Mussulman countrymen by going out of our way to cultivate friendly relations with them. We have more or less gratuitously assumed the impossibility of the task.

But we are now making a deliberate and conscious attempt in standing by their side in the hour of their need. Let us not spoil the good effect by making our free offering a matter of bargain. Friendship can never be a contract. It is a status carrying no consideration with it. Service is a duty, and duty is a debt which it is a sin not to discharge. If we would prove our friendship, we must help our brethren whether they save the cow or not. We throw the responsibility for their conduct towards us on their own shoulders. We dare not dictate it to them as consideration for our help. Such help will be hired service, which the Mussulmans cannot be blamed if they summarily reject. I hope, therefore, that the Hindus of Bihar and indeed all the parts of India will realize the importance of observing the strictest forbearance, no matter what the Mussulmans do on *Bakr-i-Id*. We must leave them to take what course they choose. What Hakim Ajmal Khan did in one hour at Amritsar, Hindus could not have done by years of effort. The cows that Messrs Chhotani and Khatri saved last *Bakr-i-Id* day, the Hindu millionaires of Bombay could not have saved if they had given the whole of their fortunes. The greater the pressure put upon the Mussulmans the greater must be the slaughter of the cow. We must leave them to their own sense of honour and duty. and we shall have done the greatest service to the cow.

The way to save the cow is not to kill or quarrel with the Mussulmans. the way to save the cow is to die in the act of saving the Khilafat without mentioning the cow. Cow-protection is a process of purification. It is *tapasya*, i.e., self-suffering. When we suffer volunt-

arily and, therefore, without expectation of reward, the cry of suffering (one might say) literally ascends to heaven and God above hears it and responds. That is the path of religion, and it has answered even if one man has adopted it *in its entirety*. I make bold to assert without fear of contradiction that it is not Hinduism to kill a fellow-man even to save the cow. Hinduism requires its votaries to immolate themselves for the sake of their religion, i.e., for the sake of saving the cow. The question is how many Hindus are ready without bargaining with the Mussulmans to die for them and for their religion? If the Hindus can answer it in the religious spirit, they will not only have secured Mussulman friendship for eternity, but they will have saved the cow for all time from the Mussulmans. Let us not swear even by the greatest among them. They can but help. They cannot undertake to change the hearts of millions of men who have hitherto given no thought to the feelings of their Hindu neighbours when they slaughter the cow. But God Almighty can in a moment change them and move them to pity. Prayer accompanied by adequate suffering is a prayer of the heart. That alone counts with God. To my Mussulman friends I would but say one word. They must not be irritated by the acts of irresponsible or ignorant but fanatical Hindus. He who exercises restraint under provocation wins the battle. Let them know and *feel* sure that responsible Hindus are not on their side in their trial in any bargaining spirit. They are helping because they know that the Khilafat is a just cause and that to help them in a good cause is to serve

India, for they are even as blood-brothers, born of the same mother—*Bharata Mata*.

Young India, 28-7-1921

11. NON-VIOLENCE

It is my conviction that we are in sight of the promised land, but the danger is the greatest when victory seems the nearest. No victory worth the name has ever been won without a final effort, more serious than all the preceding ones. God's last test is ever the most difficult. Satan's last temptation is ever the most seductive. We must stand God's last test and resist Satan's last temptation, if we would be free.

Non-violence is the most vital and integral part of non-cooperation. We may fail in everything else and still continue our battle if we remain non-violent. But we capitulate miserably if we fail in

adhering to non-violence. Let it be remembered that violence is the keystone of the Government edifice. Since violence is its sheet-anchor and its final refuge, it has rendered itself almost immune from violence on our side by having prepared itself to frustrate all violent effort by the people. We therefore co-operate with the Government in the most active manner when we resort to violence. Any violence on our part must be a token of our stupidity, ignorance and impotent rage. To exercise restraint under the gravest provocation is the truest mark of soldiership. The veriest tyro in the art of war knows that he must avoid the ambushes of his adversary. And every provocation is a dangerous ambush into which we must resolutely refuse to walk.

The story of Aligarh is an illustration in point. It seems clear enough that sufficient provocation was given by the police. We have long recognized that it is their business to do so. The people of Aligarh walked into the trap laid for them. They allowed themselves to be provoked, and resorted to arson. It is not yet clear who killed the constable in mufti. The burden is on the people to show that they did not.

Let us be hard on ourselves. If we wish to walk along the straight and narrow path (which is necessarily the shortest), we must not be self-indulgent. We may not throw the blame for any mishap on the badmashes. We must be responsible for their acts. Or we declare ourselves unfit for swaraj. We must gain control even over them. Even they must realize the necessity of not interfering with the national and the religious work we are engaged in. In a movement of purification, the whole country is lifted up not excluding the wicked and the fallen. Let there be no mistake, that is our deliberate claim. If it is merely a lip claim, we shall prove ourselves guilty of having set up a system more Satanic than the one we condemn as such.

Therefore whilst we are following the course of non-violent non-co-operation, we are bound in honour to live up to it in thought, word and deed. Let us make the frank confession if we are too weak or too incredulous to live up to our creed.

The reader must not run away with the idea that I feel we are not standing the test. On the contrary I believe that we have obtained a marvellous hold over the people, that they have understood the necessity of non-violence as they have never done before.

But it would be wrong for us not to take due warning from the slightest deviation from the path deliberately chosen by us.

I find it necessary too to utter the word of caution, because the provocation by the Government is on the increase. It is the greatest in the U.P. The arrest of Mr. Sherwani at 5 o'clock in the morning, his swift trial, conviction, sentence and removal the same day are enough to irritate the most sober-minded. The details of the trial show that the magistrate knew little of law and cared less. The evidence before him, if all of it has been given to the Press, was quite insufficient for a conviction. It almost seems that the conviction and sentence were prearranged. The production of evidence in that case was a huge farce. We are having a rehearsal of trials under the ordinary law. Where is the difference between an executive order and a judicial trial? The latter is more deadly as it is more difficult to expose. To say that a man had no trial carries greater conviction of injustice than to have to say that the trial was farcical. Repressive laws may be repealed; it does not follow therefore that repression will be done away with. The substance will be the same though the form is changed. What we want is a change of substance, of spirit, of heart.

And if we desire that change, we must first change ourselves, i.e., be proof against repression. Just as we may not retort with violence, so may we not weaken under repression no matter how severe or trying it may be.

An authentic rumour comes from the U.P. that at least three more or less noted workers found the jail life too trying, gave undertakings to refrain from certain acts and procured their discharge. If this is true, it is sad. We must be firm as a rock. There must be no going back. We must be able cheerfully to bear any torture that may be our lot in the jails of India. We may expect no quarter from the Government. We must expect it to do the worst it can whether within or without the law. Its one purpose is to bend us, since it will not mend itself.

I am not passing harsh judgment on the Government. Dharwar and Aligarh are the latest instances of Government's defiance of propriety. If I am to credit another rumour, in a U.P. jail a brave Mussulman prisoner was put in a dark cell and locked up in it for three days in the midst of foul stenches. My informant asked me, what a man who could not bear these stenches was to do. the harsh but deliberate answer I gave was, that he was even then not to apologize, he was free to dash his head against the walls of the prison rather than submit to the wish of the tyrant. This is not an idle expression of opinion, but a titbit from my South African

experiences. The jail life in South Africa was not a bed of roses. Many a prisoner had to undergo solitary confinement. Hundreds had to do sanitary work. Several fasted. One woman was discharged a skeleton because the authorities would not allow her the only food she would eat. But she had a proud and resolute spirit. Out of the thousands who suffered imprisonment in South Africa, with one or two exceptions in the early stages I do not recall a single instance of a prisoner having weakened and apologized to purchase his freedom. Some like Parsi Rustomji, Imam Kadir Bavazir, Thambi Naidu and many others whose names I could set down never flinched but repeatedly sought imprisonment. The Temple of Freedom is not erected without the blood of sufferers. Non-violent method is the quickest, the surest and the best. Let us be true to our solemn oath taken at Congress and Khilafat gatherings, and triumph is at hand.

Young India, 28-7-1921

12. MY NOTES

CLASH IN MHOW

Mhow is an important Government centre near Indore. Its population includes both Hindus and Muslims. Only a few days ago, news of a clash between Bohra and Sunni Muslims appeared in newspapers, printed in some inconspicuous corner. It is believed that, as a result of the clash, one Bohra was killed and several others were wounded. The origin of the quarrel, it is said, was the refusal of Bohras to contribute money to the Swaraj Fund. For whatever reason it may be, we find the relations between Bohras and Sunni Muslims strained. We saw this was so in Godhra too. A similar thing happened in Ratlam. The Bohra community in the whole of the country adds up to only three lakh members. It is the duty of the larger communities to make such small groups feel secure. Even if the Bohras take no part whatever in the Khilafat or the swaraj movement, they should certainly not be subjected to harassment for that reason. It is possible that members of a very small community may not come forward [to join such movements] out of timidity or fear of consequences. In this situation, it will only be proper not to put any pressure on them. I have even been told that, at Mhow, the Hindus joined others against the Bohras. I believe that, if people of the same religion fight among themselves, others should remain perfectly neutral and should try to bring about understanding and harmony

between the two groups. Just as it is improper for Muslims to take sides in a quarrel among Hindus, so it is unbecoming of Hindus to take sides in a quarrel among Muslims. It is the duty of every Khilafat worker to stop such clashes wherever any may be threatened.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 28-7-1921

13. TELEGRAM TO A NON-CO-OPERATOR AT HYDERABAD

July 29, 1921

NON-CO-OPERATORS CANNOT GIVE EVIDENCE.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1921

14. DISCUSSION ON BOYCOTT AT A.I.C.C. MEETING, BOMBAY

[Before *July 30, 1921*]¹

GANDHIJI : Where are the hopefulness and energy which we displayed when we collected a crore of rupees in the month of June? Do we now have misgivings whether we shall succeed in bringing about boycott of foreign cloth? Our weakness is the only cause of our fear. If we consider the matter calmly, we shall realize that there will be nothing else for us to do after we have succeeded in bringing about the boycott. The more I think of it the more I am convinced that we shall not even be required to advise soldiers to lay down arms or tax-payers to refuse to pay taxes. If we can effect a complete boycott, only a few people will then have to court jail by offering civil disobedience or make other sacrifices. You need not, therefore, feel dispirited or give way to despair or lose heart.

I have with me here a number of questions about swadeshi and boycott, which I shall try to answer.

QUESTIONS. What is wrong if we undertake not to buy any new foreign cloth henceforth and continue to wear the clothes we have till the stock is exhausted?

ANSWER. I cannot understand how we can keep a thing after we have realized that we violate our dharma in using it. If we violate it by using foreign cloth, how can we keep such cloth even for a moment?

¹ The A.I.C.C. met from July 28 to 30.

I shall have committed a wicked sin if we force ourselves into somebody's house and smash his oven. The imports of foreign cloth have done this to our poorer classes, have utterly destroyed our [cloth] industry and reduced many of us to the verge of starvation. We have, through this trade, destroyed the very means of our livelihood. This also has been a terrible sin. When somebody has broken the chains on our feet, shall we preserve the fragments? I realize that we have developed the same sort of attachment for foreign cloth which a slave who has long been in chains develops for them, and that is why we raise such questions.

Q. Even if we throw away our garments of foreign cloth, why should we not give them to our poor, half-naked brothers and sisters? Why should we not give comfort to their hearts by making them a gift of those clothes? Why should we send them out of India to foreign countries?

A. If someone has flung beef into our house, should we throw it out or give it to a poor person? It may indeed be acceptable to some poor people, but why should we give to another person anything which we think sinful to use? Do we give our half-cooked or stale food to anybody to eat or do we throw it away? Our people are in such miserable straits that some persons may be ready to eat even stale food. But you will concede that offering them such food does not reflect credit on our generosity or our nobility. We have resolved that we shall congregate at Chowpati on the 1st of August clothed in khadi or, at any rate, in swadeshi garments. We wish that not a single person should come there except in such clothes. Do you, then, wish that the poor people should not attend that meeting? How can they come there wearing garments of foreign cloth discarded by you? Why should they, too, not come properly clad? We pride ourselves on our generosity in giving food, but we lack discrimination in expressing our compassion. Why should the poor adorn themselves with what we have discarded? Why should we have to give alms to the poor? The only gift we can bestow on the poor is to make them self-reliant; our movement is for making them like us. "Like us" does not mean wealthy, it simply means that they do not starve or go naked for want of clothes. The worst of sinners has the right, like ourselves, to breathe. There is no Shashtra which says that he has no right to eat, drink and cover himself. Who has the right to beg? No one except a saintly man who has given us, and continues to give, the free gift of knowledge, has this right. We show lack of consideration and commit sin in giving alms. I believe that many of our charity kitchens are

symbols of sloth and sin. We should create such conditions in the country that no person will have to beg for alms. If we want to make the poor self-reliant, it is necessary to teach them some vocation or other. Only today an Englishman came to discuss this matter with me. I was explaining to him how odd it would be if he offered his hat or his suit to a poor man. I do not see on the head of anyone of you who have gathered here a turban or a cap which can be of use to a poor man. What will they do with the fine and multi-coloured saris of our sisters here? They simply do not wear such things. Had we been considerate, our dress would have borne some resemblance to that of the poor. I know the shepherdesses of Kathiawar. They would decidedly throw away the saris presented by you. Is there any poor woman who may need your silk sari? Shall we offer such saris to starving folk? Why should we create confusion in their minds? The *Gita* has forbidden us to act in this way. Why do you think that poor people will be all bliss if you give them your discarded articles? When they realize that we have given them things which we deem sinful, they will curse us. If you feel for people who are starving, give them something out of what you have kept for your own use. Why should you not give them some khadi from what you have for your use? The merit which accrues from good deeds is not earned cheaply.

Q. We may hand over our garments of foreign cloth for being sent outside; but why should they be consigned to fire? Why should the human labour which produced them go waste?

A. I would behave like a civilized man to foreign countries too. Why should we not buy mill-cloth and send it to them? I shall concede this, that it is less objectionable to send such cloth to Smyrna than to gift it to people here. There are things which may be sinful, not always and everywhere, but only at a particular place. It is so with foreign cloth. For European countries which are mostly dependent on other countries for their requirements of cloth and do not grow cotton, use of foreign cloth is not a sin. We can send back to Europe cloth which was manufactured there and imported into our country. It would not be proper for me to enter into argument with Muslim friends on this point, so I yielded and allowed the option of sending the cloth discarded by us to Smyrna. Our primary duty, however, is to make a bonfire of such cloth.

It is asked why an article on which human labour has been expended should be destroyed. But is there anything in this world on

which human labour has been expended and which will never be destroyed? My turban is well-shaped and my brother followed the profession of winding turbans. If, however, it comes to be infected with plague germs, should I, merely because it was wound by my brother, refrain from destroying it? It is, of course, my duty to destroy it. We look upon the human body as a raft with the help of which we may cross the sea of earthly existence. God has ordained the destruction of even such an essential instrument. He destroys a great many things. Are we, then, wiser than He? We have a right to destroy the thing produced by us.

Q. Why are we expected to destroy the cloth which we bought under the impression that it was swadeshi, which we were told was swadeshi? Swadeshi meant one thing till this day and now it is being defined to mean another. How can we be sure that after a while, it will not be defined in yet another way? Should we discard our clothes every time?

A. If someone gives us arsenic mistaking it for *chirata*, shall we swallow it? The question will never be asked. If somebody gives me a pice coated with mercury and if I tender it at a shop as a half-rupee coin, would not the police arrest me? We ought to discard a thing the moment we discover that it is not what we took it to be. The definition of swadeshi remains the same that I gave in 1919, but at the time I framed that definition there was no khadi even on my body. How could I put before the country something which did not exist? Today we have it in heaps. All we need now is self-confidence. We have modified the definition of swadeshi from time to time as we found practicable. A man may free himself from all forms of slavery, but he must still be a slave of his comrades. I, too, had to defer to the views of Shri Omar Sobhani and Shri Shankarlal Banker, and, for their sake I formulated the second pledge to the effect that one could use cloth woven with mill-made yarn produced from indigenous cotton. The matter did not stop there. Shrimati Ramibai Kamdar saw a difficulty even in this, and so I formulated the third pledge. There is, however, only one genuine form of swadeshi and I am now asking everybody to take that pledge.

Q. Does not the burning of cloth involve a breach of the pledge of non-violence?

A. Cleansing of filth is not violence. That is sin which leads to the degradation of the soul. Some violence is unavoidable. Shastras tell us that breathing involves violence. Even plants have life. Even

then we eat vegetables and yet do not think that we commit violence in doing so. If we look through a microscope, we shall find that even water is full of bacteria. Milk, too, is seething with bacteria. Even then, we see no harm in drinking water, and milk actually is considered to be a very nutritious food. I am committing some violence even as I am speaking to you now, but this violence is unavoidable and we do not regard it as sin.

It is a sin if you eat two morsels when you can do with one. The *Gita* says that we are thieves if we are not moderate in eating, and yet we arrange sumptuous community dinners. At every step we disobey the teachings of the *Gita*. What right, then, have we to ask this question?

Q. If, through want of faith or out of false regard for others or out of fear, a person hands over some of his garments of foreign cloth, and only some, and afterwards buys foreign cloth again, it would do the country harm rather than good. Why should we then try to collect such garments or cloth? Why should we not merely explain to the people the slavery involved in foreign cloth and leave them free saying "Do what you think best."

A. Why should we doubt or distrust anybody? Why should we believe the other man to be a dissembler? Why should we think that somebody has not been sincere in parting with his cloth? Whatever one's motive in doing a good deed, it does yield some benefit. If someone speaks the truth out of fear, even this will save the world from the harm that would have otherwise resulted from his lying. If a man does a good thing with an evil motive, it will harm him and he will not get the merit which accrues from a good deed; still, the world will certainly benefit from the goodness of his act. A man who discards foreign cloth and wears swadeshi, both out of fear, may not get for himself the merit of a virtuous act, but his wearing swadeshi will provide work to some artisans in the country and his action will certainly result in that much good. We should, however, presume that what people have offered they have done with sincere faith.

The suggested application of "Do what you think best" is also mistaken. When did Lord Krishna say these words? Only after He had Arjuna securely in his grip. The Lord explained to him what his duty was, pleaded with him in various ways and then asked him to do what he thought best. We, too, should explain things to the people, appeal to their sense of honour and then, if they are still not

persuaded, we may tell them to do what they think best. We should not, of course, wish to kill anyone. Even if, however, we are not ready to lay down our own lives instead, we must boycott foreign cloth. We shall not be following dharma if we sit back with folded arms and do nothing. I shall continue to attend meetings like this till the 1st of August, but afterwards I shall stop doing even that. I shall go on pleading for swadeshi only up to the 31st of August. Afterwards, I shall give up that too. I am a practical business man. I shall go on with the crushing of any quantity of oil-seeds only as long as I believe that it is worth while doing so, and stop afterwards. I have much other business to attend to.

Q. How can those people who earn only eight to ten annas a day afford to boycott foreign cloth? How can a man earning Rs. 100 to 150 a month discard foreign cloth and get new garments made from swadeshi cloth or khadi? Should they incur a debt? Should they beg? Should they not rather rest content with a pledge not to purchase foreign cloth henceforth?

A. Even such a poor man should cleanse himself of the filth of foreign cloth. If the worst comes to the worst, let him beg for khadi afterwards; let him borrow money from friends or get it through hard labour, wearing, meanwhile, no more than a *langoti*. A strong determination will help us to overcome many difficulties. Such determination is a form of prayer and it does bear fruit.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-9-1921

15. SPEECH ON SWADESHI, BOMBAY¹

July 30, 1921

Mr. Gandhi said on the 30th June Indians had done their duty to their country and they must be proud of it, for they had realized that they could do a thing without the support, the patronage, of Government. Their fear about want of money was now removed and even now he was receiving, unasked, funds from his Parsi, Mohammedan and Hindu friends for the Tilak Swaraj Fund and that showed that Indians were realizing their duty to their Motherland. He was now sure that, if the money that was already collected was spent properly, they would not only be able to collect one crore of rupees, but even four crores. He, however, wanted swaraj before the end of the year

¹ Gandhiji spoke to a crowded meeting of Parsis, held under the auspices of the Parsi Rajkiya Sabha, at Excelsior Theatre.

and that would mean they would not have to collect any more monies. But man proposes and God disposes, and his desires might not be fulfilled. If all Indians—men and women—did their duty to their country, he was sure of success. The All-India Congress Committee had now decided that they should put their energies in producing as much khaddar as possible. Without having swadeshi they could not have swaraj. Indians did not like to wear what was produced in this country but only those clothes which came from England, France and Japan, as they thought that country-made cloth was not beautiful or artistic enough for their requirement. If they could think like that, how could they realize swaraj? The two lungs of India were food and clothing and if they were diseased the country could not live long. How many crores of people there were in this country who were on the verge of starvation? If

they thought about them they would find that it was their duty to provide for those starving Indians. If they read the history of this country they would find that since India gave up weaving and spinning and took to foreign cloth India was suffering from poverty and as long as they did not try to remedy these things their sufferings would continue. If the Parsi millionaires gave all their money to the poor of this country their sufferings would not cease, for did they want to keep those crores of persons dependent on their *sadavarts*? Or did they want to make them self-dependent? By their own efforts, by their own work, these people should earn their livelihood and get their clothing, and they must not be taught to depend upon others for their necessities. There was only one way of providing work for the poor in this country and that was by Indians wearing khaddar. Some people might ask him why all those poor persons did not come to towns like Ahmedabad and Bombay where there was so great a scarcity of labour. He did not think that the poor of India would leave their homes and migrate to the towns for work in the mills. Supposing they did that, what would be the result? Indians would have to starve, for who would till the soil and produce wheat and other cereals for them? India would then be a jungle and the people would have to starve. It was therefore not possible for the whole population to migrate to towns. So long as there was a single man starving in this country, so long it was the duty of Indians to be economical and not to indulge in useless luxuries. Therefore he was telling his friends that whatever reforms they might get, whatever resolutions they might pass in the Councils, so long as they could not remove the poverty from this land, all their efforts would be in vain. He would appeal to his Parsi friends to realize the true position of India, diagnose the disease from which the country was suffering and then try to remove it by means of observing swadeshi. Let the Parsis show to the whole country—however much steeped in luxury they might be, however much they might like to use costly things and clothes—that once they had realized the serious position of this country they were willing to do their duty by their Motherland and not only fall in line with other communities, but to lead the other backward communities to the goal of swaraj. He

for one believed fully that a community which was always taking the lead in many questions in this country would also lead the country this time and would not fall behind. It was impossible for the country to make a move forward without taking all the different communities with it and India could not afford to leave a single community behind. Parsis who had been taking a leading part in so many questions, he had no doubt, would do so also in this regard. The Parsis should not say that because they had two months before them they would do nothing until the 30th September and give up everything on the last day. The Parsi community would be put to test on Monday next¹ and he knew they would not be found wanting, for he knew his Parsi friends thoroughly. How could he not know a community with whom he had lived for so many years? The men and women who had given so much money to the Tilak Swaraj Fund, who had given up their ornaments, should not fail in their duty now on the 1st of August. Let them all give up their foreign clothes on that date! What they thought was sinful to wear they should not keep for a single moment with them. They must realize that by wearing these foreign clothes they were starving millions of their own countrymen. Those foreign clothes should be destroyed and must not be kept with them, for they were tainted. What was sinful for them to wear was also sinful for poor men to wear and therefore he was against their clothes being given to poor men even. But they might be sent out of India to Smyrna if they so desired.

He would ask them to wear khadi and allow poor men to wear the mill-made cloth. Whatever was hand-made was more artistic, more beautiful and better on the whole than what was made on the machine. All that was made on the machine was for the poor and the rich men should spin their own yarn and send it to their own weavers to be woven into any kind of cloth they liked. That was the practice formerly before they took to foreign cloth. We had forgotten all the artistic crafts that were in this country and had taken to mill-made foreign things simply because they came from France or England. Were they incapable of all originality among themselves that they should resort to foreign countries for everything? Had they forgotten all their crafts and were they so much dependent on foreign countries for their requirements? He appealed to them to give up their foreign things and make some sacrifice for their country. It was not actually a sacrifice that they were making; they were only serving their country. He was glad that all the members of the All-India Congress Committee numbering something like 300 had come down to Bombay dressed in pure white khaddar. He often remembered what Mr. Pickthall had said about this. He had said that if they wanted to adopt any new colour they must first wash themselves white of all their impurities—they must adopt pure white khaddar before they took any coloured cloth. There was purity, there was holiness and there was beauty in khaddar

¹ August 1. The boycott campaign was to be launched on that day.

and it did not cause any inconvenience to those who wore it. It was the badge of our Indian nationality and they must wear it now. He then asked them to sign their names after due consideration to the pledge which was circulated among them. They must do so only after full consideration as he did not want to shame them into signing the pledge. It should be purely voluntary and there should be no sort of compulsion whatever.

The Bombay Chronicle, 31-7-1921

16. MY NOTES

WHITE-CLAD INDIA

On the day of the birth anniversary of Tilak, I was astonished to see Mr. Pickthall, the editor of the *Chronicle*, come to the meeting dressed in khadi, with a khadi cap, and still more pleased by his speech, brief but full of the purest sentiments. He said : “This is a movement of self-purification. India will lose nothing by wearing only white clothes for some time to come. Let them fill in colours after they have, clad in white, achieved their goal.” We wear white khadi as we have no time to get it dyed. Moreover, many of us do not like colours, as they are of foreign make. That Mr. Pickthall should see in the whiteness of khadi the purity of our movement—this struck me as a very beautiful idea. Today, we look upon all colours, whatever their source, as beautiful. In truth, however, they are ugly spots. Beauty and art lie in colours which have been used to dye the right material with due regard for the times and after satisfying oneself as to their source. What a difference there is between a child’s brush-work on a piece of paper and an artist’s drawing into which he has infused a soul! At present our fascination for colours is of the same order as that for the dabs of paint made by a child’s brush. No artist will arise in the country and we shall see no paintings in its shops so long as the majority of people do not start wearing white clothes. There can be no beauty of design, as they say, except on material of quality; in very much the same way, we cannot have a variety of designs pleasing to the eye and the mind so long as we do not make a beginning with pure, white khadi. The colours we have today are much like the colour of a white-washed tomb. One who hopes to see the development of Indian art must throw out the rubbish of foreign cloth and prepare a white background. Just as we clean up our yard before painting designs in it, similarly it is necessary to clean up immediately the rubbish of foreign cloth which is lying on the country’s doorstep.

A PARSİ SİSTER

Our Parsi brothers and sisters have started taking a very active part in the national movement. Shri Godrej, it appears, has decided to run his whole business of making safes in the interest of the country. Parsi youths have come forward to picket liquor-booths. Parsi men have started wearing khadi. Perinbehn, grand-daughter of the country's "Grand Old Man", has taken to dressing in thick khadi from head to foot. Parsi sisters have contributed their jewellery to the Tilak Swaraj Fund. The Parsi Political Association celebrated the birth anniversary of Shri Tilak in the Empire Theatre. Now one Parsi sister from Bombay has expressed a desire to take part in the picketing of liquor-booths and has invited other women to do likewise. This lady has suggested that if other women also join in picketing much of the present fear that it might lead to violence will disappear and we shall also have saved ourselves from the allegation that among the pickets are undesirable characters too. I offer my congratulations to this lady.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 31-7-1921

17. CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE RESOLUTION ON ELECTIONS¹

[BOMBAY,
July 31, 1921]

Mahatma Gandhi proposed the following resolution :

XVII. Without prejudice to the constitutional questions relating to the elections to the All-India Congress Committee held in Bengal and Madras last month and without going into the merits thereof, in view of the fact that fresh elections must take place in or before November next all over India and in view of the fact that a heavy intensive programme is at present set before all Congress organizations, this Committee considers it undesirable, in the interests of the country, to disturb the said elections and advises such persons from Bengal and Madras as feel themselves aggrieved to co-operate with the Provincial organization in both the Provinces with a view to the prosecution of the programme to a successful issue.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1921

¹ The Congress Working Committee met at Manibhavan, Laburnum Road, at 8.30 a.m. The resolution was seconded by Mahomed Ali and passed by a majority.

18. *SPEECH AT INAUGURATION OF KHADI EXHIBITION, BOMBAY*

July 31, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi, in declaring the Exhibition open, said he was thankful to the President and to Mrs. Atia Begum for the great trouble they had taken in this regard. The latter had worked day and night to make it a success. He knew there were other workers with her, and he would give his praise to them also, but Atia Begum was the driving force behind the whole show. He was glad there were such women in this country with such organizing powers, and he thanked the President and her sister for what they had done in the matter. He was gladder that the organizer was a Muslim woman.

It was their misfortune that people should have to be told at this time of day that many things could be made out of khaddar. He hoped that people would take advantage of the Exhibition. Defining khaddar, he said it must be purely hand-spun and hand-woven and made in this country. He was glad that this country was now capable of manufacturing the finest cloth, particularly in the Bezwada and Ganjam districts. Many of the sisters present at the meeting must be wearing saris manufactured in those parts of the Presidency and they should be proud that this country was capable of manufacturing saris of such fineness. But the man who was mainly responsible for producing such fine cloth in this campaign was also there. His sin was that he had popularized khaddar in his province and encouraged its production there. Mahatma Gandhi did not say that simply because he was popularizing khaddar.

He was put into jail, but so far as he could see there was nothing against him except this crime of making the use of khaddar very popular among the people. Government was now afraid of such people, and by book or by crook it was trying to put such people into jail.

It was, therefore, our duty to go to jail wearing pure white khaddar like Venkatappaya, the lion of Andhra, one of the staunchest workers in the cause of Congress and swadeshi. Government was resorting to such oppression because they had seen that the people were determined to do what they said they would do before the 30th of September. When they had begun their work they had already given an ultimatum to the Viceroy. He congratulated both Mr. Sherwani and Mr. Venkatappaya of Andhra on the splendid courage they had shown in going to jail in fulfilment of their duty to their country. But the people should not be afraid of such oppression, for as long as they did their duty they had nothing to fear in this world. He appealed to the people

¹ The exhibition was organized by the Rashtriya Stree Sabha.

to do what they could for the country by sacrificing their personal conveniences and luxuries and taking to khaddar. When he had been to Puri, he saw there people dying of hunger, and there were about three crores of such people in this country. When our peasants were working the charkha in their spare time, they used to supplement their income, thus keeping the wolf from their doors, but now that the people had taken to Manchester cloth the occupation of the peasantry had gone and they were starving. In the temple of Jagannath itself the image of the god was clothed in foreign calicoes and he had asked the priest there whether he was not shaming God Himself by this means.

People had been complaining that the price of khaddar had been increased by his friends Vithaldas Jerajani and Narandas Purshottam. He would tell the people that these friends were doing that business in order to cover the working expenses and they had no intention of making any sort of profit out of the transaction. Some people were complaining that the weavers were asking more money for their khaddar. It is was so where was their crime? Had anybody complained when the lawyers and doctors and increased their fees ? Some of them were taking as much as Rs. 1,000 per day and where was the harm of the poor weavers asked for a few annas more? Had they not their families to maintain and by getting a few annas more would they not be giving their families what they were lacking for so many days? But why should the people complain on that account? People should not mind even if the weavers increased their prices more than they had already done.

He wished every household in this country to be turned into a spinning mill and every lane into a weaving mill for the regeneration of this country. If their women could devote their spare time to weaving which they now wasted in going to cinemas, etc., India would be able to support herself as far as clothing went.

The Bombay Chronicle, 1-8-1921

19. SPEECH ON SWADESHI, BOMBAY'

July 31, 1921

I regard this day as sacred for Bombay. We are removing today a pollution from our bodies. We are purifying ourselves by discarding foreign cloth which is the badge of our slavery. We attain today fitness to enter the Temple of Freedom (swaraj).

Some say that destruction of discarded clothing is a token of

¹ The historic meeting inaugurating the swadeshi campaign with a bonfire of foreign clothes was held near the Elphinstone Mills at Parel, a suburb of Central Bombay. Printed copies of Gandhiji's speech were distributed in advance at the meeting. This translation was published in the newspapers.

anger and ill-will. Whether it is or not depends upon the point of view from which we burn such clothes.

Why should we bear ill-will towards the English, the Americans, the Japanese or the French? They will continue to dump down their cloth in our midst as long as we choose to buy it. Therefore if we are angry, we should vent our anger against ourselves. We shall cease to think ill of foreign nations when we have ceased to be tempted by foreign fineries.

I observe that the events happening in Turkey are agitating our Mussulman countrymen. They are impatient about the Khilafat wrong. I venture to suggest to them that the shortest and the straightest way of serving the Khilafat is swadeshi. For, by adopting swadeshi we make India powerful. And increase of India's power means an increase in our power to defend the Khilafat.

But the uppermost thought in our mind today must be to purify ourselves for celebrating tomorrow the anniversary of Lokamanya's death. We cannot purify ourselves until we have pledged ourselves to swadeshi. I, therefore, hope that those who have given up their clothes for distribution or sending abroad will make a fixed determination never any more to wear foreign cloth. I am sure that the best method of perpetuating Lokamanya's memory is the attainment of swaraj. And swaraj is impossible without swadeshi. And the inauguration of swadeshi can only be signaled by a complete and permanent boycott of foreign cloth. Hence I look upon the ceremony of burning as a sacrament. And I consider myself fortunate that the sacred ceremony is to be performed by me. May God remove all our uncleanness whether within or without! May India have the strength to carry out her solemn determination to bring about a complete boycott of foreign cloth by the 30th September next!

The Bombay Chronicle, 1-8-1921

20. SPEECH ON SWADESHI, BOMBAY¹

July 31, 1921

In the course of his speech Mahatma Gandhi said that the charkha was their sword with which they must fight the battle of swaraj and win it for their country. The charkha was the only weapon which would enable them to protect their dharma and it was their duty to bring khaddar into universal use in this country. On swadeshi alone

¹ At a meeting held in the compound of Motisha's temple in Parel

depended their salvation and it was their duty to give up for ever the use of all foreign cloth. The foreign clothes which they were now using were so many bonds which bound them hand and foot to foreigners and if they wished to see their country free for ever they must give up their foreign clothes. It was the bounden duty of every Indian to think of his poor brethren who were on the verge of starvation, because they had given up the use of swadeshi cloth and taken to foreign things. Now that they had realized the fate of their poor countrymen, were they going to allow them to remain in their present condition for ever? He hoped not. He had not the least doubt that those who had not already given up their clothes would do so immediately. He also appealed to his sisters present there to give up their foreign finery and wear khaddar for the sake of their country. Only by adopting complete swadeshi could they ever hope to free their country from the bonds in which at present it was. For true swadeshi meant true swaraj and they must have swaraj for their country. He earnestly appealed to the audience to do their duty to their country at this critical juncture and win swaraj for ever.

The Bombay Chronicle, 1-8-192

21. LETTER TO J. B. PETIT

[End of *July*, 1921]

DEAR MR. PETIT,

I thank you for your note of the 18th instant. I thought the note was [for] Rs. 2,000. I write from memory. Do please send Rs. 500/- out of the Rs. 2,000 note.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : G.N. 8231

22. MESSAGE TO PEOPLE OF KHEDA DISTRICT

[Before *August 1*, 1921]

BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF KHEDA,

I have always hoped for much from you, and now that you have found a place for Bhai Abbas Tyabji in your hearts, my hopes have risen. Your contribution to the Tilak Swaraj Fund has exceeded expectations. The country's second pledge, which now remains to be carried out, is more difficult, but certainly it cannot be so to you. A farmer can have no love for foreign cloth. He would feel ashamed to have to wear garments of fine cloth. The one thing which, more than anything else, can banish fear from Kheda district is the spinning-wheel. We have realized its miraculous power. Hereafter we must

depend on it alone. To do so, we ought forthwith to give up foreign cloth. No day can be more auspicious for that purpose than the death anniversary of Tilak Maharaj. On that day, make a bonfire of your foreign clothes and so cleanse yourselves. Having done so, resolve that you will in future manage with a few garments of any quality available and that you will produce in Kheda itself all the khadi you require. May God help you in this!

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 7-8-1921

23. *SPEECH ON SWADESHI, BOMBAY*

August 1, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi said the large crowd had not come there to hear speeches. They had all come there to worship Lokamanya Tilak. They had come there to pay their tribute to Tilak Maharaj. His message would appear in the newspapers and the people could read it there. His heart rejoiced to see so many people there who were determined upon winning swaraj within this year. We had to do our best to get freedom within this year. For that purpose we had taken the oath to boycott all foreign cloth by the 30th of September. It was their duty to see that they kept their oath religiously. He did not want to say anything more, as the incoming tide was advancing rapidly. The patience with which they had sat there showed that they were all non-violent non-co-operators. He hoped that Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Sikhs, Christians and Jews would observe the oath which they had taken. Tilak had taught them that swaraj was their birthright and only by winning that freedom would they be doing their duty to their country. He appealed to them to go home quietly and observe the swadeshi vow not only now, but for ever and ever. He exhorted them never to give up swadeshi even after they had got swaraj.

The Bombay Chronicle, 2-8-1921

24. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BOMBAY¹

August 1, 1921

It was the magic of Lokamanya Tilak's name that brought together the two lakhs of men and women on Mr. Sobani's ground yesterday. It was to me a soul-stirring sight. Bombay the beautiful lit yesterday a fire which must remain for ever alive even as in a Parsi temple and which must continually burn all our pollutions, as yesterday we burnt our greatest outward pollution, namely, our foreign clothing. Let it be a token of our determination never to touch foreign cloth. Untouchability of foreign cloth must be held to be a duty with every Hindu, Mussulman, Jain, Sikh, Parsi, Christian, Jew and all other religious communities which have made India their home. Let it be a common necessary factor for all Indian creeds. Untouchability of foreign cloth is as much a virtue with all of us as untouchability of the suppressed classes must be a sin with every devout Hindu. It was therefore a noble sacrifice we made yesterday. Bombay qualified herself for celebrating Lokamanya's memory. Let us treasure the memory of his great self-sacrifice, his dauntless courage and his austere simplicity. He made patriotism a religion. Let us dedicate ourselves for realization of his dream of swaraj. No memorial less than swaraj can fittingly perpetuate his memory.

And as I said yesterday, there is no deliverance of India without true swadeshi. It was the true and necessary sacrificial fire we lit yesterday.

As with the outer, so with the inner. To me, yesterday's outward fire is the symbol of the inner fire that should burn up all our weaknesses of the head or the heart. Our purified reason must show us the true economics of swadeshi. Our purified hearts must make us strong to withstand the temptation of yielding to the charms of foreign cloth. Howsoever good it may be outside India, it is not good enough for India.

If it was a true fire we lit yesterday, if it is a true homage we have met today to render to the memory of Lokamanya, we will take good care not to deceive ourselves or the nation. Khadi is on a fair way to become the State dress, it is not the foreign muslin that will henceforth

¹ The meeting was held at Chowpati. The text of this speech was printed and distributed to the audience.

deck our bodies on auspicious occasions, but the sacred khadi reminiscent not of sweated labour or the enforced idleness and pauperism of India's millions, but of the reviving poetry of the home life and of the incoming prosperity of the poorest toiler. And if that is to be the significance of yesterday's sacrament and today's demonstration on the very spot where twelve months ago the sacred remains of our deceased countryman were cremated, there must be no turning back upon our resolution, there must be no make-believe, no mere show. We must give up the use of foreign cloth once for all. We must realize that foreign cloth in our possession is valueless, even as the richest milk if it is discovered to be infected is fit only to be thrown away. If we are no longer to wear foreign cloth, is it not so much burden locked up in our trunks? Do they not, in Europe, give up valuable things when they have gone out of fashion? I utter this word of caution at this early stage, because I know that many have given up only a part of their foreign clothing in the hope, evidently, that some day they might be able to wear what they kept. Collection of foreign cloth is not like collection of funds and jewellery of which only a part need be given by many. Collection of foreign cloth is like collection of refuse, every particle of which an industrious and careful housewife puts in the dustbin. So much depends upon our ability to revolutionize our taste for the tinsel splendour if the shops for the sale of foreign cloth are to be an exception in our bazaars. Let us not hanker after imitations. If we do, we are likely to have fraudulent imitations of khadi from foreign markets. For the time being and during the transition period, the coarser and unwashed khadi is the best.

I swear by swadeshi as it affords occasion for an ample exercise of all our faculties and as it tests every one of the millions of men and women, young and old. It can succeed only if India *acts as one mind*. And if India can do so in swadeshi, she will have learnt the secret of swaraj. She will then have mastered the art of destruction and construction in a scientific manner.

To us the spot where we burnt a part of our sins yesterday has become hallowed. Let me hope that Mr. Sobani who was already contributed generously to the movement and who has given his son to it, will part with just the plot on which the sacrificial fire was lighted and enable the nation to erect a fitting monument to commemorate the sacred event. And so must we acquire this site where we have met today and where we cremated the remains of Lokamanya. Here out

of his ashes rose the force of non-co-operation. It was on the 1st of August last that non-co-operation was inaugurated. And it was in Parel on Mr. Sobani's ground yesterday that the nation commenced what is to me almost the final stage in its march towards swaraj. May God grant that india shall not be found wanting on the 30th of September next.

A word about the volunteers, and I have done. We are often accused of incapacity of organization. Yet there was no police needed yesterday, and there was no mishap. All work from collection down to burning was organized by the volunteers. All honour to them and the other helpers. It is by such patient, silent and peaceful effort that we hope to win freedom's battle.

Young India, 4-8-1921

25. NOTES

PRIDE OF ANDHRA

After all Konda Venkatappaya and his barrister and *vakil* friends have been arrested. When the news of the first two arrests of a well-known barrister and *vakil* came, I was prepared to hear that Mr. Venkatappaya was shot dead. He had proclaimed a week's hartal over the arrests in anticipation of the Committee's sanction. I felt that the hartal was a bad move. And I think so still. His next telegram was that the hartal was going on peacefully. Then came the telegram announcing the arrest of his four associates and of himself. I believe Konda Venkatappaya to be the pride of Andhra. He woke up in that great country when everyone else was asleep. He has great strength of character. He has accepted non-violence as his creed and he is fully living up to it. With so many others he has for years dedicated himself to the service of the country. And when he is arrested, to me it is the surest sign of the complete insanity of the Government. It is also a sign to me of victory hastening to us. Only, the Andhra friends must remain calm and unperturbed. They are a brave and spiritually-minded people. They have dogged pertinacity. They have a fine body of workers. And they can give a good account of themselves during these few months of strenuous work. They can best honour the imprisoned leaders by becoming leaders themselves and organizing swadeshi. They must discard foreign cloth. Ours is a country in which we do with just enough cloth to hide our nakedness. Andhra has still got the skill to produce the finest hand-spun

yarn obtainable in India. Let every Andhra man and woman be engaged in this great work during the next two months, no matter what happens to whom. Imprisonment of the best of us ought not to arrest the progress of our work; it should on the contrary add to our speed.

INDIAN SOLDIERS AND CIVILIANS

Bureaucracy does not mean Englishmen merely; it also means thousands of Indians trained by them. It is a vicious system which taints all who belong to it. And so it has come about that now the Indian soldier and the Indian civilian are being used more and more for advancing the system. Who are the men at the back of the Guntur arrests? Indians. Who gave the order to fire in Matiari? An Indian. Who charged the poor labourers of Assam? Indians. Who conducted the mock trial of Maulana Sherwani? An Indian. The Gurkhas who charged had not the courage to disobey the orders to assault innocent men and women. The Indian officers and magistrates in various places have not the courage to refuse to punish or shoot innocent men. Our demoralization is complete when we become willing tools in the hands of the tyrant. I should not at all be surprised if we find that the next Jallianwala is organized and worked under Indian guidance. And it would go down to posterity as training in swaraj! The profession of a soldier or a judge cannot be an honourable calling under a system of government that is designed to keep millions of men under subjection as long as possible. But we must put up with tyranny of our own kith and kin as we do with that of the foreigner. Let us not weakly imagine that we may frighten them into giving up their job! They will do so only when they are tired of it, never by our making their life intolerable. We must challenge them to do the worst even as we challenge the English official or officer. As a matter of fact they can only be pitied. And being irresponsible, they are more likely to make fatal blunders than an English official. The latter often imposes upon himself a restraint which his consciousness of being a member of the ruling race requires whereas the Indian runs at the most the risk of losing his post. The repression now assuming definite shape in our land is therefore of a far more dangerous type than hitherto. We must be prepared to face it patiently and fearlessly.

THE SIKH COLOUR

The Sikh friends are needlessly agitated over the colours in the proposed national flag. They want the black colour also to be

inserted on the ground of their military importance. Apart from the merits, their agitation has no point, as the flag has not even come before the All-India Congress Committee for discussion or decision. And in view of their objection I do not propose to bring it up before the Committee at all, so long as I have failed to convince them of the unreasonableness of the demand. On the merits, I have not the shadow of a doubt that they should withdraw the objection. The white includes all other colours. To ask for special prominence is tantamount to a refusal to merge in the two numerically great communities. I would have had only one colour if there had been no quarrel between Hindus and Mussulmans. The Sikhs never had any difference with the Hindus. And their quarrel with the Mussulmans was of the same type as the Hindus. It is a dangerous thing to emphasize our differences or distinctions. We must seek for points of contact. Distinguished Mussulman friends on hearing of the Sikh claim advised me to adopt a single colour, either white or red. But that too would be inadvisable. The two colours red and green should be there to perpetuate the growing unity. I am aware of the difficulty of Sikh nationalists. The Government agents in the Sikh camp are making all kinds of mischievous suggestions to breed dissensions. And they are naturally afraid. The best thing is not to worry. If they attempt to set right every grievance manufactured against Hindus or Mussulmans or against the non-co-operation movement in general, they will find that they will have no platform to stand upon. Whether they are few or many, Sikh nationalists must know their own mind and stand unmoved by anything said by their detractors.

SIKH REPRESENTATION

Whilst therefore I believe the complaint regarding the national colours to be unsound, I regard the Sikh fear about representation at the present stage to be justified. They have been assured by the Congress communal representation if the Mussulmans insist upon the Lucknow compact. The Working Committee issued only advisory instructions because of attempts to divide Mussulmans. The Sikhs therefore are entitled to similar assurances. There should be no difficulty about issuing them. It is largely a question for the three communities in the Punjab to settle among themselves. The Committee can only issue helpful instructions.

THE AGREED STATEMENT

His Excellency the Viceroy has now issued a statement¹ agreed between him and me regarding the interviews I had the honour of having with him. The statement sets forth all the details that the public need know. I do not propose to discuss it. In my opinion, it makes it clear that the apology, as I have called the statement of regrets initiated with me, was conceived before I ever knew of the impending prosecution for the speeches that were shown to me and that it was neither suggested nor made for fear of the prosecution of the Brothers, certainly not to avoid imprisonment. It is my firm belief that the Brothers have rendered a great service to the cause by making the statement. I do not regret having given them the advice. I wish also to place on record my appreciation of the willingness with which Lord Reading approached my request for the publication of an agreed statement. In the lengthy correspondence² that ensued between us for settling the form and the language of the statement, I did not observe on His Excellency's part my inclination to avoid mention of any relevant detail. On my part I had informed him that I had no intention to hide anything whatsoever. The public therefore have a full statement from both sides.

BAD OF KARACHI

Though I have not read the papers regarding the stoning of Europeans in Karachi by a crowd that was incensed against the imprisonment of Swami Krishnanand, from what I have heard through friends from Sind I must confess that those who threw stones have done a disservice to the sacred cause they had at heart. They have also shown little honour to the Swami by breaking the pledge of non-violence. The Swami is undoubtedly a popular and fearless worker. He had been producing by organized picketing a marked impression on the receipts of the liquor-dealers. I hear, too, that he was falsely charged with having assaulted someone. Granting all this, it was the clear duty of the populace to observe perfect self-restraint. It is a most thoughtless thing to assault innocent Europeans, because the police have wrongly prosecuted and a magistrate convicted. Incidents such

¹ *Vide* Appendix "Interview-cum-apology", 4-8-1921.

² This is not available.

as these make civil disobedience difficult, if not impossible. Let the crowd that so misbehaved in Karachi honour the Swami by boycotting foreign cloth, and by spinning or weaving.

A SIGN OF THE TIMES

One of the happiest experiences of the A.I.C.C. meeting in Bombay was the fact that a Telugu member asked speakers who knew Hindustani to speak in that language, and the Tamil President accepted the suggestion and straightway appealed to the next speaker to speak in Hindustani. The idea was popular, and several speakers adopted it. There are now many schools in Dravida-land teaching Hindustani. Much however still remains to be done. I hope that when the Committee meets next, the Dravidian members will have made headway with their Hindustani. Let the would-be delegates to the Congress also take note.

Young India, 4-8-1921

26. CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

Civil disobedience was on the lips of every one of the members of the All-India Congress Committee. Not having really ever tried it, everyone appeared to be enamoured of it from a mistaken belief in it as a sovereign remedy for our present-day ills. I feel sure that it can be made such if we can produce the necessary atmosphere for it. For individuals there always is that atmosphere except when their civil disobedience is certain to lead to bloodshed. I discovered this exception during the satyagraha days. But even so, a call may come which one dare not neglect, cost what it may. I can clearly see the time coming to me when I *must* refuse obedience to every single State-made law, even though there may be a certainty of bloodshed. When neglect of the call means a denial of God, civil disobedience becomes a peremptory duty.

Mass civil disobedience stands on a different footing. It can only be tried in a calm atmosphere. It must be the calmness of strength not weakness, of knowledge not ignorance. Individual civil disobedience may be and often is vicarious. Mass civil disobedience may be and often is selfish in the sense that individuals expect personal gain from their disobedience. Thus, in South Africa, Kallenbach and Polak offered vicarious civil disobedience. They had nothing to gain. Thousands offered it because they expected personal gain also in the shape, say, of the removal of the annual poll-

tax levied upon ex-indentured men and their wives and grown-up children. It is sufficient in mass civil disobedience if the resisters understand the working of the doctrine.

It was in a practically uninhabited tract of country that I was arrested in South Africa when I was marching into prohibited area with over two to three thousand men and some women.¹ The company included several Pathans and others who were able-bodied men. It was the greatest testimony of merit the Government of South Africa gave to the movement. They knew that we were as harmless as we were determined. It was easy enough for that body of men to cut to pieces those who arrested me. It would have not only been a most cowardly thing to do, but it would have been a treacherous breach of their own pledge, and it would have meant ruin to the struggle for freedom and the forcible deportation of every Indian from South Africa. But the men were no rabble. They were disciplined soldiers and all the better for being unarmed. Though I was torn from them, they did not disperse, nor did they turn back. They marched on to their destination till they were, every one of them, arrested and imprisoned. So far as I am aware, this was an instance of discipline and non-violence for which there is no parallel in history. Without such restraint I see no hope of successful mass civil disobedience here.

We must dismiss the idea of overawing the Government by huge demonstrations every time someone is arrested. On the contrary we must treat arrest as the normal condition of the life of a non-co-operator. For we must seek arrest and imprisonment, as a soldier who goes to battle seeks death. We expect to bear down the opposition of the Government by courting and not by avoiding imprisonment, even though it be by showing our supposed readiness to be arrested and imprisoned *en masse*. Civil disobedience then emphatically means our desire to surrender to a single unarmed policeman. Our triumph consists in thousands being led to the prisons like lambs to the slaughter-house. If the lambs of the world had been willingly led, they would have long ago saved themselves from the butcher's knife. Our triumph consists again in being imprisoned for no wrong whatsoever. The greater our innocence, the greater our strength and the swifter our victory.

As it is, this Government is cowardly, we are afraid of imprisonment. The Government takes advantage of our fear of jails.

¹ Gandhiji was arrested near Palmford on November 6, 1913, while leading men, women and children into the Transvaal on their "Great March".

If only our men and women welcome jails as health resorts, we will cease to worry about the dear ones put in jails which our countrymen in South Africa used to nickname His Majesty's Hotels.

We have too long been mentally disobedient to the laws of the State and have too often surreptitiously evaded them to be fit all of a sudden for civil disobedience. Disobedience to be civil has to be open and non-violent.

Complete civil disobedience is a state of peaceful rebellion—a refusal to obey every single State-made law. It is certainly more dangerous than an armed rebellion. For it can never be put down if the civil resisters are prepared to face extreme hardships. It is based upon an implicit belief in the absolute efficiency of innocent suffering. By noiselessly going to prison a civil resister ensures a calm atmosphere. The wrongdoer wearies of wrongdoing in the absence of resistance. All pleasure is lost when the victim betrays no resistance. A full grasp of the conditions of successful civil resistance is necessary at least on the part of the representatives of the people before we can launch out on an enterprise of such magnitude. The quickest remedies are always fraught with the greatest danger and require the utmost skill in handling them. It is my firm conviction that, if we bring about a successful boycott of foreign cloth, we shall have produced an atmosphere that would enable us to inaugurate civil disobedience on a scale that no Government can resist. I would therefore urge patience and determined concentration on swadeshi upon those who are impatient to embark on mass civil disobedience.

Young India, 4-8-1921

27. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

ALIGARH,

August 5, 1921

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

I got your letter. It does not matter that you could not meet me. You had my blessings along with my good wishes. You will come to no harm there, nor will you experience my difficulty. I do understand the condition of Mathuradas, Durga and others. I had very much wanted to go and see both of them. But how could I have managed this in Bombay? Speaking of Bombay, it could not have done better than it did, could it?

We are to meet on the 10th and so I write no more.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Prabhudas¹ has arrived. Stokes has also come with him.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 11416

28. *SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, MORADABAD*²

August 6, 1921

GENTLEMEN,

I have not been able to understand the purpose of the peace councils the Government of the United Provinces is setting up everywhere. If they are really intended to uphold peace, why do they not seek our colla-boration in their work? After all, the aim of our non-co-operation move-ment is also to maintain peace while we work to secure swaraj. When both have the same end in view, where is the need for the separate exis-tence of these peace councils? It is for you to reflect on the matter. Yes, if these councils, in the name of peace, cause breach of peace if they pro-voke unnecessary excitement among people, are ever ready to resort to rowdyism and thus misuse their name, then I must advise you to keep them at an arm's length. Do not run after a mirage lest you have to repent afterwards. It is for me to give you counsel. But if some people will not accept it, they are free to act as they like.

Then Gandhiji dwelt at length on the need for boycott of foreign cloth and taking to swadeshi. He said.

Though, for the time being, the price of khadi will be high, it will still be more economical as compared to muslin, for where you need eight muslin snirts in a year you will require at most four khadi shirts.

I say this on the basis of my long experience of khadi. If you act on my advice and with all your heart take to khadi, spin and give up foreign cloth even as you throw away a coffin, God, Who is

¹ Son of Chhaganlal Gandhi, Gandhiji's nephew

² Gandhiji arrived in Moradabad from Aligarh at 10 a.m. He addressed a women's meeting in the Town Hall during the day and exhorted them to use swadeshi cloth and take to spinning. In the afternoon he spoke at the public meeting held in Maharaja Theatre.

kindness itself, will not remain indifferent. He will be moved in His throne and be our help in our efforts to secure swaraj.

[From Hindi]

Aaj, 15-8-1921

29. *FITNESS TO PAY HOMAGE*

Any work done by a person not qualified to do it will yield no fruit. Should a washerman try his hand at shaving, he would only draw blood, should a lawyer try to practise medicine, the result would be disastrous. An utter rogue may not receive the deity's grace by going to the temple; prayers offered without cleansing oneself God will not accept.

Similarly, if we pay homage to Tilak Maharaj without having first made ourselves fit to do so, it will not be acceptable. One who simply dislikes India, who is irritated by its climate, who looks upon Indian customs as uncivilized, who turns his face away at the sight of Indian food and feels repelled by Indian dress, what homage can such a one offer to Tilak Maharaj? Would the latter's soul accept such homage? God is pleased only with one who offers anything, be it only leaf, flower, fruit or water, with devotion, and devotion means whole-hearted emulation.

The time has come which will test all those who profess adoration. How shall we celebrate the death anniversary of the Lokamanya today? Shall we resolve to achieve swaraj during this year? Shall we discard the garments of foreign cloth in which we adorn ourselves?

One who does not do his duty can win no rights. How can he who has not paid his debt ask for a letter of discharge? As swaraj is our birthright, so swadeshi is an obligation laid upon us by the fact of our having been born where we were. There can be no swaraj without swadeshi. "Swaraj is my birthright" is the first part of the Tilak-Gita; the second part runs: "Swadeshi is the duty born with me."

If, therefore, we wish to celebrate or observe the death anniversary of the Lokamanya in a fitting manner, we can do so only by taking the pledge of swadeshi. We cannot chant the *mantra* of swadeshi unless we give up altogether the use of foreign cloth. Such cloth is like so much dirt. We cannot be clean unless we get rid of it, and, before we have cleansed ourselves, we are not fit to enter the

temple of swaraj. As Maulana Mahomed Ali has stated, our desire to win swaraj by peaceful means does not mean that we can go on living as we please. If we sacrifice nothing and merely go on repeating the slogan of non-violence, it would be sheer apathy or laziness on our part. Non-violence not accompanied by sacrifice and work is a state of death. Who can ever enjoy the peace which is that of a corpse? What should we do with such peace? A coward takes shelter in his home at the sight of danger. Remaining peaceful in the sense in which he understands the word 'peaceful' will bring destruction on his home. The peacefulness to which we have pledged ourselves is an expression of strength. If we do not have even the strength, the courage or the desire to give up the use of foreign cloth, our peacefulness is hypocrisy. Hypocrisy is play-acting; can tears shed in acting ever bring enlightenment?

Everyone, therefore, who would pay homage to Tilak Maharaj must necessarily take the pledge of complete swadeshi. A man may constantly have the Lokamanya's name on his lips without having first adopted swadeshi in his dress, but his doing so will yield no more fruit than a parrot's recital of the *Bhagavat*.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-8-1921

30. NEW PLEDGE

The pledge taken at Bezwada may be regarded as fulfilled. Its fulfilment required the collection of a crore of rupees; God has granted the country success in this and so upheld its good name and honour. The second pledge which was taken is a more difficult one to fulfil, and this is natural. We must completely give up the use of foreign cloth before the thirtieth of September.

In this matter, Gujarat does not have to ascertain its part of the task. All are required to boycott foreign cloth totally, and so there is no question in this of one doing more or less than another. Imports of foreign cloth can be stopped only if its use is given up by all; Gujarat's contribution, therefore, will be—all Gujaratis doing this.

For this, we should meet every Gujarati-speaking person and everyone living in Gujarat and convince him. A realization of this is enough to reveal the difficult nature of our task. But, shall we accept defeat because the task is difficult? It is so very difficult for us to banish the use of foreign cloth? Are our silks and fine clothes dearer

to us than our country? Even if we doubt the power of swadeshi to bring us swaraj, we cannot possibly doubt the necessity of using only swadeshi articles.

Seen in this light, our task appears simple. We did not feel happy in giving money; in giving up legal practice, the question of livelihood was involved; in leaving Government schools, there was the fear of our remaining without education. What fear can we have when discarding the use of foreign cloth? There can be no harm at any rate. Why store something for which there is no use? A bottle of medicine, whatever it may have cost us, is thrown away once the disease is cured. When the enchantment has vanished, we would take no more than a second to cast away even the most gorgeous adornments. Are we so much under the spell of foreign cloth that we cannot possibly give up wearing it? I am sure no one will think about the money paid for such cloth. If we do, we shall be guilty of the sin of miserliness. A miserly mother makes her child sick by forcing him to eat what is left over on his plate. True economy consists in throwing the food away. In the same way, true economy consists in discarding one's stock of foreign cloth.

The giving up of foreign cloth will mean the introduction of simplicity and an end to living in pretentious style; khadi clothes besides, last longer as they are more durable. On whose monthly expenses come to a hundred rupees will now find that his expenditure for the entire year is much less. For such a person, throwing away foreign garments worth thousands should be no hardship. By discarding foreign cloth forthwith we save the country crores of rupees. That being so, throwing away foreign cloth worth lakhs or crores of rupees will be a sign of far-sightedness.

Swadeshi is the last stage of our journey. If we fail in it, we would have nothing for it but to give up the hope of winning swaraj this year. I hope, therefore, that Gujarat will take up this work without delay and do its duty.

Though everyone may have an equal duty in this matter of renouncing [the use of foreign cloth], Gujarat can be in the forefront in producing cloth. We shall have no shortage of cloth if each school and each home takes up spinning and weaving. If Gujarat does not throw itself heart and soul into the work of khadi, we shall lose the game when we have almost won it.

Let us understand the meaning of swadeshi. Not only do we

want, through it, to retain the sixty crores of rupees being sent to other countries but also wish, by making crores of men and women produce cloth of the same value, to see this amount distributed in their homes. By this means, we wish to banish hunger from the country. I, therefore, regard banishing foreign cloth as banishing hunger. Moreover, the number of charity institutions distributing food to the needy is no the increase. Hundreds of thousands of people do no work and live on alms, thereby putting their ochre robe to shame. An able-bodied person should have nothing to eat if he does no work. Today, we simple have no work of a kind which we could offer to any begger. When the spinning-wheel and the loom come to be looked upon as honourable work in the country, only the Brahmins and the fakirs who disseminate knowledge among the people will continue to live on alms. The people will love feeding the incapacitated and the crippled. Rogues will no longer be able to roam around in the garb of sadhus and beg for alms. Thus swadeshi will mean the end of fraud and the rule of goodness.

I hope that, having understood this, Gujarat will immediately step up the work of carding, spinning and weaving in every home, thereby serving itself and the country.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-8-1921

31. MY NOTES

BOMBAY SURPASSES ITSELF

Bombay paid homage to Tilak Maharaj in a befitting manner. On Sunday, July 31, about two lakhs of people performed a *yajna* and set fire to their filth on a plot of land belonging to Sheth Haji Yusuf Sobani. Innumerable people, who had doubts as to the propriety of burning, doubted no longer. Not less than one and a half lakh articles were burnt. Those who still had black caps of foreign make on their heads felt ashamed when the sacrificial fire was lit and there followed a rain of caps.

The enthusiasm of the people on that day can hardly be described. The whole ground, overflowing with men and women dressed handsomely in white khadi caps and khadi clothes, gave one the impression that the entire population of Bombay had assembled there. The flame that was kindled on that day symbolized the flame that is aglow in the country's heart today. I hope that this flame will

not die out so long as even an inch of foreign cloth remains in our homes; and may a similar flame be lit every week, not only on that holy ground, but in every town and every street of India and may our filth of foreign cloth be burnt up in it. The men, women and children of Bombay, purified by this act of renunciation, went, clad in pure khadi, where Tilak Maharaj had been cremated on the Chowpati maidan and paid homage to that noble soul. Never, perhaps, have so many people assembled with so much devotion in their hearts on the death anniversary of even an emperor.

In June, Bombay made a munificent contribution to help the country to keep its pledge and thus justified its reputation as the city beautiful and, in the next month, it prepared the ground for the next step and showed itself more beautiful still.

But much remains yet to be done. Bombay has not completely swept out the dirt of foreign cloth. Those men and women who parted with their garments of foreign cloth did so half-heartedly. So long as this filth is not totally removed, we shall not have been completely purified and as even a small amount of dirt left over can produce poisonous gases, so a little of foreign cloth left over can do great harm. I hope, therefore, that the dirt of foreign cloth will be swept out of each nook and corner, whether in Bombay or elsewhere. So long as this filth has not been completely thrown out of our homes, there will always be the danger of the plague of foreign cloth coming back. If we are determined to have swaraj, foreign cloth should become intolerable to us for ever and this can be so only if we deliberately set fire to it.

VICTORY OR DEFEAT

Long ago a correspondent asked me whether the victory here would be any better than the one in South Africa. To me this question seemed to reveal as much bitterness as ignorance. The correspondent did not know what the problem in South Africa was. He suggested that the hardships in South Africa had remained. There, the movement was directed against a particular law. In this our success was complete. The repeal of the Asiatic Act, the removal of the colour bar from the Immigration Act, recognition of the validity of Hindu and Muslim marriages and the repeal of the three-pound tax—these were the successive demands and the Government there was forced to concede them all.

I look, upon this as total victory. But the greatest victory is the

fact that it was satyagraha which enabled the Indian population in South Africa to retain their foothold there. This again was the reason for the campaign against Indians in other colonies losing a little of its vehemence. It is because of this that the entire world took note of Indians in South Africa. The Asiatic Act was the first step in a policy aimed at complete elimination of Indians. It was possible to force its reversal as soon as it was taken. The same may be understood about our struggle here. The acceptance of the demand regarding the Khilafat will not preclude the possibility of its existence being threatened again at some future date. Our getting swaraj will not necessarily mean that we may not lose it again some time in the future. One can retain something only so long as one can wield the weapon employed to attain it. With soul-force lost, we are certain to lose that which has been attained by such force. What has been attained through self-control will be lost in a minute if one violates the laws of health by eating and drinking anything one feels tempted to.

Satyagraha and its off-shoot, non-co-operation, are weapons which admit of no defeat. How can there be any defeat for one determined to fight unto death? Defeating a man means forcing him to admit defeat while he is alive. Who will say that the soldier lying dead on the field of battle has been defeated? None in this world can defeat a satyagrahi who refuses to compromise on his demand. The soul is its own enemy as also its own friend.

BREACH OF PEACE IN KARACHI

Swami Krishnanand has been arrested in Karachi and put into prison. He was a popular figure. He has done excellent work in the anti-drink campaign. I have been informed that the charge against him was baseless. It cannot be denied that all this was enough to hurt and anger the people, but non-co-operation has taught us to express our anger in a profitable manner. If the people have genuine affection for Swami Krishnanand, they would give up drinking, picket liquor shops peacefully, throw their foreign cloth into the fire, ply the spinning-wheel, start working handlooms and produce khadi. Working in this manner, they should win swaraj and get the Swami released or, continuing the Swami's work, court imprisonment. Instead of acting in this way, some persons resorted to violence and threw stones at Englishmen going their way. This certainly did not secure the Swami's release, and swaraj has receded a little. Swaraj could be won this very day but we do not get it because we cannot

restrain our anger. How can we hope for swaraj if we violate the chief condition to be fulfilled for winning it? I advise the Congress and the Khilafat Committee workers in Karachi to seek out the guilty, try to reason with them and see that they are repentant. Such incidents of breach of peace also delay the starting of civil disobedience. Either we should be capable of preventing such outbreaks of violence or the Government's power will do so. Even the inexperienced can see that, so long as we are dependent on the Government for preventing outbreak of violence, the peace-loving section of the public will not even wish to have swaraj, and swaraj will not be possible so long as there is no irresistible desire for it among the masses.

HINDUS AND MUSLIMS

The *Vanias* and Muslims of Atarsumba fell out over a trifle. A Muslim woman there has her house near a Hindu temple. This poor woman passed her days peacefully there. Gradually, the *Vania* trustees of the temple encroached on her land. The poor woman was somewhat irri-tated. She may have said something and this enraged the *Vanias*. They abused and insulted her. The woman complained to the local Muslims. The latter were aroused and sought out each *Vania* and gave him a beat-ing. Shri Abbas Tyabji came to know of this. He sent Shri Mohanlal Pandya to restore peace. Both the parties listened to him, and the dispute was settled. When the Muslims attacked the *Vanias*, the latter, not having the strength to defend themselves, took shelter in their houses. I have narrated the events as they were described to me. But this is exactly the manner in which tensions between the two communities have arisen or grown. The *Vanias* had done a wrong in harassing the woman and encroaching upon her land. Even if the woman had been to blame for anything, it was the *Vanias'* duty to overlook it. Instead, they brought an army to crush an ant. I can see what provoked the Muslims into their error, but it was grave error all the same. They should have looked for the guilty *Vanias* and complained against them to the *Panch*. If there was no *Panch* they should have approached the nearest Congress-Khilafat Committee and sought redress. Instead of doing this, they adopted the unjust course of punishing the entire *Vania* community and were guilty of the same wrong against the *Vanias* of which the latter had been guilty against the woman. Fortunately, Shri Pandya appeared on the scene and settled the dispute. In what happened on either side, the guilty adopted the policy of crushing the weak. So long as even one party acts in this manner, the root cause of trouble will never be

eliminated. The most important thing which swaraj means is that one should protect the weak and never fear the strong. The *Vanias* should have admitted their mistake and, if attacked even then, should have submitted to the blows. By taking shelter in their houses, they showed themselves cowards and unfit for swaraj. There is no doubt that some time or other we shall have to learn facing blows. Taking shelter in homes whenever threatened with danger is no evidence of our ability to manage our affairs under swaraj. Peaceful non-co-operation is an unailing remedy. The *Vanias* should have adopted the policy of reasoning calmly with the Muslims. Peacefulness does not indicate cowardice; it indicates the capacity to face blows fearlessly without returning them. Anyone who reflects will see the truth that the strength found in non-violence is not to be found in the sword.

WAS BHOJA BHAGAT A “MOCHI”?

Bhojaji, a teacher, and another person write to inform me that Bhoja Bhagat must have been a *Leva Kanabi*. One gentlemansays with confidence that he was a *Kanabi*. I have no proof in support of my belief [that he was a *Mochi*], except that I learnt this in the course of my studies as a boy and that a relation of his was once brought by someone to see me. I had even asked this relation whether he was still following the cobbler’s profession. So far as I can recall, he had replied in the negative. He did not, however, say that Bhoja Bhagat was not a *Mochi*. The reader will forgive me if I have made a wrong statement. I am certain that Bhoja Bhagat’s soul will not be grieved at his having been described as a *Mochi*. Despite this slip, the point of my argument remains.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-8-1921

32. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

ON WAY TO LUCKNOW,
*Sunday [August 7, 1921]*¹

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

I write this letter as we near Lucknow. We have planned to reach there² on Wednesday morning and leave the same evening for Arrah.

I am eagerly waiting to hear that Joseph has been arrested.

¹ Gandhiji arrived in Lucknow from Aligarh on this date, which was a Sunday.

² Allahabad

Ranga Iyer, I feel, should not be left without company.

People's shouting now gets on my nerves.

If possible, please have prepared for me some *pedas*¹, *puris*² with soda[bicarb] mixed [with the flour] and *golpapadi*³. On this journey, I have only *pedas* with me and their stock is also likely to get exhausted. The journey, too, is a long one. Perhaps you may not easily get there ghee made of goat's milk. It will not matter if *pedas* alone are prepared. We get at every place a large number of caps.

I have written to Valji to tell him that he should send you proofs of *Young India*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 11421

33. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ON WAY TO LUCKNOW,
Sunday, August 7, 1921

CHI. MATHURADAS,

These questions have just lain with me. I have gone through them today and made corrections. Now you can make any use of them you want. I hope your health is all right now. I tried hard to come but how could I? Write to me. My travel plan is as follows:

8th Lucknow

9th Kanpur

10th Prayagji

11th to 15th Patna—Address Rajendra Prasad Vakil

16th to 20th Gauhati, Assam Congress Committee

Write to me about Durga's health also.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

¹ A sweet prepared from milk

² Fried cakes of flattened unleavened dough

³ A preparation of flour and jaggery

34. *SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, LUCKNOW¹*

August 7, 1921

. . . . I must warn you that any kind of restiveness or disorderly behaviour will only be an obstacle in the way of our attaining our aim. Boycott of foreign cloth is the sole remedy for the Khilafat, for removing evils and for helping Angora. Look at the excesses of the Government of the United Provinces. In its policy of repression this province has far surpassed any other province. I will nevertheless ask you to remain peaceful. If you can raise an army of fifty thousand workers prepared to guard the gate of freedom, you have my word for it that no power on earth can defeat this army, and it will be able, in just three months, either to mend this Government or end it. I must repeat that careful attention need to be paid to Hindu-Muslim unity. I would say to each of these two communities that it should show sympathy towards the other. Let there be no rioting during the ensuing *Bakr-i-Id*. To Hindus I would say that if they are keen on protecting the cow they can do no better than unhesitatingly and unselfishly help the Muslims over the Khilafat question.

[From Hindi]

Aaj, 10-8-1921

35. *OPEN LETTER TO KATHIAWAR PRINCES*

LUCKNOW,

Monday, Shravana [August 8, 1921]

SIRS,

I have often thought of addressing a word to you but dropped the idea. I have, however, heard and come to know a few things which make me feel that it is my duty to place my views before you.

Is it necessary for me to tell you that my connection with Kathiawar is very close? The fact, however, that I was born in Kathiawar is not the only tie which binds me to it. My father served three States as Chief Minister. My uncle served one State and my grand-father, too, had similar service to his credit. Quite a few members of the Gandhi family have had their living through service

¹ Held at Aminuddaula Park. According to the source, about a hundred thousand people attended. Mahomed Ali was present.

in Kathiawar States. I have therefore, more than ordinary relations with you. I owe a special duty to you.

Hence, I feel pained whenever I hear stories of misrule in any of the Kathiawar States. I have looked upon Kathiawar as the land of heroes and cherished the hope that it will make its full contribution to the *yajna* of the swaraj movement and bring glory to Bharat.

Please do not be scared by the word "swaraj". I should like you not to let the words "swaraj" and "non-co-operation" frighten you. Let people say, if they will, that this is an anarchical movement, that it aims at spreading disloyalty and that it will ruin the country. Being certain that these things are said in ignorance, you should also defend me before your friends.

Our Shastras teach us that we should oppose injustice even at the risk of our life. My father taught me the same thing by his example. It will do the country no harm if people learn to have courage.

I have not, however, started this letter with the intention of writing about swaraj. I have made the foregoing remarks in order that my ideas about swaraj may not put you off.

I have received numerous articles about your administrations and heard numerous complaints made to me in person. To this day, however, I have not thought it proper to publish any of them. I have always thought that everything will be all right in the end and this is my belief even now. If the misrule of the mighty Empire is ended, that of the smaller States will end of itself. Self-purification is a process which takes time to be securely started, but once it is, it spreads quickly.

But I hear now that in some States the authorities ridicule the spinning-wheel, in some they look upon it as a disease and try to stamp it out, in others they subject citizens to unfair pressure in order to check a movement of permanent significance like swadeshi and in some, again, they set their face against the use of khadi and regard the wearing of a khadi cap as a crime. I hesitate to believe all this but there is so much evidence before me that all of it could not be untrue.

Kathiawar is a land of such resources that it should not be necessary for any of its residents to leave it for other regions. To embark upon a business venture in a big way deserves all praise, but I have known hundreds, nay thousands, of Kathiawaris who leave the land merely in search of a living. This pains me and I wish that it should pain you as well. I missed, during my present tours, the

former brightness in the homes of the sturdy, handsome peasants of Kathiawar.

I remember I saw villages, before the famine of '35¹, overflowing with milk and butter. I have been a witness to serving of ghee with a spoon being regarded as want of hospitality. I recall having helped myself to the rich buttermilk offered to me in their shining bowls by tall, hefty women of Kathiawar who seemed to me as big as mountains.

Today, I see not buttermilk but merely white-coloured water. Let alone kettle-shaped containers for ghee, even the modest spoons are a rare sight now. With abundance gone, people feel hemmed in and start running away.

You may be certain that, if the Princes help, the spinning-wheel and the loom will make Kathiawar more glowing with life and energy than it was. Kathiawar's population is estimated at 26 lakhs. This can easily keep five lakh spinning-wheels working. This means an income of not less than Rs. 7,500,000 every month. If the women in Kathiawar spin for no more than eight months in a year, singing devotional songs as they spin, they can put into their homes sixty lakh rupees annually. You will not need to pay a single pie towards this. Do you really envy the people of Kathiawar earning money in this way? Would you ridicule them?

If but one lakh from among the *Meghwals*² in Kathiawar, dressed in their thick khadi jackets and full-sized trubans, work on the loom, they will earn not less than 20 lakhs a month. If, likewise, they weave for eight months, they will pocket one crore and sixty lakhs annually. Should you not show farsightedness and encourage wholeheartedly such profitable work?

I would expect, rather, that even in your durbars you would give a place of honour to the khadi woven by the poor, that the dress to be worn in durbar would be of khadi and that you yourselves would wear nothing but khadi woven by your subjects and look the more princely for doing so.

Your *shastris*, I am sure, will convincingly show to you that it is no worthy principle of government that the people of Manchester or Japan should make merry with your money while the people of Kathiawar go hungry. If you want muslin, have good quality cotton grown and encourage expert spinners and weavers.

¹ Of the Vikram era, corresponding to 1879-80

² A community of weavers

What can rulers accustomed to live in the hill tracts of Kathiawar have to do with comforts and luxuries? How can they think of maintaining a whole troupe of dogs? They should, rather, be ready to lay down their lives for their subjects, suffer when they suffer and eat only after they have fed them. If a king turns a trader and a Brahmin an actor, who will teach and preserve dharma?

I do not want the people of Kathiawar to carry on agitation against the British Government from within your territories and thereby create an awkward situation for you. I understand your delicate position. I have sympathy for you. You may not join the non-co-operators, but I humbly entreat you to look upon swadeshi as a separate matter and help your subjects to work for its progress independently of the rest of the programme.

May I ask one thing more? How can liquor-booths be tolerated in Kathiawar? How can one believe that you really need the revenue which you get from liquor? When the people are making an attempt to give up drinking and persuade others to do so, I would expect all wine-bottles to be banished from your durbars too. If Rama, on being told of the dhobi's remarks, abandoned the chaste and devoted Sita, would you not, knowing what the people want, banish liquor from Kathiawar?

How, again, can one tolerate the setting apart of special compartments for *Antyajas* on your trains, the fact that they experience difficulties in getting tickets and are pushed about when they try to? You should invite your subjects, reason with them and explain to them that the ill-treatment of *Dheds* and others has nothing of compassion in it, that on the contrary it is oppression, and you should, in this way, bring happiness into the lives of these wretched people and earn their heartfelt blessings.

I have heard much else. I do not wish to go into all that here. They are old stories. I have written this leaflet simply to entreat you not to impede the current of purifying oxygen which is circulating at present. I beg of you to understand the love which has prompted me to write this, to read it with love and act upon my humble suggestion. I pray to God that He may bless you with a sense of justice and grant that the Princes of Kathiawar and their subjects find their happiness on the path of right.

Your loyal servant,

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-8-1921

36. LETTER TO BENNET

Monday [August 8, 1921]¹

DEAR MR. BENNET,

I thank you for drawing my attention to the evil of prostitution in Lucknow. I have known of it and have talked about it too. I shall do so again before leaving. But I shall write about it too in *Young India*. Thanks for your offer of help in the matter.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 11668

37. ANSWERS TO EDITOR'S QUESTIONS

August 8, 1921

Mr. Mackenzie, editor of the *Indian Daily Telegraph*, in a letter to Mr. Gandhi asked for an answer to the following questions :

- (1) Is the divergence of views between yourself and Lord Reading likely to increase or diminish?
- (2) When do you expect to establish swaraj?
- (3) Has the Prime Minister in your opinion grown more Satanic or less?
- (4) Seeing that they spring from your magnificent country, have you no word of encouragement for the new Ministers and the Councils which are aiming at ultimate swaraj?
- (5) Do you believe in a sense of humour to sweeten the cares of everyday life?

Mr. Gandhi replied as follows :

- (1) The divergence is as likely to increase as to decrease.
- (2) I expect to do nothing but endeavour to acquire government over my own self but I do expect India to establish swaraj during this very year.
- (3) The Prime Minister is to me an enigma. He has certainly not discharged his debt to India.
- (4) The Ministers have done nothing to deserve encouragement

¹From the reference to drawing of Gandhiji's "attention to the evil of prostitution in Lucknow" by the addressee, whose letter was quoted by Gandhiji in his *Young India* article of 18-8-1921; vide "Notes", 18-8-1921. This is corroborated by the words. "I shall do so again before leaving". Gandhiji was in Lucknow on Monday, August 8, 1921.

from me. They will when they have washed their hands clean of a system which, in my humble opinion, is using them as tools for promoting India's degradation. (Witness what is happening in the United Provinces.)

(5) If I had no sense of humour, I would have committed suicide long ago.

The Leader, 10-8-1921

38. *SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, KANPUR'*

August 9, 1921

There is an omission in the address you have presented. There is no mention in it of Maulana Shaukat Ali. This is prejudicial to Hindu-Muslim unity. Such unity is of the greatest moment today. On it depends the solution of the Khilafat question, the undoing of the Punjab injustices and, finally, the attainment of swaraj. Cow-protection also depends on Khilafat. Hindus must be prepared to make sacrifices for Khilafat without desiring anything in return. Every morning I pray for the cows. Cow-slaughter is the result of the sins committed by Hindus; it is owing to these sins that we are deprived of the sympathy of our brethren. We must repent for those sins. For a satisfactory solution of the Khilafat question it is of utmost importance that there should be Hindu-Muslim unity. Khilafat alone will unite the two communities.

At the same time, it is also necessary that there should be peace and non-violence. We should conquer anger and pray to God that anger may vanish from our hearts.

There can be no swaraj without swadeshi. Women should make it a duty to wear khadi. They should give up fine cloth. It has full hope that we shall have swaraj by the first of January. If we do not have swaraj by that date life will become difficult. We have forgotten the value of being self-supporting. We must learn how to die. If we are fired at, we should receive the bullet on our chest and not on the back. If the English wish to stay in our country, they must learn to

¹ Earlier in the day, Gandhiji was taken in procession and he addressed a meeting of cloth merchants at the Marwari Vidyalaya and advised them to boycott foreign cloth. He also spoke at a women's meeting on swadeshi. At the meeting in the evening, of which this is a report, Gandhiji was presented an address on behalf of the citizens of Kanpur.

live like brothers or even servants. They cannot now stay here as our masters. Women should, as a matter of duty, boycott foreign goods and ply the charkha, so that even if I am imprisoned or hanged, swaraj will still be secured.

[From Hindi]

Aaj, 11-8-1921

39. INTERVIEW TO "AAJ"

August 9, 1921

QUESTION : What would our duty be if the price of swadeshi cloth went on rising and that of foreign cloth falling?

A. The meaning of the swadeshi pledge is that we are not to accept foreign cloth even if we get it gratis, just as a Hindu will not eat beef even if bread becomes too dear.

Q. If cloth were woven in India from foreign yarn, would you consider it swadeshi or foreign?

A. It would be foreign cloth.

Q. If the capital invested in a mill were Indian but its management was in European hands, would it be considered a swadeshi or a foreign mill?

A. It would be a foreign mill. A swadeshi mill is one whose capital as well as management is Indian. Cloth produced in swadeshi mills should be set apart for the poor. Congress workers should wear pure khadi only.

Speaking about the excesses committed by the police at a meeting in Banaras on August 1, Gandhiji said that they should forgive the police, or they would not be fit for swaraj.

[From Hindi]

Aaj, 10-8-1921

40. *LETTER TO MANILAL KOTHARI AND
FULCHAND SHAH*

[KANPUR,
August 9, 1921]¹

BHAISHRI MANILAL AND FULCHAND,

With reference to the proposal for holding a [special] session of the Kathiawad Political Conference at Wadhwan and the suggestion regarding its presidentship, I wish to say that it is not possible for me to express an opinion now. If you ask me when my tour is over in September, I shall be able to give a definite reply. If I decide to accept the presidentship, I will not have things half done. I cannot rest content with merely expressing an opinion on civil disobedience. I am, therefore, unable to decide at this stage whether I should accept the presidentship.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Gujarati]
Gujarati, 14-8-1921

41. *SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, ALLAHABAD*²

August 10, 1921

Mr. Gandhi began by saying that he had intended to say something about the repression that was being resorted to in the United Provinces, but now he would give up that intention. He would now only congratulate those fellow-workers who had gone to jail. They must realize that the work for swaraj should not slacken by any of them being imprisoned. As long as they did not realize that, they would not be fit for swaraj or independence. If they wanted to achieve swaraj within this year, they had to give up every fear for jail or even death. Rather they should think that every imprisonment or death of an innocent person brought swaraj nearer. As long as they did not feel like that, he would think they had not been able to grasp the meaning of non-violent non-co-operation. Non-co-operation did not mean sitting idle. It meant organizing their forces, for non-co-operation required great power. He said he would

¹ The date is stated in the source

² Held in the evening on Swarajya Sabha grounds, the gathering numbered over 10,000 and was presided over by Motilal Nehru. Mahomed Ali and Stokes also spoke.

not bow down his head before the Union Jack—the flag before which the Punjab boys, during the martial law days, had to bow their heads—as long as the Government did not repent and ask for pardon for its former doings. This required great strength.

Proceeding, Mr. Gandhi referred to the situation in the United Provinces. Small boys were being sent to jail and yet it was declared that there was no repression. The U.P. Government was more clever than the Punjab Government. It did not touch the great leaders for fear of there being disquiet in the province as a result of their arrest, but it was condemning small boys to solitary confinement. This was intensive repression. Such methods were intended to lead to the terrorization and demoralization of the people. The *kisans* were also being subjected to such pressure. They were being forced to become members of Aman Sabhas and to remain aloof from the non-co-operation movement. He was not prepared to blame the high authorities for this, for he was not yet sure whether the Governor and his colleagues knew this thing or not. He had as yet respect for the Raja of Mahmudabad and Mr. Chintamani¹ and others. Their hands also were now polluted with sins, but they did not commit them willingly or voluntarily. They had now become members of Government and so their heads were turned. They now declared that it was the non-co-operators themselves who were using force against their opponents. He did not deny the allegation wholly, and in connection with the events at Aligarh and Malegaon, he had expressed his repentance and had condemned the violent doings. Yet he maintained that on the whole the work of non-co-operation was being done peacefully.

Mr. Gandhi went on to say that he wanted this spirit of peacefulness to advance. Even if the Government sent them to jail or shot them down, they should not even curse or socially boycott the Government officials. When they had acquired so much mastery over themselves swaraj would be theirs and they would be able to get justice in connection with the Punjab and the Khilafat. But that would not be possible as long as the Hindus and Mohammedans were not united. The *Bakr-i-Id* was coming. If the Hindus wanted to save the cow, they should sacrifice their heads in the sacred fire of the Khilafat. But they were not to do this in a bargaining spirit nor should they force their Mohammedan brethren to spare the cow.

Coming to the question of swadeshi, he said that espousing the cause of swadeshi meant a saving of sixty crores of rupees annually, food for their starving countrymen and the protection of their women's chastity. But, above all it meant preparation for civil disobedience. If they could make the item of swadeshi successful by September, he would think that they were then strong enough to give

¹ Sir C. Y. Chintamani (1880-1941); journalist, author and politician; Law Member in Viceroy's Council, 1920-22; president of the Liberal Federation in 1923 and 1927

the Government an ultimatum. Further it would mean proclaiming to the whole world that India had organized its strength. He was for burning their foreign clothes. If they wanted to help Smyrna they should send cash or new clothes and not their discarded clothes. But if they so liked it, he did not mind their being sent there. But they should part with all their foreign clothes. They should act up to the decision of the All-India Congress Committee and take up handlooms and spinning-wheels. Then they should depend on the cloth that might be prepared within their own district and should not import cloth from other places, though they might have to remain half naked. This would eliminate the danger of foreign cloth being imposed on them as swadeshi.

Concluding, he said he was going to apply the torch to the heap of foreign clothes that was collected there. He was doing that sacred work without any feeling of enmity towards anyone. His religion was love, non-violence and peace. Finally he expressed his hope that more could be expected in this connection from women than from men, and, therefore, he appealed to them to take their share of the work.¹

The Leader, 12-8-1921

42. NOTES

BURNING IN BOMBAY

If anybody had any doubt as to the necessity and the practical value of burning foreign clothes, those who witnessed the ceremony at Mr. Sobani's yard in Parel must have had their doubts set at rest. It was a most inspiring sight witnessed by thousands of spectators. And as the flames leapt up and enveloped the whole pyramid, there was a shout of joy resounding through the air. It was as if our shackles had been broken asunder. A glow of freedom passed through that vast concourse. It was a noble act noble performed. It has, I am sure, struck the imagination of the people as nothing else could have so far as swadeshi is concerned. And it was as well that it was not rags that were burnt but some of the finest saris, shirts and jackets were consigned to the flames. I know that in some cases choicest silks kept by mothers for their daughter's wedding were given up for burning. The value consisted in destroying such costly things. Not less than one lakh and a half pieces were burnt including articles worth several hundred rupees each. I am sure it was all for the good of the country. It would have been a crime to have given such things to the poor. Just

¹ At the conclusion of the meeting, Gandhiji lit a huge bonfire of foreign cloth.

imagine the poor people wearing the richest silks. To say the least it would have been highly inartistic and incongruous. The fact is that the majority of the articles burnt had no correspondence with the life of the poor. The dress of the middle classes had undergone such a transformation that it was not fit to be given to the poor people. It would have been like giving discarded costly toilet brushes to them. I hope therefore that the burning process will continue and spread from one end of India to the other and not stop till every article of foreign clothing has been reduced to ashes or sent out of India.

OF TAMIL WOMEN

A friend writes from Tirupati :

The greatest obstacle in the way of success of our movement in Madras are our women. Some of them are very reactionary and a very large number of the high class Brahmin ladies have become addicted to many of the Western vices. They drink coffee not less than three times a day and consider it very fashionable to drink more. In dress they are no better, they have given up the homely clean cloth and are running after costly foreign cloth. In the matter of jewels, Brahmin ladies excel all others. Among Brahmins, *Shri Vaishnava* ladies are the worst sinners. When men are trying to return to a purer life, our ladies are becoming extravagant. While going to temples to worship God, they cannot think of a plain, simple dress. They must wear the costliest jewels available and still more costly laces. I know of many honest women who refuse to go to temples because they have not got rich clothes and costly jewels.

I am loth to think that what the friend who is himself a non-co-operating *Vaishnava* pleader says is all true. And I am inclined to dis-believe the statement that the Tamil sisters are worse than the rest in the matter of love of gaudiness. All the same, his letter ought to serve as a warning to the Tamil sisters. They must revert to the original simplicity, and certainly God will be better pleased with those who wear the spotless khadi sari as a symbol of inner purity than with those who are gaudily dressed. Our temples are not meant for show but for expression of humility and simplicity which are typical of a devotional mood. There should be a continuous propaganda amongst women in the Madras Presidency with reference to the evil complained of.

THE WHITE CAP IN THE C.P.

The wearing of white caps by Government servants has been

officially regarded as a crime in the Central Provinces, and the decision has been publicly endorsed in the C.P. Council. The doctrine laid down by that Government is most servile and dangerous. If the white cap is the badge of the non-co-operation party, the use of khadi may be equally regarded as such and penalized. And thus may swadeshi become a sin in the Government dictionary. Foreign cloth was forced upon India two hundred years ago. The attempt has now commenced forcibly to prevent India from reverting to swadeshi. Any well-meaning Government sensitive to public opinion would have encouraged the use of khadi by its servants. I deny that the use of the white cap is any sign of non-co-operation. I know many who are averse to non-co-operation and yet have adopted the white khadi cap as a convenience and as a symbol of swadeshi. The Congress has not yet invited Government servants to throw up their employment, but I do expect of them to have courage enough to wear what dress they like and retain freedom of action even at the risk of losing their employment. If Government servants will but take concerted action, they will find that the Government is powerless to punish them. But whether that is possible or not, I do hope for the sake of themselves that individuals will be found even among Government servants who will not hesitate to wear the white cap.

DARKNESS IN GWALIOR

Passing through Gwalior, I was surprised to find that the people at the station were afraid of approaching our compartment. There was no sign of swadeshi on the platform. Nobody offered us their foreign caps as at every other station. I soon learnt the reason. Non-co-operation is practically prohibited in this State. The wearing of the khadi cap and the possession of the spinning-wheel are regarded with disfavour if not as a crime. It is unthinkable that the Maharaja has himself such reactionary views. His Highness has my sympathy. The poisonous influence of the Government is nowhere more apparent than in the Indian States, which are powerless for making substantial reforms, but are often made unwilling instruments for curtailment of the freedom of their subjects. What is more, the protecting wings of the sovereign power have made them like the rest of India emasculate and irresponsible. When, therefore, a prince is self-willed and intent upon oppression, he has certainly infinitely greater powers for mischief within his own State than the Viceroy himself. This is one of the greatest evils inherent in the existing system of Government. I hope, however, that the information given to me at Gwalior station is

exaggerated and that repression in that State has not taken the virulent shape it is alleged to have.

IMITATE LAHORE

The Municipality of Lahore which contains a majority of non-co-operators has resolved that all its cab-drivers and such other employees shall wear khadi caps and that all municipal departments are to use as much khadi as possible. The lawyers of Amritsar are said to have adopted khadi for their dresses. I hope that the other municipalities will follow the good example set by Lahore and that the lawyers all over India will follow the Amritsar precedent. This is about the least that they can do for the country and swadeshi.

LABOURERS' MITE

The public have no idea of the part labourers have played in contributing to the Tilak Swaraj Fund. Twenty-one thousand mill-hands of Ahmedabad have paid nearly Rs. 54,000 to the Fund and this at the prescribed rate, i.e., one-tenth of their monthly wages. Seven thousand have become members. Similarly, though not so scientifically or largely as the Ahmedabad labourers, the Bombay labourers have also sent their purses unasked. It is a sign of the times. As the labourers become more organized and think of the country as well as themselves, they will fight for a due adjustment of prices of manufactures to the making of which they contribute so much labour. And, then, there will be no question of mills charging exorbitant prices just to swell the shareholders' dividends irrespective of the interests of the working man or the consumer. A time must come, and the sooner the better, when there would be a respectable proportion between dividends, wages and prices.

INDISCIPLINE

My experience of the resumed tour is not happier than the past. I had expected that, after all I have written and spoken and after the discipline we have gone through, I would witness disciplined and considerate demonstrations on the way. I was, however astonished to find vast, noisy and pressing crowds at stations. They were intense and insistent at Agra and Tundla. At the latter place it was difficult to pass through the crowd. Naturally they did not hear what was said to them. They only shouted the louder when anyone asked them to keep quite. And when I was pushed into the dining room, the crowd hovered about it and in its eagerness to have a peep, it broke the panes of the door of the dining room. It would not be satisfied till I took

the people to the shed outside the station. The contrast after my speech was great. The crowd attended to instructions, was less noisy than before, did not make a rush for my compartment and made room for us to pass through. I have passed several times through Tundla, but I have never before noticed a crowd there at all. Upon inquiry I found that this time people had come from neighbouring villages just for *darshan*. This *darshan* has become a most embarrassing process and consumes valuable time. It puts an undue strain upon my nerves and deprives me of the peace I need for writing during the odd moments I get during my travels. The difficulty is largely due to want of forethought and organization. Workers must either organize these demonstrations in a methodical manner or not have them at all. Happily these are friendly demonstrations and, therefore, never cause trouble. But imagine the chaos that must ensue if we undertook hostile demonstrations. What would happen if we had to manage such crowds under fire or under angry excitement? I could see in Tundla that mass civil disobedience was an impossibility with a crowd like the one there. We can do no effective work unless we can pass instructions to the crowd and expect implicit obedience. Volunteers must therefore undergo training in handling crowds. An Indian crowd is easily the most manageable and docile in the world. But it needs previous preparation. And when we have not had it, it is the wisest thing not to bring together crowds.

DEMONSTRATIONS

It is now easy enough to understand how the incendiarism could have taken place at Malegaon and even at Aligarh. An undisciplined crowd had gathered. Such a crowd contains mischiefmakers waiting for an opportunity. And when a crowd is excited, it yields passive obedience, that is, it is driven by the momentary impulse. We therefore play into the hands of the 'enemy' when we organize at trials demonstrations we cannot control. Our purpose today is to establish a calm and non-violent yet determined atmosphere. All our determination is frittered away under an unexpected fire opened by disciplined soldiers. Therefore we must scrupulously avoid all demonstrations over imprisonments. We must let go unnoticed all whom the Government wants. As soon as we have acquired sufficient self-control, we shall be ready for civil disobedience and swaraj. This self-control can only be attained by complete swadeshi. A boycott of foreign cloth and effort put forth to manufacture the required

quantity of khadi will give us a self-confidence which nothing else can.

SORRY FOR LIBERTY

Mr. Venkatappaya wires expressing his deep regret that he has been set free whilst his comrades are still in custody. I share his sorrow. Presently the jail will be the only fit place for a self-respecting Indian. Everybody in Aligarh envies Maulana Sherwani his lot. Mrs. Khwaja tells me she is cut up to find that her husband is free whilst her husband's companion in work is in prison. It is the true spirit. And swaraj is possible during this year only if our men and women consider it their good fortune to be in jail striving for freedom. Evidently the right spirit pervades the people of Guntur, for Mr. Prakasham who ran post-haste to Guntur on hearing of the arrests wires that several pleaders have suspended practice and that the people are preparing more strenuously than before to carry out the Congress programme of non-co-operation. When we work outside the jails with a free sense of responsibility, we shall not be long being imprisoned and whilst we are not, we have faith that we are not idling away the nation's time.

FORCE ON 1ST AUGUST

X. Y. Z. angrily asks me what my experience of the 1st of August is. My experience of the 1st August is that I have never seen a better-behaved crowd. I believe him when he tells me that some people were forced to give up their foreign caps. But these instances I am sure were exceptions. The use of force is certainly out of place for the swadeshi propaganda and I have no doubt can only defeat the purpose we have in view. We cannot make India wear khadi by force. It must be a mark of freedom and respectability which it cannot be if any force is used for its propaganda.

BENGAL AND MADRAS ELECTIONS

I have no doubt that there will be heart-burning over the decision of the Working Committee on the Bengal and Madras elections. More so as the decision was given in the teeth of the chairman's ruling that the elections were contrary to the constitution. I can sympathize with the aggrieved parties. But I would ask them to give due weight to the reasons for the Committee's decision. In my opinion the Committee could not have given a decision on merits without taking evidence from the parties concerned. This the Committee had no time to do if it was to go through the programme

set by the All-India Congress Committee. Pending the investigations, the members would have remained as they are. Nothing much is, therefore, lost by the aggrieved parties by waiting till November. Moreover, it is a wrong policy to bring up such cases before the All-India Congress Committee before every possible effort has been made to redress such grievances locally. What we want to cultivate is ability to check and correct irregularities by the force of local public opinion. Neither the Bengal nor the Madras Committee can possibly defend an untenable position in the face of enlightened public opinion. And in the present leaders have got blind public opinion behind them, no decision of the All-India Congress Committee will give the injured parties any relief. The Congress has got a democratic constitution, but unless there are democrats to work it and use the barometer of public opinion for their guidance, there is no doubt that the constitution will be worked for autocratic ends. A hasty interference by the central body can but increase acerbities and splits. The Working Committee has therefore deliberately evaded the legal issue, refrained from going into the merits, put both the parties on their honour and appealed to them to set matters right by local endeavour. We have no time for academical discussions or legal subtleties. We must think less of office, and more of service.

AN ENGLISH FRIEND'S CAUTION

I reproduce below the relevant part of a letter from an English friend whom I have known for years and who is a great seeker after Truth. She says :

Some of your words have seemed very beautiful, others have seemed unlike yourself and I have been troubled. Why should I criticize? I do not know the complex situation, how can I judge whether there is sufficient cause for the radical upheaval you are trying to bring about? When I look back and see how I revered you, and the ideal for which you stood to me, I could wish that things had stood still, and that nothing had ever happened to make me wonder whether I was mistaken. Of course, this is a very weak thought, and, of course, I must brace myself up to face the actual facts of today. In so far as you are right I can but reverence you still, only that I cannot tell how far you are right. Of one thing I feel pretty sure, that if you are wrong you do not *wish* to succeed, the great majestic Right is far dearer to you than your own endeavours. How curious it is that we do not know what the Right is, and yet we are far more anxious that It should prevail than that our own schemes should succeed!

I have no doubt that many of my friends feel as this friend does.

Another English correspondent has put the same thought more bluntly and says that I appear to him to be countenancing evil so that good may come. I can only assure both the correspondents and those who think like them that I have no desire to see anything but Right triumph. I have never believed and I do not now believe that the end justifies the means. On the contrary it is my firm conviction that there is an intimate connection between the end and the means so much so that you cannot achieve a good end by bad means. And I am not aware of having resorted to a departure by a hair's breadth from the strictest truth and right as I know them. Indeed I am sure that I would long ago have stood discredited had I compromised truth for a single second. I am fully aware that I am trying a most dangerous experiment—that of inducing thousands of Mussulmans, and, for that matter, Hindus too, to become and remain strictly non-violent although their final creed permits them to resort to violence under given conditions. It has been my misfortune to be misunderstood whenever I have taken up a new cause. Friends and adversaries alike have been startled by the new and (for them) unexpected applications of some ancient truth. I was accused of fomenting trouble in South Africa to such an extent that I was often in danger of losing my best friends. The majority of them as also my adversaries afterward came to acknowledge that I was right and they had not understood the implications of the doctrine I was trying to illustrate in practical life. And so I feel it is with non-co-operation. I consider it to be one of the gentlest practices of ethical conduct. It and it alone can pave the way for a genuine understanding between Englishmen and Indians; it and it alone can promote, if anything can, real friendship between the East and the West. It and it alone can enable India to realize the full height of her own unique culture. In spite of many appearances to the contrary, I see the day coming when Englishmen and Indians will come to regard one another as friends and fellow-workers.

Young India, 11-8-1921

43. ESSENTIALS OF SUCCESS

To finish the boycott of foreign cloth programme before the 30th September next it is no doubt necessary to revise our taste, revert to simplicity and cut down our wants to a minimum. No non-co-operator can afford to wear more than three articles of dress. We must not hanker after the Bezwada finery but must be satisfied with the coarsest khadi. But this is only a preliminary. Swadeshi will fail if we are not business-like. We have hitherto tried to act on the students and they have responded to the best of their lights and ability. Many non-co-operating students are doing valiant work as pickets or propagandists. A non-co-operation school attracts to it all public activity. But we cannot achieve full success in swadeshi through the schoolboys only. We must touch the hearts of the weavers of India. We must organize them. Those weavers who for want of scope for their art have left their calling should be induced to come back to it. We must hold their meetings and tell them why they should weave hand-spun yarn even though it may be uneven, and why they should consider it a sin to touch foreign yarn. Similarly we must induce carders (*dhunias*) to prepare slivers for spinning. We must also induce clothiers to introduce patriotism into their trade and sell hand-spun cloth and give up selling foreign cloth. We must have for swadeshi shops inspectors who are experts in distinguishing between foreign cloth and swadeshi and between hand-spun and machine-spun. This great work cannot be done unless we are able to organize ourselves on a grand scale. And such organization is utterly impossible unless every Congress body is able to concentrate upon swadeshi, i.e., boycott and production to the exclusion of every other activity.

The ideal no doubt is for every village to spin and weave for itself just as today most villages grow corn for themselves. It is easier for every village to spin and weave for itself than to grow all its corn. Every village cannot grow wheat or rice, but every village can stock enough cotton and spin and weave without any difficulty. But it must be some time before we can arrive at that happy state. Meanwhile, those provinces that are at all organized for the work, for instance the Punjab, must not only immediately exclude all foreign cloth from their own markets but must send out to the parts of India that need their superfluous stock of khadi. Punjab, Andhra, Bihar and Gujarat seem to be the best organized provinces for the manufacture of khadi.

And they must busy themselves with the work so as to anticipate a famine of khadi.

And if we would do this great and glorious work, we must cease to talk, or if we do talk, our talk must take the shape of business. We must cease to wrangle and offer hair-splitting objections to every position as also to take interest in them if anyone insists on indulging in these things. The Congress must cease to be a debating society of talented lawyers who will not leave their practice, but it must consist of producers and manufacturers, and those who would understand them, nurse them and voice their feelings. Practising lawyers can help by becoming silent workers and donors. I sympathize with them for their desire to be in the limelight. But I would urge them to recognize their limitations. Their day will come when the nation is again in a position to go to law-courts and debating assemblies for justice or legislation. Today it has no faith in either, for they are corrupt beyond description. Both law and law-courts fail to do justice when the question is between the Government and the people. The test of their usefulness lies in their ability to adjudicate evenly between the two parties, not in their giving just laws as between different parts composing the people. The latter justice is like that of the lion interposing to keep the lambs from eating one another or dying of disease so that he may have all of them for food.

Young India, 11-8-1921

44. TO THE WOMEN OF INDIA

DEAR SISTERS,

The All-India Congress Committee has come to a momentous decision in fixing the 30th September next as the final date for completing the boycott of foreign cloth begun by the sacrificial fire lit on the 31st July in Bombay in memory of Lokamanya Tilak. I was accorded the privilege of setting fire to the huge pile containing costly saris and other dresses which you have hitherto considered fine and beautiful. I feel that it was right and wise on the part of the sisters who gave their costly clothing. Its destruction was the most economical use you could have made of it, even as destruction of plague-infected articles is their most economical and best use. It was a necessary surgical operation designed to avert more serious complaints in the body politic.

The women of India have during the past twelve months worked wonders on behalf of the motherland. You have silently worked away

as angels of mercy. You have parted with your cash and your fine jewellery. You have wandered from house to house to make collections. Some of you have even assisted in picketing. Some of you who were used to fine dresses of variegated colours and had a number of changes during the day have now adopted the white and spotless but heavy khadi sari reminding one of a woman's innate purity. You have done all this for the sake of India, for the sake of Khilafat, for the sake of the Punjab. There is no guile about your word or work. Yours is the purest sacrifice untainted by anger or hate. Let me confess to you that your spontaneous and loving response all over India has convinced me that God is with us. No other proof of our struggle being one of self-purification is needed than that lakhs of India's women are actively helping it. Having given much, more is now required of you. Men bore the principal share of the subscriptions to the Tilak Swaraj Fund. But completion of the swadeshi programme is possible only if you give the largest share. Boycott is impossible *unless you will surrender the whole of your foreign clothing*. So long as the taste per-sists, so long complete renunciation impossible. And boycott means complete renunciation. We must be prepared to be satisfied with such cloth as India can produce, even as we are thankfully content with such children as God gives us. I have not known a mother throwing away her baby even though it may appear ugly to an outsider. So should it be with the patriotic women of India about Indian manufactures. And for you, only hand-spun and hand-woven can be regarded as Indian manufactures. During the transition stage you can only get coarse khadi in abundance. You may add all the art to it that your taste allows or requires. And if you will be satisfied with coarse khadi for a few months, India need not despair of seeing a revival of the fine rich and coloured garments of old which were once the envy and the despair of the world. I assure you that a six months' course of self-denial will show you that what we today regard as artistic is only falsely so, and that true art takes note not merely of form but also of what lies behind. There is an art that kills and an art that gives life. The fine fabric that we have imported from the West or the Far East has literally killed millions of our brothers and sisters, and delivered thousands of our dear sisters to a life of shame. True art must be evidence of happiness, contentment and purity of its authors. And if you will have such art revived in our midst, the use of khadi is obligatory on the best of you at the present moment.

And not only is the use of khadi necessary for the success of the swadeshi programme, but it is imperative for every one of you to spin during your leisure hours. I have suggested to boys and men also that

they should spin. Thousands of them, I know, are spinning daily. But the main burden of spinning must, as of old, fall on your shoulders. Two hundred years ago, the women of India spun not only for home demand but also for foreign lands. They spun not merely coarse counts but the finest that the world has ever spun. No machine has yet reached the fine-ness of the yarn spun by our ancestors. If, then, we are to cope with the demand for khadi during the two months and afterwards, you must form spinning-clubs, institute spinning competitions and flood the Indian market with hand-spun yarn. For this purpose some of you have to become experts in spinning, carding and adjusting the spinning-wheels. This means ceaseless toil. You will not look upon spinning as a means of livelihood. For the middle class it should supplement the income of the family, and for very poor women, it is undoubtedly a means of livelihood.

The spinning-wheel should be as it was the widows' loving companion. But for you who will read this appeal, it is presented as a duty, as dharma. If all the well-to-do women of India were to spin a certain quantity daily, they would make yarn cheap and bring about much more quickly than otherwise the required fineness.

The economic and the moral salvation of India thus rests mainly with you. The future of India lies on your knees, for you will nurture the future generation. You can bring up the children of India to become simple, godfearing and brave men and women, or you can coddle them to be weaklings unfit to brave the storms of life and used to foreign finery which they would find it difficult in after life to discard. The next few weeks will show of what stuff the women of India are made. I have not the shadow of a doubt as to your choice. The destiny of India is far safer in your hands than in the hands of a Government that has so exploited India's resources that she has lost faith in herself. At every one of women's meetings, I have asked for your blessings for the national effort, and I have done so in the belief that you are pure, simple and godly enough to give them with effect. You can ensure the fruitfulness of your blessings by giving up your foreign cloth and during your spare hours ceaselessly spinning for the nation.

*I remain,
Your devoted brother,
M. K. GANDHI*

Young India, 11-8-1921

45 . SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, GAYA¹

August 12, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi then addressed the audience and said that he felt ashamed to have come from Allahabad to speak on the subject of protection of cows. The two Maulanas² had told them what their religion had got to say on the subject. One might not perform *Gayatri* and *Sandhya* and protect a cow [and] might be called a Hindu. At the same time Hindu religion did not tell them to kill Mohammedans or the English. They should be also prepared to bear the suffering caused by cow-sacrifice.

In an impressing for a long time [the fact] that cow-sacrifice is due to the enmity of Hindus towards Mohammedans. If, suppose, the 65,000 populace of Gaya were to suppress cow-sacrifice against 10,000 Mohammedans by force, some among the Mohammedans would certainly come forward to say, "I shall sacrifice a cow in your presence."

To wrest cows from the hands of the Mohammedans was not Hindu-like. It was said in the *Gita* that to use force was not religious and religion did not consist in using force. Both the *Ramayana* and the *Gita* pointed to that very conclusion. The essence of dharma consisted in maintaining peace and not in abusing others. They might appeal, but not use force. If any Hindu went against these tenets, he could be said to have never read either the *Mahabharata* or the *Manusmriti*. The Hindus should save the Khilafat. If they worked in peace and harmony they would create love for Indians. If they supported Khilafat the necessity of cow-sacrifice would go away by itself. The Hindus should not think that Mohammedans would be their enemies. In Bombay, Messrs Chhotani and Khettry had saved hundreds of cows. If they left them to their discretion, cows would be saved.

If the Government servants did not side with them they should not assault them or abuse them. It was their duty to love them.

The third point that he impressed on them was swadeshi. Bihar, he said, was a beautiful and holy place. There the trade flourished once. Many of their people accepted service under the East India Company. At first it was difficult for him to introduce swadeshi. In Champaran, boys who followed swadeshi were laughed at. It was through God's grace that the necessity of it was being recognized gradually. He had noticed a *panda* (Gayawal) boy in *videshi* clothes from head to foot. That pained him much. It made his heart ache to learn that *pandas* had become so indiscreet.

¹ Gandhiji addressed a public meeting of some 20,000 people at 9.30 p.m. He was accompanied by Mahommed Ali and Azad Subhani.

² Mahomed Ali and Azad Subhani, who had spoken earlier

Pandas were the custodians of dharma and sannyasis. Proceeding, he said that they must give up prostitution and gambling, otherwise they could not expect to win swaraj.

The Searchlight, 21-8-1921

46. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

GAYA,
August 13, 1921

MATHURADAS

CARE ABAD SHIVAJI BAZAR GATE

BOMBAY FORT

CERTAINLY CAN PRINT FORT SPEECH NAVAJIVAN.

GANDHI

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.
Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

47. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

BIHAR SHARIF,
August 13 [1921]¹

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your two letters. Seeing that the whole movement has been conceived in a spirit of service of the poor, I am not likely to go wrong about the burning. To me it seems utterly degrading to throw foreign cloth in the face of the poor because we have no longer any use for it, that cloth which has brought pauperism to the land and reduced thousands of women to a life of shame. Not even the poor will understand a sudden manifestation of pity for them in the shape of silk kerchiefs, flimsy saris and flimsier shirts, not to speak of thousands of stinking caps. The central point in burning is to create an utter disgust with ourselves that we have thoughtlessly decked ourselves at the expense of the poor. Yes, I see nothing wrong in making it a sin to wear cloth that has meant India's degradation and slavery. What I am trying to do just now is to perform a surgical operation with a hand that must not shake. I would respect the

¹ Gandhiji was in Bihar Sharif at this time in 1921.

wonderful love put into cloth prepared by a sister in Europe but I could not even then reconcile myself to the use of forbidden cloth even as one must not take at the hands of one's mother indigestible food given in ignorant love. Lady Roberts sent me what she thought was a preparation possessing the qualities of milk but which was said not to have been made from cow's milk. As soon as I discovered that it was made from milk, I wrote to her and asked to be relieved from having to take it. She not only saw the point but apologized for the mistake. The fact is I look upon life as one of discipline and restraints. These things are often caricatured as in the tortures that the so-called yogis go through. But in their essence they will stand the closest scrutiny. You cannot have an adequate notion how the people are silently and unconsciously transferring their hatred of sinners to sin itself. English ladies in Bombay were warned on the 1st of August And there was Stokes and an English nurse on the platform surrounded by no less than three lacs of men and women. God only knows how the whole thing is going to shape ultimately. All I know is that many there are today who are doing it all for love of humanity.

Yes, the money in Petit's hands is mine and yet I have no control over it. I wish you had told me earlier of his refusal. I am going to try. Please let me know what Malaviyaji has said. If you have any difficulty of course you will fall back on me. What is the final date of your departure?

I had a nice time with Stokes. We were together for about six days during my travels in the U.P.

I agree with you that we must work against opium just as much as against drink. I do feel that if the swadeshi programme is gone through properly and peace and Hindu-Muslim unity persist, we must get swaraj this year. Opium and such abominations must then disappear at the very start of the new life.

With love,

Yours,
MOHAN

From a photostat : G.N. 962

48. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

GAYA,

*Saturday [August 13, 1921]*¹

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

I have your letter. Self-surrender does not, should not, deprive one of one's originality. It only means that the person has realized his little-ness and, therefore, relies on somebody in whom he has faith. When in doubt, such a person does not insist on his own view but yields to the friend's. Arjuna harried Krishna with no end of questions. The tortoise was a lover of God. His wife would tempt God right till the last. Though [he]² scorned the counsellors and sent them away, she kept complaining to God all the time. Self-surrender does not mean giving up one's judgment. Sincere self-surrender is not inertia, it is energy; knowing that there is someone to whom to turn ultimately, the person undertakes, with due regard for his limitations, a thousand experiments one after another. But they are all undertaken with humility, knowledge and discrimination. I count Maganlal's self-surrender to be of the highest order, but he has never, I believe, surrendered his judgment. Your way is quite different. You have too little initiative and, therefore, whenever you get someone to whom you can look up, what little you have deserts you. Because too much reading has dulled your originality, you want to be an assistant. One may wish to work independently and yet be extremely modest.

Your motive in wanting to live with me is sincere, but it is wrong. You merely wish to imitate the West. If I always keep someone with me merely in order that a record of my activities may be kept, I myself would come to behave unnaturally. It is one thing that someone may remain by my side in the usual course of things and keep notes unobtrusively, but quite another that a person should keep notes of everything of set purpose. Did anyone take notes of Rama's activities? The world has lost nothing because no one did so. If extensive notes of Johnson's talks were taken, they have conferred on the world no incomparable benefit that I know of. We do not at all look at this matter merely from the point of view of literature. However, I do want you always to be with me. Since your grasp is so

¹ J. B. Kripalani's suggestion to Gandhiji to have a Bengali with him, referred to in the letter, was made on this date and Krishnadas accordingly joined Gandhiji soon afterwards.

² Illegible in the source

good and you are so well-equipped, I should like you to understand everything about my life and work. I have a great many ideas, but they find expression only as occasions arise. There are subtleties, sometimes, which no one follows. My unexceptionable comments on Vasantaram Shastri's letter¹ were understood neither by Kaka nor by Swami. You understood them a little better than they. My considerateness in those comments went unnoticed. The tempting thought does not leave me, therefore, that if I had a man life you by my side he could, in the course of time, take up my work. I do not wish yet to employ you exclusively on any one task, but want you, instead, to gather experience. If, moreover, you get acquainted with everyone whom I know, our work in the future will be easier.

There was a telegram from Valji and Swami promising that no errors would be left in future issues. The Professor², moreover, wants me to have one Bengali with me. It will, therefore, be convenient if you join me when you are free from there. If you yourself feel like taking up *Young India* to run it independently and develop it, I do not mind. Personally, though, I believe the paper will not be needed after I am gone. Perhaps some of you believe that, if you continue to spread my message, you will be able to run it. Even for this, it is not necessary that you should join it. On the contrary, I feel that after you have matured through experience you will be better equipped to run *Young India* by yourself. Talk to Jawaharlal Nehru about the *Independent*. He must find someone from U.P. How is it he cannot find any from among these vast Hindi-speaking people? What about Kapil Dev Malaviya³? In any case, place all the facts before Jawaharlal and discuss the matter.

You have done well to remind me about the matter of Rs. 25,000. I am taking steps to make the necessary arrangements. The printing must improve.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am advising Devdas to stay on there for the time being. I don't have the time to go over the letter again.

From a photostat of the Gujarati original : S.N. 11417

¹ Vide "My Notes", 17-7-1921

² J. B. Kripalani

³ A political worker of U.P.

49. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Saturday [August 13, 1921]¹

I did not know that the illness you have passed through was so serious. Even then, I had it in my mind till the very last to go and see you. But how could I do so? I reached Boribunder just five minutes before time. Things turned up one after another and kept me engaged. I do understand your desire, but it is my lot to sacrifice my dearest ones. I have had to do this on a number of occasions, and the course I took was the only right one. So, while conceding that your desire is legitimate, I would also ask you not to feel disappointed if it is not gratified. Hereafter, whenever you feel impatient, you should let me know through someone that I must go and see you. If all of you act in this way, I shall feel safe. I stop here as we are nearing the station.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi

¹ The date is given in the source.

50. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BIHAR SHARIF¹

August 13, 1921

. . . While thanking the municipal commissioners for the address presented to him and his brother Maulana Mahomed Ali, [Gandhiji] asked them to take their legitimate share in the present struggle of eradicating various abuses prevailing in the country. Referring to the cow-sacrifice, he asked the Hindus to help the Mussulmans in the Khilafat question and to pray every morning for the protection of the cow if they wanted the question to be solved properly. Concluding, he appealed to everyone present to take to the charkha and to work out the boycott of foreign cloth before the 30th September. The whole audience maintained silence throughout their speeches. The meeting closed at about 8 p.m., after which Mahatmaji attended a meeting of *pardanashin* ladies when he was presented with cash and ornaments.

The Searchlight, 21-2-1921

51. THE FEAR OF DEATH

[August 14, 1921]²

I have been collecting descriptions of swaraj. One of these would be : Swaraj is the abandonment of the fear of death. A nation which allows itself to be influenced by the fear of death cannot attain swaraj, and cannot retain it if somehow attained.

English people carry their lives in their pockets. Arabs and Pathans consider death as nothing more than an ordinary ailment; they never weep when a relation dies. Boer women are perfectly innocent of this fear. In the Boer war, thousands of young Boer women became widowed. They never cared. It did not matter in the least if the husband or the son was lost; it was enough and more than enough that the country's honour was safe. What booted the husband if the country was enslaved? It was infinitely better to bury a son's mortal remains and to cherish his immortal memory than to bring him up as a serf. Thus did the Boer women steel their hearts and cheerfully give up their darlings to the angel of Death.

The people I have mentioned kill and get killed. But what of those who do not kill but are only ready to die themselves? Such

¹ The meeting was held on the Debi Sarai grounds at 6 p.m. Gandhiji was presented addresses on behalf of the Municipality and spoke after Mahomed Ali.

² The Gujarati original was published in *Navajivan*, 14-8-1921.

people become the objects of a world's adoration. They are the salt of the earth.

The English and the Germans fought one another; they killed and got killed. The result is that animosities have increased. There is no end of unrest, and the present condition of Europe is pitiful. There is more of deceit, and each is anxious to circumvent the rest.

But the fearlessness which we are cultivating is of a nobler and purer order and it is therefore that we hope to achieve a signal victory within a very short time.

When we attain swaraj, many of us will have given up the fear of death; or else we shall not have attained swaraj. Till now mostly young boys have died in the cause. Those who died in Aligarh were all below twenty-one. No one knows who they were. If Government resort to firing now, I am hoping that some men of the first rank will have the opportunity of offering up the supreme sacrifice.

Why should we be upset when children or young men or old men die? Not a moment passes when someone is not born or is not dead in this world. We should feel the stupidity of rejoicing in a birth and lamenting a death. Those who believe in the soul—and what Hindu, Mussulman or Parsi is there who does not?—know that the soul never dies. The souls of the living as well as of the dead are all one. The eternal processes of creation and destruction are going on ceaselessly. There is nothing in it for which we might give ourselves up to joy or sorrow. Even if we extend the idea of relationship only to our countrymen and take all the births in the country as taking place in our own family, how many births shall we celebrate? If we weep for all the deaths in our country, the tears in our eyes would never dry. This train of thought should help us to get rid of all fear of death.

India, they say, is a nation of philosophers; and we have not been unwilling to appropriate the compliment. Still, hardly any other nation becomes so helpless in the face of death as we do. And in India again, no other community perhaps betrays so much of this helplessness as the Hindus. A single birth is enough for us to be beside ourselves with ludicrous joyfulness. A death makes us indulge in orgies of loud lamentation which condemn the neighbourhood to sleeplessness for the night. If we wish to attain swaraj, and if having attained it we wish to make it something to be proud of, we must perfectly renounce this unseemly fright.

And what is imprisonment to the man who is fearless of death itself? If the reader will bestow a little thought upon the matter, he will find that if swaraj is delayed, it is delayed because we are not prepared calmly to meet death and inconveniences less than death.

As larger and larger numbers of innocent men come out to welcome death, their sacrifice will become the potent instrument for the salvation of all others; and there will be a minimum of suffering. Suffering cheerfully endured ceases to be suffering and is transmuted into an ineffable joy. The man who flies from suffering is the victim of endless tribulation before it has come to him, and is half dead when it does come. But one who is cheerfully ready for anything and everything that comes escapes all pain; his cheerfulness acts as an anaesthetic.

I have been led to write about this subject because we have got to envisage even death if we will have swaraj this very year. One who is previously prepared often escapes accidents; and this may well be the case with us. It is my firm conviction that swadeshi constitutes this preparation. When once swadeshi is a success, neither this Government nor any one else will feel the necessity of putting us to any further test.

Still it is best not to neglect any contingency whatever. Possession of power makes men blind and deaf; they cannot see things which are under their very nose, and cannot hear things which invade their ears. There is thus no knowing what this power-intoxicated Government may not do. So it seemed to me that patriotic men ought to be prepared for death, imprisonment and similar eventualities.

The brave meet death with a smile on their lips, but they are circumspect all the same. There is no room for foolhardiness in this non-violent war. We do not propose to go to jail or to die by an immoral act. We must mount the gallows while resisting the oppressive laws of this Government.

Young India, 13-10-1921

52. DEFINITIONS OF SWARAJ

I take the reader's leave to put before him the various definitions of swaraj which I keep formulating in my mind.

(1) Swaraj means rule over one's self. One who has achieved this had fulfilled his individual pledge.

(2) We have, however, thought of swaraj in terms of some symbol or image. Swaraj, therefore, means the complete control by the people of the country's imports and exports, of its army and its law courts. This is the meaning of the pledge taken in December. Such swaraj may or may not have room for the British connection. If there is no solution of the Punjab and the Khilafat issues, there will be no room for such connection.

(3) But then it is possible that sadhus as individuals enjoy swaraj even at present, and that, even when we have a parliament of our own, people may not feel that they are free. Swaraj, therefore, means easy availability of food and cloth, so much so that no one would go hungry or naked for want of them.

(4) Even under such circumstances, it may happen that one community or section seeks to suppress another. Swaraj, therefore, means conditions in which a young girl could, without danger, move about alone even at dead of night.

(5) These four definitions will be found to include many others. Nevertheless, if swaraj has infused—and it ought to infuse—a new spirit in every one of the classes which make up the nation, it will mean total disappearance of the practice of treating *Antyajas* as untouchables.

(6) End of the Brahmin-non-Brahmin quarrel.

(7) Complete disappearance of the evil passions in the hearts of Hindus and Muslims. This means that a Hindu should respect a Muslim's feelings and should be ready to lay down his life for him, and *vice versa*. Muslims should not slaughter cows for the purpose of hurting Hindus; on the contrary, they should on their own refrain from cow-slaughter so as to spare the latter's feelings. Likewise, without asking for anything in return, Hindus should stop playing music before mosques with the purpose of hurting Muslims, should actually feel proud in not playing music while passing by a mosque.

(8) Swaraj means that Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Parsis,

Christians and Jews should all be able to follow their own faith and should respect those of others.

(9) Swaraj means that every town or village should be strong enough to protect itself against thieves and robbers and should produce the food and cloth that it requires.

(10) Swaraj means mutual regard between the princes or zemindars on the one hand and their subjects on the other, that the former should not harass the latter and the latter, in their turn, should give no trouble to the former.

(11) Swaraj means mutual regard between the rich and the working class. It means the latter working gladly for the former for adequate wages.

(12) Swaraj means looking upon every woman as a mother or sister and respecting her to the utmost. It means doing away with the distinctions of high and low, and acting towards all with the same regard as for one's brother or sister.

It follows from these definitions that in swaraj (1) the Government will not trade in liquor, opium and things of that kind; (2) no speculation can be permitted in food grains and cotton; (3) no person will break a law; (4) there can be no room at all for wilfulness, which means that a person cannot act as a judge when he is himself charged with something, but should let the charge be examined in a duly established court in the country.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-8-1921

53. *UNTOUCHABILITY AND NATIONALISM*

A gentleman from Ankleshwar has written a long letter in which he says that, by introducing the issue of untouchability in the national movement, I have done great harm to the country, that I have exaggerated matters in discussing this issue and have unnecessarily supplied a cause for rift amongst us. There are endless allegations in that gentleman's letter. He will forgive me for not replying to them here.

Some social questions are of such magnitude that they cannot but be made political issues. If we dismiss the question of Hindu-Muslim unity as a social one, our cart will get stalled in the very first stage of the journey. The problem of Brahmins and non-

Brahmins in the South has become so acute that any political party which tries to bypass it will commit suicide. It is easy to decide whether or not a particular issue should be taken up in the national struggle. There is no choice but to solve a problem which, if left unsolved, would block our progress. I am positively of the view that, had I not taken up the problem of untouchability, our struggle would have made no headway. We simply could not mount the heaven-bound plane, leaving behind those six crores of people whom, in our profound ignorance, we regard as untouchables and exploit to the utmost. They would cling to the plane and, as they are buried in the ground, it could not take off at all. I would not have taken up this question had I felt that they could have been carried along somehow, hanging on to the plane. I got the impression from the correspondent's letter that he has no idea whatsoever of the present system of Government.

The structure of the Government rests entirely on the foundation of our weaknesses. Today, it may be the Hindu-Muslim question, tomorrow it may be that of Brahmins and non-Brahmins, then again that of untouchability, on another occasion that of the subjects and the rulers, the capitalists and the workers, the pleasure we take in drinking and such other things. This Government has exploited all these weaknesses of ours. It is because of this that I have described our movement as one of self-purification. I have described untouchability as the greatest blot on Hindu society as the latter has been guilty of Dyerism in its treatment of the communities regarded as untouchable.

I shall not walk into the trap of the Shastras and allow myself to be fooled. I cannot brush aside the evidence of my eyes. Wherever I look, I see hatred for the untouchables. A correspondent proudly asserts that, had Hindu society really cherished hatred for the *Antyajias*, the latter would have perished long ago. I, on the other hand, feel that we have not destroyed them because we needed them to do our sanitary work. Who would destroy slaves? Those who wish that their burdens should be carried do not destroy their beasts. When I think of the heavy burden which we have made the untouchables to carry and the extent to which we have reduced them to the position of slaves, life itself becomes unbearable to me. However, since I believe that our atrocities are the result of our ignorance and are not deliberate, I have been trying to awaken Hindu society by harsh words, though with great affection and humility. We have no moral

justification at all for our present treatment of the *Antyajas*.

I like the idea of having a bath after coming into contact with anything dirty. I myself take one and advise others to do so. But that we should avoid anyone who, though outwardly as clean as myself, when questioned as to his community turns out to be an *Antyaj*—is intolerable to me.

Protection of the weak will be of the utmost importance in swaraj. If we are not prepared to ensure it, if we do not let them draw water from wells, force them to live in the filthiest localities, do not permit them to attend our schools or, if we do, reserve separate benches for them, if we regard ourselves polluted by their touch though, perhaps, they attend looking cleaner than we do, certainly, this is not Hindu Shastra it is only the element of extremism in it and is pure Dyerism.

A gentleman from the party of *Antyajas* says in a letter to me that Lord Clive had overcome others with the help of the *Antyajas*. I have not gone into this matter, but I have no doubt about its being so. Even today, if the *Antyajas* show themselves gullible enough, there are many Clives who are ready to exploit any person or class and suppress others who may lift their heads. The Gurkhas have the same blood in their veins as we; who used them against the innocent workers of Chandpur? The Sikhs' eyes have opened now, but has this brave community not been sufficiently used in the present political system for suppressing us?

We put the noose round our own necks by covering up our weaknesses, giving them the appearance of strength and postponing their reform.

If the followers of a religion in which it is customary to set aside a portion for the poor before sitting down to a meal, throw from a distance into the laps of the *Antyajas* what is left over in their plates, throw rotten grain and such other things, what should we call such wicked conduct if not Dyerism?

This correspondent says that, when the *Antyajas* were brought in to attend the Broach Conference, people kept to their seats merely out of their regard [for me], but they were certainly pained at heart. I should be sorry if this is true. If we want swaraj, we should learn to state our views and act on them even though we happen to be in a minority of one or two.

I know that I have pained many devout Hindus by my writings

and speeches on untouchability. But I also know that I have been, and am, prompted by no malice in acting as I have done. When the *vaid* prescribes *chirata*, the patient, though he may make a sour face, knows that it is for his good.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-8-1921

54. COMPROMISE?

This is not the only letter¹ of its kind which I have received. Some friends have also remonstrated with me orally for welcoming Mr. Vasanthram Shastri's article. I adhere to my opinion all the same. I would welcome any article like the above and criticism in the same spirit. It is gratifying to know that there are many now who see that the practice of untouchability is an evil and suggest that there is no room at all for compromise on this issue. The critics of Mr. Shastri's article look at it from their own point of view. I considered it from Mr. Shastri's and was happy to find that he regarded the practice of untouchability as a matter of hygiene. I can understand the idea of avoiding contact with an *Antyaj* in the same manner in which one avoids contact with a woman in her monthly course. It is not difficult for me to understand how the practice of avoiding contact with a *Chandal*² may have arisen.

The true reformer, without giving up his stand, welcomes those who come nearer to him because he believes that, in the course of time, they will understand the meaning of the reform. I have denounced the sort of untouchability which is being practised in the name of the Shastras and I have no intention of modifying my attitude in any respect. But I shall salute anyone who, though he may take a bath on touching an *Antyaj*, loves *Antyajas*, gets water tanks built for them, helps them to get educated, makes their suffering his own, will not eat before he has fed them, respectfully gives an *Antyaj* a seat in a railway compartment and nurses him if he becomes ill. I will pray to God to forgive such a man if he believes that his soul has been polluted by contact with an *Antyaj*. I will not change my view or my

¹ The letter, not reproduced here, purported to be from a *sanatani* Hindu and complained against what he regarded as Gandhiji's compromising attitude in his comments on Shastri Vasanthram's article; *vide* "My Notes", 17-7-1921.

² One of the communities traditionally regarded as untouchable

practice or method in any respect whatever. I will not compromise with untouchability. But to the extent that any persons move towards the ideal, I shall honour them.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-8-1921

55. MY NOTES

BURNING OF CAPS

The work enthusiastically begun in Bombay is progressing with great vigour. At every place in our journey, caps made of muslin, velvet and felt pile up in heaps. Muslims throw in their Turkish and Astrakhan caps. Some throw in their turbans. A friend has commented that the telephone and the telegraphs seem ineffective when compared with the telepathic communication going on in the country. With the speed of air, the idea has spread among the people that it is sinful to wear foreign cloth or have it in one's house. At each and every place, therefore, we receive something or other. What surprises me is that we rarely see anyone hesitating to hand over his clothes for burning.

OUR GROUP

During this journey, our group consists not merely of one of the Ali Brothers and myself, but also includes Maulana Azad Subhani of Kanpur and Mr. Stokes, who lives in Kotgarh near Simla. The latter is member of the Congress. He has dedicated his time to working for the removal of the practice of forced labour which obtains in the hills. Mr. Stokes is married to an Indian Christian lady and has six children. He has not, to this day, taught his children a single word of English. They know only two languages—Pahari and Hindi. He, too, threw his clothes into the sacrificial fire on July 31 and now dresses himself in a dhoti, shirt and cap, all made of khadi. As he has some time to spare now, he is accompanying us on this journey in order to get some experience. For many years now Mr. Stokes has been living in purely Indian style. the change in dress, though, is recent.

SHOUTS OF VICTORY AND TOUCHING OF FEET IN REVERENCE

The malady of bursting forth into shouts of victory and touching my feet in reverence is as active as ever. I had hoped that, after all that I have written on the subject, I would find things changed. But ever since we entered the United Provinces I have had so much of

them that I feel disgusted. There is no end to the enthusiasm of the people, but I find all this enthusiasm being frittered away in shouting and touching my feet. My ears, too, are no longer strong enough to tolerate loud noises. In a crowd of thousands, people's attempts to touch my feet are so troublesome that every moment I feel afraid I may fall down.

VOLUNTEERS

Of volunteers, there is a large number, but they are not yet fully aware of their responsibilities. They lack training. If we wish to start civil disobedience, volunteers must become perfectly efficient. They ought to be able to stop the shouting, to prevent people from touching my feet and to make themselves heard. If volunteers cannot manage this, they will be of no help at a critical moment. We should, therefore, look upon the training of volunteers as an essential part of our struggle.

VERIFICATION

Everyone asks me how we shall be able to verify whether or not we are following swadeshi. There are two methods of doing so. In the market-places today we rarely see anything but foreign clothes on people's bodies—men's and women's. We find, in our decorations such as those which we hang over our doors, only *madarashi*¹ and other foreign material made in Manchester. Our buntings, bands, etc., we see, are made of foreign material. We find the same thing in our temples and mosques. When we see khadi instead, we shall know that the age of foreign goods has come to an end. Our cloth-shops and the dwellings of our weavers will provide an even more reliable criterion. We shall know that the era of swadeshi has finally come to prevail when foreign cloth is not easily available in our shops and khadi is all that meets the eye, and when we find no foreign yarn on the looms of weavers. How can there be shops selling foreign cloth if there are no customers for it? This consummation can be brought about only if both the Hindus and the Muslims see the right course. What can Muslims by themselves do if crores of Hindus do not overcome their liking for fine muslin? What can Hindus alone do if crores of Muslims do not do so either?

PAYING FOR ONE'S MISTAKES

Since we neglected some sections of society, we are now faced with difficulties. Wherever I go, I observe absence of co-operation

¹ A kind of cloth

on the part of merchants and weavers. Merchants to some extent have come into the movement, but we have made no effort at all to get in touch with weavers. We must, therefore, educate them. So long as we have not educated them, our difficulties will continue to increase, for if merchants continue to import foreign goods and weavers to use foreign yarn and do not even touch hand-spun yarn, where shall we be? The authorities of every Congress Committee should now get in touch with merchants and weavers, enrol them as members, and persuade them to introduce the needed changes in their business or work. Such an attempt was made in Moradabad and it proved successful. The Committee there called merchants together in a meeting along with the workers. After they were convinced and had had their difficulties resolved, they willingly took the pledge not to purchase foreign cloth. I find Gujaratis in good numbers wherever I go. Many of the families have settled in the particular provinces since a hundred or two hundred years ago. Today at every place, they are going on happily with their work and, wherever they are, they live harmoniously with the local people. In some places, thanks to their efforts, one finds the work of the Congress proceeding securely. Moreover, though they join in the work, they remain humble. It gives me great happiness to see Gujaratis thus displaying their virtues in other parts. If we could rid ourselves of every kind of fear, we could do still greater service to the country.

POWER OF NON-VIOLENCE

From my experience everywhere I see that, wherever people have properly understood the lesson of non-violence, they have risen highest. The non-violence which proceeds from fear or weakness is not true non-violence. That alone can truly be called non-violence which is combined with strength and energy. Just as we do not wish to violate peace in our relations with the British, so also we must not put it aside when dealing with our own people serving as officers, soldiers and policemen. A gentleman has put the question to me whether non-violence is to be followed among ourselves or only in our relations with the British. Such a question should not arise at all. We shall lose even if we do not remain peaceful with our own people. A non-co-operator must remain respectful, peaceful and humble towards all. The braver the man the more peace-loving he should be, and the humbler he is the bigger he is. A shallow person, who starts hitting and abusing at the slightest provocation, loses his strength. Peacefulness is also like the vital fluid, form of energy, an invisible

one. Anyone who builds up a store of it in himself becomes a strong *brahmachari*. By defining *brahmacharya* in purely physical terms, we have ceased to regard as guilty those who lose their temper every second. Just as the observance of *brahmacharya* in its physical aspect is essential for the welfare of the body, so also is spiritual *brahmacharya* necessary. I am convinced that we have only succeeded in prolonging our movement by getting angry with those who co-operate with the Government and by abusing the police. We would have all power in our hands today if we had, in thought, action and speech, remained peaceful, respectful and humble towards all our opponents.

TO PARSI WOMEN

I know that Parsi sisters in fairly good numbers read *Navajivan*. They may have some difficulty in understanding its language. I try to make my language as simple as possible and to avoid conjunct letters. But one cannot completely set aside the rules of grammar. The Parsis have disfigured Gujarati to such an extent that to enter into competition with them would be tantamount to murdering the language. I, therefore, request these women readers to take some trouble to understand the words which they find difficult, or ask someone to explain the same to them. They will have no difficulty at all after they have taken pains to read through a few issues in this manner. It behoves our Parsi brothers and sisters to try and improve their language. At present it seems that there are three varieties of Gujarati : Parsi Gujarati, Muslim Gujarati and Hindu Gujarati, although our Muslim brothers do not spoil Gujarati as much as the Parsis do and have no difficulty in following the Gujarati of *Navajivan*. Khabardar, Malbari and other writers have shown that the Parsis, if they want, can write good Gujarati. I find pure Gujarati used in some of the letters which I get from Parsis. A little pride in one's language is all that is required. Given this pride, the Gujarati of the Parsis will soon improve and come up to the general level.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-8-1921

56. *LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI*

PATNA,
Monday, August 15, 1921

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have sent an article for the special *Pateti* issue of *Sanj Vartman*.¹ I have had it copied. I have not read the copy. If there are any mistakes left, please see to them. Meet Kapadia and see if he has any difficulty in reading the handwriting. I wish that there should be no mistakes and no omissions in the article.

Your health will be all right now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

57. *LETTER TO OMKARNATH PUROHIT*

ON WAY TO PATNA,
August 15, 1921

DEAR OMKARNATH,

I have your letter. I send you the printed letter. I do not see in it anything so unjust that you must proclaim its injustice by publishing the letter. You should keep your word about not publishing it. Whether you act upon the advice contained in it it is for your heart to decide.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

OMKARNATH PUROHIT
C/O LALA CHANDULAL
RAJA KA BAZAR
AGRA

From a photostat of the Hindi original in Gandhiji's hand : G.N. 6088

¹*Vide* "Benevolent Parsis", 10-9-1921.

58. APPEAL TO RESIDENTS OF SIMLA HILL STATES¹

August 15, 1921

BROTHER HILLMEN,

Munshi Kapur Singh and his associates are undergoing trouble for your sake in order to rid you of the injustices of which you are the victims for a long time past. Are you going to give them up without efforts? I am sure in this matter you would not incur the displeasure of the whole country. I hope that so long as your friends and helpers are in jail you will, in pursuance of Mr. Stokes' advice, refuse to give *begar* to the British Government and the State. Do not allow any excess on your part; remove anger from your minds during the time your brothers are under custody. It is much better for you to undergo hardships and be ready to fill jails for the sake of your faith (dharma) than to give *begar* to any official. Remember that, if on this occasion you prove unworthy, you will perpetuate your slavery and for all time to come you shall continue to be treated as slaves. In your efforts I am with you with all my heart and soul.

The Leader, 18-8-1921

59. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

ON WAY TO CALCUTTA,
[Before August 17, 1921]²

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

I have your letter. Motilalji certainly wants you to stay on, but the main thing for you to consider is what you yourself would like to do. If you find the work there very strenuous or if the place does not suit your health, do come away. Can one be more important to a man than be his right hand? "If only I were the right hand" could have been written either in grief or with knowledge. If in grief, I would say you have not understood me. If you wrote it with knowledge, all is well. Two brains can drift apart from each other, but can a hand be separated from the brain to do anything? I am training you to work as a brain. Santaram, being a "permanent Under-Secretary", cannot

¹ This was issued originally in Hindi and was widely distributed among the residents of the Simla Hill States.

² Gandhiji was in Calcutta on August 17.

leave. I should like you to understand your position rightly.

You will not understand the secret of my keeping Pyarelal¹ here. You do not know that part of my life. Ba and I do not have the same temperament. Ba does not understand me. I have not yet found in the Ashram a single woman of the type I want. Managing the kitchen is [a difficult thing]. Only a few can do it. I consider the work beyond your capacity. So far Maganlal, Vinoba, Chhotelal², myself and to some extent Bhuvanarji³ have proved equal to the task. There is science in our cooking. There were numerous difficulties on account of Gokibehn⁴. We do want one responsible man [in the kitchen]. I think that I am making the best use of Pyarelal. When the proper time comes I shall shift him from there and put him elsewhere.

While Joseph is out, your asking for Devdas or Pyarelal to join you seems to be rather an exorbitant demand. You should find someone of a lower level than these two. You can have Prabhudas with you.

Would it suit you to continue staying with Joseph after Durga has recovered? But that is a distant thing. I must first know what your own desire is. I will not now send you to take up *Young India*. Did you receive my last letter? You will either continue there or be with me—this is what I think at present.

I read your articles. All of them are good, that is, they call for no comments. You have given a good reply to Bipin Chandra⁵.

Write to me at Gauhati. I shall be in its neighbourhood up to the 25th.

Kristodas⁶, who was to join me for *Young India* work, has come. He is with me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original : S.N. 11413

¹ Pyarelal Nayyar; Gandhiji's secretary since 1920; biographer of Gandhiji

² Chhotelal Jain, a former anarchist, later an inmate of the Satyagraha Ashram

³ An inmate of the Satyagraha Ashram

⁴ Raliatbehn, Gandhiji's sister

⁵ Bipin Chandra Pal

⁶ A variant of "Krishnadas"

60. SPEECH AT MIRZAPUR PARK, CALCUTTA¹

August 17, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi at the outset said that he would not speak for more than five minutes and hoped that the audience would kindly give him a patient hearing, as he was to leave for Assam that evening by the Darjeeling mail.

He said that he believed that they had all read the resolutions of the All-India Congress Committee which had reference to the fact that there must be a complete boycott of foreign clothes before the 30th of September next and he urged the audience to see that that resolution was carried into effect. He appealed to them to use swadeshi clothes and he desired that they should burn the foreign clothes they were still wearing or send them to Smyrna. Pointing to his own dress which consisted of a khadi cloth and a 'swaraj' cap, he said that though khadi was a bit coarse they should not be discouraged. He reminded the audience that if they were determined to follow the resolutions *in toto*, he promised them swaraj and the undoing of wrongs done to the Khilafat and to the Punjab in October next. He also advised them—both Hindus and Mohammedans—to be united in their efforts just like two sons of a mother, and be prepared to fight their battle peacefully and to present a bold front in their struggle for freedom by absolutely non-violent means.

In conclusion, Mahatma Gandhi again appealed to the audience to throw away all their foreign clothes and to burn them if need be, reminding them at the same time that he would address them again and devote a longer time when he returned to Calcutta in the course of a few days after his tour in Assam.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 18-8-1921

¹ Gandhiji addressed the meeting, attended by over 15,000 Hindus and Muslims, at 4.30 p.m. Abul Kalam Azad and Mahomed Ali were present.

61. LETTER TO KHWAJA

[After August 17, 1921]¹

DEAR KHWAJA SAHEB²,

You will please forgive me for not acknowledging your wire earlier regarding cow-sacrifice. I know that in many parts of India, the work done was marvellously good indeed. You wanted me to wire regarding scarcity of grain. It is no use my wiring anything now. I shall hope to meet you on the 4th³ when you will mention the matter if the situation still requires consideration.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : S.N. 7599

62. REPRESSION IN THE UNITED PROVINCES

The following note was prepared for me by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, now over two months ago, reviewing repressive measures in the United Provinces to the 30th May. Other matters having absorbed my attention, I have not been able to deal with Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's notes. They, however, read as fresh today as in June. And the reader will find in them almost a complete answer to the official repudiation of the charge of repression.⁴

Young India, 18-8-1921

63. NOTES

A HINDI "NAVAJIVAN"

So many Hindi-speaking friends have been anxious for me to make myself responsible for publishing a Hindi edition of the

¹ This was in reply to Khwaja's wire dated August 16 received at Monghyr on August 17 which read : "Only two cows sacrificed yesterday against 6 last year over 200 previous years response to swadeshi very hopeful wheat four seers per rupee rumours of further fall causing great excitement in city serious development apprehended. Please wire advice."

² Presumably Khwaja Abdul Majid, Vice-Chancellor of the National Muslim University of Aligarh which later became Jamia Milia Islamia of Delhi

³ Gandhiji was to reach Calcutta on September 4 to attend the Working Committee meeting to be held on the 6th.

⁴ For the text of the note, *vide* Appendix "Jawaharlal Nehru's note on repression in the United Provinces", 18-8-1921.

Navajivan. I have myself been anxious to do so. But it has not been hitherto possible. The editing of the *Navajivan* and *Young India* is difficult enough to cope with. But there is no doubt that I am in love with my ideas and theories. I am firmly of opinion that they are good for India, and if I may say it in all humility, good for all. And so I am yielding to the pressure of friends and workers to issue a Hindi edition. I know that several translations in Hindi appear in different parts of India. But the desire has been to put under one cover an authorized free translation of selected articles from the *Navajivan* and *Young India*. This is now being done. The Hindi of the edition will really be Hindustani, a resultant of Hindi and Urdu—simple words understood by both Hindus and Mussulmans. An attempt will be made to avoid ornamentation. Indeed I would love to give a simultaneous transcript in the Urdu characters. But that cannot be as yet. Let me not also hide the secret from the reader that it is my regard for the Marwari friends, and notably, Jamnalalji that hastened the issue of the Hindi *Navajivan*. Jamnalalji has made the declaration as publisher and Mr. Shankarlal Banker as printer. The Hindi *Navajivan* like the Gujarati and English editions will not contain any advertisements. It has also to be self-supporting like the other two and will therefore depend for existence on the support it receives. The subscription for the Hindi edition will be Rs. 4/- yearly and Rs. 2/- half-yearly. I would advise intending subscribers to send only half-yearly subscriptions. The Hindi *Navajivan* is merely a trial. I have only a limited staff. But for the exhaustless energy and resourcefulness of Swami Anandanand I would have refused to take the responsibility. We have found that it is voluntary labour that is most efficient. And it is not easy to tap that class of labour whether bodily or mental. I would therefore invite Hindi lovers of non-co-operation as a doctrine of life to confine their patronage to six months as a trial. Needless to say the concerns are not meant for profit. Any margin left therefore will be devoted to the development of the three editions. The readers will also be interested and pleased to learn that Maulana Mahomed Ali has placed at my disposal his machinery, type and other material of the *Comrade* free of charge. Thus the battle of non-co-operation with forces of evil (as I consider the Government to represent) is dependent upon closest co-operation between forces of good as I consider non-co-operation to represent in spite of all the faults and limitations of non-co-operators.

FRAUDULENT IMITATIONS

A friend writes from Madras :

The piece of cloth which I enclose herewith is a sample of what is being sold in Madras at from 10 to 15 annas per yard by the Bombay Swadeshi Stores under the name of pure khadi, i.e., hand-spun and hand-woven. How is one to be protected against such frauds? I have little doubt that the sample is of foreign make.

I have seen the sample and there is not a shadow of doubt that it is neither hand-spun nor hand-woven. It is possible that it might be a production of Indian mills, though it shows Japanese rather than Indian finish. The pity of it is that such stuff is being sold in swadeshi stores. But we must be prepared for such frauds. They are an eloquent testimony to the fact that the swadeshi spirit is rising. How to detect and check these frauds is the question. The golden rule, of course, is that we must spin our own yarn and get a weaver to weave it under our superintendence. That time is undoubtedly coming. When we cannot spin for ourselves, we must get the spinning done by the thousands of spinners coming into being all over the country. Where we cannot do it, we must in choosing our khadi reject every piece of cloth that looks at all like mill-made. For coarser counts it will be most difficult to distinguish between imported cloth and that manufactured by our mills. Hand-spun khadi lacks the dead polish of the mills but is rougher to look at, porous, light to handle, and pleasant to the touch. It is never glossy. Another safeguard I suggest is that the cloth should be unbleached. A third alternative which is not free from danger is that in every Congress district there should be swadeshi shops licensed by the Congress and there should be expert inspectors who should constantly inspect the stock in licensed shops. If possible, every article should be stamped. I know that we are not organized and trained enough for undertaking this work on a universal scale. But till every district has begun to manufacture all khadi for itself, some such inspection is undoubtedly necessary, and whatever can be honestly improvised should be done.

PLAGUE-SPOTS OF LUCKNOW

An English friend writes to me at Lucknow :

I am just writing to ask you to write a word before you go to someone in authority among your supporters here in regard to the brothels in Lucknow. I was talking to the military police this morning in Aminabad, and it seems that there are some fifty of these places in that locality frequented by soldiers

(some of whom have been court-martialled as it is out of bounds)—Europeans and Anglo-Indians. He did not say anything about Indians but I heard the other day that they also go to these women. A word from you as to this debasing of manhood and lack of self-control would do more than anything else to counteract this evil. I will pledge myself to do all I can to help in the matter.

I wish I could share the English friend's belief that my word has the power he attributes to it. As I write this paragraph, the picture of the dear sisters who visited me at Cocanada after nightfall haunts me. They were dearer to me after I learnt of their shame. It was only by suggestion they could tell me what their life was. As the spokeswoman spoke to me, she had shame and sorrow written in her eyes. I could not bring myself to hold them guilty. I devoted my speech after this meeting to the necessity of personal purity. My heart, therefore, goes out to the fallen sisters of Lucknow. They are driven to a life of shame. I am satisfied that they do not go to it from choice. And the beast in man has made the detestable crime a lucrative profession. Lucknow is noted for its love of ease. But Lucknow is also the seat of a Mussulman divine. It has its full share of all that is noble in Islam. For the Hindus Lucknow is the capital of the Province where the spotless Sita and Rama roamed and reigned. It recalls the best days of Hindu purity, nobility, bravery and steadfastness to truth. Non-cooperation is self-purification, and I urge all the non-co-operators and others to deal with this moral plague of Lucknow. I hope no custodian of Lucknow's good name will remind me that Lucknow is no worse than the other cities in India. Lucknow has come in by chance as an illustration. We are responsible throughout India for the purity and the safety of our womanhood. Why should not Lucknow lead?

Young India, 18-8-1921

64. THE KHILAFAT

At Lucknow I found natural impatience on the part of the Mussulmans regarding the Khilafat. Maulvi Salamatulla voiced in moderate language the public feeling regarding the position of the Angora Government when he said that the British attitude was becoming unbearable. There is no doubt about the growing distrust of the British declarations about friendliness towards the Turks. Nobody believes either that the British declarations are genuine or that

the British Government is powerless to afford relief. In their impatient anger the Mussulmans ask for more energetic and more prompt action by the Congress and Khilafat organizations. To the Mussulmans swaraj means, as it must mean, India's ability to deal effectively with the Khilafat question. The Mussulmans therefore decline to wait if the attainment of swaraj means indefinite delay or a programme that may require the Mussulmans of India to become impotent witnesses of the extinction of Turkey in European waters.

It is impossible not to sympathize with this attitude. I would gladly recommend immediate action if I could think of any effective course. I would gladly ask for postponement of swaraj activity if thereby we could advance the interest of the Khilafat. I would gladly take up measures outside non-co-operation, if I could think of any in order to assuage the pain caused to the millions of Mussulmans.

But, in my humble opinion, attainment of swaraj is the quickest method of righting the Khilafat wrong. Hence it is that for me the solution of the Khilafat question is attainment of swaraj and *vice versa*. The only way to help the afflicted Turks is for India to generate sufficient power to be able to assert herself. If she cannot develop that power in time, there is no way out for India and she must resign herself to the inevitable. What can a paralytic do to stretch forth a helping hand to a neighbour but to try to cure himself of his paralysis? Mere ignorant, thoughtless and angry outburst of violence may give vent to pent-up rage but can bring no relief to Turkey. Nor can it increase the power of India to assert herself. And the measures taken to put down violence may well lessen the speed with which we are marching to our goal.

But there is no cause whatsoever for despair. The whole of the Congress programme has been framed and measures are being adopted to meet the Khilafat crisis. There is no doubt that two months for finishing the swadeshi work is a most intensive measure calculated to bring the best out of the nation. And if India completes the boycott by September and comes to her own in October, surely it must satisfy the most sanguine temperament and the most impatient and ardent Khilafatist as I claim myself to be.

The fact is that all the workers are not convinced of the possibility of completing the swadeshi programme during the time fixed or of its power to effect all that is claimed for it. Such doubters have to stand out, unless they can suggest a better and quicker method

and get it accepted by the country. In spite of their doubt, they should faithfully plunge them-selves into swadeshi work and give the experiment a fair trial. And does not this doubting of India's ability to go through the swadeshi program-me show, if the doubt is justified, that India has really no interest in the Khilafat or it has no desire to sacrifice anything for it? Is it a big sacrifice for every Hindu and Mussulman to discard all foreign cloth and to use only khadi? And if India is not to have that ability, will it not also be proof that India is unfit for any higher sacrifice and therefore unfit for helping Turkey? Let us all work for complete boycott of foreign cloth and the manufacture of the required quantity of khadi and we shall be in sight of the heaven.

A suggestion was seriously put forth at Lucknow that we should boycott Ralli Bros., a Greek firm, and avenge ourselves against the Greeks and should invite the labourers to stop work on the export cargo. The suggestions, it seems to me, are as absurd as they are impossible to carry out. Assume for one moment that we can in a moment extinguish the business of Ralli Bros., how can that affect the Greeks? Ralli Bros. do not send all or a great part of their flour to Greece. Theirs is a world trade. And it is more difficult to deal with their trade than with swadeshi. Any such attempt apart from its inherent wrong can only expose us to well-deserved ridicule. Interference with the labourers working on export cargo is equally fantastic. If we had such absolute control over the masses, we should have won our battle long ago. To stop the export of cargo requires not only a permanent or an indefinitely long stoppage of work by the existing labourers, but it presupposes our ability to stop any replacement of withdrawn labour. I fear we are not organized enough for the work. Any such attempt can only end in failure, if not worse.

The only feasible suggestion is the immediate taking up of civil disobedience. I am convinced that the country is not ready for its adoption on an extensive scale. It can be safely and successfully adopted, if the country evinces sufficient organizing ability, resourcefulness and discipline necessary for bringing the eminently practical swadeshi enterprise to a successful end. Let us hope and pray that the country will.

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65. A VENOMOUS PROSECUTION

During my travels in the United Provinces, I have come across extraordinary tales of repression. For the present I propose only to deal with two cases of prosecution which I do not hesitate to consider venomous. Messrs Mohansinh Darmal and Shambhunath, a Zemindar of Sitapur and ex-Tahsildar, were called upon to show cause why they should not file security for an offence described thus in the summons :

Whereas it appears from the report of the Patwari at Ramgadh that

(1) Th. Mohansinh of Ramgadh,

(2) B. Shambhunath, late Naib Tahsildar at present at Bhowali and Bhunyadhar are taking part in anti-Government agitation and selling notes for the Tilak Swaraj Fund, as such agitation against the Government established by law is likely to eventually lead to a disturbance of the public tranquillity and breaches of the peace, hence these persons are called on to show cause why they should not be bound over to keep the peace for one year in personal bonds of Rs. 1,000 each and each in two sureties in Rs. 500 each.

On the face of it, the summons discloses no offence. But the painful humour of the situation is accentuated upon reading the Patwari's statement. It refers to the accused having paid the collections to Pandit Motilal Nehru and having been found in the company of such a confirmed non-co-operator as Pandit Nehru (sen.) in a place like Ramgadh, a sanatorium. It is true, the magistrate has not the courage to mention this very relevant fact, but as the second accused made it abundantly clear in his statement, his being with and having served Panditji was the sole offence. The accused is a well-known man in his district. He is known also to be a consumptive in the last stages. His right lung is almost gone. The other, and his bowels are badly affected [*sic*]. He had not taken any active part in any political work for many months. He had not made any speeches. He was in Ram-gadh like Panditji himself recouping his health. Thus there was absolutely no excuse for the magistrate to arrest the accused or to go on with his trial after the arrest. The fact is, the magistrate's idea was evidently to terrorize all those who had anything to do with non-co-operation even to the extent of collecting subscriptions or helping non-co-operation in villages. It may be said that such things are really an exception and that their importance need not be exaggerated. I am unable to subscribe to the doctrine. The

magistrate in the instances quoted may have adopted an original method of acting, but my observation of the United Provinces leads me to the conclusion that there is subtle terrorism going on in the United Provinces as nowhere else except perhaps in Sind, designed solely to kill non-co-operation activities, no matter how non-violent and otherwise innocent they might be. A most unscrupulous use is being made of the statement of regrets issued by the Brothers. The users know the manner and the method of the Brothers' apology. But for them distortion of a brave act is the least wicked among the wickednesses that they resort to for the sake of bending non-co-operators and weaning others from their ways. I am satisfied that the poorer people who dare to accept the banner of non-co-operation are molested in order to prevent them from joining Congress Committees, and they are by equally questionable methods made to join the so-called peace-promoting organizations which are as a matter of fact anarchical in the sense that the methods adopted for promoting them are both illegal and immoral. The United Provinces Government are doing in a clever and cowardly manner what Sir Michael O'Dwyer's Government did in an honest blunt manner. He followed up the logic of his policy and had the courage to arrest all the leaders and to create an atmosphere for an open Jallianwala. I have drawn attention elsewhere to the fact that tragedies worse than Jallianwala had been enacted in the Punjab during the recruiting period but they passed unnoticed because leaders were not arrested. The U. P. Government will not arrest leaders of the front rank except in isolated cases like Mr. Sherwani's. They have arrested Mr. Ranga Iyer. They have not as yet touched Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru or Mr. Joseph though all the three issued their challenge simultaneously. I have taken the trouble of reducing to writing the results of my observation in the United Provinces, because I saw Mr. Chintamani's speech energetically defending the measures of his Government, and because I was pressed to encourage ministers who were working out the Reforms to the point of complete responsible government. In my humble opinion the Reforms and the Reforms ministers are being used, wherever possible, for sustaining the clever but unscrupulous bureaucracy. That the ministers are unconscious and unwilling instruments does not lessen the evil of the policy, though it is an extenuating circumstance in favour of the ministers. I am loth to believe that Raja Saheb Mahmudabad and Mr. Chintamani know what they are doing. I am inclined to think that they are irresistibly drawn into the bureaucratic

net, and the plausibilities put before them induce them to excuse what they would otherwise condemn without any hesitation. The Raja of Mahmudabad is stated by the *Independent* to have defended the action of a District Judge who suspended an acting *munsarim* in East Badaun for failing to produce a written declaration of loyalty by his son who had been served with a notice under section 144. He was suspended on the 10th May pending production of the required declaration. No doubt the son was living with the father. The result was that on the 6th of June the father produced the son's application to join an Aman-sabha and procured reinstatement by selling his son's liberty of action. If we could but peep behind the scene, we would probably find confidential despatches seeking to justify the suspension of the poor *munsarim*. Be that however as it may, we have here the melancholy fact that pressure is being put upon Government servants in order to compel their boys to withdraw from the non-co-operation movement. I have no doubt that the Raja Saheb of three years ago would have written and spoken far more energetically against such wicked demoralization of officials and their families than I am doing. What is however still more to the purpose than the drawing of attention to the fact that ministers are being made tools in unscrupulous hands is that non-co-operators must not be disheartened over the illegalities and the immoralities referred to here, but that they should realize that such repression and even worse must be expected by us and cheerfully accepted as the lot of reformers all the world over. The persecutors really believe that we are in the wrong, that we are harming the country and that means do not matter so long as the movement for which we stand is crushed. Repression, therefore, must be treated by us as a prelude to victory and must, therefore, be welcomed and be utilized by us for making our determination still more rigid.

Young India, 18-8-1921

66. A CONFESSIOIN OF ERROR

God only knows how often I have erred. Those who charge me with infallibility simply do not know me. My own experiences have taught me to be humble enough to know and to appreciate the fact that life consists in struggling against errors. When I launched on light-heartedly on civil disobedience in 1919, I saw that I erred grievously. As soon as I perceived at Nadiad the want of foresight, I

called it a Himalayan miscalculation. It was not an exaggeration. And if India has not lost in moral growth thereby, it is because I had the wisdom to make a clean and full confession. I wish similarly to make another confession during these few weeks of concentrated swadeshi work. I have already made the confession in my talks with students and professors. But a more definite and more public confession is necessary as well for my mental peace as for the present propaganda. All these nine months' experience has confirmed the correctness of the boycott of government educational institutions. But I was weak about the alternative suggested, and I was weak because I distrusted my ability to carry conviction. I cared for the consequence instead of leaving it to God. And therefore in my weakness I said the boys, after leaving schools, could roam about the streets, follow the same course of instruction or best of all take to hand-spinning till swaraj was established. I discovered soon after the Nagpur Congress resolution that I had erred in suggesting several alternatives. But the mischief was already done. It started in September last. I began to retrace my steps in January, but repair is always patch-work. And so the spinning-wheel remains more or less an excrescence or an idle pastime in most non-co-operation schools. I should have boldly said the whole truth and suggested hand-spinning and hand-weaving as an integral part of the proposition regarding boycott of educational institutions. It is true that probably fewer students would have come out. But they would have done far greater work than all the thousands who have left schools and colleges without a definite notion about the alternative. They would by this time have become experts in hand-spinning and hand-weaving, and our swadeshi work would have been easier. I know that the students and the professors of non-co-operation schools are doing their best. But it must be admitted that they are labouring under a handicap. They did not come with any conviction about hand-spinning of swadeshi in general. They simply considered the question, as they had a right to, from the educational standpoint. It was enough for them that they diminished the prestige of the Government by withdrawing from its educational institutions. It is hard on them now to be told that their boycott to be complete involved manufacture of yarn and khadi, that the preliminary training for the new method—the swaraj type—of education meant during the war period the learning of hand-spinning and the other processes of cloth manufacture and actual production.

But the mistake having been made, I at least must pay the

penalty of trying patiently to convince the doubters that it would have been better to have insisted on hand-spinning as a necessary part of the educational item in non-co-operation. I invite those who share my belief to hasten to repair the mistake and earnestly take up the work of production of yarn and khadi in all national institutions which they influence. They will not ask me to supply them with teachers. I have far too few. But I jot down for them the processes that bale cotton, which is what we usually have today, has to go through. It must be first carded. There is no district in India which has no carders, i.e., *pinjaras* or *dhunias*. They can card and a mere watching them for a day or two enables one to understand the process. A week's practice at the rate of six hours per day will enable one to card moderately well.

The carded cotton has to be turned into slivers or *punis*, an incredibly simple and easy process.

The cotton is now ready for hand-spinning, which can be learnt from any spinner. Yarn to be yarn must be free from dirt, even and well-twisted. If it is not well-twisted or even, it cannot be woven.

The next process is sizing. It is rather difficult to practise. I have no scientific formula giving the quantity of ingredients. It must be learnt from an experienced weaver.

Joining the thread is also a process to be separately learnt. It requires like cycling a little knack which is easily acquired.

Lastly comes weaving which is purely a matter of practice. One learns the principle in a day. The reader must not be surprised at the ease with which I claim processes can be learnt. All natural and necessary work is easy. Only it requires constant practice to become perfect, and it needs plodding. Ability to plod is swaraj. It is yoga. Nor need the reader be frightened of the monotony. Monotony is the law of nature. Look at the monotonous manner in which the sun rises. And imagine the catastrophe that would befall the universe if the sun became capricious and went in for a variety of pastimes. But there is a monotony that sustains and a monotony that kills. The monotony of necessary occupations is exhilarating and life-giving. An artist never tires of his art. A spinner who has mastered his art will certainly be able to do sustained work without fatigue. There is a music about the spindle which the practised spinner catches without fail. And when India has monotonously worked away at turning out swaraj, she will have produced a thing of

beauty which will be a joy for ever. But it cannot be without the spinning-wheel. Therefore the best national education for India is undoubtedly an intelligent handling of the spinning-wheel.

Young India, 18-8-1921

67. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

ASSAM,

*Thursday [August 18, 1921]*¹

CHI. DEVDAS,

I wish you to stay on there. There are a good many things you have to learn from experience there—*Young India* and Hindi and Gujarati *Navajivan*. You can do much in the Hindi section. Moreover, you will be able to give mental peace to Ba. There are carding and spinning also if you would only take interest in them. You can act as the physician and heal the wounds caused by small bickerings which may occasionally occur. I, therefore, think that you will spend at least this month there with profit. It is time now for us to cross the Brahmaputra. I shall not write further, as the post has to be got ready for despatch before that. I had long talks with Harilal. He told me that he, too, had started wearing the khadi cap since the beginning of this month.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original : S.N. 7631

68. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

*[After August 18, 1921]*²

CHI. MAGANLAL,

What is the good of wishing you a long life?

I wish you to make greater and greater progress. Whether the body exists or not, the spirit grows or decays. I certainly wish you improved health. That will be possible only when you are wholly free from care and fear. Now that time is approaching. As you settle down,

¹ Gandhiji was at Calcutta on August 17 and at Gauhati on the 19th. Presumably he crossed the Brahmaputra on the 18th, which was a Thursday.

² Inferred from the contents of the letter. Gandhiji reached Assam on August 18, 1921.

you will bloom more and more and your confidence will grow.

If internally we discover truth and follow the path of non-violence, that is, love, and externally develop the activities of carding, spinning and weaving, we need nothing more. If swaraj and swadharma are based on swadeshi, then let us be the best of carders, spinners and weavers.

What I see in Assam reveals to me what India had been and what it has become.¹ That is why I was happy to read your article about looms in the *Navajivan*. Develop still further weaving, carding and spinning and make these processes more scientific. The rest of the things can be done by others; but engage only qualified persons in these things.

If we have to erect more buildings, we do not want to take the money for it from the Congress. It can be obtained from elsewhere. Let me know how much we should spend and go ahead.

Can Pyarelal² be freed from the kitchen? Tell me how that can be done if that is possible. You may send the reply to this at Calcutta through Harilal. Prabhudas is with me; also a Bengali gentleman and Jamnalal. They will accompany me during the Assam tour.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Chhaganlal Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Sabarmati Museum

69. THE “HINDI NAVAJIVAN”

Although I am aware of the difficulties in bringing out *Navajivan* in Hindi, the insistence of friends and the zeal shown by co-workers impel me to venture on starting a Hindi edition of this paper. I am in love with my ideas. I am convinced that by following them people will gain much. I have therefore long cherished the desire to put them across in Hindi. But it was not the will of God so far that this desire be fulfilled. I have always endeavoured to make Hindustani the national language of India. That no language except

¹ For Gandhiji's experiences in Assam, *vide* “Experiences in Assam-I”, 4-9-1921 and “Experiences in Assam-II”, 11-9-1921.

² Pyarelal was at that time in charge of the Kitchen at the Satyagraha Ashram

Hindustani can be the national language is beyond doubt. Only a language spoken by tens of millions of Hindus and Muslims can be a language common to the whole country, and I was sad as long as *Navajivan* was not published in this language.

Lovers of Hindustani must be warned not to look for any excellence of language in *Hindi Navajivan*. It will only be possible to give translations from *Navajivan* and *Young India* in the paper. I have neither the time nor the ability to write articles, etc., in Hindustani.

Propagation of Hindustani is not the chief motive behind the venture. Its aim is chiefly to propagate non-violent non-co-operation. The success of non-violent non-co-operation is next to impossible so long as those who speak Hindustani have not thoroughly grasped the doctrine of non-violence and non-co-operation. Hence the need for *Hindi Navajivan*. I pray to God that *Hindi Navajivan* may be of help to those who understand Hindustani alone.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 19-8-1921

70. LETTER TO MARWARIS

DEAR BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Urged by your love for me, I make bold to bring out the *Hindi Navajivan*. Ever since I returned to India, I have been coming closer and closer to you. You have been indulgent towards my activities and you have helped me a lot. You have effectively supported the movement for spreading Hindi. It is largely owing to the assistance given by you that the work for the furtherance of Hindi goes on so well in the Dravidian provinces. You brothers and sisters are votaries of non-co-operation. You take interest in national life. You have realized that wealthy men and women cannot keep aloof from national life.

You have love for religion. You give away lakhs in the cause of religion. You have courage too. Yours is the first place in amassing wealth. The chances of victory in the righteous warfare that is going on in India today are slender if the rich keep away from it.

The full success of the step that the all-India Congress Committee has taken for the achievement of swaraj depends only on

help coming from you. The Congress has decided that by September 30 the boycott of foreign cloth should be complete. I was relying on you when I suggested that the date be September 30. It is but proper that the *Hindi Navajivan* be brought out to intensify this national campaign.

What we see in national life today is the commercial outlook and the slave outlook. Wisdom and valour seem to be lacking. It is necessary now for our commercial society and our slave society to acquire wisdom and valour. We should realize that our country lies crushed because of the trade in foreign cloth. And we should have the courage to give up that trade. If we do not have even the little courage needed for giving up this trade, we cannot pursue our dharma. It is no *punya* if, having piled up crores by harming our brothers and sisters, we give away a few lakhs in charity. It is therefore my prayer to you, brothers and sisters, that you add to your past service by now showing courage in boycotting foreign cloth and making khaddar.

Yours,

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 19-8-1921

71. UNTOUCHABILITY

I have received so many comments on Shastri Vasanthram's letter¹ giving his interpretation of untouchability that it would take up too much space to publish them all. However, I regard these comments as a good sign. Everyone of the correspondents wants the issue to be determined on a religious and philosophical level. Their comments show that they will not be satisfied with a purely pragmatic solution of the problem. If Hindu society, though providing *Antyajias*² with all facilities, continues to look upon them as untouchables even if they take a bath after coming into contact with filth, these fundamentalists would regard it as unbearable and sinful. These correspondents are not reformers. They do not believe that all that is ours is bad and all that is European is good; they are men of moderation. They look upon themselves as Hindus and take pride in the fact. They attach the utmost importance to self-restraint. I am overpowered with joy at this and, in their uncompromising attitude, I see an early deliverance from the sin of untouchability.

We occupy ourselves so much with hair-splitting discussions about what the Shastras mean that, instead of turning dust into corn we turn corn into dust, cling to the bran and leave the grain, run after insipid whey and forget the butter. The letters lying around me indicate that we are about to leave behind the age of songs and enter the age of action. There are four castes, and not five. The practice of untouchability is not evidence of self-restraint, it is not a restriction inherent in the caste system. To regard as untouchable those also who are outside the pale of the caste system is not the way of compassion but of hard-heartedness. The soul is never polluted by the touch of the leper; on the contrary, if such contact is inspired by a spirit of service, it is elevated. Service of the *Bhangi*³ is dharma; compassion lies in nursing an ailing *Bhangi* before others. If such a *Bhangi* has been engaged in sanitary work, to take a bath [after contact with him] is simple hygiene and is absolutely necessary, but failure to do so does not threaten one with spiritual ruin. There can be sin in refusing to

¹ Published in *Navajivan*, 17-7-1921

² Etymologically, "last-born" lowest on the social scale; traditionally charged with sanitary duties

³ One of the communities attending to scavenging work

touch a *Bhangi* when the occasion requires us to do so. It is sinful not to welcome a *Bhangi*, who has bathed himself, to take a seat by our side, and it is ignorance to believe that his touch will pollute us. I find from the letters addressed to me that such an attitude is widespread now. I have already published one of these letters. I now give below a second one, from Shri Ambalal Sakarlal Dave¹.

I read with interest Shastri Vasnram's discussion on untouchability as regards its basis in the Shastras, but in order that a person like me, ignorant of the Shastras, may not be lost in the mazes of discussions about the meaning of the Shastras, will he be kind enough to clarify these two points?

1. Would you, who have dedicated yourselves to God all your thoughts, actions and speech, your possessions and your life, bathe on having touched a *Chandal*²? By coming into contact with such a person, do you think you are purified or defiled? Would you permit him to enter a temple dedicated to Krishna if he wished to do so?

2. If the *Bhangi* who cleans your lavatories comes to your house at two o'clock in the afternoon after a bath and looking dean, would you let him into your drawing-room?

I believe that clarification of these two issues will terminate all discussion on untouchability.

I can place only one construction upon Shastriji's article. Nevertheless, I shall certainly publish the reply he gives. Meanwhile, I wish to caution Shri Sakarlal. The debate on untouchability will not terminate with Shastri Vasnram's pronouncement. Even if Shastriji's reply is favourable, the filth that has accumulated over a long period cannot be washed away all at once merely through argument. Action alone can help us to be rid of it. It will disappear only when those of us who believe that there can be no sin in touching anyone, that it is a sin to take a bath on touching a *Bhangi* even though he may have washed himself and be clean in body, engage ourselves in their service and, in the process, have physical contact with them from time to time. For the rest, there will always be those who say and believe that it is sinful on touch anyone who may have had an untouchable forbear as long ago as a hundred generations. We shall be able to win them over with our conduct, as uncompromising as respectful, and the good results following from it.

¹ A Gujarati educationist

² One of the communities regarded as untouchables

I look upon untouchability in the form in which we practise it as sinful and have been advocating its abolition from a purely religious motive. Swami Shraddhanandji¹, however, says in a letter that, in the north, some Englishmen are inciting untouchables against non-co-operation also. Had we not taken up a fight against untouchability everywhere in the country, our opponents would today have been exploiting it to the full. Satan always enters through a small hole and makes for his coming and going an entrance large enough for everyone to see. One who would shape his life according to dharma will not permit a single brick in the fort of dharma to get loose.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-8-1921

72. MY NOTES

BIHAR TOUR

The Bihar tour has proved a very troublesome thing to me because of the services I had rendered in Champaran and because of the Bihari temperament. Even in small towns, thousands of people assemble and, by their loud shouting and attempts to touch my feet, they try my patience. With all of them wanting my *darshan*², they do not give me a moment's respite. I get no peace anywhere, by day or night. As for going out for a walk, it is out of the question. With a few efficient workers, any work could be got out of people with such faith, and Bihar has been doing such work. Some of the workers in Bihar are men of such simple and pure lives and their faith in non-violent non-co-operation is so firm that they have created a deep impression on the people and have done much good and quiet work. In places where, only a year ago, but a few spinning-wheels were plying, they are now in use in thousands of homes, thousands of yards of khadi are being woven and thousands have started wearing khadi exclusively.

In Bihar, Orissa and such other provinces, the spinning-wheel which yields a daily wage of two annas is a sufficient means of livelihood for any person. Many who work even as farm-labourers do not get more than this. For such work, one should have a hardy

¹ 1856-1926; nationalist leader; known as Mahatma Munshiram before he became a sannyasi; founder of the Gurukul at Kangri near Hardwar

² Sight of a person, place or thing considered holy

constitution. But the spinning-wheel can be used by any weak-bodied girl and she can, if she will, earn two annas daily. No other aspect of non-co-operation has produced the same effect on the people as the universally accepted and if, by means of it, we do not succeed before spinning-wheel movement. Some have come to worship it as a means of profitable employment. It has become popular among all classes, among both Hindus and Muslims. If it does not come to be September 30 in producing all our requirements of cloth and cannot, in consequence, boycott foreign cloth, that will be solely due to our lack of organizing ability and efficiency.

WEAVERS' MEETING

There is a small town in Bihar called Bihar Sharif. It has a population of 25,000. The well-known Tirthankar Mahavira Swami¹ was born, and also died, in its neighbourhood. There are majestic temples here, on the way to Bihar Sharif. The place is known as Sharif because it is associated with a famous Muslim saint. The place, they say, is esteemed second only to the shrine of the Pir in Ajmer. There are About five hundred weavers living here. Most of them are Muslims. The Congress Committee and the Khilafat Committee held a special meeting of the weavers. All of us pleaded with them at this meeting and they have agreed to use in the future exclusively hand-spun yarn for weaving, and mill yarn only if they must. Till now, they have been using foreign yarn exclusively, though they themselves told me that their forefathers used only hand-spun yarn. From now on, if these weavers are supplied good hand-spun yarn, they will most certainly use it to the exclusion of other yarn. If no enthusiastic workers come forward, they will as certainly continue to use foreign yarn even though they have agreed to use hand-spun yarn. Our task now is to persuade weavers, carders, carpenters, blacksmiths and others to take interest in public work. I hope that in every town of Gujarat, Congress workers will get in touch with such artisans, enrol them as members and secure their services. Let us not mind if they earn well; we should be satisfied if only they give preference to public work and charge for such work at a little less than the prevailing rate.

GREAT "YAJNA"²

Renouncing the use of foreign cloth is a great *yajna* in which we

¹ Last of the line of seers whose teachings evolved into Jainism

² Sacrifice

are engaged. Swaraj lies in our being completely successful in it. We need not, however, feel anxious how such a mighty task can be accomplished within a month; for anyone who is distracted by fear loses his wits, feels dizzy and cannot see his way. If we reflect, we shall see that swaraj is quite easy to win, for it is our birthright. So, assuring ourselves that swadeshi must be easy, we should give ourselves up wholly to the work. To do this, we should have determination and be industrious. The more I tour the country, the more I see that the easiest way for us is to weave in our own homes the cloth we require. It is much easier to teach everyone how to spin and weave, sitting in his own home and living in his own town, than to assemble vast numbers at one place and use their labour. As Shri Amubhai has shown, the task which, even if we proceed at a fast pace, we shall take not less than 25 years to accomplish through mills, we can, given conviction, accomplish in 25 days. But just as anyone starting to cook a meal cleans his utensils first, so also should we cleanse ourselves of the filth of foreign cloth. Unless we do so, our lethargy will not leave us. As a man who has been rendered incapable of walking for some time is afraid of giving up the support of the stick even after he is cured and limps for fear of falling down, we too shall not be able to stand on our feet as long as we lean on foreign cloth for support.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-8-1921

73. TO THE PEOPLE OF BIHAR

TEZPUR,

ASSAM,

*Bhadrapada Krishna 4 [August 22, 1921]*¹

The faith and devotion of the Biharis are beyond description. I know well your love for mother cow. You are the admirers of Tulsidas², supreme among devotees. You follow the religion of compassion. There is only one golden way of saving mother cow you should help your Muslim brethren in saving that other cow which is the Khilafat. Conquered thus by love, our Muslim brethren can save the cow. Our religion does not teach us that in order to save an animal

¹ Gandhiji was in Tezpur on this date.

² Great Hindi poet; author of the Hindi epic, *Ramacharitamansa*

we should take a human life. We should sacrifice our own lives for the life we wish to save. Our religion calls it *tapascharya*. We can follow religion only through *tapascharya*. *Tapascharya* emerges out of compassion and in compassion alone is dharma.

How can we say anything whatever to others so long as we have not rid ourselves of sin? Do we not kill cows with our own hands ? How do we treat the progeny of the cow? What crushing burdens do we not lay on bullocks! To say nothing of bullocks, do we give enough feed to the cow? How much milk do we leave for the calf? And who sells the cow [to the butcher] ? What can we say of the Hindus who do this for the sake of a few rupees? What do we do about it?

Cows have always been slaughtered for English soldiers. What have we done about it? Taking all this into account, why should we be angry with our Muslim brethren who slaughter cows considering it a matter of religion? Then least we can do is to clean our soiled hands.

It was a great mercy that on the day of *Bakr-i-Id* our Muslim brethren maintained complete calm, were very considerate to us and, so far as they could, refrained from slaughtering cows. We are grateful to them for this.

But it is necessary to make sure that this is so in future years also. Therefore we should give up [eating] goat's meat, etc. If we do this, the price of these animals will go down and the price of cows will rise. We should make the very trade in cows impossible. We can do all this only when in our work we show discrimination, compassion, reason and self-sacrifice.

You have great faith in religion. Living in the sacred land which produced Janaka, Buddha and Mahavira, holding to patience and your religion, you can do great work and show to the whole of India the righteous path which will lead to the saving of mother cow.

Your servant,

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 2-9-1921

74. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

TEZPUR,

*Silence Day [August 22, 1921]*¹

BHAISHRI MAHADEV²,

I hope you have received my letters. You too must have written to me, but no letter has reached me so far. If you had been with me in Assam, your gift for poetry would have got sufficient food. But we are not born for enjoyment in this land of duty. We have, therefore, to draw what poetry we can from Assam and Prayag³ both.

The following itinerary is very nearly correct.

23	Jorhat
24-25	Dibrugarh
27	Silchar
28-29	Sylhet
31-1	Chittagong
3rd	Barisal
4th	Calcutta

We shall be staying in Calcutta for about ten days. We may have to go to Bolpur for a day during that time.

Other news you will find in *Navajivan* and *Young India*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11422

75. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

MERDAN,

August 24, 1921

DEAR SHANKERLAL,

I thought of writing to you many times but could not manage it. Today I have a few moments.

It is possible to do a lot of swadeshi work in Assam, but the

¹ Gandhiji left Tezpur on the 22nd in a boat and reached Jorhat *via* Nowgong on August the 24th, instead of the 23rd.

² 1892-1942; Gandhiji's secretary for 25 years

³ The addressee was at Prayag, i.e., Allahabad.

people are lazy. Women are tremendous weavers. But they never want to weave more than what they need for personal use. They had abandoned spinning which they have now resumed.

Work must be going on in full swing there. Collect the money from those who have given the names.

Jayakar's amount of Rs. 25,000 has been reserved for the *Independent*. We can be free from this bother if we can reserve Rs. 25,000 from Umar's money. You should make some arrangement that seems to you suitable to send Rs. 50,000 to Motilalji.

Here I get great help from Jammalalji. There is a large population of Marwaris here and all of them are engaged in the trade of foreign textiles. Many of them have taken a vow of swadeshi.

Jammalalji wants me to spend at least ten days in Calcutta. In that case, I think I cannot leave Calcutta before the 10th.

My travel schedule is as follows:

25-30 Silchar, Sylhat, etc.

31- 1 Chittagong

2- 3 Barisal

4-12 Calcutta (4 Pollock St.)

I hope you are looking after your health.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32689

76. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

JORHAT,

August 24, 1921

REVERED SISTER,

I do want very much to write to you, but where is the time?

I did send you a magazine but could not send you one on swadeshi. Now I will not send it as it can be of no use.

Let me know how the work there is going on. I suppose you would hardly be going to the Ashram. But you must. Send me all the news. All our endeavours rest on the success of swadeshi.

What are the workers doing? What is the position of the mills ?

Ask Amubhai and let me know what are the materials used in sizing. I think I am not mistaken that animal fat is also used. Let me know for what other things it is used.

Blessings from

BABU

[PS.]

My tour programme;

25th-30th—Silchar

31st-1st—Chittagong

2nd-3rd—Barisal

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32816

77. STATEMENT OF REPRESSION IN PRINCELY STATES

[Before *August 25, 1921*]

In the course of my journey to Gwalior, I was shocked to see that people at stations shrank even from approaching our train. On platforms there was no swadeshi cloth to be seen at all. In this State the non-co-operation movement has been completely stopped. Wearing a khadi cap or possessing a charkha is regarded with disfavour—it is in fact considered an offence. I firmly believe that the Maharaja Sahib's thinking cannot be so mean. My sympathy is wholly with the Maharaja. The poisonous influence of the Government is nowhere so marked as it is in the Indian States. For while the States can effect no reforms of any kind, they are frequently made to strike at the liberty of their subjects. Besides, under the aegis of the Government they have also become, along with the rest of India, weak and irresponsible. Therefore, if a self-willed ruler wants to tyrannize over his people, he can give even more trouble than the Viceroy. This is the greatest defect in the present administrative set-up. I hope that much of what I have been told at the Gwalior Station is exaggerated and that the repression carried on here is not as terrible as it is reported to be.

[From Hindi]

Aaj, 25-8-1921

78. NOTES

NON-CO-OPERATION IN ANDHRA

I am writing these notes at Mr. Mazharul Hak's¹ Sadakat Ashram in Patna situated on the banks of the Ganges. I have always considered Bihar to have done the best for non-co-operation. Andhra I have put next. But it is difficult to say which Province will do better. Anyway the local Government are certainly assisting the people in their discipline. This is what Mr. Konda Venkatappayya says in his latest letter:

In my last letter I informed you that after the arrests of myself and three merchant friends of mine, the pleaders of this city resolved to boycott the courts till the 31st December. After our release the Bar at Bapatla, the next important town in this district, has also resolved to do the same. Mr. Prakasam² and myself are proceeding to other stations in this district to have the courts similarly boycotted by the pleaders. The city of Guntur has one District Court and two Sub-courts besides two District Munsif's Courts and several Magisterial Courts. In Bapatla there is a Sub-court and two District Munsif's Courts. At present all these courts stand abandoned except by a few. We hope to have the courts in other stations in this district similarly abandoned. Arbitration boards to hear and dispose of both original suits and appeals have been formed and the first sitting of these courts will commence the day after tomorrow (i.e., Monday, the 8th instant). It is aimed to have all the suits and appeals now pending in the courts to be withdrawn from the British courts and referred to the arbitration courts. After regular establishment of parallel courts and the paralysation of the administration of justice in the British courts in this district, I have every hope that other districts will soon follow the example. Our aim is to complete this work in our district and next proceed to other districts if they do not begin to do it themselves in the meanwhile.

The merchant community in this district, particularly in this city, have had a remarkable awakening. On the day of Lokamanya Tilak's³ anniversary almost every one of them wore the new swadeshi clothes and attended the procession and the meeting. The cloth merchants here are willing

¹ A leader from Bihar; one of the founders of Muslim League; later, its president; gave active support to Gandhiji in Champaran

² T. Prakasam (1816-1957); editor, *Swarajya*; was called "Andhra Kesari", lion of Andhra; first Chief Minister of composite Madras State

³ Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1856-1920); political leader, scholar and writer.

to deal in swadeshi cloth, provided they are shown a way to dispose of the foreign goods now in stock with them. In the whole of this district, there is 29 lakhs worth of foreign cloth and yarn of this, about half is got from Indian mills. In this town of Guntur, the merchants have with them three lakhs worth of foreign cloth and yarn. They are willing to re-export the stock to any place outside India, and to deal solely in swadeshi cloth and yarn.

I therefore request you kindly to refer me to some friends in Bombay who may be willing to inform me as to what the cloth merchants in Bombay propose to do with their foreign stock, and if there is any way of helping our merchant friends here to get rid of their stocks without loss to them by export to places outside India.

I hope that the enthusiasm of the pleaders will prove true and lasting. This boycott of law-courts even by way of protest will do good to them and the country. Regarding the difficulty of the merchants, all I can advise them is that they should themselves devise a method of sending out the stock through the principal dealers. I wish, too, that the merchants in Bombay will come to the assistance of the dealers throughout India and try to re-export as much stock as is possible. But supposing no arrangement is arrived at, the dealers in foreign cloth and yarn should not force the sale of their stock but sell only to customers who insist on buying foreign cloth. I do not expect that the whole of India will all of a sudden understand and accept the duty of renouncing the use of foreign cloth. There is still more than a month left and much can be done during that time if no further purchases of foreign yarn or cloth take place.

HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

Mr. Saiyad Mahammad, President, Khilafat Committee, Unnao, writes as follows to the editor:

I have read with pain and anxiety occasional remarks in your paper about the Mussulmans not joining the Congress. It is a matter for regret that the Hindu leaders in districts generally feel a sort of estrangement from their Mussulmans neighbours and both the Hindu and Mussulman workers in small districts are fired with the ambition of personal advertisement and claim a superiority which is the most dangerous poison to real unity. The result is that the Hindu workers hardly take any active part in the Khilafat movement, and the gulf thus gets wider. The Congress Committees are doing nothing so far as the propaganda world is concerned, and they think that their work is quite different from that of the Khilafat Committees. This evil in small districts is

most deplorable, and in spite of my most earnest endeavours to bring about a complete union, matters have not gone beyond a surface unity. Once the Hindus understand and realize this power of unity, I can confidently say that the cow sacrifice in this district will be reduced to almost nothing. Our great impediment is their aloofness.

I should be very sorry, indeed, if the Hindus of Unnao are apathetic the Khilafat cause. I have no doubt that the more interest the Hindus take in the Khilafat, the nearer comes swaraj. Let us not ignore the fact that it is not yet possible to induce Mussulmans to take interest in swaraj except in terms of the Khilafat. It is sad but it is true. The two communities have remained so long estranged; the Mussulmans had unconsciously almost come to think that India was not their home. The peril to the Khilafat has opened their eyes. The Hindus can take note of the fact, help their Mussulman countrymen and help themselves, and thus for all time cement Hindu-Muslim union. Happily for both, whatever may be true of Unnao is most certainly not true of many other places where the Hindus are doing all they can to help the Khilafat movement. There can be no real progress if the awakening is not general among both the communities.

TAMIL SISTERS AGAIN

A South Indian lawyer sends me the following note:

Khadi is not as widely used in the Tamil province as in the other provinces, mainly because the womenfolk do not wear it. The spinning-wheel is not much in evidence for the same reason. Plain white cannot be worn by married women here. They can only wear dyed saris. In former times cotton was the only wear of ladies. Now, except by the poorest, cotton saris are discarded, and silk saris form the daily wear. Silk saris were at first locally manufactured at Koranadu (near Mayavaram) and later on at Conjeevaram, and dyed with Indian dyes. They cost from Rs. 10 to 30. They were only occasionally used. Lately the market has been exclusively captured by Bangalore saris dyed with German or English dyes, the least of which costs about Rs. 50. This presses on the poor Brahmin householder, especially as he has to clothe the members of his family only with these; and when it is the daily wear, he has to go in for a number of them. On marriage occasions the minimum cost of a sari fit for presentation is above Rs. 100. Many a decent family is ruined by a marriage, mostly on this account. This ruinous habit, which was confined to the Brahmins, has spread among other classes also.

Besides the question of expense, there is the other aspect of comfort

and convenience. Silk is non-absorbing and heavy and working or cooking in it is martyrdom. It is always hot here except for one or two months of the year. There is also the peculiar insanitary habit of not washing the more costly saris lest they should lose colour and get crumpled. The perspiration and smell emitted are awful.

Many a householder on the verge of ruin would feel grateful to you if you would bring about a return to economy, simplicity and comfort.

I hope the workers in Madras will deal with the evil complained of in the correspondent's letter. I dread my forthcoming visit to Madras. I share the correspondent's feeling that the Tamil woman is over-fond of her silk sari. There is no more unwholesome garment than silk in a hot climate like that of Madras. And one hundred rupees for a sari is a criminal waste of money in a poor country like India. Men are no better, for they are proud of their hand-woven puggrees, dhotis and *uparnas* little thinking that the yarn used for these things is all foreign. Strange as it may appear, absorbent khadi is cooler than the fine garments which are so prized by men. I am hoping, however, that my faith in the spirituality of Tamilians will be realized even in the difficult matter of swadeshi, and that they will perceive the spiritual necessity of complete renunciation of foreign cloth and return to the charkha. In the melting plains of Madras and Andhra, I can imagine no industry so helpful as the gentle-moving charkha. Dravida land is responsible for sending out the largest number of emigrants to a life of servility and exile. Restoration of the charkha automatically solves the difficult problem of enforced emigration. Land alone cannot support the poor peasantry of India even if there was no assessment to be paid.

PRACTISING LAWYERS

Letters continue to pour in regarding practising lawyers holding offices in Congress Committees. Ever since my arrival in Bengal, the question has been still more pressingly put to me. An ex-student from Dhubri writes to ask whether I expect the movement to succeed under the leadership of practising lawyers. I cannot conceive the possibility of the movement, which is one of self-sacrifice, succeeding if it is led by lawyers who do not believe in self-sacrifice. I have not hesitated to advise that electors rather than be ably led by such lawyers should be content to be more humbly guided. I can certainly imagine a brave and believing weaver or cobbler more effectively leading than a timid

and sceptical lawyer. Success depends upon bravery, sacrifice, truth, love and faith; not on legal acumen, calculation, diplomacy, hate and unbelief.

THE BREAD PROBLEM

The same student says that many Bengalis cannot do national work or leave slavery because of the bread problem. It is not so much the bread problem as the bread-labour problem. We the educated classes have lost the art of labouring for our bread. With the wages of weavers, carders and spinners rising daily, there is certainly no bread problem. Any man who weaves for eight hours a day may earn even at the commencement at least one rupee per day. Accomplished weavers today earn two rupees per day. We must not think of earning a livelihood by deskwork merely.

NON-VIOLENCE AS A POLICY

His last question is the most important of all.

Do you hope, that this non-violent war which is based on love and soul-force will succeed with those who take it merely as a matter of policy? Pure non-violence necessitates more courage and love of country. But as a weapon of the weak, it will breed fear in the face of coming repression.

The questioner has partly answered the question himself. Non-violence may succeed, even if it is adopted as a matter of policy rather than creed, if it is combined with courage and real love for the country or the cause. Hatred of the wrongdoer does not necessarily mean love of the country. Our difficulty arises from the fact that many people make a pretence of non-violence without believing in it even as a policy. The Ali Brothers¹ believe in it purely as a policy, but in my opinion there are no two truer believers in non-violence as a policy than they. They do believe that violence can only hurt the cause, and that non-violence if extensively practised can entirely succeed. A man who honestly practises truth as a policy certainly gains its material results, but not the one who feigns truth.

VOLUNTARY OBEDIENCE

If we are to achieve swaraj during this year, we must show signs of its coming in every department of life, most of all in the working of Congress organizations. Unless we conform to laws and rules that we

¹ Mahomed Ali (1878-1931) and Shaukat Ali (1873-1937) ; prominent leaders of the Khilafat movement.

ourselves now make, we are not likely to do better when we have attained swaraj. The Treasurer bitterly complained to the Working Committee at its last meeting that several provincial committees had not yet sent in 25 per cent of their collections. Some were reported to be withholding because other provinces had not made their returns. On the contrary, I would suggest that each province should vie with every other in being most exact in discharging all its obligations. Thus and thus only may we expect to become self-governing, and command respect for our demands. If the Congress organizations are to work efficiently, all the instructions of the Working Committee should be faithfully and promptly carried out. The Committee has come to the decision that not less than one fourth of the total provincial collections should be devoted to swadeshi, i.e., hand-spinning and hand-weaving. Twenty-five lakhs is not a large sum to spend throughout India, if we are to cope with the demand for khadi. Indeed the more a province spends on this head, the better it will have done.

CHRISTIANS AND NON-CO-OPERATION

An Indian Christian from Basrah North writes:

I am sorry to say that you do not take us Indian Christians as the people of India, as I have seen many-times *Young India* mentioning Mussulmans, Hindus, Sikhs, etc., but omitting the Christians.

I should like you to believe that we Indian Christians 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 non-co-operation as Indian Christians have. I have much sympathy for my motherland's affairs. I am also a follower of non-co-operation.

I promise to give some news about the state of Indians in Mesopotamia 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 Mussulmans 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.

MY AMBITION

A persistent correspondent from Simla asks me whether I intend to found a sect or claim divinity. I have answered him by a private letter. But he would have me make a public declaration for the sake of posterity. I should have thought that I had in the strongest terms repudiated all claim to divinity. I claim to be a humble servant of India and humanity, and would like to die in the discharge of such service. I have no desire to found a sect. I am really too ambitious to be satisfied with a sect for a following. For I represent no new truths. I endeavour to follow and represent Truth as I know it. I do claim to throw a new light on many an old truth. I hope that this declaration will satisfy my inquirer and others like him.

Young India, 25-8-1921

79. A MOCK TRIAL

I have already dealt in a previous issue¹ with the disgraceful behaviour of a Karachi crowd on 25th July last upon the receipt of the news that Swami Krishnanand, a popular preacher, reformer and the soul of the picketing movement in Karachi, was arrested tried and sentenced to one year's rigorous imprisonment inside of three hours. The court house was surrounded by the military, and the trial took place practically with closed doors. The Swami was arrested on the 20th but set free after an hour's detention. He was without a warning re-arrested on the 25th on the same charge. He was charged with having assaulted a constable "in the discharge of his duty". Prof. Vaswani² who was in touch with the Swami and who was present, at the court, testifies³ that the Swami never assaulted the constable, but that on the other hand, he, the Swami, was fairly severely assaulted by the latter for having refused to move on whilst he was engaged in a conversation with a friend. The crowd believed implicitly in the innocence of the Swami. And in its madness, it selected every European passer-by and everyone with a European hat for venting its wrath. Among the Europeans assaulted was Mr. Price, M.L.A.

¹ *Vide* "Notes", 4-8-1921.

² T. L. Vaswani (1879-1966); sage from Sind; author; founder of Mira Educational Institutions, Poona

³ In his letter to Price ; *vide* Appendix "Prof. T. L. Vaswani's Reply", 25-8-1921.

Whatever the provocation, however great the Swami's innocence and whatever his status, the crowd had no business to lose temper. Victory is impossible until we are able to keep our temper under the gravest provocation. Calmness under fire is a soldier's indispensable quality. A non-co-operator is nothing if he cannot remain calm and unperturbed under a fierce fire of provocation. We must lie on the bed chosen by us. We must not expect the Government to remain calm in all circumstances. It has its creed as we have ours. It is calm up to a point. It will sit still so long as we seem to play. Its creed is to strike terror immediately we are serious. The Swami and his following were serious, and the Government delivered the blow. It was at this stage that our creed was put upon its trial and we failed. It is true but it is irrelevant, that Prof. Vaswani and other staunch workers tried to curb the fury of the mob and even partly succeeded and prevented worse things from happening. The fact that matters very much is, that the crowd lost self-control at all. There was no occasion for it to gather. Having gathered it ought to have remained coolhumoured throughout. It was entitled to vent its anger by discarding all foreign cloth, by making up its mind to turn to weaving and picketing liquor shops. That would have been a death-blow to the Government. As it was, its impotent rage was very near a death-blow to the movement for which the crowd ostensibly stood.

There should be no mistake. There is no civil disobedience possible, until the crowds behave like disciplined soldiers. And we cannot resort to civil disobedience, unless we can assure every Englishman that he is as safe in India as he is in his own home. It is not enough that we give the assurance. Every Englishman and Englishwoman must *feel* safe, not by reason of the bayonet at their disposal but by reason of our living creed of non-violence. That is the condition not only of success but our own ability to carry on the movement in its present form. There is no other way of conducting the campaign of non-co-operation.

Let us bear the Swami's farewell message in mind: "Carry on the anti-liquor campaign and help the *Bhangi*." He could not have delivered a better message. If we banish liquor and raise the *Bhangi* to our level, low as it is, we are very near swaraj.

Of course the Sind authorities have lost their head. I see proclamations prohibiting people from walking where and as they like, from carrying anything but walking-sticks.

The European residents too have lost self-control. I do not wonder. They are a handful in the midst of many. Prof. Vaswani wrote a dignified letter of sympathy to Mr. Price, regretting the incident. He had met Mr. Price before. Mr. Price wrote a splenetic letter in reply. Prof. Vaswani wrote again. Mr. Price was still angry. I reproduce letters out of the interesting correspondence that passed between the two, —one from Mr. Price by no means his worst, and one from Prof. Vaswani calm and dignified. The latter is also valuable as a cogent statement of a non-co-operator's position.

The lesson of the "mock trial" as Prof. Vaswani has truly called it and the aftermath, is that we must expect more mock trials as the heat of non-co-operation grows and the closing months approach, and that we must be prepared calmly to face the imprisonment of innocents without retaliation and fury, or we must be prepared to court well-deserved disaster. It will be a cruel pity, if, when we are so near the cherished goal, we should all back by our inability to control crowds.

Young India, 25-8-1921

80. *CHIRALA-PERALA*

Chirala-Perala is in fact one village not far from the sea, with a nice climate and containing a compact population of about 15,000. The place is situated in the Andhra Province, and possesses in Mr. Gopal Krishnayya a talented and self-sacrificing leader, who has by his perseverance and sacrifice been able to hold the people together without difficulty. Municipal government is a transferred department. The minister in charge began last year to make his presence felt by these brave people. A vexatious trading licence was imposed upon them. They retorted by trading without a licence. The result was a prosecution and convictions against the resisters, who, including an old woman went to jail. The Government has been endeavouring to impose a municipality on the people, who protested against the measure. But what could a minister who had accepted office in the teeth of public opposition do but seek to impose his will upon the people and show that he cared little for it?

Let us see what the municipality meant to the people; certainly not better sanitation, for the place was unusually well kept by the people themselves; certainly not more education, for the people were

non-co-operators. It meant more taxation, more interference with their liberty. This was an intolerable evil for the people.

They therefore decided to remove to a bare place of ground near by, outside the municipal area. They erected huts there for residence and evacuated Chirala-Perala about May last. Nothing daunted, the minister has sought and received the assistance of the Revenue Department which has levied penal cesses in respect of the sheds on the ground that they were erected on Government waste. The rate for each shed is Rs. 10-2-6, whereas the value thereof is only Rs. 25. If this payment is not made, the occupants have to vacate the sheds.

The commencement of repression is thus described in its note by the Andhra Provincial Congress Committee:

In the repression at Chirala-Perala, the roll of honour is lengthening. Already 12 men and one woman have served out their term of imprisonment for refusing to pay the municipal taxes. Three men are now undergoing rigorous imprisonment in the Central Jail at Rajamahendri, six more are awaiting orders of incarceration. It is extraordinary that these six were sentenced to imprisonment nearly a month ago and the sentence held in abeyance. We have not heard of any other instance in which convicted persons are quietly told that they might go home and await orders, not even bail bonds being taken from them. Many more in Chirala-Perala are prepared to fill the prisons. The struggle is being carried on with remarkable vigour and persistence, though the dislocation of business caused by the evacuation and the loss of living in the case of poorer inhabitants have entailed serious hardship.

The property of the convicted persons has been attached and brought to sale a number of times at Bapatla and at Guntur for realizing the amount of fine levied on them. But no bidders have come forward in either place. This is an eloquent testimony to the sympathy generally felt for the sufferings of the Chirala-Perala patriots.

Here we have a concrete instance of the meaning of the reforms and responsibility. I doubt not that the minister believes that what he is doing is good for the people. Did not the English officials whenever they imposed anything on us even the Rowlatt Act, seek to justify the imposition on the ground of public weal? What non-co-operation is fighting among other things, is the spirit of patronage. We must have the liberty to do evil before we learn to do good. Even "liberty" must not be "forced" upon us. The democratic spirit demands that a most

autocratic minister must yield to a people's will or resign office. He must be patient enough to carry enlightened public opinion with him even in the most perfect measures of amelioration.

The brave people of Chirala-Perala have challenged the Government to do its worst and refused to have a municipality. They need not have done so. They might have waited for swaraj. But they chose to do otherwise. The responsibility is entirely theirs. They may not now yield in any circumstance whatsoever. Nor must they under provocation lose their heads. They must cheerfully let the Government subject them to any penalty it chooses to inflict upon them. By their meek and unyielding suffering they will cover themselves and India with glory, and will give an object lesson to the country in non-violence.

Young India, 25-8-1921

81. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

DIBRUGARH [ASSAM],

August 25, 1921

CHI. MANI¹,

I have been carrying your last letter with me from place to place. It seems to me a tough job to convert your uncle Vithalbai. At his age, it is difficult for him to adopt a different line of work, especially as he thinks that he has been successful with his own way of fighting.² We can only have patience, agree to differ from him and go our own way.

I hope the boycott³ and the work of khadi production over there are going on apace. Assam impresses one as altogether a different kind of land. I have given the more interesting part of the tour in *Navajivan*⁴ and will not, therefore, write about it here. I have had a talk with Bhai Indulal⁵. I wish to have a heart-to-heart talk with

¹ Daughter of Vallabhbhai Patel

² Membership of legislatures

³ Of foreign cloth

⁴ Vide "Experiences in Assam-I", 4-9-1921 and "Experiences in Assam-II", 11-9-1921.

⁵ Indulal Yagnik; an active political worker from whom Gandhiji took over *Navajivan*

Kumudbehn¹ and comfort her. This will depend on her willingness and my leisure. I do not think I shall be able to go there before October. I trust you and your brother² are giving plenty of help to father in his work. He has a heavy burden to carry and, God willing, he will be able to cope with it.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I shall be in Chittagong and Barisal from the 31st to the 3rd and in Calcutta from the 4th to the 12th.

BEHN MANIGAURI

C/O VALLABHBHAI JHAVERBHAI PATEL³, BAR-AT-LAW

BHADRA

AHMEDABAD

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne

82. SPEECH AT DIBRUGARH

[August 25, 1921]⁴

BROTHERS,

This is our last night in Assam. Tomorrow we shall leave for Chittagong. We have by now said everything to the Assamese that we had to say. And now before I proceed further I should like you to tell me how many tea plantation workers are here. If my voice reaches you, these workers who are here may raise their hands. I see that there are very few workers present at this meeting.

I had hoped to be able to meet our working brethren here. I have spent at least twenty years of my life among workers in Africa. In India also wherever I go I keep in touch with the workers. I do not know what the condition of the working class in Assam is. Tomorrow

¹ Wife of Indulal Yagnik

² Dahyabhai Patel

³ 1875-1950; Congress leader from Gujarat who became the first Deputy Prime Minister of India

⁴ Gandhiji was in Dibrugarh on this date; *vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 22-8-1921.

I shall have a talk with the representatives of planters. But I had hoped that before that I should be able to have a heart-to-heart talk with the workers. The mission on which I came here has occupied my time so completely that I was not able to go to the tea gardens and speak to the workers. I shall ever regret this. But I am also comforted by the thought that if God grants me success in the task that I have undertaken it will not be necessary to go to the workers. The sufferings of the Indian people have to be mitigated or swarajya will have no meaning. Our swarajya should be such that the humblest man or maid working in a tea plantation can freely go from Kashmir to Cape Comorin without a single ruffian teasing them; otherwise it would be no swarajya. The struggle that is going on started because the British rule has done India no good. I cannot get entangled any more in petty things. For a time I had thought that love would put everything right. But the experience of the Punjab and the injustice committed against Muslims in the name of justice have convinced me that in no other regime would such tyranny be possible. And since then I have called this a Satanic regime.

If we wish to remove this Satanism, if we wish to mitigate the suffering of the workers and stop the atrocities inflicted on women, there is no power that can prevent us.

If we had not lacked faith in God this stark poverty would not have descended on India.

Our struggle does not spring from enmity. But we cannot accept anyone's overlordship. *We accept no one except God as our Lord and Master.* This is the meaning of swarajya. It is heinous to love a regime where untruth reigns, barbarities are perpetrated, and false despatches are sent. We therefore seek no justice from its courts and do not wish to have our children educated in its schools and colleges. This is called non-co-operation. We do not incite anyone to rioting. We can achieve swarajya prayerfully and peaceably and heal the wound of the Muslims.

We must understand thoroughly what self-purification means. Give up drinking alcohol, smoking ganja and eating opium. Give up visiting prostitutes. I am well acquainted with the habits of workers. You cannot live comfortably on your wage of eight or nine rupees a month. You drink in order to forget your misery. But the simplest remedy for misery is that, while you should put up with suffering, you should [not] put up with any unjust punishment that a tyrant may

inflict on you. India has not yet understood this principle fully. The day I am persuaded that India has learnt this, the country can become free. Today India lacks the power for peaceful, civil disobedience of laws. I hope we shall have this power by October. But this power will not come through drinking and debauchery. Therefore give up drinking, give up debauchery. This has a very deep meaning. If you would rather have nothing to do with dirty things, you should become pure yourselves.

We do not realize how our country has fallen through foreign trade—even more than it has by drinking and opium. We have not looked at the evil and sin there is in it. My brother Andrews¹ asks me why I burn English cloth, while there is a famine in Khulna. We do not realize what a crime it is to wear foreign cloth. For self-purification, and for showing the world what self-purification is, it is necessary to give up foreign cloth. If India can do this, it can become free by October.

I humbly beseech my Marwari brethren of Dibrugarh that, if they wish to serve Assam, if they wish to serve dharma—and I know that they are keen to serve dharma and they love it—they should give up using foreign cloth.

I am sorry that there has been no proposal to perform, during this our last night here, the sacred task of burning foreign cloth. It is a sad thought that Dibrugarh could not perform this *yajna*. Do you shrink from burning even dirt?

If you wish to end the sufferings of workers, if you wish to guard the chastity of women and the ancient culture of India, then burn foreign cloth. Why do workers have to come here [to Assam] from such great distances? The only reason I can see is that they have given up the charkha. Even the peasants have given it up. Then the land does not produce enough. So a million people from outside have come into Assam. This is an indication of our sin.

I shall close my speech with a prayer to God to grant us strength to give up foreign cloth and guard the honour of our women.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 9-9-1921

¹ C. F. Andrews (1871-1940); British missionary who took great interest in Viswabharati University founded by Tagore; his devoted services for many years in the cause of the Indian people won him the name “Deenabandhu”, brother of the poor; he was deeply attached to Gandhiji.

83. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

ON THE WAY TO SILCHAR,
*Saturday [August 27, 1921]*¹

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

We have crossed the border of Assam, as the province is defined by the Congress and are now entering the Surma Valley. The scene too has changed. We thought of you often during our voyage on the Brahmaputra. But do we always get, and can we always eat, the food we relish? There have been no letters at all from you. As a matter of fact, we have received no mail after we left Gauhati, and I am afraid we may not get any till we reach Calcutta. We may just manage to reach there on the 4th. Annapurnadevi's address is: Chataparru, Ellore, Madras Presidency.

Please send me the address of Esther Faering² if you remember it.

I am anxious to have news of your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11412

84. LETTER TO H.S.L. POLAK

ON TOUR,
August 29, 1921

MY DEAR HENRY,

So you are having your full dose of domestic afflictions. May they show you to be truly courageous and god-fearing and I hope that friends in London have been found to share your sorrows. I know what London is in these matters.

I am so immersed in my work and incessant travelling that I hardly feel that there is any such thing as domestic sorrow. The misery about me is so great. To read of semi-starved millions was so

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 22-8-1921.

² A Danish missionary who came to India in 1916 and later joined Sabarmati Ashram; Gandhiji treated her as his daughter.

different from seeing them.

With love to you all,

Yours,

BHAI

From the original : Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy : National Archives of India

85. TELEGRAM TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SYLHET,

ASSAM,

August 30, 1921

EVENT¹ COMING. HAVE GUJARAT DAY'S HARTAL, LABOURERS JOINING AFTER LEAVE. WEDNESDAY THURSDAY CHITTAGONG SATURDAY BARISAL SUNDAY AND AFTER CALCUTTA.

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine

86. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SYLHET,

ASSAM,

[August 30, 1921]²

BHAISHRI VALLABHBHAI,

I have your letter. I have sent you a telegram³ today; a copy of it is enclosed. If we have the necessary strength, I for my part would suggest that there should be a hartal in Ahmedabad, but only so long as the Prince is there, care being taken to see that poor people get all the provisions they need. In the event of such a hartal being observed, martial law is likely to be proclaimed. We should face it and meet death if it comes to that. But I do not think we are ready for this; we haven't yet the necessary strength. We should, therefore, rest content with what we can do. We should tell the people how they could dissociate themselves from the visit. The Municipality should have as little to do with it as possible. No one may salute the Prince and, if he visits Government schools, the boys may not rise from their seats. If

¹ Visit of the Prince of Wales

² As given in the source on the basis of the post mark

³ *Vide* the preceding item.

we are strong enough for such action, we should organize picketing outside his office and prevent people from seeing him. We can think of many more ways of showing our displeasure without being rude. All these we may adopt and make our attitude known to the public. My advice is that we announce the full boycott programme right now and start training the people to act peacefully but firmly. We must have the strength to make it impossible for the Prince to parade his position in Ahmedabad.

More than this I cannot say from this distance. Only, I would ask you not to undertake anything beyond your capacity. It is essential to avoid failure. Apart from this, if there is any possibility of a breach of the peace following determined opposition by us, please do not make any attempt to carry out my suggestions.

It is in the fitness of things that you have accepted the Chairmanship of the [Congress] Reception Committee. Such honours will not turn our heads when service of the people is our only aim in life.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine

87. SPEECH TO RAILWAY WORKERS, CHITTAGONG

August 31, 1921

(The workers of the Assam-Bengal Railway had gone on a strike to serve no selfish interest but to secure to the labourers who had abandoned the tea plantations justice for the cruelty which they had suffered at Chandpur. The Government had beaten up and driven them from the railway station, and refused to help them to return to their home towns. This had hurt the railway workers. They had no common bond with the plantation labourers. The latter hailed from Bihar and other provinces whereas most of the railway workers came from Bengal. Their strike, thus, had no element of self-interest in it. I met these strikers at Chittagong. I told them what they should do. Notes of that speech were taken down. Since some of the ideas are likely to prove useful, I publish the summary here believing that, though it is not complete and I have not been able to revise and

abridge it, the speech may be read with profit.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI)

I thank you all for the address which you have presented to me; but I do not wish to detain you long over expressions of gratitude.

I shall not enter into a detailed discussion whether it was proper or improper on your part to have gone on a strike and continued it for so many months, because I am not in possession of all the facts. I know only what I heard yesterday after coming here. It is not possible for me to express any opinion on the basis of that limited knowledge. You must have already heard from some of your leaders what I wrote in *Young India* about the Assam Bengal Railway strike. In that article also, I did not express any opinion since I did not have enough information to form one. I did not know your circumstances, your grievance. I did not know whether you had sufficient justification for striking work; and I do not know that even now. I can see, however, that your strike, unlike other strikes, is not motivated by self-interest. You have struck work not for any rise in wages but for the sake of others. You have gone on a strike to express your sympathy for the sufferings of your brothers as a result of the atrocities at Chandpur. I did not imagine that workers in India had become strong enough to go on a strike out of concern for other people's sufferings. This is not true of the entire working class, but in your case, I am told, you have struck work only out of sympathy with the sufferings of your brethren.

And if that is the reason why you have gone on strike, it becomes your duty not to return to work, any of you, until the hardships of plantation labourers have ended, until they get justice.

When can we say that their hardships have ended? When can it be said that justice has been done for the atrocities committed at Chandpur? Only when the Government expresses regret, apologizes for the beatings and pays the labourers the railway fare which it refused under pressure from the planters. The Commissioner who ordered Gurkha soldiers to throw out from the railway waiting-sheds, in the middle of the night, poor and exhausted working men and women and their children, was born in India and is one of us. He should be ashamed of himself. He should, on his own, offer an apology.

You can return to work only when all this is done. If the

Government acts thus, one may not mind the railway company not paying you for the strike-period on the ground that you had given no notice. The railway company might employ you as if you were fresh recruits, it may tell you that you will be employed as and when vacancies arise and may even stipulate new service conditions,—you may submit to all this, but only after the Government yields. As long as the Government refuses to bend, you ought not to return to work no matter what they offer you or how hard they try to win you over.

You should not go down on your knees even if the Congress Committee does not help you with funds or your leaders desert you. Why should a person, who can work with his hands and feet, have to go down on his knees? Such a man ought to remain independent and not rely on others for anything. Whether it is I or the Congress Committee, if any leader deserts you' after having advised you to go on strike, you must not waver. I have read the notice which was served on you yesterday. It says:

Many of you have now returned to work. The rest of you also should report for duty immediately. We are advising you in your own interest. Some irresponsible leaders incited you to go on this strike and have now deserted you. Do not be misled by them any more. If you delay returning to work, you will lose your jobs too.

You need not be frightened by this notice. You are not going back to work; do not mind those who have returned. They have acted unworthily; you should preserve your honour.

Times change and one age succeeds another. This one belongs to the weavers. You can stand on your own feet if you adopt this profession. Do not think that this work will not solve your problem. Weavers can today earn twice as much as others. Those of you, moreover, who wish to go back to your villages may do so, your fares will be paid to you. You may live there, till your piece of land and spin during spare hours. Apart from this, you may do any other work of your choice and become self-supporting. If all of you belong to Chittagong, here also you can combine farming and weaving as I have suggested and thereby make Chittagong the pride of India. It is not at all difficult to do this. God is most merciful and just. A man can learn to spin within three days, carding is also easy and even weaving can be mastered within a month if properly attended to. There is one thing, of course. Railway employees habitually take bribes or steal. If you

wish to have your bread without working for it, you will write to me the very next day that you cannot go on with weaving. If however you are willing to work and if you work for twelve hours daily, you will be positively writing to me within a month that the way suggested by me has made you self-supporting and that now you fear no one except God. It is not hard to work for twelve hours a day. I am an old man, I do not have much energy now, and yet I can work that long. Why, then, cannot you young men do so? If you work hard and live a thoughtful life, you will know God, for a man who does not possess good characters who drinks and visits prostitutes, cannot work strenuously for twelve hours. You cannot expect maintenance from the Congress Committee but, since you have struck work, you can ask for spinning-wheels. The spinning-wheels will provide you maintenance. You should continue your strike with the the help of the spinning-wheel, offer love and sympathy to those who suffer and, as long as this Satanic Government does not yield, let none of you go back to work.

For not less than thirty years now I have lived in the closest contact with labourers. Even when I was practising, I accepted generally working men's briefs. I lived with them, moved with them and slept and ate with them. I have conducted a number of strikes before now. I consider myself an expert in conducting strikes. With God's grace, I succeeded in all of them, the only reason being that I advised workers to stand on their own feet I refused to support them by raising funds. Why should a man, sound of body and limb, feed himself with money from another? I most certainly would not seek financial assistance from my brother or my friend if I should happen to lose my job or if my business is ruined. I would seek my brother's help only when I was ill or incapacitated. When there was a strike by forty thousand men and women in South Africa, I straightway wired to Mr. Gokhale¹ to tell him that he should not worry at all and that there was no need to raise funds in India and send the money there. As long as there was no money, things went on very well; it was only when funds started flowing in that difficulties arose. The workers secured their demands. We did not have to continue the strike for as long as six months. It was called off within a few weeks on a

¹ G. K. Gokhale (1866-1915); founder of the Servants of India Society; President, Indian National Congress at Benares in 1905

settlement being reached. The strikers used to get one *roti*¹ and an ounce of sugar daily. On this ration, they walked twenty miles every day. Their women and children also accompanied them.

That one was a very big strike. Compared to it, your strike is a very small affair. During that strike large numbers submitted to beatings and assaults without so much as opening their mouths. Not less than ten thousand people walked into jails without uttering a single syllable. Among the ranks of the strikers were many hefty Pathans. Once a Pathan working in a coal-mine came to me and bared his back before me. It was all sore and swollen. He told me he had received the blows without the slightest movement of his body, that the tyrant had all but skinned him alive; but he submitted to it all because of the pledge he had taken before me in the name of God. Were it not for this, how dare the man beat him, he asked. He could have crushed the like of him in no time.

I told him that he was indeed a brave man. And, in that strike, he was not the only Pathan who behaved in this way. There were many Others like him. Some persons who had served terms of imprisonment for theft or murder had also joined the Strike. All of them, however, had only one thought in their minds, that the pledge they had taken had to be honoured even at the cost of their lives. All of them were brave people. I want you to be equally brave. I ask you, once again, not to look to the Congress or depend upon it. God has given us teeth and He is sure to provide us food. This land of Bengal is so very fertile. You have abundant rains here. Nature is all smiles upon you. Why should people here at all die of hunger? How can people here be anyone's slaves? They should be completely free. If they so choose they can, this very day, win freedom for the whole of the country. I feel ashamed to think that, when there is famine in Khulna, they should approach merchants in Bombay for money and that the Khulna people can be fed only if the money is forthcoming.

Let us think what needs to be done now. Either all of you go back to your villages and find out for yourselves some means of livelihood, or you set up some sort of a corporation of your own. If you wish to go back to your villages, the Congress Committee should pay you the fare for the journey. I would, however, advise you to set up a corporation. As one fighting for swaraj, I would ask you to card, spin and weave. After a month of training, you will earn from this

¹ Flat, round unleavened bread

work one rupee daily. The greater your skill the more you will earn. By taking up this work, you will also be serving the nation. Your family members will then cease to be liabilities since they too can lend a hand in this work. Moreover, your courage will have an effect on public opinion and those who have deserted you may again join you. This will of course need determination. Our forefathers laid great stress on honouring one's pledge. Dasharatha said that the tradition of Raghu's descendants enjoined them not to break a pledge, even if that meant losing one's life.

Many of you have returned to work with the Railway; they are ignorant, weak men. You should not abuse them; nor should you employ force to compel them to give up their jobs again. That will not be right for you. If you refuse to go back on your pledge, silently keep up the strike and earn your bread by spinning and weaving; if you live a godly life, they will themselves feel ashamed; public opinion will make them feel so.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-9-1921

88. NOTES

LOVELY ASSAM

I am writing these notes at Tezpur on the banks of the mighty Brahmaputra. Tezpur was known as Shonitapur and is reputed to have been the capital of the demon Banasur, whose daughter Usha was married to Aniruddha¹. Devotees can point out the place where Hari² and Hara³ fought. Assam is a land of magnificent vegetation. Some of the river scenery is hard to beat throughout the world. I have seen the gorgeous scenery on the Thames. But I cannot recall anything as superior to the lavishness with which nature has decorated the great stream on whose banks I am writing these notes.

Upper Assam alone has a population of over 37 lakhs. Every woman of Assam is a born weaver. No Assamese girl who does not weave can expect to become a wife. And she weaves fairy tales in cloth. Some of the old patterns that our host Mr. Phookan showed me

¹ Grandson of Lord Krishna

² Vishnu, the preserver

³ Siva, the destroyer

were of matchless beauty. And as I saw these beautiful patterns, I could not help shedding a silent tear over India's past glory and her lost art. Where is to be found in all the fine rich foreign saris in India, that beautiful blending of soft colours so pleasing to the eye? The vegetable dyes of Assam are almost extinct. When Assam became a British possession, its women ceased to spin and sinfully took to weaving foreign yarn. And now, what the women of Assam are saving through weaving, they are losing through buying foreign yarn. And the saris I see today are not anything to be compared to the old patterns I have seen for beauty or softness. Assam, if its workers do their duty, can play a most important part in developing swadeshi. Its women can weave much more than enough for themselves. Forty thousand acres are under cotton cultivation today, an acre yielding on an average 133 lbs. But of course Assam can grow much more. Some of the cotton I saw was very beautiful and long-staple. And fine spinning is still in existence in isolated homes as in Andhra. Every one admits that the Assamese have ample time at their disposal. I have elsewhere reproduced an extract from an English writer's observation confirming the view. Assam has plenty of wood, sound and durable, just the kind for making spinning-wheels. Let us hope that Assam will rise to its full height in the matter of swadeshi.

The Assamese are cursed with the opium habit, but the movement against vice has spread throughout the length and breadth of India. I am told that many people have given up the habit altogether and that abstinence is on the increase.

I understand that some Government officials have made use of a slip I have committed in ray booklet *Hind Swaraj*, in which I have bracketed the Assamese with the *Pindaris* and other wild tribes¹ have made ample amends to the people. It was certainly on my part a grave injustice done to the great Assamese people, who are every whit as civilized as any other part of India. They have a fine literature some of which is written on bark of *agaru* tree with beautifully coloured illustrations said to be very old. And of course I fell in love with the women of Assam as soon as I learnt that they were accomplished weavers. Being weavers, they have used economy in their dress without impairing its beauty or its efficiency as cover. And to me it is a sign of very high culture to see the Assamese women and girls wearing little or no jewellery. They are like women all over India naturally shy and

¹ *Vide* "Hind Swaraj", 22-11-1909, footnote 6.

modest with extremely refined and open faces.

My stupidity about the Assamese rose, when about 1890 I read an account of the Malipur expedition, when the late Sir John Gorst defended the conduct of the officials towards the late Senapati, saying that governments always liked to lop off tall poppies. Being an indifferent reader of history, I retained with me the impression that the Assamese were *jungli*¹ and committed it to writing in 1908². However my slip has afforded consolation to some officials, amusement to my audience before which I corrected the slip, and a splendid opportunity to me of paying a tribute to the simple and natural beauty of the Assamese sisters and of enlisting them on the side of India and swadeshi.

I must not omit to mention the fact, that out of nearly seventy-eight Assamese pleaders, fifteen have suspended practice, probably the highest percentage throughout India.

Lastly, I must congratulate the Congress Committees on the excellent order preserved at all the meetings. All rush and noise have been avoided with wonderful discipline.

OFFICIOUSNESS

The officials in Assam are evidently unused to large demonstrations and gatherings. They have forbidden to the demonstrators the use of public grounds. The Nowgong officials however positively irritated the people. The Deputy Commissioner would not allow a little platform with a canopy to be erected on the football ground, and after having allowed its use had it dismantled because, he said, the chairman of the committee was guilty of a breach of faith in that he had erected the platform. The committee in disgust held the meeting on private ground. Nor was this all. The Deputy Commissioner endeavoured to control the attendance at the railway station and wanted the names of the chosen few who were to go to the platform. He would not allow any procession for fear of disturbance. As a matter of fact, the crowds have been nowhere so restrained or well-behaved as in Assam, even in the demonstration of their affection. And any experienced official could have seen, that affectionate demonstrations, no matter how noisy could not possibly end in trouble or mischief. But Assam is a place, where, I understand,

¹ Uncivilized

² Slip for 1909

officials will not tolerate any awakening among the people. Only the other day, at Tezpur, an official summarily and forcibly had certain quarters evacuated by the residents, because their buffaloes interfered with his sport. Another official during the war period carried fire and sword among a little border tribe called *Kukis*, and slaughtered them like goats, sparing neither women nor children. I understand, that the whole of this shameful massacre was suppressed from the public, though it is common knowledge among the people. No wonder that in Assam things have been carried so far, that its permanent capital is 4,000 feet above the sea level, It has no capital on the plains at all. Shillong is, I have been told, to all intents and purposes a European settlement. And the Government never descends from its inaccessible heights.

A MUNICIPAL MODEL

The Raipur (Central Provinces) Municipality has adopted by a majority the following proposals:

That all the boys reading in the municipal schools should have the national uniform of khadi coat or *kurta*¹ and khadi cap from the 1st August, 1921.

That the 1st August 1921 should be declared a holiday in all the municipal schools and offices in honour of the late Lokamanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak.

That this Committee expects its servants to use country-made cloth.

That all dresses supplied to municipal servants should be of khadi.

It is a wise use the Raipur Municipality has made of its powers. Indeed all the municipalities can carry out all the constructive permanent features of non-co-operation without being wholly non-co-operationist. There is not one among the foregoing proposals, to which reasonable exception could possibly be taken by anybody. Any municipality which adopts swadeshi, the vernacular of its province as the medium of its proceedings, the amelioration of the suppressed classes, the abolition of the drink-traffic, prostitution and such other things, will assist the work of national purification, and thus justify its existence.

¹ Long shirt

HOW TO KILL SWADESHI

We are familiar with the official ban put upon the khadi cap in various parts of India. In Bihar, I heard that a magistrate actually sent hawkers to sell foreign cloth. Mr. Painter of Dharwar fame has gone one better, and has issued an official circular in which he says:

All officers subordinate to the Collector and District Magistrate are desired to take steps to make people realize, that inasmuch as India produces less than her population requires, a boycott of foreign cloth and its destruction or export must inevitably lead to a serious rise in prices, which may lead to a serious disorder and looting, and that these consequences will be the result, not of any action on the part of Government but of Mr. Gandhi's campaign.

In two other paragraphs means are indicated of combating the swadeshi propaganda, i.e., by holding meetings, and by dealers who are opposed to boycott attending the Collector's Office at stated hours. The Madras government have issued a still more pedantic circular. The meaning of these circulars is obvious Pressure is to be put upon the dealers and others not to countenance boycott. The subordinate officials will take liberties which the authors of circulars may not even have contemplated. Fortunately for the country, these threats now produce little or no impression upon the public, and the swadeshi movement will go on in the teeth of the official opposition, be it secret or open, unscrupulous or honourable.

The officials are so ignorant and obstinate, that they will not take the only effective course for avoiding the feared disorders and looting", viz, making common cause with the public and stimulating production. Instead of recognizing the agitation against foreign cloth as desirable and necessary, they regard it as an evil to be put down. And then it is complained, that I call a system which seeks to thwart healthy public agitation, Satanic. Why should there be any dearth of indigenous cloth? Is there not enough cotton in India ? Are there not enough men and women who can spin and weave ? Is it not possible to manufacture all the required number of wheels in a few days? Why should not each home manufacture its own cloth, even as it cooks its own food ? Is it not enough in times of famine to distribute uncooked grain among the famine-stricken? Why should it not be enough to distribute raw cotton among those who need clothing? Why this hypocritical or false alarm about the dearth of cloth, when it is possible in India to manufacture enough for India's needs in a month even without the aid of the mills? The people have been purposely or

ignorantly kept in the dark hitherto. They have been wrongly taught to believe, that all else cloth needed cannot be manufactured in India's homes as of yore. They have been figuratively amputated and then made to rely upon foreign or mill-made cloth. I wish the people concerned will give the only dignified answer possible to these circulars. They will forthwith burn or send out all their foreign cloth, and courageously make up their minds to spin and weave for their own requirements. It is incredibly easy for everyone who is not an idler.

BOGUS ADVERTISEMENTS

I continue to receive complaints about bogus advertisements in swadeshi. The Manager of Satyagraha Ashram who has handled almost all the so-called improvements and inventions, writes to say that he has lately received an advertisement from Calcutta which beats all previous record. He is of opinion that as yet nothing has been found to beat the original charkha in simplicity, ease or output, and warns all spinners against investing in any of the new designs. He advises all Congress Committees to scan all such advertisements in their respective jurisdictions, and after giving each machine at least a month's trial to pronounce an opinion upon these designs. Whilst swadeshi is taking root, fraudulent inventions are bound to come before the public. Congress Committees therefore must guide it in all such matters.

A Tuni correspondent writes to say, that Bombay buyers have gone to Andhra Desha to buy fine cloth. He says, that in spite of his warning, cloth woven out of foreign yarn was sent by some merchants from Bezwada. He warns all buyers against buying such cloth. He says that practically all swadeshi stock is exhausted. The moral is of course clear. "Beware of fine cloth." Fine hand-spun yarn cannot be had in abundances and therefore it is best for Congress workers to avoid buying fine khadi. As Shrimati Sarojini Naidu¹ said at Farrukhabad, it is better to cover ourselves with leaves than to wear foreign cloth. Those who are fired with such a spirit will not fall into the dangerous trap of fine cloth as yet. A time will soon come, when there will be no dearth of fine hand-spun that is capable of being woven.

¹ 1879-1949, poet, patriot, Congress leader and a close associate of Gandhiji

A SEASONABLE PUBLICATION

Dr. Syed Mahmud of Patna has rendered a service to the Khilafat by bringing out this booklet on the Khilafat and England. It is easy reading, and makes out for the busy man a fairly complete case for the Khilafat. Dr. Mahmud has been careful to support every one of his propositions by copious extracts. He proves the treachery of British ministers from their own writings and speeches. He has had no difficulty in showing that England, even when she was regarded as Turkey's friend, was a friend out of necessity, because she was Russia's foe. The history of England's relationship with Turkey has been one of betrayal, of secret treaties hostile to Turkey's interests, the brave and trusting Turks always believing in England's promises. Here are Lord Palmerston's reasons for the support of Turkey in his days: "We support Turkey for our own sake and for our own interest." When these very sound reasons ceased, Turkey was sold. It was at the time of the Berlin Congress of 1877, that the secret leaked out that Britain had exacted the cession of the island of Cyprus from Turkey. Disraeli and Salisbury, the two English plenipotentiaries, kept the secret from the Congress, although they were under an obligation to disclose it. "They stood convicted of nothing less than a direct and recorded lie!" Did the discovery lead to the return to Turkey of Cyprus? Not at all. England placated outraged France by recognizing the latter's right at the first convenient opportunity to occupy Tunis, by recognising her special interest in Syria and giving an equal share to her in the financial spoliation of Egypt. No wonder Mr. Blunt has said: "To the Cyprus intrigue are directly or indirectly referable half the crimes against Oriental and North African liberty our generation has witnessed." Dr. Syed Mahmud traces the treacherous dealings of England regarding Egypt, Tripoli and the Balkan War, and shows clearly that Turkey was practically driven out of the alliance with England. Is it any wonder that no Mussulman trusts British ministers' friendly professions? They will forfeit all title to be called followers of Islam, if they rest themselves before compelling England to do the right thing by Turkey and India.

PUNJAB PROSECUTIONS

Maulvi Saiyad Habib has been sentenced to rigorous imprisonment for three years, avowedly for his writings in his paper, the *Siasat*, but in reality for the influence he exercises over the Mussulmans. Mr. Zafar Ali Khan's son, Mr. Akhtar Ali Khan, and his

cousin, Mr. Gulam Kadar are under trial. The conclusion is foregone. Thus every Mussulman and every Sikh non-co-operator of note is to be put "out of harm's way". They would not apologise, they would not withdraw anything for there was nothing to withdraw. Disaffection in their writings certainly there was. But a non-co-operation journal to be worthy of the name has to preach disaffection. I therefore congratulate these gentlemen upon their well-earned honour. I can only hope, that the Mussulmans and the Sikhs will appreciate the Government action by completing their part of the swadeshi programme. The people will have deserved these trials and convictions, if they generate enough power to be able to discharge these friends from jails long before their period is over.

AN INDICTMENT

A friend has sent me a copy of the notice served on Pandit Radhamohan Gokulji of Nagpur, calling upon him to file security for good behaviour or to go to jail. The Pandit is safely lodged in jail. But I have before me the extracts that were attached to the notice, and said to be from his speeches delivered at various times. I have read and re-read the extracts. I now present them to the reader in the order in which they were given in the notice.

SPEECH DATED 20TH JUNE 1921 AT SEONI

1. We are fighting against a tyrannical Government. See. . . how long can the tyrant Government . . . prosecute us? The Western people . . . are not Christians.
2. Unless all the jails in India are full of Indians, you cannot achieve your object. To the last child . . . let the struggle for liberty be continued.
3. When the Romans were ruling over England, they became cruel and supercilious. Once they . . . whipped Queen Boadicea; the result is, where is Rome today ?
4. Close the slave houses (schools) of the Satanic Government.
5. In the face of two laws, one for Indians and another for Europeans, we cannot help remarking, the Government are dishonest and wish ill to the people.
6. So long as you are fighting against the tyrant Government, do not produce children.

SPEECH DATED 21 ST JUNE 1921 AT SEONI

1. He then referred to the non-co-operation movement, by means of which a bloodless revolution could be caused, this oppressive system of Government could be broken and swaraj attained.

2. It is our duty to destroy a Government, which is capable of acting so dishonestly.

3. What did we get in return for the money and men we gave to the bureaucracy? The Rowlatt Act which provides neither for appeal nor for argument.

4. Imperial preference is being forced on us today. We cannot buy at a cheaper rate outside the British Empire, nor can we sell at a better price to an outsider.

5. The laws on which our very honour depends are made and discussed in a foreign language . . . at a distance of thousands of miles. We are certainly not bound to obey such laws.

6. You should be prepared to undergo transportation and to get yourself beheaded like Robert Moore.

7. Do you deserve to be called human beings, if you do not consider it your duty to destroy that ill-born Government, which has caused sticks to be introduced into the private parts of women?

SPEECH DATED 5TH JULY 1921 AT NAGPUR

1. The Sinful British Government taught the Chinese to smoke opium and Indians to drink (alcohol).

2. The Government . . . cut up the Turkish kingdom but left European kingdoms intact.

3. The Indian (Marwari) traders are dacoits who rob for the benefit of the bigger dacoits.

4. The British and Japanese Governments are cousins and both are devilish. As the British imprisoned people, so the Japanese executed non-co-operating students in Korea.

5. The Government is so sinful, that its sins will recoil on its own head and it will perish like the Roman and the Egyptian Empires.

There is in the foregoing extracts nothing, that hundreds of speakers including myself have not said on various occasions and from a thousand platforms. There is only one sentence to which an objection may properly be taken, and that is No. 7 in speech No. 2.

The charge does occur in the statements made before the Congress Committee. But it is against individuals and not against a whole corporation. The Government could not properly be described to have "caused" the infamous barbarity, as the Government can be said to have made India crawl on her belly in that lane in Amritsar. But it is not for the inaccuracy or the over-colouring that the Pandit has been sentenced. His is a severe but accurate indictment covering eighteen charges in three speeches. And almost every one of them can be sustained. The speaker has been impartial in his condemnation, as shown by his reference to the Marwaris and the Japanese. It must moreover be remembered, that the speaker spoke in Hindi, and the extracts are given without their context. The lesson, however, for us workers is to continue to do our work fearlessly and earn imprisonment, even as Pandit Gokulji and many others have done.

THE NAGPUR PLEADERS

The pleaders of Nagpur have done well through the ordeal to which its Sessions Judge subjected them. He required non-co-operating pleaders to show the consistency between their suspension and their oath as lawyers. All of them said, that they had suspended in obedience to the Congress call. Mr. Mahomed Samiulla Khan added, that his declaration of allegiance was subordinate to allegiance to God and His Prophet, which latter nothing could override. Mr. Narayanrao T. Vaidya said, that times had very much changed, that the oath of allegiance would have to be changed to suit the circumstances and that otherwise no self-respecting lawyer would care to practise in any British Court. The lawyers deserve congratulations on their fearless attitude. Times are indeed gone, when people could be frightened into slavish submission. Man does not live by bread alone. He has at his disposal a sustenance far richer than the richest bread can afford.

Young India, 1-9-1921

89. NATIONAL EDUCATION

So many strange things have been said about my views on national education, that it would perhaps not be out of place to formulate them before the public.

In my opinion the existing system of education is defective, apart from its association with an utterly unjust Government, in

three most important matters:

1. It is based upon foreign culture to the almost entire exclusion of indigenous culture.

2. It ignores the culture of the heart and the hand, and confines itself simply to the head.

3. Real education is impossible through a foreign medium.

Let us examine the three defects. Almost from the commencement, the text-books deal, not with things the boys and the girls have always to deal with in their homes, but things to which they are perfect strangers. It is not through the text-books, that a lad learns what is right and what is wrong in the home life. He is never taught to have any pride in his surroundings. The higher he goes, the farther he is removed from his home, so that at the end of his education he becomes estranged from his surroundings. He feels no poetry about the home life. The village scenes are all a sealed book to him. His own civilization is presented to him as imbecile, barbarous, superstitious and useless for all practical purposes. His education is calculated to wean him from this traditional culture. And if the mass of educated youths are not entirely denationalised, it is because the ancient culture is too deeply embedded in them to be altogether uprooted even by an education adverse to its growth. If I had my way, I would certainly destroy the majority of the present text-books and cause to be written text-books which have a bearing on and correspondence with the home life, so that a boy as he learns may react upon his immediate surroundings.

Secondly, whatever may be true of other countries, in India at any rate where more than eighty per cent of the population is agricultural and another ten per cent industrial, it is a crime to make education merely literary and to unfit boys and girls for manual work in after-life. Indeed I hold that as the larger part of our time is devoted to labour for earning our bread, our children must from their infancy be taught the dignity of such labour. Our children should not be so taught as to despise labour. There is no reason, why a peasant's son after having gone to a school should become useless as he does become as agricultural labourer. It is a sad thing that our schoolboys look upon manual labour with disfavour, if not contempt. Moreover, in India, if we expect, as we must, every boy and girl of school-going age to attend public schools, we have not the means to finance education in accordance with the existing style, nor are millions of

parents able to pay the fees that are at present imposed. Education to be universal must therefore be free. I fancy that even under an ideal system of government, we shall not be able to devote two thousand million rupees which we should require for finding education for all the children of school-going age. It follows, therefore, that our children must be made to pay in labour partly or wholly for all the education they receive. Such universal labour to be profitable can only be (to my thinking) hand-spinning and hand-weaving. But for the purposes of my proposition, it is immaterial whether we have spinning or any other form of labour, so long as it can be turned to account. Only, it will be found upon examination, that on a practical, profitable and extensive scale, there is no occupation other than the processes connected with cloth-production which can be introduced in our schools throughout India.

The introduction of manual training will serve a double purpose in a poor country like ours. It will pay for the education of our children and teach them an occupation on which they can fall back in after-life, if they choose, for earning a living. Such a system must make our children self-reliant. Nothing will demoralize the nation so much as that we should learn to despise labour.

One word only as to the education of the heart. I do not believe, that this can be imparted through books. It can only be done through the living touch of the teacher. And, who are the teachers in the primary and even secondary schools? Are they men and women of faith and character? Have they themselves received the training of the heart? Are they even expected to take care of the permanent element in the boys and girls placed under their charge? Is not the method of engaging teachers for lower schools an effective bar against character? Do the teachers get even a living wage? And we know, that the teachers of primary schools are not selected for their patriotism. They only come who cannot find any other employment.

Finally, the medium of instruction. My views on this point are too well known to need re-stating. The foreign medium has caused brain-fag, put an undue strain upon the nerves of our children, made them crammers and imitators, unfitted them for original work and thought, and disabled them for filtrating their learning to the family or the masses. The foreign medium has made our children practically foreigners in their own land. It is the greatest tragedy of the existing system. The foreign medium has prevented the growth of our

vernaculars. If I had the powers of a despot, I would today stop the tuition of our boys and girls through a foreign medium, and require all the teachers and professors on pain of dismissal to introduce the change forthwith. I would not wait for the preparation of text-books. They will follow the change. It is an evil that needs a summary remedy.

My uncompromising opposition to the foreign medium has resulted in an unwarranted charge being levelled against me of being hostile to foreign culture or the learning of the English language. No reader of *Young India* could have missed the statement often made by me in these pages, that I regard English as the language of international commerce and diplomacy and therefore consider its knowledge on the part of some of us as essential. As it contains some of the richest treasures of thought and literature, I would certainly encourage its careful study among those who have linguistic talents and expect them to translate those treasures for the nation in its vernaculars.

Nothing can be farther from my thought than that we should become exclusive or erect barriers. But I do respectfully contend, that an appreciation of other cultures can fitly follow, never precede an appreciation and assimilation of our own. It is my firm opinion, that no culture has treasures so rich as ours has. We have not known it, we have been made even to deprecate its study and deprecate its value. We have almost ceased to live it. An academic Grasp without practice behind it is like an embalmed corpse, perhaps lovely to look at but nothing to inspire or ennoble. My religion forbids me to belittle or disregard other cultures, as it insists under pain of civil suicide upon imbibing and living my own.

Young India, 1-9-1921

90. ETHIC OF DESTRUCTION

The reader, I am sure, will appreciate my sharing with him the following pathetic and beautiful letter from Mr. Andrews:

I know that your burning of foreign cloth is with the idea of helping the poor, but I feel that there you have gone wrong. If you succeed in Boycotting all, or a greater part, of foreign cloth, it seems to me self evident that the price of mill-made cloth will rise and it will hit the poor. But there is besides a subtle appeal to racial feeling in that word "foreign" which day by

day seeds to me to need checking and not fomenting. The picture of you lighting that great pile, including beautiful fabrics, shocked me intensely. We seem to be losing sight of the great beautiful world to which we belong and concentrating selfishly on India, and this must (I fear) lead back to the old bad selfish nationalism. If so we get into the vicious circle from which Europe is now trying so desperately to escape. But I cannot argue it out. I can only say again, that it shocked me and seemed to me a form almost of violence; and yet I know how violence is abhorrent to you. I do not at all like this question of foreign cloth being made into a religion.

I was supremely happy when you were dealing great giant evils, at the great fundamental moral evils, drunkenness, drug-taking, untouchability, race arrogance, etc., and when you were, with such wonderful and beautiful tenderness, dealing with the hideous vice of prostitution. But lighting bonfires of foreign cloth and telling people it is a religious sin to wear it, destroying in the fire the noble handiwork of one's fellowmen and women, one's brothers and sisters abroad, saying it would be "defiling" to wear it I cannot tell you how different all this appears to me. Do you know I almost fear now to wear the khaddar that you have given me, lest I should appear to be judging other people as a *Pharisee* would, saying, "I am holier than thou!" I never felt like this before.

You know how, when anything that you do hurts me, I must cry out to you and this has hurt me.

I wrote *The Modern Review* articles which I have enclosed with such eager joy, because I felt certain that I had found your own life's meaning. But now my mind cries out to you that you are doing something violent, distorted, unnatural. . . . You know that any love is stronger than ever, just as your love for your brother was when you felt he was doing something wrong. Do tell me what you mean. What you said in *Young India* about burning¹ did not convince me a bit

It is so like him. Whenever he feels hurt over anything I have done (and this is by no means the first such occasion), he deluges me with letters without waiting for an answer. For it is love speaking to love, not arguing. It is the outpouring of an anguished heart. And so it has been over the burning of foreign clothes.

What Mr. Andrews has put in loving language, correspondents already out of tune with me have written in coarse, angry and even vulgar words. Mr. Andrews' being words of love and sorrow have

¹ *Vide* "Notes", 28-7-1921.

gone deep down in me and command a full answer, whereas the angry ones I was obliged to lay aside save for a passing reference. Mr. Andrews' being non-violent, charged with love, have told. The others being violent, charged with malice, took no effect and would have evoked angry retorts, if I was capable of or disposed to such retorts. Mr. Andrews' letter is a type of non-violence we need in order to win swaraj quickly.

This is however by the way. I remain just as convinced as ever of the necessity of burning. There is no emphasis in the process on race feeling. I would have done precisely the same thing in the sacred and select family or friendly circles. In all I do or advise, the infallible test I apply is, whether the particular action will hold good in regard to the dearest and the nearest. The teaching of the faith I hold dear is unmistakable and unequivocal in the matter. I must be the same to friend and foe. And it is this conviction which makes me so sure of so many of my acts which often puzzle friends.

I remember having thrown into the sea a pair of beautiful field-glasses, because they were a constant bone of contention between a dear friend¹ and myself. He felt the hesitation at first but he saw the right of the destruction of a beautiful and costly thing, a present withal from a friend. Experience shows that the richest gifts must be destroyed without compensation and hesitation if they hinder one's moral progress. Will it not be held a sacred duty to consign to the flames most precious heirlooms, if they are plague-infected? I can remember having broken to bits, when a young man, the loved bangles of my own dear wife, because they were matter of difference between us. And if I remember right, they were a gift from her mother. I did it, not out of hate but out of love—ignorant, I now see in my ripe age. The destruction helped us and brought us nearer.

If the emphasis were on all foreign things, it would be racial, parochial and wicked. The emphasis is on all foreign cloth. The restrictions makes all the difference in the world. I do not want to shut out English lever watches or the beautiful Japanese lacquer work. But I must destroy all the choicest wines of Europe, even though they might have been prepared and preserved with all the most exquisite care and attention. Satan's snares are most subtly laid and they are the most tempting, when the dividing line between right and wrong is so

¹ Kallenbach, a German associate of Gandhiji; *vide An Autobiography*, Part IV, Ch. XXX.

thin as to be imperceptible. But the line is there all the same, rigid and inflexible. Any crossing of it may mean certain death.

India is racial today. It is with the utmost effort, that I find it possible to keep under check the evil passions of the people. The general body of the people are filled with ill will, because they are weak and hopelessly ignorant of the way to shed their weakness. I am transferring the ill will from men to things.

Love of foreign Cloth has brought foreign domination, pauperism and what is worst, shame to many a home. The reader may not know, that not long ago hundreds of "untouchable" weavers of Kathiawar having found their calling gone, became sweepers for the Bombay municipality. And the life of these men has become so difficult that many lose their children and become physical and moral wrecks; some are helpless witnesses of the shame of their daughters and even their wives. The reader may not know that many women of this class in Gujarat for want of domestic occupation have taken to work on public roads, where, under pressure of one sort or another, they are obliged to sell their honour. The reader may not know that the proud weavers of the Punjab, for want of occupation, not many years ago took to the sword, and were instrumental in killing the proud and innocent Arabs at the bidding of their officers, and not for the sake of their country but for the sake of their livelihood. It is difficult to make a successful appeal to these deluded hirelings and wean them from their murderous profession. What was once an honourable and artistic calling is now held by them to be disreputable. The weavers of Dacca, when they wove the world-famous *subaam*, could not have been considered disreputable.

Is it now any wonder, if I consider it a sin to touch foreign cloth? Will it not be a sin for a man with a very delicate digestive apparatus to eat rich foods? Must he not destroy them or give them away? I know what I would do with rich foods, if I had a son lying in bed who must not eat them but would still gladly have them. In order to wean him from the hankering, I would, though able to digest them myself, refrain from eating them and destroy them in his presence, so that the sin of eating may be borne home to him.

If destruction of foreign cloth be a sound proposition from the highest moral standpoint, the possibility of a rise in the price of swadeshi cloth need not frighten us. Destruction is the quickest method of stimulating production. By one supreme effort and swift

destruction, India has to be awakened from her torpor and enforced idleness. Here is what Mr. Allen, the author of the *Assam Gazetteer*, wrote in 1905 of Kamrup:

Of recent years the use of imported clothing has been coming into favour, —an innovation which has little to recommend it, as the time formerly spent at the loom is not as a rule assigned to any other useful occupation.

The Assamese, to whom I have spoken, realize the truth of these words to their cost. Foreign cloth to India is like foreign matter to the body. The destruction of the former is as necessary for the health of India as of the latter for the health of the body. Once grant the immediate necessity of swadeshi, and there is no half-way house to destruction.

Nor need we be afraid, by evolving the fullest swadeshi spirit, of developing a spirit of narrowness and exclusiveness. We must protect our own bodies from disruption through indulgence, before we would protect the sanctity of others. India is today nothing but a dead mass movable at the will of another. Let her become alive by self-purification, i.e., self-restraint and self-denial, and she will be a boon to herself and mankind. Let her be carelessly self-indulgent, aggressive, grasping; and if she rises, she will do so like Kumbhakarna¹ only to destroy and be a curse to herself and mankind.

And for a firm believer in swadeshi, there need be no pharisaical self-satisfaction in wearing khadi. A Pharisee is a patron of virtue. The wearer of khadi from a swadeshi standpoint is like a man making use of his lungs. A natural and obligatory act has got to be performed, whether others do it out of impure motives or refrain altogether, as they do not believe in its necessity or utility.

Young India, 1-9-1921

¹ Younger brother of Ravana in the *Ramayana*

91. LETTER TO REHANA TYABJI

UNREVISED

CHITTAGONG,
September 1 [1921]

MY DEAR REHANA¹,

I have your sweet letter. Both you and mother are right but I have not a shadow of a doubt that you are more right. Mother has given her worldly wisdom. You have given the dictates of your instinct unspoilt by the bitter experience of the world. Discarded foreign garments cannot be given to the middle class. That will be no swadeshi. If people shunt me by conveniently making me a saint I cannot help. I do not ask the public to do all the things that may qualify me as a saint. I am simply asking them to develop the soldier spirit which is so indispensable for swaraj. If to attain swaraj is to become saints then I want us all to become saints and you may in your own winsome manner bear down the opposition of mother. We must subordinate the *Bania* spirit of calculation and bargain and like soldiers of God do pure sacrifice. The delicate colours and fineness, we had before. And you must work for all that your vanity or taste may need. Today there is only one taste—and that for swaraj and no other. If my argument convinces you I look to you to convince mother and let me know that you have cleared your wardrobe of all rubbish. I reach Calcutta on Sunday and probably remain there till 12th. My address there, would be 4, Pollock Street.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 9634

92. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

CHITTAGONG,
September 1 [1921]

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

I have your long letter written in pencil. I found it difficult to read. Other letters in pencil sometime come to me and I find them also difficult to read. From this I conclude that my pencil letters too must cause a lot of difficulty to the addressees. I have always felt that

¹ Daughter of Abbas Tyabji

it was a crime to write a letter in pencil. However in my difficult predicament, I took that liberty. But I cannot tolerate that crime when somebody else commits it. I know you have committed no crime, for you wanted to keep a copy. It often happens that the first carbon copy is clearer.

I have changed my mind.¹ It would be better for you first to meet me in Calcutta and then send for Durga. If you have decided to stay on there, send a wire to Devdas². But I feel it would be better to do whatever is to be done after we meet and discuss things and am therefore sending you a wire³ with an altogether different message.

I read about the Malabar incident later. I have already written and despatched an article about it for *Young India*.⁴ It would have been better if I had sent you a copy. As to your articles, etc., I shall be able to see them only after I reach Calcutta.

I cannot imagine that either Malaviyaji⁵ or the Poet is envious of me. Both lack fearlessness and are proud of their opinions and ideas. You can tolerate pride if it is not accompanied by fear. They cannot look at non-co-operation from our point of view, cannot overlook the shortcomings of non-co-operators, as we do and so may oppose us. Besides, they are confused by the novelty and simplicity of my ideas. To believe anything more than this about them seems to me positively sinful. Bipin Babu⁶ and Vijayaraghavachariar⁷ may think all sorts of things about me. Ramakant I consider but a child. He appears to have opposed me to show that he is a man of independent views. We should leave him alone and go on offering our comments as journalists without acrimony. Do point out the Poet's and Malaviyaji's ideas on . . .⁸ whenever there is an occasion for doing so. This cannot be done freely in *Young India*, but it can be easily and tactfully done in the *Independent*.

¹ Gandhiji wrote two sentences and crossed them out, and hence this.

² 1900-57; youngest son of Gandhiji

³ This is not available.

⁴ Vide "The Two Incompatibles", 8-9-1921.

⁵ 1861-1946; founder of the Benares Hindu University; President, Indian National Congress, 1909 and 1918

⁶ Bipin Chandra Pal (1858-1932); educationist, journalist, orator and political leader of Bengal

⁷ 1852-1943; President, Indian National Congress, 1920

⁸ A word is illegible here in the source.

It will be easy enough to have garlands for Indu made of hand-spun yarn.

I have no objection to your taking coffee. It is more essential, to my mind, that you keep fit. I see, and it is my considered view as well, that ordinarily one does not need it. I did not notice any benefit from it when I used to take it. My not taking it now certainly means so much less burden [on the stomach] and less risk of harm.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11418

93. MOPLAH OUTBREAK

Though I am here far away in the north-east at present, I have received some reports of the sudden outbreak of violence in Malabar. I am writing this article on the train, on Friday¹, the *Janmashtami*² day. The reader will have the article in his hands after nine days. Meanwhile, further reports will have appeared. But we can discuss some principles on the basis of the reports already received, regardless of whether the facts turn out to be more serious or less.

The Moplahs are Muslims. They have Arab blood in their veins. It is said that their forefathers came from Arabia many years ago and settled in Malabar. They are of a fiery temperament, and are said to be easily excitable. They are enraged and resort to violence in a matter of seconds. They have been responsible for many murders. Many years ago a special Act was also passed to subdue them. There are said to be a million of them. The community, though illiterate, is courageous. They have simply no fear of death. They always set out for fighting with a pledge not to return defeated. That is why it is generally said that the Moplahs think nothing of assaulting or killing anyone. Mr. Yakub Hussain was stopped and later imprisoned because it was feared that they would break out into violence. It is not clear as yet what led to their present outburst. They are reported to have taken the lives of six officers, four Indian and two British. It is believed that some others also may have been killed. Five hundred Moplahs are

¹ August 26

² Birthday of Lord Krishna

believed to have been killed. It is also reported that they have resorted to arson and looting. Calicut and some areas to its north are under martial law at present.

Thus, for the time being progress has been arrested in Malabar and the Government has had its way. It is well versed in the art of suppressing such revolts. Many innocent men must have been, and more will be, killed. Who will come forward to blame the Government? And even if anyone does, what is the chance of the Government paying attention to him?

That is a Government which prevents or stops violence. Malabar has demonstrated that we non-co-operators have not yet gained full control. A Government to be worthy of its name should be able to get the people under control. There is only one way in which we can gain such control, and that is through non-violence.

Even if we wish to attain our goal through violence and bloodshed, we should have the strength to carry out our intention. It is needless to consider what we should do in order to acquire such strength, because victory through such means is beyond our wits and capacity to plan.

It is evident, however, that we have departed from the path of peace. We cannot follow both methods at the same time, of peace on one side and violence on the other. If we do, we shall gain success through neither.

It is clear that we have not been able to make our influence felt by the Moplahs. A change of heart has not been brought about in them to such an extent that they will never resort to violence. Their violence is likely to alarm us, it impedes our progress.

Those at any rate who believe that we can win only through non-violence should realize that we shall have to redouble our efforts to preserve peace. We should always remember that we must not, even inwardly, approve of violence.

Other provinces should devote themselves earnestly to their duty. It ought not to be difficult to win swaraj before the end of this year even if only one province makes an all-out effort. I think swaraj during this year is quite within the bounds of possibility if one province at least carries out the non-co-operation programme fully, though other provinces may be slack. But I cannot assert with confidence that we shall win swaraj through the peaceful efforts of one province despite violence in one or more of the other provinces. I

see numerous obstacles, but our duty is plain to me. We should exercise stricter self-restraint, become purer, be more alert and make heavier sacrifices. The two forces pull in opposite directions, so that our cart can go forward only when our non-violence is the stronger of the two. If, out of the four bullocks attached to a cart, one either dies or breaks himself loose, the other three have to carry his burden. If, however, one of the four does not die or break loose, but opposes the others or pulls in the wrong direction, the others have not only to carry his burden but also to acquire the strength to prevent him from doing mischief. Thus, the sincere non-co-operator has now a heavier burden to carry.

I see all the time that the most serious obstacles in our path come not from the Government but from ourselves. The former's perversity does not obstruct us as much as our own weakness, our own perversity and our own lack of understanding. We shall be able to raise ourselves if we see through the Government's perversity; our own perversity and our weakness will hold us back. It is rightly said that the *atman*¹ is our only enemy as also our only friend. The complete victory of non-violent non-co-operation will be possible only if we conquer this enemy inside us.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-9-1921

94. PREPARATION FOR CONGRESS

The Congress session will again be held, after many years, in Ahmedabad. This year's session will be quite different from all others. A new constitution, new hopes and a new era! For, if the Congress acts upon the resolution it has passed regarding itself, that is, if the people redeem their own pledge, we shall be assembling to celebrate the coming of swaraj. But can we expect such a happy occasion within four months from now? Can old chains be broken in a second?

The doubt itself furnishes the reply. It certainly takes time for a sick person to recover, but should it be only an illusion of illness which the person is suffering from, it will vanish in a moment if it vanishes at all. No matter when it vanishes, it will do so in a moment.

¹ Self; the reference is to the *Bhagvad Gita*, VI.5.

When the time comes for breaking the chains of one who has worn them for ten years, would the act of breaking take any time? It is only a question of our fear leaving us. When the bandage [over a person's eyes] is removed, what else can happen than that he will that very moment be able to see. We would need to think further if the conditions for breaking the chains were of a difficult nature; but there are only three essential conditions: (1) Hindu-Muslim unity, (2) remaining peaceful and (3) swadeshi.

All that is required for the fulfilment of the first two is a change of heart. This requires no big sum of money, or much education or the sword, that is, brute force. But it is not my purpose in this article to argue that we are bound to get swaraj during this year or show how to win it. Its purpose is to examine, from a practical point of view, what Ahmedabad and Gujarat should do to ensure the success of the forthcoming Congress.

Gujarat's duty will be to look after the comforts of the guests. We shall have fulfilled our first and special duty if we extend fitting hospitality to them.

We shall have to attend to arrangements for the guests' stay and their meals, and look to their requirements by way of facilities for bathing, sanitary arrangements and lighting.

This time, we shall provide facilities for one style of living only, and that will be the Indian style. It seems to me that we simply cannot accommodate, on the campus, those guests who wish to live in the English style. We should notify at this very stage that the stage that the Congress is unable to undertake the responsibility of providing accommodation for those who live in perfect English style. It should suffice if we provide them with the names and addresses of hotels.

But we should provide the very best facilities in Indian style. Today, the distinction is between an Indian style of accommodation which is dirty and the English style of accommodation which is clean. On the contrary, the rule should be, the greater the simplicity the greater the cleanliness and the greater the outer pomp the greater the amount of the filth within. But in modern times we associate simplicity with lack of cleanliness. We shall have to give up this attitude.

The arrangements for lavatories are generally very unsatisfactory. We shall have to have a large number of them and the necessary arrangements to keep them clean will have to be made. If we depend for this on the *Bhangis* alone we shall not be able to

maintain the degree of cleanliness we should like to. If we have freed ourselves from the sin of untouchability, we should have no objection to cleaning lavatories. Pits will have to be dug to serve as lavatories and, if we keep large quantities of dry earth ready, cleaning them up would be no problem. My suggestion is that we should issue instructions regarding this in Hindi, Urdu, Gujarati and in as many other languages as possible and these could then be distributed among the delegates.

Bathing arrangements should be planned as carefully as the lavatories. People should be supplied hot or cold water as desired. There should be separate volunteers for this section.

There should be separate arrangements for urinals.

I have often observed that arrangements for drinking water are not satisfactory. We should supply it by means of temporary taps or some other less expensive methods, so that water would be easily available to all. Again, as there should be arrangements to supply water, so there should also be some arrangements for the disposal of the water that may be spilt. In Nagpur we saw pools of water all over the place.

We shall have to think out most careful arrangements for meals as well. The general impression is that the arrangements in Nagpur were relatively good. We shall ourselves have a lot of trouble if we provide separate kitchens for Bengal, Punjab, Madras and each of the other camps. Perhaps the best course would be right now to ascertain from the secretary of each committee their requirements. We know the maximum number of the delegates that may come from each place, so there should be no difficulty in making the required arrangements.

I should like to make a suggestion right at this stage. All the delegates from Gujarat should become volunteers. We shall, of course, require other volunteers; but our hospitality will shine out if the delegates from Gujarat enrol themselves as volunteers and look into the arrangements, while demanding no service for themselves. We should all convert ourselves into full-fledged volunteers if we do not wish to see any mismanagement.

We should hope that in all one lakh people will attend and hold our promises which will attract such a numbers.

This time we have only discussed things from the point of view of what will be convenient to us. More in another issue.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-9-1921

95. MY NOTES

HOW TO GUARD AGAINST BEING CHEATED

Letters are coming in from everywhere telling me that greedy persons have been selling foreign or mill-made cloth by passing it off as khadi and they also put up the price of such cloth. This does not surprise me. When the entire system of government is based on fraud, what else can we expect from people? Go where you will, to law-courts, shops or hospitals, even to legislatures, everywhere you will see cheating. Non-co-operation is intended to save us from this. Our non-co-operation is directed not against individuals but against their misdeeds. There is, however, always the danger, in trying to save ourselves from one kind of sin, of being caught in another. And so long as we like to have cloth like that made in the mills and so long as our cloth is not woven before our eyes, so long the danger of being cheated will remain. The easiest safeguard against this is that every village should produce its own khadi and that people in the cities should buy only such khadi as does not look like mill-made cloth, and that too preferably stamped with a Congress mark. Even if all these precautions are taken, there is no guarantee that there would be no danger of fraud. We have no choice but to put up with this as inevitable. It is worth noting that the complaints of fraud come only from cities. I hope that before long people will stop ordering khadi from Bombay and that, on the contrary, the citizens of Bombay will order their requirements from neighbouring places. There will be less possibility of fraud in the khadi coming from villages.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4 -9-1921

96. EXPERIENCES IN ASSAM—I

THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE

I had merely heard the name of Assam. Ever since I read, in England, the story of the invasion of Manipur, I had been under the misapprehension that the people of Assam were backward and uncivilised. This is how I came to describe them in *Hind Swaraj* as

being uncivilized. This had hurt the people of Assam. The remark had been fully exploited by the officers. Could the Assamese feel any affection for the ignorant man who had once supposed them to be uncivilized? But the people today have learnt to look into a person's heart, how is it possible that they should be angry with a man for his genuine ignorance ? Even so, I took the very first opportunity in a public meeting to ask forgiveness for my mistaken description of them. People laughed heartily when I described my error. They had not expected me to apologize.

Who would call the people of Assam uncivilised? Anyone who does so must himself be an uncivilised person like myself. Who would regard as uncivilised a people whose women weave the most beautiful cloth and wear only what they themselves have woven?

As Gujarat is in the west of India and to the south of the Vindhya, Assam is in the extreme east and north of the country. It is the north-east corner of India. From there one can, walking along the banks of the Brahmaputra, go to Tibet and following a foot-tract southwards through the mountains reach Burma. Wherever you turn your eyes in Assam, it is all green. One of the hills in Assam, Cherapunji, has the heaviest rainfall in India, an average of 368 inches a year. Actually in 1861 the rainfall amounted to 805 inches, and of this 366 inches of rain fell in the month of July alone! Nowhere is the rainfall less than 60 inches. And so with the rainfall on the one hand and the river Brahmaputra on the other, what can one expect but greenery all round in rich profusion? Moreover, it is all hills and hills on either side of the river, so that a scene of the highest beauty meets the eye in whichever direction it turns.

The house in which we are put up is just by the riverside. The river, in front, flows peacefully. I deliberately use the word "peacefully". As the water is deep, I see no turbulence in it. So big is the Brahmaputra that large ships can sail on it throughout the year. If only we could acquire such serenity and enjoy such peace, within what a short time we could win swaraj! We do not want the roar of shallow waters, but want rather the peace that is in the stillness of deep waters and the strength which it reveals.

A large variety of plants and many kinds of fruit grow here. Tea, of course, is there. But can anyone say that we have gained any benefit from it? We all know the harm it has done. Fruits such as bananas, pine-apples, oranges and custard apples grow in plenty here.

Among cereals paddy is the chief crop.

The people are trustful and simple. Both the Hindus and the Muslims speak Assamese. Bengali and Assamese are said to be sister languages. The script is the Bengali one. As I tour the country I see that, if all the Indian languages were written in the Devanagari script this would greatly strengthen the idea of our being one nation. There should be only two scripts, the Urdu and the Devanagari. There can be no doubt that there would be little difficulty in understanding Assamese, Bengali, Punjabi, Sindhi and other languages if they were written in the Devanagari script. If this could be done, students of all these languages would be saved much time and would find the languages very easy to learn.

But this was by the way. The people of Assam can be said to be relatively happy. Their land does not require much cultivation. The flood waters of the rivers fertilize it, so that the people are able to earn their livelihood with little labour. Few “reforms” have been introduced in Assam as it came under British rule much later and consequently the people have saved their wealth and preserved their prosperity. They never work as labourers. Since, however, the tea gardens cannot be maintained without labourers, the required number are brought from the United Provinces. Hence it is that we hear many stories of atrocities on them and that an incident like the one at Chandpur could take place.

Fifty years ago, the conditions were such that Assam produced all the needs of its people. The reader will be pleased to know that even today every woman in Assam knows weaving. She weaves all the cloth she needs for herself. All women in families of consequence as in ordinary families are weavers. They do not weave for a living, but do so in their spare time in the home. A girl who cannot weave will never get a partner. The owner of the house where I am staying is a big zamindar and has money enough and to spare, but his seventy-year-old mother, his sisters and his wife, all weave. His daughter of ten or eleven also weaves.

Assam produces a good quantity of silk, and so the women weave both silk and cotton yarn. They can also work exquisite designs on the cloth. Fifty years ago, every woman used to spin as well as weave. But with British rule came foreign yarn and this spelt ruin, total and complete. Attracted by that yarn, the women gave up spinning. Fortunately, because of the custom that one who does not weave

cannot marry, they kept up their weaving. Spinning is easy enough for women who are used to such work, and so there has been an awakening among them and they have again started spinning. At the time when foreign yarn was introduced in Assam, a British critic had observed that these women had not gained anything from it since they had not taken up any other work in place of spinning.

Even today, forty thousand acres of land in Assam are under cotton cultivation. This cotton must be of a very high quality, because the slivers of cotton which were shown to me reminded me of what we see in Andhra. They were very clean, soft and free from dust particles. I have been given a sample of cloth, so fine that it can almost rival Andhra cloth.

The Assamese-speaking population of Assam numbers thirty-seven lakhs. Of this number, no less than ten lakhs are women. If they spin and weave for India, Assam could not only meet its own cloth requirements but could also provide India with a large quantity of khadi.

It seems that the Congress workers in Assam are efficient. My host belongs to the Senapati family of this province. He is a barrister of long standing. He is a big zemindar and was a member of the Legislative Assembly. He has much public work to his credit. Today he is a staunch non-co-operator. Shri Bardoloi is the Secretary. He too is a barrister of long standing and a man with property. He has adopted full non-co-operation. There are seventy-eight Assamese lawyers, of whom fifteen have given up practice and are engaged in non-co-operation work. About 500 volunteers are working under them. Many of them are students who have left their colleges.

The people of Assam are addicted to opium and throw away lakhs of rupees on it. These workers inform me that the opium-habit is greatly on the decline after the starting of the non-co-operation movement. It is said that the revenue from it has decreased by twenty-five per cent. There were also large numbers who smoked foreign cigarettes but you will hardly find any doing so now. Those who still smoke use the country-made *bidi*. But even this is being left off. I am informed that, thanks to non-co-operation, people are introducing reforms on their own.

WOMEN'S MEETING

Three separate women's meetings were held, one for Marwari¹ sisters, one for Assamese and the third for Bengalis. Of these, the Assamese and the Bengali women came to the meetings clad in their simplest saris instead of in their very expensive foreign ones. Many felt ashamed because they did not have khadi saris. The Marwari sisters were dressed entirely in foreign clothes. But Shri Jamnalalji² informs me that even they have now asked for khadi saris. Maulana Mahomed Ali's wife³ was present at this meeting, and she pleased the people by her khadi dress. She is a good speaker and, wearing a *burka*⁴, even made a speech.

BONFIRE OF FOREIGN CLOTH

I am writing this note in Gauhati. It is the principal city of Assam. The journey from Calcutta takes nineteen hours. A huge public meeting was held here, and at this meeting there was a bonfire of a large heap of foreign cloth. I saw in the heap a great number of fine dhotis, fine saris and caps and a good quantity of lace. The sacred task of lighting the bonfire was, of course, left to me. The sight after the bonfire was lighted seemed grand to me. Hundreds of fine shirts and other garments of foreign cloth flew up in the air and fell back into the fire. There were very few caps among these as they are not much in use on this sides. Here, too, khadi has come into use, so that those who wear caps use mostly caps made of khadi.

MARWARIS

Marwaris are found in large numbers in Assam. All external trade is in their hands. As I have already said, the people of Assam, because of the fact that their lands yield good crops, rarely go in for trade or seek jobs, and the result is that trade is controlled by Marwaris and Government posts are monopolised by Bengalis. Many of these Marwaris trade in foreign yarn and foreign cloth. The majority of them—about sixty-five business

¹ Inhabitant of Marwar in Rajasthan

² Jamnalal Bajaj (1889-1942); treasurer, Indian National Congress for many years; Gandhiji regarded him as his fifth son.

³ Begum Sahiba; vide "Speech at Madras", 15-9-1921 and "Notes, 29-9-1921 under the sub-title 'A Brave Woman'.

⁴ A veil

men—pledged themselves not to import foreign yarn or cloth from now on.

ASSAM MUSLIMS

There is a large population of Muslims in Assam but they take little part in public affairs. They do not even have a proper idea of the Khilafat. But now one finds that there has been an awakening amongst them, too. One may say that they have been awakened by the Hindu leaders. As a result, one finds no hostility between Hindus and Muslims here. The presence of Maulana Mahomed Ali and Maulana Azad Sobhani has led to a greater awakening and an infusion of courage among the Muslims.

ENJOYING ONESELF AT OTHER PEOPLE'S EXPENSE

I have said above that Gauhati is the principal city of Assam. But it is not its capital. Shillong is the capital. It can be reached by car from Gauhati in about five hours. It is 4,000 feet above sea-level. I have not been able to go there, but it is said that the place is a European centre. If one could live all the year round in Simla, it would have been the permanent capital and not one for the summer alone. If it were possible to live in Darjeeling throughout the year, it would have been the permanent capital of Bengal. Does not the Bombay Presidency have three capitals? For some time it is Bombay, for a while Ganeshkhind and in the summer it is Mahabaleshwar. But because the climate of Shillong is such that Europeans can live there throughout the year, it has been made the [permanent] capital of Assam. Can the cry of the labourers toiling in the fields reach up to such a height? Might is right in all matters. The planter can live in Shillong or run up there whenever he needs to. Dare any of his labourers go there? Even the poor man's appeal would get crumpled and torn by the time it reaches Shillong.

BRAMAPUTRA AND THE GOVERNMENT—WHAT A CONTRAST!

The Brahmaputra is such a large river that from a woman it is transformed into a man—it is a *nada*¹—but there is no limit to its humility. Though he dwells on the top of the Himalayas, he descends to the plains to bring happiness and carries on his bosom thousands of men and their goods from one place to another. For this reason he is worshipped by the whole of Assam and even I, who come from the

¹ The masculine form of nadi meaning “river”

extreme west, involuntarily bow my head. Our Government, after disembarking at Apollo Bunder¹, uses the services of innumerable labourers and steam and electricity to climb up, and lodges itself in Simla or Shillong and snarls at people from there. What wonder if people in their fear cry out, "Save us save us"! The Brahmaputra gives solace. The Government which has its headquarters in Shillong scorches the people from that height and, for this reason, the Assamese have left off saluting it, co-operating with it. What can the people do but run away if the Brahmaputra in his fury should inundate fields and drown villages? And what can they do but flee when scorched by the blazing fire of the Government? The Assamese have realized that the golden way for them is non-co-operation.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-9-1921

97. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON²

ON TOUR,
September 4, 1921

MY DEAR ESTHER,

I found your letter awaiting me on my return to Calcutta from the East Bengal tour.

I wish you and yours a happy life of service.

I was longing for your letter and to hear how you were doing.

I cannot understand your not getting *Young India*. I am inquiring.

When you return to India, you will find the Ashram devoting its best time to carding, spinning and weaving. I wish you would study Danish hand-spinning, hand-weaving, if there be any such in Denmark.

God is great. Not by the effort we are making, but by His grace it is possible to gain swaraj this year. And then you return without hindrance.³ There will be just as much steadfastness needed to

¹ In Bombay

² This was written after hearing the news of the addressee's marriage with E. K. Menon in Denmark.

³ The British Government, for a time, refused her permission to return to India.

work out swaraj as is needed for attaining it. Let Anne Marie¹ work here for its attainment and you will work there to make it a success.

With love to you both,

Yours,

BAPU

My Dear child, pp. 73-4

98. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

148, RUSSA ROAD,

CALCUTTA,

Silence Day [September 5, 1921]²

BHAISHRI VALLABHBHAI,

I have your letter. About visitors [to the Congress] I will write a notes³ in *Young India*.

I am in fact pining to return there, but work will not allow me to leave the place. Rajagopalachari⁴ wires from Madras to say that I must not leave Calcutta before I get another telegram from him. In any case, the work before me is not likely to be finished *before the 12th*.

The swadeshi movement in Bengal has slackened. Quite a number of spinning-wheels are no doubt being plied, but the yarn is not properly accounted for; nor is weaving attended to as it ought to be.

Civil disobedience had better be postponed at least during this month. Let there be as much picketing as possible, in terms of the Delhi Resolution. It seems better that we start civil disobedience only when we are ready to carry it to the bitter end. If I can discuss the matter with co-workers, I shall be in a better position to judge. It is

¹ Anne Marie Petersen, who along with Esther, worked in South India; was an inmate of Sabarmati Ashram for some time.

² This letter was written by Gandhiji on a silence day during his stay at Calcutta. According to the itinerary given in "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 22-8-1921, Gandhiji was to reach Calcutta on September 4, 1921, and stay there till September 12.

³ Vide "Notes", 22-9-1921, under the sub-title 'The Congress Not a Show'.

⁴ Chakravarti Rajagopalachari (b. 1879); statesman, first Indian Governor-General

enough if, for the present, we concentrate on swadeshi, including both the boycott of foreign cloth and the production of khadi.

From your letter, I take it that there are at present no bickering going on there in the Vidyapith.

Please take care of your health. There is plenty of work to be disposed of before December. The face of the country is bound to be transformed. Whether it will become a lion's or a jackal's is in the hands of God, or perhaps in our own.

The Viceroy's speech has disillusioned me still more. If the Prince is not coming for political reasons, why is he coming at all and at whose expense? But, for the present, we simply need not worry about this.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

BHAISHRI VALLABHBHAI PATEL, BARRISTER
BHADRA
AHMEDABAD

[From Gujarati]

Bapuaa Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine

99. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

CALCUTTA,

Silence Day [September 5, 1921]¹

CHI. MANI

I received your letter just now. My appeal is for burning garments only. Some people have foreign carpets in their houses and foreign coverings on their couches, but most of them would not like to part with them. I have, therefore, not asked these to be discarded. It is enough if they do not make any fresh purchases of such articles. We should ask the people to part with their clothes only. I will write in *Navajivan* on the subject.

It is good you are visiting the [Jain] *apasras*² during *Pachusana*³. Do any women in the congregation hand over their foreign clothes ?

¹ *Vide* the preceding item.

² A place of residence for Jain sadhus

³ Religious festival of the Jains celebrating the birth of Mahavira

I shall have to stay on in Calcutta till the 12th at any rate. I shall consider what to do after that. It seems certain that malpractice have now entered the manufacture of Bezwada saris. The best thing is to leave those saris alone. You did well in writing to Kumudbehn. She will feel comforted by your letters.

Mahadev will come here tomorrow to see me.

Here too there are two enthusiastic girls of your age, who wear khadi exclusively and help Deshbandhu Das's¹ sister in her Nari Mandir² work.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4 : Manibehn Patelne

100. SPEECH AT PUNJAB SABHA MEETING, CALCUTTA

September 7, 1921

A meeting convened under the auspices of the Punjab Sabha was held on Wednesday afternoon at the Khalsa Dewan Association, 62, Sambhunath Pandit Street, Bhowanipur. Lala Meghraj Jai presided. There was a large gathering composed mostly of Sikhs. There was also a sprinkling of Marwaris. Several Sikh ladies were also present. . . .

Mr. Gandhi in the course of his address said at the outset that last time when he came to Calcutta he appealed to the people for contributions to the Tilak Swaraj Fund and he was pleased to get a ready response for the good of the whole of India. Mr. Gandhi wanted the foreign clothes to be either burnt or sent to Smyrna. He urged the complete boycott of foreign goods and he advised the gathering to use hand-spun cloth—cloth that was produced on charkhas. He was prepared to give swaraj to the people of the whole of India and to undo the wrongs done to the Khilafat and to the Punjab if all of them tried their level best to clothe themselves with swadeshi clothes. That was the resolution passed by both the Congress and the Khilafat Committee. The All-India Congress Committee also passed a resolution that there should be a complete boycott, of foreign goods before the 30th of September and that the people should be clothed in their own country-made clothes. Mr. Gandhi exhorted them to

¹ C. R. Das (1870-1925); lawyer, orator and author; President, Gaya Congress, 1921; founder, Swarajya Party, 1923

² Women's, institute

see that the above resolution was carried into effect if they really meant to do good to the country. Continuing, Mr. Gandhi said that he knew that the Sikhs were a very powerful community. If they were really sincere and earnest in their work and took to the charkha he had no doubt that they would be able not only to clothe their own community but the people of the whole of India. He wanted them to follow the principle of non-violent non-co-operation in its entirety and should on no account adopt any measures that would lead to violence. He very much regretted the Nankana Saheb tragedy¹ and said that this event was more outrageous than that of the Punjab. It was natural that they (Sikhs) took this event in that light and he had heard and had seen reports of their meetings but Mr. Gandhi asked them to forget all those events. It was true that the sin committed by the cities had no atonement and that it was the general belief that the only atonement for those wrongs was that they should be severely punished. Mr. Gandhi did not like to punish them and in his opinion it was God alone who would punish them. In Conclusion Mr. Gandhi advised the Sikhs to see that the great task in which they were engaged was accomplished peacefully.

Maulana Azad Sobhani and Lala Lajpat Rai² also spoke on the subject of non-co-operation and boycott. . . .

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 8-9-1921

101. SPEECH TO MARWARI MERCHANTS CALCUTTA

September 7, 1921

Mr. Gandhi had a conference with the piece-goods merchants in the night at 124, Canning Street, which lasted till midnight. Mr. Gandhi urged them not to sell foreign cloth and not to enter into a fresh contract. The merchants, however, stated that they had already agreed to act according to the resolution passed by the Marwari Chamber of Commerce which expressly stated that they were not going to purchase foreign cloth till 31st December, 1921. Mr. Gandhi wanted from them an undertaking that they would not purchase any more foreign cloth without any specified time limit. Mahatma Gandhi, however, gave them further time to consider the matter and promised to address them again before the 13th instant when he was expected to leave Calcutta.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 9-9-1921

¹ Vide "Speech at Nankana Saheb", 3-3-1921 and "Message to Lahore Sikhs on Nankana Tragedy", 4-3-1921.

² 1865-1928; social reformer, writer and political leader; deported in 1907; founder, Servants of the People Society; President, Indian National Congress, 1920

102. NOTES

THE ALI BROTHERS

I hope that the rumour about the impending prosecution of the Brothers is untrue. If the Government really desire that the issue between them and the people should be decided on merits and by the ripening of public opinion, they will leave the Brothers alone. I shall certainly hope, that the people will remain calm, dignified and firm, in spite of their prosecution and incarceration. But their incarceration will make the task of preservation of peace more difficult than it already is. No two men have so successfully restrained the Mussulmans as these two patriots have. They have, in season and out of season, in private and in public, preached and practised non-violence. And even in respect of the speeches, some parts of which seemed to bear a contrary interpretation, I know that they never meant violence. The prosecution of the Brothers would, therefore, mean an intention to strangle the ever-growing Khilafat agitation in India, and would amount to a direct challenge to the Indian Mussulmans, and indeed, to the whole of India. For the Khilafat has become an Indian question. It is no longer merely a Mussulman grievance.

But I write this more to warn the people than the Government. If the people have understood the message of the brave Brothers, it is that they must stand the gravest provocation for the sake of their religion and country, that they must be prepared to suffer for either to the utmost, that the interests of Hindus and Mussulmans are identical and therefore they must sink or swim together, and that they must be true as steel and brave like lions and must tell the truth as they know it even on the gallows. The greatest honour the people can do to the Brothers is to follow the non-co-operation programme to the better and win swaraj during this year. Anger over their incarceration will be madness. We have dared openly to desire and to prepare for the end of the existing system of Government, and challenged its administrators to do their worst. We must neither be surprised nor angry, if they treat us seriously and take up the challenge. For they must, some day or other, take us at our word and put us to the invited test, or mend in accordance with our will. We shall be committing a grievous breach of the laws of the game if we are found wanting when we are weighed in

the scales of our own make. The only prescription for non-co-operators when anyone is arrested, is to put forth redoubled zeal in the prosecution to our programme, i.e., boycott of foreign cloth and manufacture in our own homes of the cloth we need. There must not be any hartal.

A THREATENED INFLICTION

I have just heard, that Mr. Painter, who has distinguished himself by his wanton provocation of the people of Dharwar,¹ is to be promoted and inflicted upon Gujarat as Commissioner. An official, who in the public estimation has disgraced himself, earns rewards from the Government for meritorious services. I hope, that Gujarat will mark in a suitable and special manner its disapproval of the insult sought to be offered by the Dharwar Collector being imposed upon it. Gujarat will have, if the rumoured appointment is actually made, a unique opportunity of showing how such insult can be dealt with in a non-co-operation spirit. We must distinguish between the man and the Commissioner. We must boycott the latter and render social service to the former. We must therefore permit him to receive all he may reasonably need as man for creature comforts, but if we have the people with us, the Commissioner, Mr Painter, may not get a blade of grass for the upkeep or the dignity of his office. We must therefore inculcate among the people the habit of refusing salaam to him in virtue of office. They must not send any applications to him. They must not, whilst he is touring in the country, supply him with any convenience whatsoever. He must be made, in every dignified and peaceful manner, to feel that he is not wanted as an official in Gujarat. The municipalities containing non-co-operators should refuse to recognise him as Commissioner in every way possible. If we have developed the spirit of real independence and manliness, we would refuse to put up with an official who has forfeited public opinion as Mr. Painter has. What, for instance, would be said of us, if Col. Frank Johnson or Gen. Dyer² were imposed upon us? We have to pass through certain rigid tests as proof of our capacity for self-government. One of them is refusal to submit to national insults. Indeed, if we had evolved that capacity sufficiently, I would expect even the employees,

¹ *Vide* "Notes", 1-9-1921, under the sub-title 'How to Kill Swadeshi'.

² Officer Commanding, Amritsar, who ordered firing on a peaceful assembly of people at Jallianwala Bagh

who would come under Mr. Painter's direct control, to resign by way of protest. We have such mortal fear of loss of livelihood, that the employees are the last to be expected to develop that sense of self-respect, which is so necessary for national existence. But their reluctance will not materially interfere with attainment of swaraj this year, if the general public is responsive enough. It is time for them to assert themselves individually as well as collectively. We must begin our battle with a disciplined and complete hartal, when that gentleman enters Ahmedabad if he does. And to that end, seeing that there is ample time, the Provincial Congress Committee should secure permission from the Working Committee for declaring a hartal all over Gujarat in the event of Mr. Painter being sent to Gujarat in any official capacity. If a hartal becomes necessary, I need hardly say that it must be completely voluntary. The labourers should participate after due notice and permission.

HYPOCRISY UNMASKED

Hitherto official letters have been noted for their reserve and unornamental style. If offence has been intended, it has been covered under severely restrained language. But officials have now begun to throw off the mask and like ordinary mortals they have taken to expressing their pleasure or anger in so many words, instead of allowing their acts only to speak for themselves. I have noticed this in the official correspondence in Assam. But the most refreshing illustration comes from Gujarat. The editor of the *Prajabandhu* wrote to the Deputy Commissioner of Salt and Excise, drawing his attention to grave irregularities committed by his subordinates in dealing with picketing. The editor's letter contains nothing offensive. He adopted simple dignified language. He did not argue. He only put a question. But the Deputy Commissioner was prejudiced against picketing, and he thus gave vent to his pent-up feelings:

Since you send me an extract from your paper, and press for a reply, I give you one. Your so-called picketing campaign, undertaken with the avowed object of injuring the lawful Government, cannot be called a genuine social measure undertaken for the good of the people. It is like the washing of an elephant. Owing to the violence of the persons engaged in your campaign, I understand, that the Excise staff in Ahmedabad are far too busy in preserving order and avoiding a breach of the peace, while carrying on their ordinary duties, to be able to spare time in investigating your complaint of some technical infringement of the licence conditions. I presume, that you are only making the complaint (believed to be an unfounded one) with the object

of further harassing the government officers, and I shall certainly not lend my authority for any such purpose. If, however, you have any other motives, you can renew the complaint after restraining the objectionable conduct of your adherents.

The only remark I need make is, that the editor is not conducting the campaign of picketing, he claims no adherents. He simply discharged a public duty by drawing attention to serious, not technical, breaches of liquor-licensing law on the part of or at the instance of liquor dealers.

Young India, 8-9-1921

103. THE MEANING OF THE KHILAFAT

I continue to receive letters from far and near, warning me against my interest in the Khilafat. Here is a typical letter from an old friend from New Zealand:—

Just a few lines to say. I do not forget you. Were I in danger of so doing, the cables that often appear in our papers would prevent me forgetting. I see, you have a mighty problem you are trying to solve in regard to India. Whether you are facing it in the wisest way I cannot say, for I am not in a position to judge. I would esteem it a favour, if you would hand enclosed post office order for 10/- to the publisher of your paper, *Young India* I think it is called, if it is published in English, or to the publisher of any paper in English representing your side of the case. Perhaps as an old friend, I may be borne with if I speak freely, even although I should be speaking without full knowledge. It always grieved me, that you should be an arch-supporter of the Turkish Empire, and that the Khilafat question should be turned to political ends to undermine and cripple and confuse the administration of the British Government in India. Turkey's crimes against Bulgarians, Greeks and Armenians call to heaven for judgment. I wonder, how far the Muslims in their All-India Khilafat Congress during recent years protested against those atrocities and dissociated themselves from the Turkish policy of extermination of a noble, excellent, industrious and gentle race (the Armenians). The blood of these martyrs will cry to heaven for justice, and not one can be forgotten by Him who marks the sparrow's fall. If Turkey's history has been one of rapine and massacre, is it not therefore to be shorn of its power as no longer worthy to be trusted with it? If political power is not to be used to maintain justice, freedom and fraternity of tributary races, but is to be used for oppression, persecution, extermination, robbery and rapine, is such a nation not to be judged by other powers and deprived of her power to continue

a malevolent sway ? To be shorn of political power need not deprive Islam of its spiritual weapons, if it has such. By its spiritual force let it live, or die if it has not such. Political power is a curse to any religion, and history shows, it has often been used tyrannically, e.g., the Roman Catholic Church.

I do not know what are exactly the aims of the non-co-operators, but it would appear they have come to object, *in toto*, to any British officials in the country. Rome was not built in a day, and a constitution cannot be framed ahead of the conditions of a country. Suppose all British officials were to leave bag and baggage tomorrow and Natives put in their place, would the administration be as pure as it is, would justice be done everywhere through the courts of your great country? I understand, that the Indians fear the Native police, and their officials (Natives) are peculiarly open to bribery and corruption. Before a people can be self-governing there must be a basis of national character on which to build and with which to build, and has the day come, when there are forces running through your various spheres of social, educational and political life that are regenerative and purifying?

Political propaganda, if revolutionary, may easily attract the basest and most malevolent among men, and if they capture the control of machinery of organisation, the blind and more than blind will lead those who follow their dictum to the pit. I am sure, that you personally have not departed from your noble ideals and unselfish spirit of patriotism and justice, and freedom of soul, but there may be great slumbering forces awakened in the state of society around you, that may carry you far beyond the points of wisdom and measures that make for true national well-being. Your country has an the elements that might make India a Russia, a Sinn Fein Ireland, a land of civil war, inter-tribal bloodshed. Division may easily spread through a land like India, your independent princes become arrayed on opposing sides, and no strong controlling unifying power be forthcoming to preserve peace, conserve progress, lead the way to *fuller* national life. Your pathway must be surrounded by snares and pitfalls which you can only escape by a clear vision of the will of God and unflinching adherence thereto. As long as you coincide with the wishes of the popular clamour, there will be many who will cry "Hosanna" and will strew your path with palm leaves, but if you adhere to the high principles of the vision of God, the same people will cry, "Crucify him, away with him." You know the parallel. He unflinchingly followed the will of God and they rejected Him. His aims were too pure, His kingdom too spiritual, His methods too divine. He died, but God raised Him up and made that resurrection the life of the world's thought, made Him meet the need of all the men as Saviour, High Priest to represent, King to rule over.

Courage, brother; do not stumble,
Though thy path be dark as night;
There's a star to guide the humble,

Trust in food and do the right
 Let the road be rough and dreary
 And its end far out of sight,
 Foot it bravely, strong or weary,
 Trust in-God and do the right.
 Perish policy and cunning,
 Perish all that fears the light!
 Whether losing, whether winning,
 Trust in God and do the right.
 Trust no party, sect or faction,
 Trust no leaders in the fight;
 But in every word and action
 Trust in God and do the right.
 Trust no lovely forms of passion,—
 Fiends may look like angels bright,
 Trust no custom, school or fashion;
 Trust in God and do the right.
 Some will hate thee, some will love thee,
 Some will flatter, some will slight;
 Cease from man and look above thee;
 Trust in God and do the right
 Simple rule, and safest guiding,
 Inward peace, and inward might,
 Star upon our path abiding,—
 Trust in God, and do the right.
 Courage, brother, do not stumble,
 Though thy path be dark as night;
 There's a star to guide the humble;
 Trust in God, and do the right.

The great thing is to have divine wisdom, the deep insight into principles and far-seeing wisdom of true statesmanship. You are doubtless familiar with the life of Abraham Lincoln, his clear sighted vision, his absolute integrity, tender-heartedness, humility, humour, humaneness.

I often say to my friends, "If you heard Mr. Gandhi's side and the great grievances that exist under the present order of things, you would understand his

opposition.”

The question is, what is the best way for the welfare of India to correct existing abuses. Strikes, violence arouse passions, and a hundred discontents and ill-feeling, and in most cases defeat their own ends. Reforms that come along constitutional lines, if the gain is to be accompanied by good feeling and unity and peace. Gains by revolutionary means cannot be a natural evolution. From my distant corner I can only earnestly pray, that God may guide and direct and bless you, and make you an instrument for the true well-being of India.

The warmth and the sincerity are unmistakable. I know the friend to be a devout godfearing Christian. But it must be evident to anyone who knows anything about the Turkish question, that my correspondent is strongly prejudiced against the Turks. His picture of the Armenians as “a noble, excellent, industrious and gentle race” betrays the extent of his ignorance about the question. He cannot be blamed for it. The Turkish side has been sedulously kept from the English-reading public. All these good Christians scattered about in different parts of the world have only one class of reading presented to them. The missionary journals are fanatically, I was going to say, criminally anti-Turkish and anti-Islam. The very word harity about which St. Paul wrote so magnificently is absent from the minds of the writers in the missionary journals, when they write about Islam and Turkey. The Turk is to them the arch-infidel created by God only to be cursed. It is this prejudiced but honest attitude that stands in the way of Truth and Justice.

I have no desire to defend Turkey against the Armenians or the Greeks. I am not prepared to deny Turkish misrule or misdeeds. But the Greeks and the Armenians have an infinitely worse record. What is more, the defence of the Khilafat is the defence of a pure ideal. It is not necessary to defend the conduct of individual Popes in order to support the institution of Papacy. Oppose all Turkish misrule by all means, but it is wicked to seek to efface the Turk and with him Islam from Europe under the false plea of Turkish misrule.

What is still worse is, that the defeat of the Central Powers should be utilized to crush Islam. Was the late war a crusade against Islam, in which the Mussulmans of India were invited to join ? To say that the Mussulmans may have anyone they choose as their spiritual head, but that they may not interfere with the disintegration of Turkey, is not to know the Khilafat. The Khilafat must ever be the Defender of the Faith of the Prophet, and therefore nobody can become or remain

Khalifa, immediately he is deprived of or loses the power of defending Islam against the whole world. One may dispute the ethics of the doctrine in the abstract, but England is not engaged in a war against Islam because it is unethical. In that case England has to renounce her association with millions whose faith is divorced from ethics.

As a matter of fact, is there anything immoral in a religion seeking to sustain itself by possession of temporal power? In practice has not Christianity been sustained by temporal power? And even in Hinduism, have not Rajput Kings been custodians of Hinduism ?

What I venture to commend to the many Christians who honestly think like my friend, is to join the defence of the Khilafat as an ideal, and thus recognize that the struggle of non-co-operation is one of religion against irreligion.

For my part I have the clearest possible conscience in this matter. The end to me is just. I fight to bolster up no fraud or injustice. The means are equally just. In the prosecution of the fight, truth and non-violence are the only weapons. Self-suffering is the truest test of sincerity.

Young India, 8-9-1921

104. THE TWO INCOMPATIBLES

Violence and non-violence are two incompatible forces destructive of each other. Non-violence for its success therefore needs an entirely non-violent atmosphere. The Moplah outbreak has disturbed the atmosphere, as nothing else has since the inauguration of non-co-operation. I am writing this at Sylhet on the 29th August. By the time it is in print, much more information will have reached the public. I have only a hazy notion of what has happened. I have seen only three issues of daily papers containing the Associated Press messages. One cannot help noting the careful editing these messages have undergone. But it is clear that Moplahs have succeeded in taking half a dozen lives and have given already a few hundred. Malabar is under martial law. The reprisals on the part of the Government are still to follow. The braver the insurgents, the sterner the punishment. Such is the law of governments. And I would not have minded the loss of ten times as many lives as the Moplahs must have lost, if only they had remained strictly non-violent. They would then have brought swaraj

nearest. It is any day worth all the price we can pay in our own lives. For the Moplahs it would have meant too the immediate redress of the Khilafat wrong. God wants the purest sacrifice. Our blood must not contain the germs of anger or hate. It is not a sacrifice freely given that exacts a price. The Moplahs have demanded a price. The sacrifice has lost much of its nobility. Now it will be said, that the Moplahs have received well-merited punishment.

There would have been no martial law, if only the Moplahs had died. And if there had been, it would have been thrice welcome. It would have ended the system of Government which is decimating the land.

Of course nowadays it is the fashion to make non-co-operation responsible for every affliction, whether it is a famine, a coolie exodus or a Moplah rising. It is the finest tribute that can be paid to the universality of non-co-operation. But nothing has been produced by the Madras Government in support of the charge.

Our own duty is clear. Non-co-operators must wash their hands clean of all complicity. We must not betray any mental or secret approval of the Moplahs. We must see clearly, that it would be dishonourable for us to show any approval of the violence. We must search for no extenuating circumstance. We have chosen a rigid standard for ourselves and by that we must abide. We have undertaken to do no violence even under the most provoking circumstances. Indeed we anticipate the gravest provocation as our final test. The misguided Moplahs have therefore rendered a distinct disservice to the sacred cause of Islam and swaraj.

We may plead, as indeed we must, if we have acted honestly, that in spite of our efforts we have not been able to bring under check and discipline all the turbulent sections of the community. The choice for the people lies between the gentle and self-imposed rule of non-violence and non co-operation, and the iron rule of the Government. The latter is now demonstrating its power and ability to counteract all the forces of violence by its superior and trained violence. We have no answer, if we cannot show that we have greater influence over the people. We must be able quite clearly to see for ourselves and show to the people, that display of force by us against that of the Government is like a child attempting with a straw to stop the current.

I am painfully aware of the fact, that we have not as a people yet

arrived at the settled conviction, that India cannot attain immediate swaraj except through complete non-violence. We do not even see, that Hindu-Muslim unity must vanish under the strain of violence. What is at the back of our mutual distrust, if it is not the fear of each other's violence? And swaraj without real heart-unity is an inconceivable proposition.

What is it that hinders attainment of swaraj, if it is not fear of violence? Are we not deterred simply through that fear, from taking all our steps at once? Can we not, if we can be sure of non-violence, issue today an ultimatum to the Government either to co-operate with us or to go? Do not the Moderates keep aloof, mainly because they distrust our ability to create a non-violent atmosphere? Their timidity will derive nurture from the Moplah outbreak.

What then must we do? Certainly not feel despondent. We must go forward with greater zeal, greater hope because [of] greater faith in our means. We must persevere in the process of conversion of the most ignorant of our countrymen to the doctrine of non-violence as an indispensable means as well for redressing the Khilafat wrong as for attaining swaraj.

The Moplahs are among the bravest in the land. They are God fearing. Their bravery must be transformed into purest gold. I feel sure, that once they realize the necessity of non-violence for the defence of the faith for which they have hitherto taken life, they will follow it without flinching. Here is the testimony given to Moplah valour by the writer in the *Imperial Gazetteer of India*.

The one constant element is a desperate fanaticism; surrender is unknown; the martyrs are consecrated before they go out and hymned after death !

Such courage is worthy of a better treatment. The Government dealt with it by passing years ago a special Act against them. It has already set its machinery in motion for the present trouble. The Moplahs will no doubt die cheerfully. I wonder, if it is possible for us to transmute their courage into the nobler courage of non-violence. It may be impossible to achieve the miracle through human effort. But God is noted for His miracles. Many consider, that attainment of swaraj this year, if it is realized, must be counted a miracle. It has got to be preceded by a miraculous conversion of India, not excluding its bravest sons, to the doctrine of non-violence at least in its restricted scope, i.e., as an indispensable condition for securing India's freedom.

Young India, 8-9-1921

105. THE WAY TO SAVE THE COW

The visit of Maulanas Mahomed Ali and Azad Sobhani and myself to Bihar was undertaken in order to check the growth of misunderstanding on the cow question. We delivered many speeches at many places. The substance of one speech of mine I am able to give to the reader by the courtesy of a friend who took down the notes.

At the commencement of his speech Mr. Gandhi referred to the touching of the feet which had become embarrassing, and said:

People do these things in a spirit of hero-worship, and in Bihar particularly there is an abundance of that spirit. People even talk of an avatar. As a Hindu, I believe of course, in avatars. I believe, that in the pursuit of his plan, God sends His special messengers on earth, upon whom the effulgence or the glory of God specially shines, and who in our Shastras are known as avatars. But that is not the case here. In my view, the condition of India is such, that there can be no coming of an avatar at this time. We must first purify ourselves and the country by hard, strenuous work on right lines, before we can even think of an avatar. And in India, what we want now is not hero-worship, but service. We want more and more servants for the country. The swaraj that we want does not mean, that on the destruction of the present raj, somebody else's will be established, whether he be a Gandhi, or to take the names of my brothers, a Maulana Shaukat Ali and a Maulana Mahomed Ali. We know, that whatever may have been the case in past days, India is so wide awake now that there can no longer be any repetition of these things. We do not want that there will be one man to rule and everyone else to be his slave. We have had enough of slavery. What we want is to inspire the people with our own faith, and a living desire to serve the country. We want that every Indian be transformed into a Gandhi, a Maulana Shaukat Ali and a Maulana Mahomed Ali; and then the swaraj of our dream will be realized in its entirety. My submission to you, therefore, is, that you do not put obstruction in the way of the easy prosecution of our work by the touching of feet or unnecessary shoutings and *jayajayakars*¹. It is unthinkable, that a whole crowd of people can touch me. But when those who are near me begin to fall at my feet, the crowd is tempted to

¹ Shouts of victory

follow suit, and indescribable confusion follows. So those who are near me should never touch my feet. They should not even bow low before me. Not only do I not like these things, but there is a possibility of my getting seriously hurt. I desire the country to move with a speed greater than the speed of the Punjab Express. We have got to attain swaraj within this year, so that we may celebrate its attainment in December next. I implore you once again not to do anything that may hinder the smooth progress of our work, for it means nothing but so much loss to the country.

I now come to the question which has really brought us to your place. As soon as I set foot here, I inquired whether there was peace between the Hindus and Mussulmans of this place. It was no small gratification to me to hear, that there was no misunderstanding between the two communities at Sasaram. But I am told that there is no earnestness about Congress work here. The Congress Committee and the Khilafat Committee that are in existence do very little work. My request to these two Committees is that they put more energy into their work. I wanted to inquire about many other things, but I was so tired that I could not do so. On the question of cow-killing, I say that with the Hindus it is their dharma to protect the cow. The Hindus have many differences amongst them as regards religious belief, and religious and social customs and practices; but on the matter of the protection of the cow all Hindus are united. And I go so far as to say, that the cow question is the central and common fact in Hinduism, which differentiates it from all other religions of the world. In India the need for the cow is very great. Not only do the people drink her milks but her male offspring is used for cultivating the land. The Hindus reverence the cow as they reverence the Brahmin. But the case is not so outside India. So there is no prohibition in the religion of our Mussulman brothers against the slaughter of cows. And if a Mussulman brother slays a cow, for instance during *Id*, on what ground can a Hindu raise his hand to strike him? Is he enjoined by the Shastras to kill a fellow-man in order to save a cow? There is really no such injunction in the Shastras; but on the contrary it is against the Shastras to do so. No Hindu raises his hand against an English brother, because he eats beef; nor does he prevent thousands and thousands of cows being led to the slaughterhouse for the use of Englishmen in India. What I mean to say is this; in order to save the cow you can only sacrifice your own life; you cannot take another's life, nor can you even cherish anger against him. My brother Maulana

Mahomed Ali in one of his speeches today said one thing on this matter, which I realize as very true. He says, that three fourths of the responsibility for cow-slaughter in India lie with the Hindus; and the Mussulmans are guilty of only one-fourth. For the cows that are slain really come from Hindu custody. I have actually seen in Bombay shiploads of cows being sent out from India for slaughter in other lands. It is the Hindus that do cow-selling business, and not the Mussulmans. And my brother's suggestion that if an artificial price of say a hundred rupees for each cow could be set, cow-slaughter will automatically diminish, seemed to me to be very practical. It all depends upon us. In Bombay one cow given for the Tilak Swaraj Fund was sold for five hundred rupees, and another for a higher sum. If the *shraddha*¹ of both the buyer and the seller is sufficiently roused, all this is quite easy and practicable. My submission to the Hindus, therefore, is, that if you are really anxious to save the cow, do not quarrel with our Mussulman brothers, but live with them in peace. Do not try to force their hands. Give yourselves up wholly to their service in this hour of their sore need without asking for a return. I look upon the Khilafat problem for the Mussulmans in the same light as the cow problem for the Hindus. It is my firm belief, that the solution of one will automatically lead to the solution of the other. I do not say this in a spirit of bargain. If our offering of service to our Mussulman brethren be genuine and spontaneous, if we really sacrifice our lives for the safety of their religion, I have no doubt, that another law higher than the law of contract will operate, and solve the cow problem in India.

I wish to touch on another matter, before I close. I have come to know, that there are about five hundred families of Mussulman weavers in this place. But as they are looked down upon by fellow-Mussulmans, there is a tendency amongst them to give up their calling. It is absolutely necessary, that we check this tendency. Amongst us, Hindus, social distinctions based on karma do exist. But so far as I know, Islam does not recognize such differences. Mussulman society is based upon the theory of perfect equality. So it does not at all appear to me reasonable that these *julahas*² should be discredited in society. There is nothing dishonourable in the

¹ Spirit of reverence

² Weavers

profession of weaving. In my opinion, the two most essential things in India, the things on which the existence of India depends, are agriculture and weaving. They are like the two lungs of a living being. If one goes wrong, if it is diseased or rotten the other lung may do duty for a time no doubt, but cannot keep up life for long. So it has been with India. She has been weakening in proportion to the decay of her weaving industry. And the programme of swadeshi, which we have started, is like the cure of a diseased lung, so that waste may be repaired, and new blood may flow into it making it healthy and strong. The moment we come to realize this absolute importance of agriculture and weaving for India, we shall lose all sense of contempt for the agriculturist or the weaver. We shall, then, see that they are objects of the highest regard. We must recognise, that without the help of our weavers, there can be no success of swadeshi in India. By swadeshi I mean that every province must produce its own cloth. If you depend upon Bombay for your cloth, that will be no swadeshi for Bihar. My appeal to the Congress Committee therefore, is, that it should lose no time in distributing charkhas to every home in Bihar. When that is done, every home becomes a spinning factory at our disposal. And with the production of yarn on this scale we can easily hope to see every lane transformed into a weaving factory. The question is very urgent for the whole of India, but more especially for Bihar. For of all the provinces of India Bihar is the poorest. I have included Orissa under Bihar here. But if we take them separately, Orissa comes to occupy the lowest place, and Bihar comes just above it. I gathered my idea about the extent of poverty in Bihar, when I was engaged in my work at Champaran. I came to know then, that the women in Bihar had in most cases to be satisfied with a single piece of cloth; indeed, they had no cloth other than the one which they wore. They told my wife,—they felt ashamed to tell me so directly,—that if I went to their houses, I would find nothing but old, worn out and tattered rags. They also said, “Gandhi asks us to bathe every day, but if we are to remain naked after washing the piece of cloth that covers our nakedness, we can’t do so even for the sake of Gandhi.” Such is the extent of poverty in Bihar. And if these women are given charkhas to work and paid two annas each for their daily labour, I have no doubt that they will take up the work in right earnest and pursue it

with energy. I have known the indigo planters get work from them at the rate of six pice per head per day, and in that place if they find that the charkha yields them two annas daily, the thing will catch on automatically without any effort at preaching. These are the lines on which we have to start work immediately. I expect much from Bihar. I have some special claim upon her. I hope Bihar will not deny me that claim. I expect you all to explain the thing I have said to men of the villages. The villagers are not likely to understand these things, but you who live in towns have wider experience of the world. So it is your duty to make these things intelligible to the villagers. Three things are vital to this movement for swaraj, without the fulfilment of which we can never hope to make any headway in our struggle. First, there must be absolute Hindu-Muslim unity. There must be a feeling of brotherliness amongst the Hindus and Mussulmans. This is the first condition of the success of this swaraj movement. Secondly, this peaceful and non-violent movement must always be kept peaceful and non-violent. It is easy for a man who bestows even the least thought on the subject to realize that we shall never succeed by violence. If we draw the sword, that will be simply to our own undoing, if only because we do not possess the modern implements of warfare such as aeroplanes, etc. So you must under no circumstance disturb the peace. We must observe peace with English and among ourselves, co-operators and non-co-operators, zamindars and ryots, in thought, word and deed. And thirdly we must immediately boycott all foreign cloth and manufacture for our needs in our own homes and villages. Then we attain the power to achieve the three ends.

Young India, 8-9-1921

106. SPEECH AT HARISH PARK, CALCUTTA

September 8, 1921

. . . Mr. Gandhi said that some months ago when he came to Calcutta for the purpose of collecting money for the Tilak Swaraj Fund he said that the required sum should be realized before 30th of June last and he was pleased to hear that that mission was successful. This time the Mahatma wanted a complete boycott of foreign goods before the 30th of September. Swadeshi was in full swing in all other provinces and the Mahatma wanted to have an assurance from the brothers and sisters of Bengal whether they would be able to help him in his new mission. The Mahatma expressed his regret at the weak response of Bengal as it lagged behind all other provinces in this respect. He knew that Bengalis were intellectually strong and ahead of other provinces but he failed to understand why she was backward in this noble cause. It was Bengalis who first initiated the swadeshi cult in Bengal and it was in Bengal that fine hand-spun clothes could be produced in former times and he was surprised to hear their inability to carry on the work at the present time. He was confident that when the Bengalis would be able to realize that the use of swadeshi cloth would enable them to attain swaraj they would be able to accomplish this great task within the remaining twenty-four days of the current month. He regretted that the pleaders should have still continued their practices but the moment Mr. Das and Pandit Motilal Nehru¹ suspended their legal practice his mission had been fulfilled. The Pujas were fast approaching and it was the great festival of the Hindus when they were required to purchase a number of clothes. Mr. Gandhi appealed to the people with folded hands not to purchase even a pice worth of foreign goods, particularly clothes. He hoped that if they readily responded to his appeal they would get the blessings of the Providence.

Continuing Mr. Gandhi said that there was a good deal of difference between the swadeshi movement in the days of the partition of Bengal and the present movement. At the time of the partition of Bengal restrictions if any, were confined to the boycott of foreign clothes. By foreign clothes it was meant clothes manufactured in London, but allowance was given for the use of goods manufactured in Japan. The present swadeshi cult meant total boycott of foreign clothes of all descriptions and it was restricted to only hand-spun clothes. At that time the movement was set on foot to get redress of certain grievances but the present had a higher and nobler object in view, namely, the attainment of swaraj. He advised the gathering to totally boycott

¹ 1863-1931 ; lawyer and politician; twice President of the Indian National Congress.

foreign goods, burn them Some people had asked the speaker to send these clothes to Khulana for famine-stricken people there. Mr. Gandhi said he was opposed to their views as he did not like that these poor people should be polluted with the poison. If they want to help these people they . . . as well send their own swadeshi cloth and they themselves should wear *lungiyas*¹....

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 9-9-1921

107. TELEGRAM TO CONGRESS AND KHILAFAT COMMITTEES, FARIDPUR

[Before *September 10, 1921*]

CONGRATULATE BADSHAH MIAN ABU KHALID RASHIDUD MIAN² ON HIS ARREST. THOUSANDS OF HIS DISCIPLES AND FRIENDS ARE LIKELY TO GET EXCITED. I WOULD URGE THEM TO SHOW THEIR REGARD BY IMMEDIATE ADOPTION OF SWADESHI, THAT IS, BOYCOTT OF ALL FOREIGN CLOTH AND MANUFACTURE OF KHADI BY MEANS OF HAND-SPINNING AND HAND-WEAVING. I TRUST THAT THE PEOPLE WILL KEEP QUITE CALM AND DIGNIFIED. MAULANA AZAD SOBHANI WITH CERTAIN FRIENDS IS PROCEEDING TO FARIDPUR TO PACIFY THE PEOPLE.

GANDHI

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 10-9-1921

108. BENEVOLENT PARSIS

[*September 10, 1921*]³

Whenever I think of Parsi philanthropy, I realize that if the tiny Parsi community has become renowned in the world, it is because of its philanthropy. Among the well-known communities the Parsis are the smallest. Why does the world care for a community of eighty thousand men and women? The Parsis possess no armed strength, they employ no craftiness nor do they practise any magic; or, one may say, their philanthropy is their magic.

¹ Waist-cloth

² A religious divine of Bengal

³ The article first appeared in the Pateti (Parsi New Year's Day) number of Sanj Vartaman. In 1921, Pateti fell on this date.

If the Parsis had earned millions and then locked them up in safes, they would have perished long ago. Philanthropy is a soul-force and in virtue of this soul-force which they possess the Parsis enjoy everyone's respect and are able to maintain their position.

Parsi philanthropy, however, takes the form of giving money. Money comes in and goes out. What will be their fate if they can earn money no more? Monetary philanthropy is only a very small part of soul-force. When talking to Parsi friends, I have often said that the Parsis are now being put to a test. If they wish to retain their glory only by counting their millionaires, they will not succeed. I have told Parsi friends that there was every danger of their spiritual growth being arrested because of excessive wealth. Every literate Parsi knows by now that I am simply in love with his community. I have also given the reasons for my love. This love of mine has been hurting me ever since I observed certain signs of moral weakening among the Parsis.

No community can survive merely by imitating others or if it remains rolling in luxury. I saw that Parsi life had become easygoing. Hospitals for Parsis, exclusive accommodation and other facilities for Parsis, separate funds for Parsis! I was alarmed. I saw that their philanthropy had assumed a form which held the danger of the community's losing its present position. Any community whose members live on what others' charity provides is bound to perish. A man can digest and assimilate only such amenities and comforts as he has earned by his efforts. Real manhood consists in availing oneself as little as possible of amenities provided by one's community. A man must let himself be tested on the anvil of difficulties.

Men are not born for imitating one another. Even a child has an individuality—his distinctive character. Eating, drinking and other such actions are performed by animals too. We are distinguished from animals because of one thing alone, that we have reason, we have discretion and the faculty of moral choice. What we do after reflection, the animal does instinctively. We may observe the behaviour of an ant and imitate its perseverance, but our imitation will have some originality if it is intelligent. Such imitation is not really imitation; if, however, a slave tries to imitate his master, he is bound to come toppling down.

When, therefore, young Parsi men and women started taking part in non-co-operation, I was delighted. One of the intentions behind non-co-operation may be to defeat the Government, that is

injustice, but I wish to impress upon the hearts of Parsi men and women the chief motive underlying it. Non-co-operation means self-purification. It is a principle of medical science that disease-carrying germs cannot infect a person whose blood is quite pure. Healthy blood itself destroys such germs. Likewise, if we ourselves become pure and just, how can anyone oppress us? It is a wrong policy to fight the oppressor. The right course is to suffer, to bear his ill-treatment without submitting to his injustice. Once we have stood such an ordeal, nobody can use violence against us.

There is, in fact, no limit to self-purification. But the limits we have prescribed for ourselves are so narrow that even a child can reach them.

1. Why should we neglect our own and run after what is others? That we should trade with foreigners when millions in India are dying of hunger is a crime against ourselves. To stop this crime, we should exclusively use indigenous cloth and give up foreign cloth however attractive it may be and, to be able to do this, we should all start carding, spinning and weaving. In this way we shall become self-supporting.

2. For following this rule of pure swadeshi, it is essential for us to adopt simplicity. We may also have to change our aim in dressing. We should dress not for decoration but for covering the body. We may, therefore, wear only such and so many clothes as are necessary in view of our climatic conditions. White is the coolest colour suitable to the Indian climate. It is pleasant to the eye. Any stain on a white garment is immediately visible and we are obliged to clean it. Burdening the body with a coat over and above a *sadra*¹ and a shirt or a blouse is positive cruelty to the body. If anything is required over a *sadra*, it may be shirt. Anything else is unnecessary. English-style trousers simply cannot match khadi pyjamas. We do not need chairs in our country. They may be necessary in countries with a cold and moist climate. We have no justification at all for wearing stiff and tight trousers. Loose and smooth pyjamas suit us best, as they enable us to sit on the floor. In this country, no other garment is as dirty as socks. If you wear them for a couple of hours in the summer, they stink. If the feet are left exposed, they remain clean and there is not the least beauty in covering them. No consideration of modesty is involved in

¹ A loose garment of fine cloth worn under the shirt

the matter of covering any parts of the body except the one whose sight may excite impure desires in us. Putting on boots is a cruelty in this country. Our feet can be sufficiently protected against mud or thorns by *chappals*¹ or slippers. In our country, shoes are known as shields against thorns or a protection for feet.

3. I do not know how the Parsis came to acquire the habit of drinking. I shall never be convinced that the Prophet Zoroaster has sanctioned drinking. In any case what is inconsistent with reason cannot be Shastra though it may be regarded as such. Nothing which teaches immorality can be Shastra. Liquor may be a necessity on the North Pole, but in temperate zones, where the climate is equable, drinking is certainly a heinous sin. While in England, I once attended a Parsi gathering. Everything was going on with perfect decorum. There was music and singing. Then followed a round of drinks. All propriety vanished. I felt ashamed to remain there and ran away. I observed such behaviour at Hindu and Muslim gatherings, too, in England. Is anyone who has sailed in a ship unacquainted with the unrestrained behaviour of passengers who get drunk ? I have come across quite a few “moderate drinkers”. It is true that they do not roll in gutters, but—?

Parsi men and women should, therefore, take a pledge to give up drinking entirely.

4. I myself never eat meat. I did so once when I did not know better; I have repented my action ever since and atone for it very severely. Both of us, my wife and I refused to eat meat when we were at death’s door and the doctor prescribed meat-diet. I do not wish to survive even for a moment by eating meat. I have learnt from my discussions with Muslim friends that austere fakirs among them abstain from meat with a view to mastering anger and the cravings of the senses. However, I am not asking Parsi men and women to become vegetarians. Through my close contact with them, I know that their diet includes too much of meat and chicken. I should certainly urge them to avoid an excess of these so that they may have control over the palate. It is my considered opinion that the crores of Muslims who do not eat meat regularly have lost nothing in consequence; on the contrary, they have gained something.

¹ A kind of sandals

I humorously refer to Parsis as *pa rishi*¹. I expect much by way of enlightenment and soul-force from this community of eighty thousand. Being small, it can introduce useful reforms in a short time. I should like the Parsis to introduce such reforms and so be perfect modern sages of India. Prophet Zoroaster's was a highly moral life. I should like to see the utmost development of such virtues among the Parsis. The *yajna* of the swaraj movement requires the services of virtuous, fearless, simple, brave, honest and resolute men and women.

We are now in a position to understand the new meaning of philanthropy. It does not mean donating money only; it means dedication of one's all, body, mind and possessions. Felicitating the Parsis on their New Year Day, I beg the Parsi brothers and sisters that they dedicate to India all these powers. This will enhance the worthiness of Parsi philanthropy, worthy as it is. I pray to God that it may be so.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-9-1921

109. SPEECH TO KHILAFAT VOLUNTEERS, CALCUTTA

September 10, 1921

On Saturday afternoon about 500 volunteers belonging to the Khilafat Committee and the Burrabazar Congress Committee assembled at the residence of Mr. C. R. Das when Mr. Gandhi, Maulana Mahomed Ali and Pandit Motilal Nehru inspected them. In addressing the volunteers Mr. Gandhi said that he was very glad to see them. He believed that through the help of the volunteers he would be able to win swaraj. He knew that the volunteers enlisted themselves being prepared even to lay down their lives for the attainment of swaraj, for Khilafat and the Punjab. He advised them to maintain discipline . . . It had been complained to him by outsiders as well as by the Marwaris that the volunteers had some time been offensive. He very much regretted such conduct on the part of volunteers, if they had really done so.

Referring to the picketing, Mr. Gandhi said that they would continue doing so but that must be tempered with kindness, courtesy and friendly feeling. They would not do anything which would hurt the feeling of anybody as otherwise they would do the greatest harm and mischief to the cause.

Speaking of the apprehended arrest of Ali Brothers, he said that he knew that his two Brothers were soon going to be arrested and imprisoned and he hoped that if

¹ One-fourth of a sage

such a thing came to pass the volunteers should not be excited over the matter and should keep their passions under control

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 11-9-1921

110. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

[On or before *September 11, 1921*]

Interviewed by a press representative as to the published versions of the interview¹ between Dr. Rabindranath Tagore and Mr. Gandhi the latter declined to make any statement whatsoever saying that though there was nothing secret about the interview, he questioned the right of the public to know all that had happened at interviews between two public men. He declined to make any statement also because he said that an attempt was made in all the imaginary reports² to discredit him and his cause, but he knew that both the cause and himself were absolutely safe in the hands of the poet, the reports notwithstanding.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 11-9-1921

111. EXPERIENCES IN ASSAM—II

ON THE BRAHMAPUTRA

The ship is sailing on the river. The days of my third-class travel came to an end long ago. We are all sitting at the moment on the first class deck. Whenever I think about the third-class, I feel ashamed of travelling by first or second class. But I know that, in a strenuous tour like this, where I am constantly on the move, my health cannot stand the strain of a journey by third class. I believe that we should be sturdy enough to be able to travel by third-class, that our bodies should be sufficiently trained for the purpose. So long as we fight shy of travelling third-class, conditions in this class will not improve and its hardships will not disappear. If all the hundreds of public workers start travelling by first or second class, public funds will be exhausted in travelling and our ship of swaraj will make no progress. It is necessary for us every moment to pause and think before spending public funds. I say this, being ill at ease because of a remark which one rich gentleman, a public worker, made before me. The moment I brought up the subject of khadi, he said: “You cannot understand our

¹ At Calcutta on September 6

² For example in the report in *The Statesman*, 10-9-1921

plight. You can get a car whenever you want, you will get ten glasses of goat's milk if you ask for one, everyone gives you khadi; but others, even a wealthy person like me, will find public service an expensive job if I have to pay each time taxi and hotel fares and for all the khadi that I require." This gentleman is a member of the All-India Congress committee; he does not hesitate to spend money; but I realize that his daily expenses in Bombay could not have amounted to less than twenty rupees. I do feel that there is a good deal of substance in his argument. However, I am helpless in my present situation. I know that my weakness has reduced my capacity to serve. I do not now have the courage to ask everyone to go walking. Because I myself am weak, I imagine others to be so and often unnecessarily take pity on them. Otherwise, one who wishes to serve the public does not have to spend overmuch. Third-class fares are not so high that one cannot afford the expense and, moreover, one should make it a point to spend nothing on transport at any place one visits. One should eat simple food and dress simply. But we have pampered ourselves so much that we think we cannot do what hundreds of thousands of other people do every day.

I had wanted to describe the river but came out instead, with what has been troubling my mind. The river looks as vast as the sea. Far away in the distance, on the two sides, one sees the banks. The river is about two miles broad, or even more. The journey will take 15 hours. The peace on the river fills the heart with a sense of grandeur. The moon, hidden behind the clouds, is shining with a faint gleam on the water. The ship's propellers make a gentle sound as they cut through water. Except for this, there is peace all round. And yet I find it difficult to have peace of mind. Neither the river nor the ship is mine. It is through the favour of that same power whose tyranny has disillusioned me, whose operations have inflicted wounds on the country, enfeebled it and reduced it to a state of penury, that I sail on the river and go in this ship—this thought disturbs me in the midst of all this peace. Nevertheless, I cannot blame the Government. Why should I blame the Government if thirty crores of Indians do not understand their duty? Should I blame the usurer who charges me excessive interest, or myself for paying it? It is the business man's nature to trade with me. It is for me however to choose whether or not to trade with him. Why do I trade with him? Who can force foreign cloth on me if I do not want it? Realizing that it is my weakness to blame the power behind the trader, I recover my peace and get

absorbed in my duty, aware that my work lies with the people.

ELEPHANTS OF ASSAM

Assam is as well-known for its elephants as it is for the weaving skill of its women. I was even shown a work on *hasti vidya*¹, written on bark, which was two hundred years old. Besides the writing, it contained many beautiful pictures of elephants and other things. The colours used in these were exquisite, such as one hardly comes across nowadays. The paintings are so well proportioned that, looking at them, one cannot but take pride in the ancient art of Assam.

An elephant is valued at anything up to Rs. 6,000. He is used as a beast of burden and in hunting. A person who knows about these matters told me that a wild elephant is subjected to much cruelty when it is first caught. As the elephant likes music, the mahout also tries to win him over with it. It understands our language so well that it can clearly recognize words of anger or affection. This person told me that every elephant in Assam is familiar with the word *shabash*². Needless to say, ivory is in plenty in Assam. I was happy to learn that here not only is the elephant not killed for the sake of his tusks but that killing it for this purpose is actually forbidden.

ASSAM SILK

Two varieties of silk are produced in Assam. Both these are obtained from worms. One type of worm is called *andikeri* and the other *mooga*. In obtaining the former's silk, the worm is not destroyed in the process. Its cocoon is spun like cotton. The *mooga* spins its own silk. When the *mooga* has completed the spinning, it is exposed to sun and destroyed. The cocoon is then boiled and the silk is pulled out by wrapping it round a bobbin. This process was carried out before me. Both these varieties of silk are produced in large quantities in Assam but, though the industry is still alive, the use of foreign yarn has become widespread and many weavers—both men and women—use only such yarn as warp.

PROCESSING OF COTTON

I also observed cotton being processed. I see that fine cloth like that made in Andhra will by and by be produced here too. I have

¹ Elephant lore

² Well done !

been given a sample recently made. I was shown saris of very fine cotton which were two hundred years old. In many places even Egyptian cotton has been planted. I saw such cotton being spun unginned. The other cotton, I saw, was being spun in the same way as it is done in Andhra. Each seed is first combed out with fish teeth, so that all the fibres are separated. The cotton that remains entangled in the comb is spun as it is and then woven into khadi. The seeds and the cotton which is still sticking to them are then separated and the latter is carded. Each seed is processed in this way. Such cotton is spun and the finest yarn is prepared out of it. If the women of Assam respond with zeal, there will be no limit to the help that they can give. I feel that Assam's capacity to help the swadeshi movement is even greater than that of the Punjab. If the women here take up spinning and weaving, they will do so out of love for the country and not for love of money. As in Andhra, each woman cards her own cotton.

SHONITPUR

We have now reached Tezpur. Its ancient name is Shonitpur. It is said a British officer found it difficult to pronounce "Shonitpur". He asked what *shonit*¹ meant in Assamese and was told that the Assamese equivalent was *Tez*. He then named Shonitpur "Tezpur" ! In ancient times, Tezpur was the capital of Banasura and it is for this reason that the authors of Puranas are supposed to have called it Shonitpur. The legend about this place says that Chitrlekha carried off Aniruddha from Dwaraka and brought him here for Usha. It is said that Arjuna went right up to Manipur. Pandu is the first city we come to on the eastern banks of the Brahmaputra. The Pandavas, when living in disguise, came as far as this place. Five miles from Pandu on the river bank is Gauhati and we have arrived at Tezpur from there. Gauhati, too, has an ancient name. It is believed that the battle between Hari and Hara took place near Tezpur, and devotees even show the footsteps of Rudra on the spot where they fought. In this way, wherever I go, I get proofs of the unity of India in the past.

PLANTER-RULE

Tezpur has a population of six thousand. Even so it has a municipality, a railway line, electricity and running water as well. How

¹ A Sanskrit word for "blood"

did it come to have all these things? The question can be readily answered. There are large tea gardens very near Tezpur. The railway line is for bringing the tea, which is then exported from this port. Indeed, the people believe that it is the planters who rule Assam. The British Government is there of course, but the real power is with the planters. Mr. Andrews says that it was to oblige the planters that the poor workers were beaten up at Chandpur.

The Brahmaputra water is not considered good for drinking, as the Ganga water is and, therefore, in many places, even with the river at their doorsteps, people use tap water. This water is filtered through some salts before it is used. In this very town a reservoir has been built at a height of ninety feet; water is filtered in it and then supplied to the people through taps.

EAST BENGAL

A SCENE BEYOND DESCRIPTION

After leaving Dibrugarh, the train passed through some parts whose beauty is still vivid before my eyes. Lumding Junction may be regarded as the border of Assam. After leaving it, the railway line ascends gradually. It climbs on, one ghat after another. It can be said that the ghats on the way to Poona can stand no comparison with these. There is a sudden change in the air. Even the sick would feel fresh. Wherever one looks, there are green hillocks. There is no limit to the clouds in these parts. Quite often one sees them below the hills. Sometimes we clearly see puffs of steam going up and mingling with the clouds. The large rivers flowing down the ghats seem to be running a race with the train. I have not seen such a sight anywhere else in the world. I have seen a number of them in Africa, England and other places, but I do not think there is any which could be compared with this.

Our destination was Silchar. It has a very heavy rainfall, no less than two hundred inches. Hence the humidity here is extreme. Wherever one looks, one finds pools of water. Silchar is at the foot of the hills. So we found the heat there to be oppressive. But the people's love was such that thousands had collected in the maidan despite the rain. At every place, the gift consisted of an address always inscribed on khadi. The days of ostentatious addresses are over. I was afraid that people in these parts would insist on English, but did not find that they did anywhere. People have grown so used to Hindustani that even

in Bengal anyone speaking in English would feel embarrassed. In Silchar, we stayed with a gentleman called Babu Kaminikumar Chanda. Before the days of non-co-operation, he was a member of the Imperial Council and practised as a lawyer. He has now boycotted the legislature, given up practice and is working for non-co-operation. His wife and daughters have taken up spinning. The spinning-wheels which I saw were rather inconvenient to work. They were small and none too strong, with a very small plank. They could produce very little yarn. Even so, the spinning-wheel has taken its place in the national schools and elsewhere.

After spending a day in Silchar, we went on to Sylhet. There, Muslims form about fifty-five per cent of the population. There is relatively little awakening among them here in these parts. It is because of this that only Rs. 216 were collected for the Khilafat and Smyrna Funds despite this large percentage of Muslims. The entire burden of the work is borne by a Muslim lawyer of Sylhet, named Maulvi Mahomed Abdulla. Thanks to his efforts, a school for weaving has been functioning. Incidental to this, some carpentry work is being done and spinning-wheels and looms are being made. This enterprising spirit has developed after the starting of non-co-operation. The meeting in Sylhet was convened in an *Idgah*¹. Mahomed Ali said that he had not seen anywhere else an *Idgah* as beautiful as this. It is located on the most beautiful hill in Sylhet. About five thousand people can be accommodated on that hill. All round it there is green grass and below there is an open maidan with a lake in it. Both the hill itself and the place below it were filled to capacity with people. The population of Sylhet must be 20,000, but, as people had come from the entire district, there were actually more than 20,000 at the meeting.

CHATGONG

From Sylhet we went on to Chittagong. Its, Bengali pronunciation is as I have spelt above. This is a large and beautiful port. It is known as “Chatgong” because it consists of four villages. There are many Arabs in this place and, as a great Pir once lived there, it is also known as Islamabad. Many Buddhists also used to live there and so they too had their own name for it. There is a large river near Chittagong and, only a small distance away, is the Bay of Bengal.

¹ Mosque

Because of the large number of hills, there is much natural beauty. The court and the railway office there are on the largest hill. A well-known lawyer of this place, Mr. N. Gupta, has much work to his credit. He has given up his large practice. He is captain of the volunteer corps. Hundreds of volunteers in Bengal have started wearing khadi shirts and the swaraj cap. All of them wear the dhoti. Volunteers on the Bombay side look upon the dhoti as an obstruction in their work. I did not find the volunteers in these parts thought so. Hundreds of thousands of Muslims in East Bengal wear the dhoti. The chief outward difference one finds is that, whereas Hindus are generally bare-headed, Muslims wear caps. After the spread of khadi, however some Bengali Hindu volunteers too have started wearing khadi caps.

IF ALI BROTHERS ARE ARRESTED?

On reaching Sylhet, I saw a telegram reporting the arrest of the Ali Brothers. I, therefore, began to refer to this in my speeches. I am quite convinced that the two brothers are completely innocent. By this I mean that so long as they adhere to non-violent non-co-operation, they will not be guilty of violence in thought, word or deed and will dissuade others from it. They are holding on to their pledge, straining every nerve in the effort. They are, however, brave men. It is not through fear that they refrain from employing violence or spreading the spirit of violence among others, but with a deliberate effort keep their anger and their emotions under control. When such innocent persons are put into prison, it is natural that the people's feelings should be aroused. If, at that time, the people turn towards the right-path they will be saved; if, on the contrary, they lose self-control and take the wrong path, they will be destroyed. The only way, therefore, is to remain peaceful on the imprisonment of the Ali Brothers and, giving up the indifference we have shown till now in following swadeshi, take to it with greater enthusiasm and make a bonfire of whatever foreign cloth we may still have with us. Everyone who has till now been slack in starting work on the spinning-wheel should shake off his indifference and spend some time daily in spinning. Those who still commit the sin of sending their children to Government schools should stop doing so; those lawyers who have not had, to this day, the courage to give up practice should now sacrifice it. Only if everyone acts in this manner shall we succeed on the Khilafat issue, win swaraj, be able soon to open the prison gates with

our own hands and secure the release of our innocent Brothers and others who are in prison through the wrath of the Government. I explained this to the audiences at great length.

VOLUNTEERS

From Chittagong onwards, I observed that the volunteers were working harder. I saw in them better capacity for enforcing discipline. Even though a large procession has been taken out at that place, no one rushed towards the car from behind. Thousands stood in lines in silence and let the car pass. As even cries of victory had been disallowed, the scene appeared grand to me.

STRIKERS

It was at this place that there was a large contingent of strike-ing [railway] workers. I spent much time with them. But as my speech to them is to appear in *Navajivan*,¹ I will say nothing about it here.

BARISAL

After leaving Chittagong, we went to Barisal. On the way to Barisal is a place called Chandpur. Here I saw the spot where innocent workers had been assaulted by the Gurkhas. My heart bled and our slavery was brought home to me. These were only poor labourers. India came to know something about them because of the strike that took place on their account. If the persons who were brought out of their homes at midnight at the 'point of the bayonet had been important men, the country would have been afire. Swaraj should mean equal justice for the rich and the poor. Will this be so in our swaraj? If it is not, that swaraj would not be real swaraj.

Barisal is the home of the well-known leader of venerable age, Babu Ashwini Kumar Dutt. The principal crop in these parts is paddy. Shri Ashwini Kumar Dutt had started in this place, forty years ago, a magnificent school at a cost of Rs. 50,000. Today, the school has joined the non-co-operation camp. Its principal is Shri Jagdish Babu. He is a life-long *brahmachari*². He is over fifty at present. Everyone told me that he is a learned man, with an excellent character and full of humility.

It can be said that the work of swadeshi is being carried on fairly

¹ *Vide* "Speech to Railway Workers, Chittagong", 31-8-1921.

² One who observes brahmacharya, celibacy

well in Barisal. In the foregoing schools, students showed me the yarn which they hand spun; it was very fine. There is a separate weaving department besides, with about eighty looms. At present they have goods worth Rs. 15,000 produced on the looms. Except in Shri Joshi's factory in Surat, nowhere have I observed as much cleanliness as I found in this weaving-shed. I did not find a single piece of yarn or a speck of dirt on the floor. The work, too, I saw, was clean. The weaving school was started only this year.

In Barisal, I found the volunteers to have better control than even those in Chittagong. Even though it was a vast gathering, excellent order was maintained. The volunteers had kept a way ready for us. We found things very easy for us as repeated requests had been made in advance that people should not try to touch my feet in reverence.

Barisal is one of those places where the Hindus and the Muslims, during the Bengal partition days, lived in harmony with one another despite their differences. Everyone gave credit for this to Babu Ashwini Kumar.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-9-1921

112. FALLEN SISTERS

There are many other experiences of Barisal worth recording. But I do not have the time to narrate all. There is one, however, which I simply cannot omit and that concerns the fallen sisters of Barisal. I shall never forget that scene. Some of these sisters of Barisal are enrolled on the Congress register and have even contributed to the Tilak Swaraj Fund. There are about 350 of them. They had written to me, asking me whether they could meet me. They wished to take greater part in Congress work. Why should they not, if elected, hold offices as well? On my return at night, from the meeting, I saw about a hundred women standing on one side. I took the hint. Very cordially, I led them to the terrace. I kept an interpreter with me and dismissed all the other men. I asked them to speak out without any reservations. There were, among them, four or five girls too about ten years of age. Some were past their youth. The remaining must have been between twenty and thirty. I give a summary of their conversation with me in the form of questions and answers.

QUESTION: I am glad, sisters, that you have come. You are as sisters and daughters to me. I wish to share your suffering. If, however, you keep anything from me, I shall not be able to help you.

ANSWER: We shall give truthful replies to all your questions.

Q: Some of you look advanced in age. Do these still follow your profession ?

A: No, sir. Those of us who are advanced in age beg for a living.

Q: Does this become you?

A: Hunger drives one to do anything.

Q: Are these little-girls in the same plight?

A: We have come here with the hope that you will show us some way out. None of us wishes to continue in this profession.

Q: What about those of you who are young? Are they not allured by the pleasures which this profession offers?

A: There may be a few who are.

Q: Do any of you get children?

A: Some get them.

Q: How many of you are there?

A: Three hundred and fifty.

Q: How many children in all do you have?

A: About ten at present.

Q: Are they boys or girls?

A: Six are girls, and the rest, boys

Q: What do you do with your sons?

A: One is grown up and married to one of the girls among

Q: Would you entrust your daughters to me?

A: We would if you undertook to look after them

Q: How many of you are serious about giving up your professions?

A: All.

Q: Will you do the work I suggest?

A: We know what you want. Some of us have already started spinning.

Q: I am very-glad to know that. But have those sisters who have started spinning given up their profession?

A: Do we not have our debts? How can we maintain ourselves by this work alone?

Q: How much do you earn at present? You feel ashamed in replying. I can understand your hesitation. I am talking to you, but my heart is in agony. Do let me know what you earn at the moment.

A: Many of us earn sixty rupees, which comes to two rupees a day.

Q: I know that you cannot earn that amount by spinning. You should, however, give up now the many tempting pleasures in which you indulge at present. It is not you alone whom I ask to do this. My wife also has stopped wearing jewellery. There are girls of tender age with me. Their parents can afford to give them jewellery and other things and yet they dress themselves in half-length saris of khadi and wear no jewellery. So it does not pain me at all to request you to give up your adornments.

A: We shall try to make our lives simple. Some will do so immediately, and some others by and by. One of us gave away all she had to the Ramakrishna Mission and now lives by begging.

Q: I bow to that sister. It is certainly good that she has given away everything. But I find that (turning towards her) you have sound limbs; it would, therefore, be more virtuous for you to live in a simple manner by spinning. I should like every man and woman in the country who is not a cripple to feel ashamed to beg. It is now possible to say this. We have discovered the spinning-wheel, which is our *kamadhenu*¹. I would not be satisfied even with you sisters taking up spinning. You should learn to weave and card as well. If you do, you will be able to earn all you need for a living.

A: Show us the way and we shall follow it.

Q: How many of you are ready to give up your profession to-morrow ?

In response to this, eleven sisters stood up at once. I asked them to think it over. They told me that their decision was final. They had already thought over the matter. The problem was how to make the thing possible. So I said:

Marriage is now out of the question for you. So, no matter how you have lived in the past, if henceforth you live pure lives the world will forget your sins. Further, you may keep yourselves aloof from the affairs of the people with homes and families, that is, can become

¹ Sacred cow which according to fable, yielded all that one desired

sannyasinis. You can serve Bharatavarsha. You could almost clothe the whole of Barisal if a large number of you spin and weave for twelve hours daily, singing devotional songs the while. If all the women of your class in the country give up their unworthy profession and take up the sacred work of spinning and weaving, the country will prosper in no time. I hope, therefore, that you eleven sisters will stick to your decision. I am here just on a tour, but I shall commend your case strongly to the local leaders and I am certain that the local Congress Committee will help you in every way. May God bless you.

Reader! I do not know how you, whether you are a man or a woman, will think or feel on reading this. I have not described to you everything. I have painted the scene as best as I could. One can have a true idea of the reality only by seeing it. I was all the while overpowered with shame and was trying to realize the magnitude of the crime perpetrated by man against woman. These women did not choose their fallen life; it is man who drove them to it. For the gratification of his desires, he has committed a great atrocity on women. Anyone who is moved by this should, by way of atonement if for nothing else, give a helping hand to fallen sisters. As the picture of these sisters grows more vivid in my mind, the thought strikes me,— what if they had been my sisters or daughters? Why this ‘if’? They are so indeed. It is my and every man’s task to work for their uplift. This is why the music of the spinning-wheel is so dear to me. The wheel is a kind of wall for the protection of women. I cannot think of any other thing which may serve as a support for such sisters in India. The task, however, cannot be accomplished till good men in every city take it up. In Barisal, the persons who are working among these sisters are the noble-minded Shri Sharat Kumar Ghosh and his co-worker, Shri Bhupati Babu, a lawyer who has joined non-co-operation. I merely took advantage of the ground prepared by them.

Sisters, now that you know, you too must reflect on this. You alone can reach the inner shrine in the hearts of the fallen sisters. Till you come forward to work for the emancipation of such women, efforts by a man like me will be unavailing.

Swaraj means the emancipation of the fallen.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-9-1921

113. MY NOTES

CHILDREN'S BLESSINGS

Many sisters write to me, as also many youths; it is only from children that I seldom get a letter. An unexpected letter has come from one and here it is:

I am very eager to do what you want us to do. I have started wearing khadi....¹ and I have believed in non-co-operation from the very beginning....² did not believe in it. But now he believes in it. If you get all the children in the country to join non-co-operation, your success will be certain.

At every place I ask for women's blessings in this holy struggle, for I believe that they are pure and tender-hearted, that they are free from guile or deceit. They sincerely believe this struggle to be for a holy cause.

But children are even more innocent at heart than women. In what way can one ask for their blessings? Can they take even one step without their parents' permission? Hence, I have done nothing in regard to children except to play with them. I was, therefore, pleased to get this letter. I can see that the language is not a child's. The letter seems to have been inspired by their teacher. But it is indeed what I ask and desire, that parents give their children education in the essentials of dharma, teach them non-co-operation with sin and the use of the weapon of non-violence and obtain their blessings in this sacred tasks.

Women, children, the lame, the crippled, all can join the movement, and they should. The greater the number of these that join, the sooner shall we win. There is no distinction here of high or low, of big or small. Anyone who has a big heart is big, and anyone with a small heart is small, is a cripple. Hence children's blessings are sweet to me. The Viceroy's goodwill will not help us to win swaraj, but the blessings of pure-hearted children certainly will.

HOW TO CELEBRATE DIWALI

A gentleman has been good enough to remind me that if as it

¹ The source omits the name.

² *ibid*

happened last year, I do not write about Diwali in time, many people will pay no attention to the matter and go in for unnecessary expenditure. There are two months yet for Diwali; during this period, we can win swaraj and celebrate a true festival of lights. We should, therefore, complete boycott of foreign cloth during this month and see that we are able to produce all our requirements of cloth with the help of the spinning-wheel so that we may have swaraj in October and then celebrate a true Diwali. The right way to prepare for the Diwali celebrations is to secure swaraj before that time. Why should it be impossible for us to win swaraj within this time? The only obstacle in our way is our weakness.

Supposing, however, we do not get swaraj before Diwali, what should we do? Most certainly, we should go into mourning. We should prepare no sweets, indulge in no feasting and no merrymaking and, refraining from all enjoyments, pray to God. It is only after he had practised penance for fourteen years that Bharat¹ saw the day when he could celebrate Diwali. Shall we act otherwise? Why sing when there is no occasion for singing? Why eat when there is no appetite? Why celebrate anything while we do not have swaraj? On Diwali day we should eat the simplest of meals. Rising early, we may sing devotional songs and spend the entire day in spinning. During these days, we should wear nothing but khadi and, if we wish to gift any clothes, we should give only khadi. How can we have fireworks at all?

There are, thus, two ways of celebrating Diwali; one is to celebrate it after we have won swaraj and the other is to work for securing swaraj. Which of the two courses we should adopt depends on the strength we possess.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-9-1921

¹ Brother of Rama in the epic Ramayana

114. SPEECH AT MIDNAPORE¹

September 13, 1921

Mr. Gandhi said:

From the nature of my reception at Midnapore I cannot persuade myself to believe that the educated folk of Bengal have been estranged from me or have discountenanced my movement or the attainment of swaraj.

He then gave his message to the people of Midnapore to adopt the swadeshi cult, to preserve the non-violent nature in their propaganda work and to strive for the Hindu-Mussulman unity. If these three things be uppermost in their thoughts, words and actions, said Mr. Gandhi, then the attainment of swaraj, he believed, could not be delayed beyond the end of the current year, if not by the end of October next.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 15-9-1921

115. TELEGRAM TO DR. T. S. S. RAJAN

[Before September 14, 1921]

ARRANGE A SHORT TOUR² WITH THREE-HOUR SILENCE DAILY.

The Hindu, 11-10-1921

116. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREW

ON THE WAY TO MADRAS,
September 14 [1921]

MY DEAREST CHARLIE,

Mahadev has given me a graphic description of Shantiniketan. It has made me sad. There is dissension there and even bitterness. You yourself are torn by internal conflict he says. I know that you will find your peace. Whether I lose you in the struggle or keep you, you will remain the same to me even as Polak is. I know too that you will do as the spirit leads you. I want you not to be sad on my account.

Mahadev tells me you resented my taking away Banarasidas. But

¹ At a college playground

² Of Madras Province

I am not taking him away. He wrote to me and told me too, that so far as you were concerned he was free to settle where he chose. From the point of view of the work he has to do, I told him Bombay was better. And he made the choice. But he is free to remain in Shantiniketan and I shall still try to find money for him so long as he works for the cause of the emigrants.

Here is Natrajan's¹ letter about your proposed visit to East Africa.

I expect to be in Madras for eight days. With love.

Yours

MOHAN

PS.,

CARE CONGRESS OFFICE

I have just seen the enclosed. I read the original in *The Statesman*². I felt that no relative of the Poet could have written such an untruth. No relative was present at the interview³, and I took no notice of it. But evidently there is a relative at the back. Or the *Bengalee* would not have taken it seriously. Will not the Poet read it and if it is an untruth will he not contradict it? Even you can. But please consult the Poet and do what you can.

From a photostat: G.N. 987

117. MESSAGE TO BOMBAY CITIZENS

[After *September 14, 1921*]⁴

The following message sent by Mahatma Gandhi to Bombay was booked to us from Waltair yesterday, but has not till now been received.

Maulana Mahomed Ali was arrested at Waltair under Sections 107 and 108 to be called upon to give security, to be on good behaviour for one year. The place and date of trial is unknown. The Begum Sahiba and Mr. Hayat were permitted to see him after arrest.

He and I were going to address a meeting outside the Station.

¹ Editor, *The Indian Social Reformer*, Bombay

² Of 10-9-1921

³ At Calcutta on September 6, C. F. Andrews being present

⁴ Mahomed Ali's arrest referred to in the message was on September 14.

He was arrested. I continued going to the meeting and addressed them.

There is no cause for sorrow, but every cause for congratulation. There should be no hartal. Perfect peace and calmness should be observed. I regard the arrest as a prelude to swaraj and the redress of Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs, if we can remain non-violent, retain Hindu-Muslim unity despite the madness of some Moplahs, and fulfil the swadeshi programme.

I hope every Indian, man or woman, will completely boycott foreign cloth and take up spinning or weaving during every spare minute.

By striving like the Maulana, be insistent on religious and national rights.

Let us earn imprisonment. I am conscious of the Maulana's innocence and I am sure the imprisonment of the innocent will enable the nation to reach the cherished goal.

The Maulana was quite calm. So is the Begum sahiba. She accompanies me during travel. So does Maulana Azad Sobhani.

GANDHI

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 18-9-1921

118. NOTES

EFFECT OF HARTAL

Mr. Konda Venkatappayya justifies the hartal in Guntur and gives some other valuable information in a letter I have just received. I give it below for the benefit of the reader¹.

As regards the hartal, you hold it to be a bad step. However, please allow me to state that the awakening which the people of Guntur have had since the days of the hartal was almost impossible to secure even through years of strenuous propaganda. The restraint and self-discipline, which they have cultivated within this short time, are also remarkable. No doubt there was some disturbance on the fifth day of the hartal. . . The reason for our release is not the discovery of anything to contradict the evidence against us, but the fact that the voice of the people was against him [the District Magistrate]. The merchants closed the shops, the pleaders boycotted the courts, the people

¹ Only relevant portions are reproduced here.

assembling daily in huge monster meetings were stoutly protesting against the proceedings more than all. There was a move amongst the clerks in the Government offices to resign their appointments. Almost everybody in the town felt the injustice of the proceedings. These were the causes of our release. Under the circumstances it is difficult to overestimate the importance and the utility of the hartal. The driving force, which had brought about such union amongst the people, is in my humble opinion not a little due to the hartal, which was most willingly undertaken by the merchants and heartily appreciated by the people in general. Arrangements were made to supply necessaries to the poor and the needy by keeping a few of the shops open. At a large meeting of the labourers in the factories, shops and railway goods-sheds, help voluntarily offered to them by way of relief to the needy amongst them was refused. They stated that they would most willingly suffer for the sake of the cause rather than receive any help.

The above facts have, I hope, at least disclosed some extenuating circumstances. . . .

My general opposition to hartal without permission of the Working Committee must still stand. That the hartal in Guntur bore good fruit is creditable to Guntur and its workers. But the very description given by Mr. Venkatappayya shows, that it is attended with danger and requires skilful handling. My own analysis of the situation in Guntur is, that the arrests prior to the hartal galvanized the Gunturians into activity. In so far as the hartal overawed the Government into discharging the leaders, it was bad. I would again suggest, that it was the renunciation of pleaders and the threatened resignation of the clerks which brought about the release. And if it was the hartal which determined the renunciation of the pleaders, it was decidedly good. What we need is greater response to the concrete programme of non-co-operation, and if we can get it by hartals, I for one would always advocate them.

Young India, 15-9-1921

119. A PROTEST AGAINST BURNING

To
THE EDITOR
YOUNG INDIA

SIR,

Your idea that all foreign cloth collected on the 1st of August should either be burnt or sent to Smyrna, with the support it found in the last meeting of the All-India Congress Committee, has bewildered me; and the issues it involves appear to me to be so far-reaching, that I have ventured to write this letter. The first of August is come and gone, and that which is destroyed can never be restored; but in our calmer moments we may reflect on our actions in a different light from that in which they were conceived, and prevent a recurrence of what on reconsideration we should find to be wrong.

The non-co-operation movement, shorn of its superfluities and the passing tangle of conflicting opinion, has always appeared to me to be a symbol of India's regeneration, and a mighty echo of the voice of its soul, forgotten through many years of abandoned ideals, broken power, selfishness and ignorance, and the spirit of ahimsa in which it was conceived was to me the unfailing cure of all ills of life, should man rise to that height of the soul. But I cannot help thinking of the burning of all foreign cloth in honour of the memory of Lokamanya Tilak as a travesty of what, in my humble opinion, I regarded as the lofty ideals that inspired the movement.

It is argued that all foreign cloth should be burnt, because (1) it is a mark of dependence and a badge of slavery for the rich and poor alike, and (2) it is a garb of sin forced on India by the wickedness of the East India Company and perpetuated by our own helplessness and ignorance. In both cases we can get rid of it only by destruction; and the clothing of even the poorest among us with such cloth would be as sinful as offering rotten or poisonous food to a hungry man. But, with strange inconsistency, we are told that it may, however, be sent to the people of Smyrna.

I do not wish to discuss the assumptions on which the foregoing arguments are based; but, while I realize the necessity of swadeshi and believe in the moral and partially economic value of khadi, the revival of the spinning-wheel and restoration of the great staple industry of India, I think it would be easy to prove that, so long as the total imports of India exceed four times the value of its foreign cloth, we are as

many times dependent and so slaves for our other requirements, which, too, should on that account be burnt. It could even more convincingly be argued that books written by foreigners and in a foreign language, machinery, medicines and other products of modern science and human skill and intelligence, in which, for the present, they have advanced more than we have, are a much deeper mark of dependence and a greater badge of slavery, mental and physical, than foreign cloth, and we should get rid of these as well by destruction. And then, in the opinion of some, why not in the same way of the foreigner too—the source of all our ills? If, again, by yielding to the wickedness of the East India Company which crippled our weavers and killed our industry, Indians of those times and through them their sons of today are guilty of sin, which may be atoned for only by setting fire to the cause of their crime, why not burn only *English* cloth and spare the rest? Again, if one may not offer rotten or poisonous food to a poor and starving Indian, might he offer it to a helpless Turk? To send our cast-off foreign clothes to the people of Smyrna appears to me to be much more sinful than offering them to our own countrymen; for it is dishonourable for one nation to offer its shreds and leavings to another, and the wrong done to Islam by the foreigners, the allies, is more recent and in the opinion of many, greater than the harm done by the East India Company to ourselves; and can we regard it moral or in any way justifiable to send to the people of Smyrna cloth manufactured by those very foreigners and cast off by us as the garb of sin? Well may such charity be said to degrade both the giver and the receiver.

In conclusion I would point out, Sir, that the analogy between rotten food and foreign cloth can hardly be maintained; and so long as there are thousands of our own countrymen who are literally naked and enough khadi has not been manufactured to clothe them, there are many who would regard it as a sin to burn a single yard of foreign cloth or send it out of the country when it is required more urgently at home.

I do not question the spectacular effect of destruction by fire or its efficacy to catch popular imagination and rouse quick, if temporary, enthusiasm; but I cannot think that, you have been actuated by such considerations in the face of such utter need of so many of our poor, naked and famine-stricken countrymen.

Yours, etc.,

N. V. THADANI¹

HYDERABAD,

¹ Principal, Hindu College, Delhi and Sind National College, Hyderabad, Sind; educationist; author of the *Mystery of the Mahabharata*

SIND,

3rd August, 1921

I gladly print Mr. Thadani's closely reasoned letter. I have already admitted the weakness of the argument in favour of sending foreign cloth to Smyrna. But it is a concession to Mussulaman opinion. Nevertheless the use of foreign cloth is poison in India, certainly not in Smyrna; for the cloth industry has never been Smyrna's lung, as it has been India's. In burning foreign clothes we are burning our taste for foreign fineries. The effect upon India would have been equally disastrous, if Japan instead of England has tempted us in the first instance. The motive was to punish ourselves and not the foreigner. We are boycotting not British but all foreign cloth. The one would be meaningless as the other is a sacred duty. The idea of burning springs not from hate but from repentance of our past sins. A moment's reflection must show the writer, that burning must make us earnest and thus stimulate, as it has stimulated, fresh manufacture. The disease had gone so deep that a surgical operation was a necessity. The ill-clad or the naked millions of India need no charity but work that they can easily do in their cottages. Have not the poor any feeling of self-respect or patriotism? Is the gospel of swadeshi only for the well-to-do?

Young India, 15-9-1921.

120. CONFUSION OF THOUGHT

TO
THE EDITOR
YOUNG INDIA

DEAR SIR,

I have seen your argument about the utility of picketing. The very same arguments appealed to non-co-operating students of Bengal, when they fell flat before the gates of Calcutta University College and the Senate House, and thereby hoped to dissuade the law examinees from taking their examinations. With folded hands they entreated their examinee brothers not to drink the insidious poison. And you are certainly aware of the amount of success they obtained in their novel way of picketing. The examination halls wore a deserted appearance and a subsequent supplementary examination had to be held. But it was you who then disapproved of the picketing, and everything had to be given up. The results so nobly achieved were lost, and Bengal repents today that her youths have a tarnished fame on their brow to be proud of. When the picketing party laid themselves flat before the gateways, they did so on the very argument that "diseased persons have got to be helped against themselves." As brothers, who deemed themselves blessed in truly understanding your advice about modern education and in possessing boldness enough to leave their colleges, they thought it a duty incumbent upon them to dissuade their brothers from appearing at the examination. Lying flat on the ground is indisputably an oriental way of moral persuasion. It was nothing but humility preached in its real aspect. If I am truly inspired with the feeling that drinking is a dire vice and everyone has to be saved from its clutches, shall I be deemed using physical force if I lie down in front of the drinking den and ask the intending drinker to trample over my body and get his drink? Here in this case I appeal to his heart. And by moral persuasion I understand appealing to the heart. By laying themselves in front of the Senate House, the Bengal pickets appealed to the heart of the examinees and certainly that was moral persuasion. I shall be glad to know why you disapproved of the method of the Bengal pickets, as they used to appeal to the heart of the examinees and did not use physical force in any way.

BENARES,
12th July, 1921

S. N. RAY

The writer assumes without warrant, that I would countenance liquor shop picketing of the type described in his letter. If the

unseemly obstruction of the passage had been persisted in, there would have been a revulsion of feeling in the country, such as would have thoroughly discredited non-co-operation. Moreover, it is a far-fetched analogy to compare the drink habit with education. In the matter of education, it is a conflict of ideals, and non-co-operation is for this generation a new ideal. Whereas in the matter of drink, the conflict is between abstinence and a recognized vice. A young lad considers it a virtue to go to a Government college, a drinker knows drinking to be an evil habit. The educated youth read newspapers, know all the arguments for and against. Visitors to liquor shops read nothing, and not being in the habit of attending meetings, hear nothing. Picketing, therefore, in the case of colleges and schools was not only superfluous, but in the manner it was carried out, constituted a sort of violence utterly unjustified in any event, and for a non-co-operator a breach of his pledge. I am glad, therefore, that the picketing stopped, if it did, as a result of my severe criticism.

Young India, 15-9-1921

121. OUR FALLEN SISTERS

The first occasion I had of meeting those women who earn their livelihood out of their shame was at Coconada in the Andhra province. There it was a few moments' interview with only half a dozen of them. The second occasion was at Barisal.¹ Over one hundred of them met by appointment. They had sent a letter in advance, asking for an interview and telling me that they had become members of the Congress and subscribed to the Tilak Swaraj Fund, but could not understand my advice not to seek office in the various Congress Committees. They wound up by saying, that they wished to seek my advice as to their future welfare. The gentleman who handed me the letter did so with great hesitation, not knowing whether I would be offended or pleased with the receipt of the letter. I put him at ease by assuring him, that it was my duty to serve these sisters if I could in any way.

For me the two hours I passed with these sisters is a treasured memory. They told me that they were over 350 in the midst of a population of about 20,000 men, women and children. They represent

¹ *Vide* "The Fallen Sisters", 11-9-1921.

the shame of the men of Barisal, and the sooner Barisal gets rid of it, the better for its great name. And what is true of Barisal is true, I fear, of every city. I mention Barisal, therefore, as an illustration. The credit of having thought of serving these sisters belongs to some young men of Barisal. Let me hope that Barisal will soon be able to claim the credit, too, of having eradicated the evil.

Of all the evils for which man has made himself responsible, none is so degrading, so shocking or so brutal as his abuse of the better half of humanity to me, the female sex, not the weaker sex. It is the nobler of the two, for it is even today the embodiment of sacrifice, silent suffering, humility, faith and knowledge. A woman's intuition has often proved truer than man's arrogant assumption of superior knowledge. There is method in putting Sita before Rama and Radha before Krishna. Let us not delude ourselves into the belief, that this gambling in vice has a place in our evolution because it is rampant and in some cases even state-regulated in civilized Europe. Let us not also perpetuate the vice on the strength of Indian precedents. We should cease to grow the moment we cease to discriminate between virtue and vice, and slavishly copy the past which we do not fully know. We are proud heirs to all that was noblest and best in the by-gone age. We must not dishonour our heritage by multiplying past errors. In a self-respecting India, is not every woman's virtue as much every man's concern as his own sister's ? Swaraj means ability to regard every inhabitant of India as our own brother or sister.

And so, as a man I hung my head in shame before these hundred sisters. Some were elderly, most were between twenty and thirty, and two or three were girls below twelve. Between them all, they told me, they had six girls and four boys, the eldest of whom was married to one of their own class. The girls were to be brought up to the same life as themselves, unless something else was possible. That these women should have considered their lot to be beyond repair, was like a stab in the living flesh. And yet they were intelligent and modest. Their talk was dignified, their answers were clean and straight. And for the moment their determination was as firm as that of any satyagrahi. Eleven of them promised to give up their present life and take to spinning and weaving from the following day, if they received a helping hand. The others said they would take time to think, for they did not wish to deceive me.

Here is work for the citizens of Barisal. Here is work for

all true servants of India, men as well as women. If there are 350 unhappy sisters in a population of 20,000, there may be 52,50,000 in all India. But I flatter myself with the belief that four fifths of the population of India, which live in the villages and are purely agricultural, are not touched by the vice. The lowest figure for all India would therefore be 10,50,000 women living on the sale of their own honour. Before these unfortunate sisters could be weaned from their degradation, two conditions have to be fulfilled. We men must learn to control our passions, and these women should be found a calling that would enable them to earn an honourable living. The movement of non-co-operation is nothing, if it does not purify us and restrain our evil passions. And there is no occupation but spinning and weaving which all can take up without overcrowding. These sisters, the vast majority of them, need not think of marriage. They agreed that they could not. They must therefore become the true *sannyasinis* of India. Having no cares of life but of service, they can spin and weave to their heart's content. One million fifty thousand women diligently weaving every day for eight hours means that number of rupees per day for an impoverished India. These sisters told me they earned as much as two rupees per day. But then they admitted, that they had many things needed to pander to man's lust, which they could discard when they took to spinning and weaving, reverting to a natural life. By the time I had finished with my interviews, they knew without my telling them, why they could not be office-bearers in Congress Committees if they did not give up their sinfulness. None could officiate at the altar of swaraj, who did not approach it with pure hands and a pure heart.

Young India, 15-9-1921

122. REPRESSION IN SIND

The following note¹ was prepared at the end of June by Mr. Ghanshyam Jethanand Shivdasani², and like the others has lain with me unattended to during my wanderings. The reader is familiar with the Matiari shooting, and the trial and convictions of Swami Krishnanand³ and others, which took place after June.

Young India, 15-9-1921

¹ Published in *Young India*, 15-9-1921 and 22-9-1921; not reproduced here.

² Deputy Leader, Sind Congress Assembly Party; Secretary, Lok Sevak Mandal, Bombay .

³ *Vide* "A Mock Trial", 25-8-1921; also Appendix "Prof. T. L. Vaswani's reply", 25-8-1921.

123. APPEAL TO HINDI-LOVERS

MADRAS,
September 15, 1921

DEAR HINDI-LOVERS,

For three years now, the work of spreading Hindi has been going on in Madras. Money was collected in Bombay for this special purpose. However, the work has now increased to such an extent that this amount as well as what is forthcoming in Madras itself is no longer adequate. I am convinced that the work in Madras is going on well.

If you are satisfied and if you have sympathy for this great cause, I earnestly appeal to you to give liberally all you can by way of financial assistance.

Yours,

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi : S.N. 8156

124. INTERVIEW TO "DAILY EXPRESS"

MADRAS
September 15, 1921

Taking advantage of the arrival of Mr. Gandhi in Madras on Thursday morning, a representative of the *Daily Express* called on the non-co-operation leader and interviewed him in regard to various questions that are at present agitating the minds of the public in which Mr. Gandhi is either directly or indirectly concerned.

Asked what proportion of the Crore Fund had been collected and where the money had been deposited, Mr. Gandhi said that the bulk of the Fund had been collected and was deposited with the several provincial committees. So far as he was aware the monies were deposited in various banks the largest part of it being deposited in Bombay.

[REPRESENTATIVE :] How will the amount collected be utilized ?

[GANDHI:] The amount collected is being utilized chiefly for swadeshi, i.e., for encouraging hand-spinning and hand-weaving, in national educational institutions, for famine relief and in connection with the temperance campaign and the untouchables. You

may take it roughly that 50 per cent will be devoted to hand-spinning and hand-weaving.

In view of the outbreaks of violence that have occurred in Malabar, and in other centres previously, what steps will you take to ensure adherence to non-violence ?

The only answer that I can give to this question is that I will do it by speeches, by talks in private also, by correspondence and by popularizing hand-spinning, because I consider hand-spinning as the greatest and the most efficacious antidote. If I could only get the whole of India to become busy with this development, it would stop all violence in the movement

Do you think that there are bound to be exceptions to observance of nonviolence as in the case of the Moplahs?

Yes, there are bound to be exceptions, but I am positive that there would have been much greater violence, more widespread, if there had been no non-co-operation continuously emphasizing non-violence. I should like to answer fully and frankly all the questions that may arise from my answer in order to make my position absolutely clear.

With regard to the question of picketing, I take it that there is a strong body of opinion that objects to picketing. If you find, after experience, that the two opposing forces would result in any form of disorder, do you intend that, in spite of that, picketing shall continue?

Yes, it will continue so long as there is no violence used by those who are picketing. I would not take into consideration the violence that may be offered either by the liquor dealers or by the people who want to visit these liquor shops; the third party being the Government. In several cases in Bihar, the Magistrate had actually given half a crown and said: "Here's half a crown, you go and insist upon drinking, because it is your birthright and you are entitled to drink." So of that kind of violence, I shall take no notice so long as the non-violent party remain true to their principles, but if they do not remain true then, of course, all picketing will cease.

Then there is the question of the boycott of cloth. My information here is that there has been an increase in the price of the Indian goods that come from Bombay. If the boycott of imported goods continues, I calculate myself that there is bound to be a further increase in the price of Indian-made goods. If that occurs, will it affect your campaign?

It would not affect my campaign because it is really not a question of the mills. I continually bring to the ears of the people that true swadeshi means home-production. I therefore want the people to be totally indifferent to the mill manufactures.

Even of the Indian mills?

Yes. I am not boycotting Indian mills as such, because that is unnecessary. But if the people fall back upon Indian mills, only then I will boycott Indian mills also because they will not solve the ultimate problem. I know that the swadeshi gospel has not been understood; certainly it has not been assimilated by all the body of workers, much less by the critics.

Is it your object not to support at all even the consumption of Indian mill-made goods ? We have a strike here now in which five or six thousand of the workers in one of the Indian mills have come out. Would it not be possible in accordance with your own programme to provide a percentage of them with handlooms instead of insisting upon all of them going back to the mills?

I am doing that; I have done that in the case of the Assam-Bengal strike.¹ They had struck work out of sympathy for the outraged coolies from the Assam tea plantations. The Government have not repaired the mischief which they had done and ruthlessly maltreated them. If I can prevent all the men from rejoining as on the Assam-Bengal Railway and Steamer Co.'s, I shall do so and I shall advise the Congress Committee to vote as much as they can in order to give every one of the strikers, a spinning-wheel and to give groups of them handlooms, and establish for them a colony to give them every facility. When I heard of a strike of women in mills I sent similar messages. We are trying to reduce the number of women labourers.

Do you solely object to the conditions under which the workers have to live or do you object to the introduction of Western machinery? If the conditions in all the Indian mills were improved to a certain extent, and they were given satisfactory housing and satisfactory wages, would your objection to mill production continue?

Yes, my objection will continue because it is not based on antipathy to Western machinery. Here the question of West and East does not arise. The question of West and East is ever present in my mind but in connection with the machinery as you have put it, I am against concentrating the manufacture of cloth in the hands of a few, just as I would be against concentrating the cooking of our food in

¹ *Vide* "Speech to Railway Workers, Chittagong", 31-8-1921.

hotels. Millions of people in India used to occupy themselves usefully and honourably at least eight hours per day. Today the most tragic result of the British rule has been— unintended by the British people I admit—that over 20 millions of the people of India remain in enforced idleness for six months in the year.

If further outbreaks cannot be prevented, will you abandon the non-cooperation movement as you formerly abandoned the civil disobedience campaign ?¹

I am sorry I cannot do so for the civil disobedience campaign was aimed at a particular Act. This non-cooperation movement is aimed at the whole system of Government and as it is aimed at the whole system of Government it is not possible for me to abandon it. I cannot possibly say so, because it is a big movement and there are tremendous risks to be taken, in order to do away with the greatest of them which is the continuance of this system.

In the event of Great Britain conceding Dominion Status to India, what, in your opinion, are the essential features of such a proposed settlement?

If the Dominion Status is conceded, I must state the Khilafat and the Punjab questions will have to be put out of the way.

If the whole issue of the Khilafat were referred to the arbitration of the League of Nations, would you agree to abide by the decision as both England and France have agreed in relation to the Silesian question?

I could not do so, because it would be camouflage. I know it depends upon Mr. Lloyd George². Mr. Lloyd George has to go as far as the nation would let him. I do not believe that Mr. Lloyd George is deliberately mischievous. He has become entangled with the reactionary element in the British Empire.

If the dispute were referred to the League of Nations it would be entirely out of his hands.

But he would still be able to affect the deliberations of the League. I will put it in a concrete way. Is there anything to prevent the Prime Minister from withdrawing all the forces from Mesopotamia and having nothing to do with Mesopotamia ? The mandate in Mesopotamia and Palestine is with the British nation. I marvel why if they are honest they are insistent upon their remaining in Mesopotamia.

¹ *Vide* "Press statement on suspension of civil disobedience" and "Letter to the press on suspension of civil disobedience", 21-7-1919.

² British statesman; Prime Minister of England, 1916-22

Would you assent to the idea that the disputed territories should be transferred to Turkey under a mandate from the League of Nations ?

I do not mind at all, but there will arise general difficulties. What I say is that there should be absolutely Muslim control without the slightest control of the Great Powers, directly or indirectly, over all the Peninsula and there should be no interference whatsoever with Turkey. If the Arabs do not want anything to do with Turks, let them fight it out amongst themselves.

Would you be content if the British were to retain control at Basra but not over the remainder of Mesopotamia?

It cannot be done. No, let trade proceed without political interference, or control.

Failing such a settlement, do you agree with Mr. Mahomed Ali that the Congress at Ahmedabad should declare for an Independent Republic?

No, for this reason, that a mere declaration of independence would not satisfy me. It would not satisfy me to declare an Independent Republic. To do that we must be able to fight with the British Government not along the lines of violence, but non-violence. But we are not sufficiently organized. Lord Salisbury used to say when he was irritated by some questions, "It does not matter; somehow or other we have muddled through to success up to now, so the hon'ble member need not worry." We have done in the same way. I am not taking the sole credit for retaining non-violent non-cooperation. God has come to our help and assistance.

If India were to receive Dominion Home Rule, would not that be regarded as settling the issues raised by the Punjab automatically?

Yes, it would settle the issues automatically.

Then your suggestion of a settlement is that the Government of India should be made wholly responsible to the legislature?

Indian Legislature. Oh, yes; certainly.

Are you anxious to take over the whole control of the Army at once, or would you make an exception of that subject?

I think we are entirely ready to take up the whole control of the Army which means practically disbanding three-fourths of it. I would keep just enough to police India.

If the Army were reduced to that extent, do you not apprehend anything aggressive from the frontier territories?

No.

My information derived from military sources, is that there are over half-a-million armed men on the frontier?

You are right, I agree. These tribes have frequently attacked India hitherto.

Why hitherto? Why do you think they will refrain from doing so when India possesses Home Rule?

In the first instance the world's views have changed and secondly the preparations that are now made in Afghanistan are really in support of the Khilafat. But when the Khilafat question is out of the way, then the Afghan people will not have any design on India. The warrior tribes who live on loot and plunder are given lakhs of rupees as subsidy. I would also give them a little subsidy. When the charkha comes into force in India, I would introduce the spinning-wheel among the Afghan tribes also and thus prevent them from attacking the Indian territories. I feel that the tribesmen are in their own way God-fearing people.

Referring to the Moplah outbreak Mr. Gandhi continued:

I have not yet been able to understand the genesis of the outbreak except the provocation—very great provocation—which I believe was caused when the mosque was surrounded. I do not understand the looting of so many Hindu houses. Whilst I was in Calcutta I had what seemed definite information that there were only three cases of forced conversions. But I now understand that some other cases also have been brought to the notice of the Congress people and they are very much regretted. The Moplah lawlessness is a thing which takes one back, but I do not think that it seriously interferes with the Hindu-Muslim unity.

It shows the gigantic nature of the task which the party of non-violent non-co-operators has set before itself and to a superficial observer it might appear that nowadays without some degree of violence or exercise of force all these turbulent things cannot be held under check. That is not what I believe and that is the reason why I put a swadeshi programme to the forefront as an indispensable condition. If we can bring it out that will itself, in my opinion, ensure such a degree of non-violence as is necessary to change the life of India.

In so far as the Moplahs are concerned, instead of manufacturing piecegoods they have manufactured arms?

But that is a reflection really upon the British administrators that instead of getting hold of all these turbulent tribes and making them peaceful they have used them for their own base ends. It is a sad thing which the future historians will have to note against the British administration. I am coming now in touch with the Nepalese. They are a splendid people. I met a little girl and I parted with her the day before yesterday. She is spreading the knowledge of non-violence among the Nepalese, because there never has the slightest attempt been made to make them peaceful.

If it is the case that the British administration has failed to keep the Moplahs non-violent, is it not the case that your movement has failed equally?

I cannot say that it has failed owing to my movement. My movement started not twelve months ago and against heavy odds, Government laughing, my own people laughing. It was most difficult for me to make them understand the word "non-co-operators". No reformer has been so hampered as I am. I know that the difficulties are all of my own making, but I had no choice. If, therefore, I say that non-violence is a matter of mere policy, they do not understand what this policy is. When dealing with the Hindu-Muslim problem, non-violence must be our final creed. If I can succeed in doing that, then of course, we shall attain our goal quickly. The British Government intervenes if a non-co-operator goes to these Moplah districts. He is prevented. It is our case that those places, where this violence has taken place, were those least touched by non-co-operators.

Don't you think that the whole of the Moplahs are under the control of the religious leaders and not of the political?

True; that is why I have brought religion into politics. I have endeavoured and endeavoured very successfully to make these religious pandits understand that they cannot exist without the political life of the country affecting them; otherwise the largest part of theirs goes out of their control. Here is a disturbance going on. I could have taken one of the Ali Brothers and quelled it in no time if the Government system had been honestly administered. If we had failed it would have cost us our lives. We would have been killed. It would have been nice for the Government and for us; but when we died, out of our ashes the spirit of non-violence would have risen.

The Hindu, 16-9-1921

125. INTERVIEW TO "MADRAS MAIL"¹

[September 15, 1921]

[REPRESENTATIVE:] You look upon the propaganda of boycott of foreign cloth as the constructive side of non-co-operation though it involves the destruction of the existing stock of foreign cloth?

[GANDHI:] I look upon swadeshi as the constructive side of non-co-operation, as I expect it to lead to the manufacture of all the cloth needed by the nation by means of hand-spinning and hand-weaving.

Do you think, Mr. Gandhi, it is possible in view of the existing conditions of the country to produce sufficient to meet all the needs of the people?

Certainly, even as it is possible for us to cook our daily supply of food, if the manufacture of cloth be our hands as it was only two or three hundred years ago.

Have not the conditions altered materially with the introduction of machinery, apart from other causes?

No disturbance has been really created by machinery, such as that it cannot be corrected. It is a mental state which has got to be put right. It is not as though hands, nor is it as if all the hours that the nation devoted to manufacturing cloth and spinning yarn, are now utilized to any other or better purpose. The hours are there unutilized and the hands as well.

You believe that the concentration of manufacture under the factory system could equally and effectively be carried out for the purpose of meeting the needs of the nation by hand-spinning on an extensive scale in the homes and cottages of the people?

Certainly.

In other words you think it is only a question of extensive manufacture through the agency of hand-spinning and hand-weaving in rural areas in the country rather than intensive manufacture under the factory system?

Most certainly so.

Do you think that all our modern requirements could be adequately and effectively answered without the use of machinery?

¹ A representative of *Madras Mail* called on Gandhiji at Ramjee Kalyanjee's residence at San Thome.

Modern requirements so far as cloth is concerned, yes, they can be; but during the transition stage the nation will have to do with a limited supply till the beautiful fabric of India is revived.

But how is it necessary, Mr. Gandhi, to destroy the existing stock in use of foreign cloth in this country to achieve this end?

Because the nation has to realize the crime that it has committed in abandoning its home industries and taking to foreign cloth, it is a necessary penance in order to demonstrate a change of heart.

Penance, Mr. Gandhi, presupposes a sincere feeling for the abandonment of the practice or ideal of the people?

Certainly.

Do you think that the people of this country have actively helped in the destruction of indigenous industries or do you not agree that in any system of competition between manual labour and machinery, indigenous industries are bound to go to the wall?

Although under diabolical pressure, nevertheless people deliberately sacrificed their own national industries when there was no question of competition.

I don't quite follow you, Mr. Gandhi.

It is historically true that when we gave up our home industries there was no competition between the handloom and the machinery.

But I thought that people had not voluntarily given up their industries, but found themselves unable to cope with the competition of machine-made goods imported into this country?

My point is that owing to the political advantages which the East India Company had obtained they were in a position to force upon the people machine-made goods.

But were not these machine-made goods at the same time cheaper than indigenous products?

Never. Over and over again the people of the country were terrorized into giving up their occupation of cloth manufacture. By such means as for instance the cutting of their own thumbs by the weavers themselves when their labour was impressed.

But could it have gone on such a scale as to effectively kill indigenous industries ?

Certainly, the continuance of the process over a certain length of time was bound to have that effect unless people treated those home manufactures as a part of their religion.

Do you consider the political conditions now favourable in your opinion for a revival Of indigenous industries, which you contend had been killed by the East India Company?

I consider the conditions very favourable because people realize that if hand-spinning and hand-weaving are not revived now, there is nothing but deeper and deeper starvation day after day staring the nation in the face.

It is part of your programme, then, to enforce this lesson on the masses ?

Yes. It is being done on a very vast scale.

At the same time if the factory system and machine-made goods coming to India are continued, do you expect any very large success for the movement even though people, out of considerations of patriotism and economy, agree to devote their attention to hand-spinning ?

Your question supplies the answer. If people resort to these things from patriotic and economic motives then it can be done.

But does your study of our people and their present condition encourage you to think that patriotic considerations will prove such a powerful factor as to give a strong impetus to indigenous manufactures on a large scale, unaided by the State?

Yes, certainly. That is why I say that hand-spinning and hand-weaving accepted by the people on a universal scale ought to lead automatically to swaraj.

But internal disturbances of the kind in Malabar, you will agree, Mr. Gandhi, are a powerful set-back to the movement of non-violent non-co-operation ?

My answer is yes.

Do you not also agree, Mr. Gandhi, that your movement has a great deal to do with this outbreak in Malabar?

All the information that I have collected, and which I have no reason to doubt, points to the fact that violence broke out in those parts which were least touched by the activities of non-co-operators and my information goes further that non-co-operators were deliberately prevented from entering those disturbed parts.

Notwithstanding protests from respectable leaders not in your camp against the evil consequences of non co-operation on a large scale, you still think that it is the only means, if not the chief means for a people situated like India to attain swaraj?

It is the only means; in no other way, can India attain swaraj for a century.

So long as there are large masses of people who do not come under your

influence directly but who read of non-co-operation in the Press and hear on platforms, do you not think that the movement is calculated to create ill-feeling against those in authority without giving them suggestions as regards ways and means to remedy the state of affairs which they are made to believe is attributable to the existing Government?

That question assumes that nobody does really preach about non-violence.

But I think you will agree, if I am not flattering you, that it wants Mr. Gandhi in every quarter where there is trouble of one kind or other believed to be consequent on the spread of the doctrine of non-co-operation ?

I cannot flatter myself that it required my personal presence everywhere to bring about a tranquil atmosphere because I know there are many who have been able to bring about and retain that atmosphere. I do believe that if the Government had allowed Mr. Yakub Hassan to go to Malabar what had happened there afterwards would have been prevented and I am positive that the Government, instead of giving a change of air to Mahomed Ali at Waltair, had invited him to Malabar, he would have brought about perfect peace and many lives would have been saved and many Hindu households would have been left undisturbed by the Moplah fanatics.

But what do you think will be the effect on your movement of the arrest of Mr. Mahomed Ali? Will it conduce to make the Mohammedan section among your followers violent?

I hope not, and I believe that if India remains non-violent and yet firm, I know swaraj is within sight. Seeing that Government do not want to consult public opinion, the only alternative left open to Government is to kill out those who represent that opinion at least temporarily.

Is that what you say they are doing?

I have no doubt about it in my mind.

But so long as there are these big "IFs" underlying your ideal you will not save people for fearing that, despite the best of goodwill in the world on your part, there may be occasions for violence, when they have not your philosophic temperament or strong will to keep them under control ?

There always is the danger and no reformer has yet been able to carry out his reform without large risks.

So long as there are such large risks, do you think Government is not justified in fearing such measures as ill their wisdom they think necessary?

Government cannot possibly be justified seeing that the Government are opposing the just aspirations of the people.

But is that not a matter on which there is large difference of opinion among Indians themselves?

My answer is that there is no difference of opinion as to the demands of people about the Khilafat and the Punjab. I mention this because Government could not have imprisoned Maulana Mahomed Ali if the Government had any intention of satisfying Khilafat demands.

Notwithstanding the Malabar outrages, you do not despair of Hindu-Muslim unity?

I don't despair for the simple reason that no sane Muslim approves of what a few Moplahs have done. It is too much to expect when you have to deal with masses of mankind that there will be no wrong done by any single individual.

That is the very thing that is being urged against your non-co-operation ?

Yes, but has the Government erased the word "risks" out of their vocabulary?

The Hindu, 16-9-1921

126. SPEECH AT MADRAS

September 15, 1921

A monster meeting was held last evening at 5.30 at the Beach, opposite the Presidency College to hear Mahatma Gandhi on "Swadeshi". . . .

On the motion of Mr. S. Kasturiranga Aiyangar¹, Mr. Yakub Hassan was voted to the Chair. . . .

Mahatma Gandhi, who on rising was received with an enthusiastic ovation, addressed the audience in clear and ringing tones for over an hour and was heard with great attention. The speech was in English and was translated sentence by sentence by Mr. A. Ramaswami Aiyanger² first and then by Mr. S. Satyamurti³. Mahatmaji said:

¹ Congress leader of Madras who was a member of Civil Disobedience Enquiry Committee; editor, *The Hindu*, Madras

² Editor, *Swadeshmitran*, a Tamil daily of Madras and later of *The Hindu*; General Secretary of the Congress, 1926-27; Member of Legislative Assembly

³ 1887-1943; Congress leader from Madras and orator

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

As usual I have to offer my apologies to you for my physical inability to speak to you standing. I would like all the audience that is at the back to preserve complete silence if they want to follow my remarks. I would ask the whole of the audience also neither to give applause nor to cry out “shame”, “shame”. If you are in earnest about fulfilling the programme set before the country by the National Congress held in September at Nagpur, believe me, you will not be able to do so either by applause or by “shame”, “shame”. It is necessary for us to become far more serious and business-like than we have hitherto been. We have only a few months in order to fulfil our programme and to establish swaraj. We have far too little time, humanly speaking, in order to obtain redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs. Happily I see signs about me every day that God is with us. And I know—I have no doubt you also know—that God can make us succeed even if we may seem, humanly speaking again, to be the weakest.

I verily believe that this arrest at Waltair of Maulana Mahomed Ali has come to us as godsend. God only knows how he tried, his brother tried and I tried to keep them out of jail by every honest, legitimate means worthy of non-co-operators. All that a brave man can do, Mahomed Ali did in order to keep himself on the straight and narrow path; and the burden rests upon the shoulders of the Viceroy to show what new situation has developed to justify the arrest of Maulana Mahomed Ali when he was on a mission of peace and goodwill. Ever since that celebrated and much discussed statement signed by the Brothers, Maulana Mahomed Ali has been more or less with me. I am here to testify to the whole of this audience and through this audience to the whole of India that I have not found Maulana Mahomed Ali to depart by a hair's breadth from the promise that he made to India in the name of God, that he will not incite to violence. I assure you that in private and in public, in season and out of season, Maulana Mahomed Ali has emphasized the necessity for observance of complete non-violence by the people of India. He has been telling everyone who has met him and he has been assuring all the audience, numerous as they were that the only condition—indispensable condition—of success whether for swaraj or for the Khilafat wrong or for the Punjab wrong was the complete retention of non-violent spirit by the people of India. But the Ali Brothers are no cowards. And if

anybody dreamt or thought that the statement meant a change in their attitude or a change in their language, they were mistaken. I have not had the privilege of meeting two braver and truer souls. I assure you that both the Brothers are transparently sincere. But I admit they are capable of and are fond of using strong language and calling a spade a spade. (Suppressed laughter.) They as brave men and as strong men have endeavoured and were able to pour a little bit of their own bravery and strength into their audience. But in their own incomparable manner they have also disciplined themselves to the best of their ability with the strength and bravery that they infected their followers with. It is my conviction that no two Mussulmans have tried more than they have to retain a non-violent atmosphere throughout the length and breadth of India; and the Government need not, therefore, be surprised if I charge them with having imprisoned or attempted to imprison the Khilafat with the imprisonment of Maulana Mahomed Ali.

It was open to the Government, powerful as that Government is, to invite the Ali Brothers and me to enter the disturbed area and give us an opportunity to procure calmness and peace in that disturbed land. I am sure that much innocent blood would have been spared. I am sure that the desolation of many a Hindu household would have also been spared. But I must be forgiven if again I charge the Government with a desire to incite the populace to violence. They have no room in this system of government under which we are governed, for strong, brave and true men. The only place they have for such men is their prison.

My heart goes out to those men who have been so much afflicted in Malabar. I am aware that our Moplah brethren, undisciplined as they have been all these long long years, have gone mad. I am aware that they have committed a sin against the Khilafat and against their own country. The whole of India to-day is under an obligation to remain non-violent even under the gravest provocation. The desolation of the Hindu households shows clearly to me that the message, the healing message, of non-violent non-co-operation had not penetrated Moplah households in that area. And I have evidence which I have no reason to doubt, that those parts in which our Moplah countrymen went mad were not touched by the spirit of non-co-operation. I am aware that non-co-operators were deliberately prevented from going to those parts by the authorities.

But I hope that my Hindu countrymen will keep their senses. Even assuming, as I am not prepared to assume, that all the stories that have come to us through Government circles of forced conversions are true, you, the Hindu part of this audience, will believe with me that that ought not to put such a strain upon our loyalty to the creed of Hindu Muslim unity as to break it. We must not expect all of a sudden every Hindu and every Mussulman to become absolutely faithful to this creed. It do not know a single sensible Mussulman who approves either secretly or openly of these forcible conversions, nor need we Hindus disturbed about the future of these brethren of ours.

My reading of our shastras convinces me that a man who is forced to do anything against his will needs no *prayaschitta*¹. Our friend Mr. Yakub Hassan has told the Tamil land that these men who are supposed to have been forcibly converted are inadmissible in the faith of Islam. As a devout Hindu knowing what he is speaking, I assure you that not one of those Hindus has forfeited his right to remain in the Hindu fold. I understand that the Government is placing every obstacle in the way of the Congress and the Khilafat workers taking relief to those desolate homes and I am told that at the same time the Government itself is taking no pains to provide relief to these poor people who are supposed to be starving. Whether they give us permission or do not, I have no doubt that it is our clear duty to collect as much funds as we can for the relief of these sufferers and see to it that they get what they require. The Congress Committee has already voted a certain sum of money and I know that the Khilafat Committee also is endeavouring to vote a certain sum of money for the relief of these sufferers. But I suggest to the Mussulman countrymen in the Madras Presidency that it will be a graceful act on their part if they were to collect even pies from every home for the relief of their Hindu brethren.

I know today that this Presidency is perhaps the most afflicted throughout India. We do not yet know fully what measures the Government are taking in order to repress the strong and the rising forces of the people in this land. I have no reason to disbelieve the testimony that has been given to me this morning that many young men quartered in Malabar have been insulted because they have had the audacity to wear khaddar caps and khaddar vests. I understand that these keepers of the peace in India have torn the pure vests of

¹ Atonement

khaddar and burnt them to ashes. I understand the authorities in Malabar have invented new methods of humiliation, if they have not gone one better than the authorities in the Punjab.

The "Reform" ministers have shown their teeth in the Andhra country. They have imposed upon an unwilling populace a municipality. In the teeth of universal opposition in another part of the Andhra country, they have been endeavouring forcibly to collect a grazing tax. And I understand that under a *fatwa*¹ from these ministers innocent cows have been torn from their calves and consigned to the pounds, where they have not even grass and water to eat and drink. What are we to do in the face of these repressive measures, not only at the hands of English administrators, but also at the hands of the so-called responsible ministers? Are we to answer to these repressions with violence? The result in that case, we know, is certain. We know that the result of any violence done by the people who are under an oath not to do violence, is certain destruction. If you want to secure the release of Maulana Mahomed Ali, if you want to secure the release of those innocent cows, if you want to avoid the repetition of the humiliations that are being imposed upon our countrymen in Malabar, in the name of law, order and peace, if you want to resist the pressure that is being put upon our gallant countrymen in Chirala and Perala, the only remedy before you is complete observance of non-violence. The self-respect of the nation demands that the only way to secure the release of Maulana Mahomed Ali and all those who may be unlawfully imprisoned by this Government is to establish swaraj and for the first parliament of swaraj to pass the first measure of discharge of these innocent prisoners with becoming honours. We must ask for no quarter from this Government; and we must expect none. We must challenge the Government to do its worst and before it yields to the expressed will of a determined people, we must expect that Government to take up the challenge and answer it in the only manner in which a tyrannical and insolent Government can answer.

But I want you to turn the searchlight inward. What shall we do then to attain swaraj during this very year? I can present my countrymen with no other programme but the well-tried programme of non-violence, Hindu-Muslim unity and swadeshi. Our non-violence and our attachment to Hindu-Muslim unity must be expressed through swadeshi. It grieves me to find, therefore, in this audience so

¹ Decree of a Muslim divine

very few people expressing the swadeshi spirit on their own persons; and when I see Begum Mahomed Ali Sahiba and when I see my sisters in front of me, my heart breaks. Begum Sahiba is as gently brought up as those sisters of mine. But she is not ashamed, on the contrary, she takes pride in wearing heavy khaddar. And if you, my dear sisters, have followed the trend of my remarks, I hope that you will change your heart tomorrow, and throw away your foreign silks and foreign fineries and dress yourselves in pure holy khaddar. When I think of Maulana Mahomed Ali and still more of his bigger and bulkier brother, Maulana Shaukat Ali, all dressed and drenched in their khaddar costumes, and when I cast my glance over this vast audience, my heart breaks again. You cannot get swaraj with a spirit such as is exhibited here. The country expects you to give up your foreign and fine clothing, your caps made of foreign cloth and your dhotis made out of the fine foreign yarn. The country expects every man, woman and child to spin away for all the time that he or she can find at his or her disposal. Not until the message, the peaceful and sacred message of the spinning-wheel has penetrated almost every home of India is swaraj attainable by non-violent methods.

At this stage an interval of ten minutes was allowed for Mohammedans to offer their evening prayer. Meanwhile silence was strictly observed at the meeting. After the *namaz* Mahatmaji, continuing, said:

The spinning-wheel to me is a sign of our reviving prosperity and a significance of self-confidence. The spinning-wheel is a sure test of our assimilation of the spirit of non-violence. The spinning-wheel is the common bond that will tie not only Mussulmans and Hindus but all the other people professing other religions and who are domiciled in India. The spinning-wheel is the symbol of the chastity of the womanhood of India. In the absence of the spinning-wheel I give you my testimony that thousands of our poor sisters are giving themselves to a life of shame and degradation. The spinning-wheel is the widow's companion. And it was the spinning-wheel which supplemented the slender resources of the millions of the peasantry of India. It is the spinning-wheel which has purified many a man before now; and the universal adoption of the spinning-wheel in our homes means to me a complete demonstration of the fact that we have ceased to consider that the head is the only thing we need care for. The spinning-wheel is therefore a demonstration to me that those who spin the wheel realize the supreme dignity of labour. The spinning-wheel is

the solace of the untouchable whom we have hitherto so sinfully despised. The spinning-wheel the honourable substitute that can be presented to our fallen sisters throughout the length and breadth of our land, and it is only when the spinning-wheel has found a sure and established footing in our homes that it is possible for India to embark upon mass civil disobedience. Not whilst our blood is hot with rage, not whilst we are in a state of excitement can disobedience be proclaimed in the land which can, by any stretch of imagination, be called civil. If we want to spread throughout the length and breadth of India the spirit of non-violence in order that we can work out our salvation during the year, there is no other weapon but the spinning-wheel which can purify us. It is not the mills of Bombay nor the mills of Ahmedabad which should clothe you, but you should have ability and you should have self-respect enough to insist upon clothing yourselves by your own sacred hands. But I hope no one in this audience will use my remarks as a cover for his weakness and for his continuing in the foreign dress in which I see the audience. On the contrary, if you feel as I do that we are in honour bound to fulfil our sacred resolution come to during last December, you will see to it that you go about the streets of Madras with only a *langoti*¹ on you until you have clothed yourselves by the sweat of your brow. The Ali Brothers want no hartal from you. They want no demonstrations by means of mass meetings from you. But they want from you an expression of your fixed determination of valour, of courage, of fearlessness, of truthfulness and of non-violence. They certainly expect the school boys who have flocked to their audience to respond, if they have any shred of feeling and regard for them, to cease to go to the schools of the Government whose system they are resolved upon destroying. They expect weak title-holders, weak councillors, weak lawyers who believe in the message of non-co-operation and yet have not the courage to give up what they have. They expect all these classes now to respond and respond in a brave manner.

But whether these select classes recognize their duty or not or whether, recognizing their duty, they can rise to the occasion or not, there is no reason for anyone of us here to reject the message of swadeshi. We want swaraj not merely for classes but we want it for masses including the untouchables and the weakest men and women

¹ Loin-cloth

in the land. Ours, thank God, is an army in which men, women and children, the leper and the diseased, all have the same honourable place side by side with the privileged. For, do we not claim and do we not say from a thousand platforms that the present Government is a kingdom of Satan and do we not claim that we seek to substitute the kingdom of Satan by the kingdom of God? And has not the lowest of us an equal place with the highest in the kingdom of God? I have so often said on this sacred Beach, in the presence of the rolling waves and in the name of God, that I have an abiding belief in the religious instincts of the Tamilian and the Telugu people with whom I have had the privilege of eating, drinking, sleeping and suffering in South Africa. I am hoping and praying that the future historian will not have to testify that, whereas the people of Dravida land talked of the name of the kingdom of God with their lips, they were following the ways of the kingdom of Satan. Let us not justify the charge levelled against us by our opponents, that under cover of non-violence and truth we are violent and untruthful on many an occasion. Swaraj as Tilak Maharaj has said, is our sacred birthright, Khilafat is a sacred treasure with our Mussulman countrymen; redress of the Punjab wrongs is a sacred trust. Let us not betray our birthright, our religion and our trust by proving false to a creed to which we subscribed twice over last year. We have set before ourselves a standard and we must abide by that standard and prove true to it. Let us not, by proving untrue to our creed, deserve the curse of our future generation.

The next few months must be to us times of turmoil, troubles, imprisonments and many other things. All the world over darkness is the deepest before dawn and I want you with the eye of faith to see the rays of dawn coming out through this deep darkness that has overshadowed the land. And I ask the men and women of this great Presidency to discharge their trust in such an honourable manner that the future generations may be able to say that the Madras Presidency was in no way behind other presidencies in doing its duty. I pray to God that He may give all strength and courage and a fixed purpose to enable us to reach our goal.

You will give Begum Sahiba, who will speak to you a few words, a most respectful and attentive hearing. She will be followed by Maulana Azad Sobhani, and he is a great Muslim divine. When non-co-operation was finally decided upon by the Central Khilafat Committee long before September last, he was the representative

chosen by the Central Khilafat Committee to expound the doctrine of the Khilafat. I am therefore sure that you will give him the same patient hearing that you have been kind enough to give me. Finally, I would urge you to remain undemonstrative not only at this meeting but at all of our meetings. Non-violent discipline demands that we do not unnecessarily heat our blood by useless demonstration, noise or signs. I say this from my wide experience that it is not possible to observe always peace when all people are talking and making noises even though they may be of affection. In spite of our knowledge of what our opponents are doing, of what our countrymen who are opposing us are doing, I would urge you to observe a respectful and forbearing attitude even towards them. Gentleness and love, I assure you, will win us many an opponent who has hitherto given us battle. As we progress, we will have many an occasion to be incensed by writings, speeches and acts of our opponents. I would urge you not to return their evil, if we believe it to be evil, with our evil. They are bound by no creed of non-violence as you and I are and we need not be surprised nor angry for anything that they may do. Let us take care of ourselves and the future is assured. I thank you from the bottom of my heart for the great attention that you have paid to the remarks that I have made before you.

The Hindu, 16-9-1921

127. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, MADRAS

September 16, 1921

Under the auspices of the Sarvajanic Mitra Mandal, Mahatma Gandhi addressed a ladies meeting in Soundarya Mahal at 4.45 p.m. on Friday last....

Mahatmaji . . . addressed the meeting in Gujarati. . . and impressed upon the audience the desirability and necessity of using swadeshi clothes. He felt sorry to see that the ladies present were all dressed in foreign clothes. He said that if they were offered *rotis* prepared in Japan and England they will unhesitatingly refuse to consume them however delicious they may be. In the same way they must make it a religious point not to use foreign clothes and fineries at all because they are the source of the national degradation. He advised the ladies to burn their foreign clothes and to make resolute determination to use only the hand-woven swadeshi clothes which must be prepared by their own hands. He then dwelt upon the utility of the charkha and said that it is the life-support of a widow, a companion of any forlorn woman and now it must be a dear friend of every self-respecting Indian lady. Charkha

is a mechanism which does not require any great strength or skill to use it. Even a poor weak boy can work at it.

Introducing Mrs. Mahomed Ali, Gandhiji said, that the ladies should follow the example of Begum Sahiba. Her husband has been recently arrested by the Government but she did not show the least sign of fear or nervousness. She is dressed in khaddar although she has to wear heavier clothes than any of you will have to do. He said that the ladies have a fancy for fineries but they must always bear in mind that beauty does not lie in anything outward. If a woman is good and dutiful she is beautiful, otherwise she is ugly. Exhorting the audience Gandhiji said that if they have any sense of self-respect and if they want to keep honour of their children and the nation at large, then they must give up their liking for pomp and show and lead a simple, rigorous life. Sitaji, when she was a captive in the Ashokavatika was offered all sorts of fine things by Ravana but she indignantly refused to use any of them, she preferred to live on fruits and cover her body with the bark of the trees. So, as long as India is in the chains of slavery and dharma raj is not established, every man and woman of India must look down upon the foreign clothes as something really untouchable.

In the end he advised the northern ladies to mix freely with their Madrasi sisters and said that they must bring up their children properly. They must infuse bravery, courage in them.

The Hindu, 19-9-1921

128. SPEECH AT PIECE-GOODS MERCHANTS' MEETING, MADRAS

September 16, 1921

An important general body meeting of the Madras Piece-Goods merchants' Association was held last evening in the Association premises to discuss the question of boycott of foreign cloth with Mahatma Gandhi. The meeting was largely attended by the members of the Association. Maulana Azad Sobhani, Messrs Yakub Hassan, C. Rajagopalachari and T. S. S. Rajan were also present at the meeting. The speeches were in English and were translated by Mr. C. Rajagopalachari.

Mr. Ramjee Kalyanjee on behalf of the Association welcomed Mahatmaji. . . . Mahatma Gandhi in reply said:

GENTLEMEN,

It gives me the greatest pleasure really to meet you here this afternoon. It has been my good fortune to enjoy the sweetest of relations with the piece-goods merchants. As you know I had several meetings with them in Bombay and in Calcutta, and throughout my

travels in the different parts of India I have taken good care to see the merchant community. You will be glad to learn from me that in all these places they have been in full sympathy, as they ought to have been with this great swadeshi movement, and you will be glad to learn also that with the exception of Calcutta the merchants by a very large majority have agreed to stop importing any further foreign cloth. The Calcutta merchants, I know, have found some difficulties. They suggested that they would stop imports only up to 31st December and should reserve to themselves the liberty for exchanging and selling foreign yarns amongst them with their existing stocks. I was unable to accept that proposition, because I felt that was nothing but camouflage. And I would have been an unwilling instrument for entering into secret bargains. In a movement of this character which we claim to be pure and religious, there is really no room for secrecy or for under-hand dealings. It is much better that those who cannot see their way to stop importing foreign cloth should say so frankly and openly and continue their trade than that they should say one thing in the public and do quite the opposite in private. But of course I sympathize with our Calcutta merchant friends, in that they are the largest importers of foreign cloth throughout India. But you will be glad to hear that even they are now taking a more patriotic attitude than they have taken hitherto. Mr. Jamnalalji who specially remained in Calcutta in order to carry on negotiations with those big houses telegraphed to me today saying that several of them had now shown reasonableness and national interest in the subject. So you see that the whole of India really is rallying to the swadeshi flag. And therefore I was delighted to find assurances of your sympathy with this movement; and if you can only abide by the undertaking you have given in your statement, viz., that you will not import hereafter foreign cloth, it will largely answer the purpose which we want to fulfil. I know that we have throughout India today, probably 40 crores worth of piece-goods for sale. I do not see much difficulty in 40 crores worth of foreign cloth even disappearing in India amongst the multitude. But I must totally dissent from the view that the stock that you have at present is not capable of being sent out of India altogether. As you know there is a large quantity of piece-goods imported into India for re-export. I know that there are certain styles which are not salable with any degree of profit outside India. But surely there is still a large quantity of stock which is just as salable outside India as inside it. And I would ask you to tax yourselves and see whether you cannot get rid

of some at least of your foreign stock outside India. I see, for instance, no difficulty whatsoever in sending out of India all the foreign yarn that you might have. But if you will take with me a broad and national view of our own position I have still one more suggestion to make. But I know that before you can realize the suggestion by execution you must also have the same faith that I have. If all the merchants throughout India were to be true to the country and were to give their best energies and their splendid ability to the attainment of swaraj . . . if you share the belief with me that swaraj is attainable during the very year, and if you intend upon working it up then, like sensible men that you are, you may even hold your stock in reserve to be disposed of by the State through its firstparliament; any such decision on your part cannot but redound to your credit and cannot but be a credit to the country immensely. But I know that this is a counsel of perfection. At the same time other countries have in action transformed many more things. I know what happened in South Africa when the great war with the English was going on. The South African Dutch are a brave and a godfearing people; and having an immutable faith in the destiny of their own country, they counted no cost to be too heavy to pay in order to retain their country's freedom. But as I say, if you cannot have patience and if you have not the faith that we can attain swaraj during this very year, then, as I say, you will cease to import any foreign cloth either directly or indirectly and cease to enter into bargains amongst yourselves. That would entirely satisfy the present requirements. I want to put before you a few mathematical problems. Today our importers are really nothing more than commission agents. You get perhaps Rs. 5 out of every hundred rupees worth of cloth. But Rs. 95 entirely goes out to your principals. Now, imagine that you are the manufacturers of the cloth that we need in India itself. Then the whole of the hundred rupees would remain in India; and see that we shall still want almost all the cloth that we have been hitherto importing from outside. Who is going to trade with 60 crores of rupees per year? I need not tell you that you are the people. You are strong. You know the value of figures. You know your own country's need. Then is it any impossible proposition that I place before you when I suggest that you should take charge of the whole of the swadeshi movement? Does it require any very extraordinary bravery on your part to dot the country with your own agents or *gumastas*? You will simply spread charkhas and handlooms, taking and collecting yarn from all those thousands and thousands of India, stocking,

selling and converting the yarn into cloth for India. It is really your privilege and your duty to organize hand-spinning and hand-weaving throughout the length and breadth of the land. I would therefore ask you, not to feel despondent altogether as to the future of the country, and what the future of the imports of India will be when foreign cloth is entirely boycotted. I assure you that the future of India under swaraj is the brightest possible. I have no shadow of doubt that in a very short time many people in India would be laughing [at themselves] that they did not see the beauty of such a simple thing and that it had not occurred long ago that they should be undertaking this business. I would like you to cross-examine me even as your friends in Bombay, Calcutta and elsewhere have done. Nothing tends to elucidate difficulties more than hearty discussions. I thank you for gathering here and inviting us to address you this afternoon.

Afterwards a general discussion ensued . . . Mahatma Gandhi in replying to each of the merchants agreed that the initiative should come from the consumers and said that there was not the slightest suggestion in his remarks that they should repudiate the contracts made, and, as it was incumbent upon them in the cause of the motherland to co-operate with the whole of India in making the swadeshi programme a success, wished they should cease to give any further orders. If they were able to alter the taste of the people as he expected they would surely be, the people would certainly go to them; and nobody had got a greater opportunity of doing substantial propagandist work than they, the piece-goods merchants had. He deprecated the credit system obtaining among the merchants as fatal to their commerce and commercial morality, and it should therefore never be regarded as an impassable barrier to undertaking to stop future orders. Swaraj was sure to come and with it new economic laws would come to prevail. With regard to the suggestion that boycott should be gradual, Mahatmaji said that they had sufficient notice of it as early as one year back and an honest merchant would never find cause to complain of financial difficulties, consequent on the giving up of the credit system. This, Mahatmaji illustrated by referring to the case of Mr. Mohamed Kachalia in South Africa who originally carried on business on credit on a large scale and when his European customers out of political motives pressed him to clear off their dues, he boldly sold away all his property and paid his creditors to the last pie and then started business with no credit and rose to such a prosperous condition that those very European merchants were tempted to offer him their goods on credit again. That was an example which they would do well to follow and a braver merchant they could not find. Personal difficulties, no doubt he appreciated, but swaraj meant sacrifice, and even a merchant was called upon to take an unselfish view of his calling. Now that *Deepavali* was approaching they should not pin their faith to any combinations of colours and

fancies in cloth and they would find that the people had altered their faith so that *Deepavali* would mean greater self-denial and greater sacrifice....

The Hindu, 17-9-1921

129. SPEECH TO LABOURERS, MADRAS

September 16, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi addressed a large gathering of labourers (now on strike) at the Beach opposite the High Court at 6.45 p.m. Among others present were Messrs Yakub Hassan, A. Rangaswami Aiyangar, S. Satyamurti, Salla Guruswami Chetty, S. Srinivasa Aiyangar, Safi Mohamed, Kasturiranga Aiyangar, Venkatarangam Naidu and M. K. Acharya. Mahatma Gandhi spoke for more than 45 minutes in English and the speech was translated into Tamil by Mr. M. S. Subramaniya Aiyar of *Swadeshmitran*. He said:

FRIENDS,

I was not able to be here punctually at 6.30. I have been talking to our merchant friends and they occupied me longer than I thought I would have to be. I well remember the scene that presented itself to me last time when I had the pleasure of meeting you. A fellow-labourer myself, my heart has always gone out to the labourers of Madras in their sorrows and their troubles. I want to come to the subject of this evening without any further ceremony.

I know that about ten thousands of you have struck work. It grieves me to find that you have trouble amongst yourselves. It grieves me to find that you are divided into two parties. It grieves me further to find that the two parties represent not two different views but two different castes. I understand that the *Adi Dravidas*, our *Panchama*¹ friends, are ranged on one side and you, the others, on the opposite side. I understand further that these *Panchama* brethren have resumed work, whereas you, a large majority have not done so. And I understand further that there has been some pressure exerted by some of you on those brethren of ours, who have rejoined work. I understand further there are continuous quarrels and squabbles between these two parties. I am therefore here to warn the majority against using the slightest pressure against the minority. As one knowing the labourers for a period of 25 years, very nearly 30 years, as one experienced in handling large strikes even affecting more than

¹ Literally, belonging to the fifth caste; an outcaste

50,000 people at a time, I know that nothing is so demoralizing to labourers than that they should use force against a single one of their brethren. The lowest one of us, the fewest of us must have the right of exercising his own free choice even though you may consider that he has erred. Therefore I would urge you to leave those 3,000 brethren of ours severely alone. I would urge you not to think low of them. I would urge you even to be kind to them. Certainly you will never swear at them. I would ask you not even to go to them to wean them from their service. Believe me when they find that you exercise no pressure against them, when they find that you have not a trace of ill will against them, they will of their own free choice and accord come to you. Nor will you consider that they are low caste and you are high caste.

All those who are Hindus I warn them, beware of thinking that there is high caste and low caste in Hinduism. Caste there undoubtedly is in Hinduism, but caste has been created for giving us a sense of duty, not of privileges and rights. Each caste is born to serve mankind. The Brahmin serves with his knowledge, a Kshatriya serves with his power of protection, a Vaisya with his commerce, and a Sudra with his hands and feet. But believe me all are equal in the sight of God and he is the greatest who serves best. There is no such thing as a fifth caste in Hinduism. Untouchability is a sin against God and humanity. It is a blot on Hinduism. I urge you, fellow labourers, to dispense from your minds the idea that the *Panchama* brethren are untouchable or lower than anyone else. If we had not treated them with contempt, if we had not maltreated them even as we claim we were ill-treated in Jallianwala Bagh, there would have been no difficulty about the attainment of swaraj. Believe me that this unhappy land will never return to happiness, unless Hindus with a supreme effort have got rid of this curse of untouchability. Therefore considering the whole question from every point of view I advise you strongly not to interfere with our *Panchama* brethren in anything they may do.

Your course in my opinion is absolutely clear and straight. It is your right and privilege to demand that if the company wishes to re-employ you, the company has to take all of you or none. It is your right to be advised by whomsoever you may choose and the company cannot dictate to you that you may not be advised by outsiders. You must insist upon your inherent right of selecting any Chairman or President you like of your Union whether out of your own ranks or

anybody else. You have a right consistently with the condition of affairs in the country to determine for yourselves the terms on which you will rejoin service. You have a right to demand such wages as will enable you to sustain life, to educate your children and live as decent human beings. You are entitled to the same fresh water and fresh air as your employers. You are entitled to insist upon having leisure and recreation from day to day. But you have also corresponding duties to perform. You must render diligent and faithful service to your employers. You have to look after the property of your employers as if it was your own. You must not seduce a single one of the employees from service. You may not absent yourselves without permission. These simple rights and duties once being understood must always be insisted upon and fulfilled as the case may be.

The next question therefore that arises is what are you to do if the employers will not employ you on your own terms. After having respectfully tendered your submission to your employers you should no more think about that submission. But you must set about working for your own livelihood. I have therefore suggested to the mill-hands of Ahmedabad and the railway employees on the Assam-Bengal Railway and the employees of the River Steam Navigation Company that they should always have a supplementary occupation to fall back upon, and the only occupation that thousands upon thousands of our countrymen can usefully occupy themselves in is hand-spinning, carding and weaving. All these three things are as easy as they are universal. I assure you and I ask you to accept the assurance of an experienced spinner and weaver. If you will diligently work at this occupation for not less than 8 hours a day; you will, each one of you, earn as much as Re. 1 per day. As a spinner you will earn perhaps Re. 3 per day but as an accomplished weaver you can command a wage of Re. 1 per day. Your wives, your sisters, your mothers, your little children of 7 or 8 years can all lend a helping hand to you in earning your livelihood in this fashion. The more there are of you, the more you earn. The question therefore for those who have got large families is solved automatically and when you have learnt the dignity of your state and when you have also understood you have an occupation to fall back upon, you will not be violent either against your employers or against those who choose to seek employment under them. If you will but follow my advice you will find that you will not only become self-reliant, but the relation between yourselves and your employers will be of the healthiest character. When every

labourer, man or woman, in the land thinks of swaraj and self-purification, let me assure you that if you accept my advice you will accelerate the day of swaraj. If you are Mussulmans you will soon find that you are not only supporting yourselves honourably, but you are discharging your obligations to Islam in the most faithful manner.

I know that in the beginning stages even if you accept my advice you will require a little capital to start with, but I have not a shadow of doubt that everyone of you who is an honest worker will have no difficulty in getting a handloom, a spinning-wheel or a carding bow. Whether you accept this or not, please remember that any violence, any disturbance, committed by you will recoil with redoubled force upon your own heads. You will forfeit all public sympathy and every man's hand will be against you. Therefore you will make up your minds not to go near the mills, not to seek collision with your *Panchama* brethren; but you will be engaged in quietly organizing yourselves for work. Labour has no occasion to go a-begging.

One word more and I have finished. I would like you all, you and your wives and your children, to take your share in the great national movement that is sweeping across the length and breadth of the land. The things that the country demands of us are capable of being done by every one of us. I would like you to swear before God that we shall not resort to violence for the freedom of our country or for settling quarrels between Hindus and Mussulmans, to resolve that God is our witness, that in spite of the madness shown by some of our Moplah countrymen we Hindus and Mussulmans shall remain united for ever, and to take a solemn vow that henceforth we shall never wear foreign cloth or use it for any domestic purpose and that we shall wear only such cloth as is made out of hand-spun yarn and hand-woven. Saying that we claim to fight the battle of religion we will not defile our bodies by touching wine or women. We shall not gamble, we shall not steal, nor shall we deceive any people. I make bold to say that if you, the ten thousand labourers of the Madras mills, will make this solemn resolution and abide by it, you will find at the end of the chapter that you will have contributed not a little to the attainment of swaraj and to the solution of the Khilafat and the Punjab problems. May God bless you with the wisdom and courage that are required today of every Indian. You heard yesterday from my lips, if you were at all present on the Beach, that Maulana Mahomed Ali was arrested at Waltair. He was arrested and will be imprisoned for your sake and my sake. You and I know him to be an honest Mussulman and a brave

Indian. You and I know him to be lover of his religion and his country. He and his brother have suffered already for their country and for their religion; and our honour and our affection for these brothers demand from us not violence, not anger but a fixed determination to carry out our programme to success. They want no hartal, nor madness from us. But they expect us to remain united and to carry out boycott of foreign cloth even though every one of us may have to be satisfied with a loin-cloth. They expect us by fearlessly turning our faces godward to establish swaraj within this very year and release them under the first resolution of the swaraj parliament.

I thank you for the exemplary patience with which you have listened to me. Maulana Azad Sobhani Saheb who, as some of you at least know, is a great Mussulman divine, will now say a few words to you to which I am sure you will give respectful attention. . . .

At the close of the meeting a big bonfire was made of foreign clothes of all kinds . . .

The Hindu, 17-9-1921

130. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

ON THE WAY,
Septmeber 17, 1921

REVERED ANASUYABEHN,

I have your letter. I sent you a copy of the telegram I sent to Mangaldas about the workers. Here is another telegram. Now nothing remains to be done. I hope to reach Bombay on October 2. It is a Monday.

The news of Bapubhai's health is saddening. I am sending a telegram about it. I can't make anything of Shankerlal's health. He is not looking after himself. I have written to him.

I feel that our struggle will have to be more intense because of the Shaukat Ali-Mohmed Ali incident.¹ We shall think about it when I come.

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32828

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

¹ *Vide* also "Notes", 8-9-1921.

131. SPEECH AT CUDDALORE¹

September 17, 1921

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

I thank you for the addresses presented this evening, and also for the Tilak Swaraj Fund purse. I thank you too for the purse presented by Muslim friends for Smyrna Relief Fund. I know that you would have been better pleased if Maulana Mahomed Ali had been present to receive the purse. But if we do not have in our midst Mahomed Ali, we have Maulana Azad, a divine in his place. And if the Muslims are so minded to learn all about the Khilafat and the Koran they have a safe guide and friend in Maulana Azad.

Surely, if we are to attain swaraj this year, and to redress the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs this year, we should follow non-violent non-co-operation without causing the slightest confusion. Love that expresses itself in confusion is blind love. And what today India requires most is enlightened love. And enlightened love translates itself not in vocal demonstrations but real, substantial actions. The honour of every Indian demands that we should not rest quiet for a single minute until Maulana Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali are released from prison by our own efforts. Their discharge will be a proper discharge from prison if and were it to be by the reason of our having attained swaraj. And swaraj if it means nothing else, undoubtedly means discipline. I hope therefore that leaders of this place will see to it that they give practical demonstrations to the citizens in conducting meetings in discipline, so that orders are obeyed implicitly. For, we have understood, the Congress in two successive sessions has shown us the way to attain swaraj. And that is the way of non-violence. And we shall not succeed till we practise non-violence with full knowledge. I hope therefore that the people of Cuddalore District will have preliminary lessons by propaganda and practice. There is no doubt that we are at the present moment in an excited state. On the one hand repression by the Sircar irritates us, on the other, hope of something good in future throws us off our balance. It is just the state that predisposes to violence. And any violence on the part of the non-co-operators certainly blocks the way

¹ On Gidlam grounds, S. Srinivasa Iyengar presiding; the address in English was translated into Tamil by M. K. Acharya.

to swaraj.

And in my humble opinion the spinning-wheel is the greatest steadying force amidst us. Just think what splendid results you could have shown if you had been devoting all your time to spinning for the sake of the nation in the name of God instead of waiting for me so long a time. It is high time that we unlearn the habit of listening to speeches and an idle curiosity to have a look at the leaders. And I assure you that I would have declined to go over here on account of ceaseless travelling if it was not for the assurance given that it would lead to complete establishment of swadeshi. I see that most of the sisters present, and the men of the audience have something or other of *videshi*¹ cloth on their person. But let me hope that you will come to an unalterable decision to throw off the foreign cloth on your person and in your boxes. And you will see to it that a spinning-wheel finds a place in every home and manufacture your cloth instead of getting it from either Manchester and Japan or even Bombay and Ahmedabad.

The third condition of success is Hindu-Muslim unity. But I am satisfied from all my observations that if the spinning-wheel finds a place in the home it will create unity. We call our movement a movement of self-purification. And I was therefore glad to understand from Dr. Rajan² that the movement of temperance has made a considerable headway in this Province. I hope that you will drive away the curse of drink from your midst in its entirety.

One word to my Hindu countrymen and women. Probably the curse of untouchability does not inflict any other part of India as this Presidency. It is in this land of religious devotion and worship that this shadow defiles you. It is in this sacred land that the untouchable is treated worse than what we complain of at the hands of our rulers. Swaraj is a meaningless term if we disenfranchised permanently one-sixth of the population of India. Speaking as a *sanatani*³ Hindu, as I claim to be, there is not the slightest authority for untouchability in our Shastras. And it grieves me to think of that in a land where Shankara and Ramanuja were born and preached. I repeat the declaration I have made from many a platform that unless we remove such a blot there is no swaraj for India. Believing as I do in the law of

¹ Foreign

² Dr. T. S. S. Rajan, who was present at the meeting

³ Orthodox

karma, it is the fittest retribution that God has given us for making one-sixth of the people as Pariahs, thereby making ourselves Pariahs of the world. Hinduism, Islam, Christianity and all the great religions of the world are in the melting pot today. And believe me; if we cannot get rid of it, Hinduism will be at the bottom of the list. I hope therefore that you and especially leaders of public opinion and sisters will hear my remarks and will give due consideration to the Congress resolution regarding untouchability. I thank you for the patience you have shown in listening to me and I hope you will give a respectful hearing to the words of my friend Maulana Azad who will speak in Hindustani. . . .

Later there was a bonfire and *videshi* clothes worth Rs. 1,000 or so were burnt amidst defening cries of *Mahatma ki jai*, *Vandemataram* and *Allah-o-Akbar*. The Mahatma left the place for Porto Novo *en route* to Kumbakonam.

The Hindu, 19-9-1921

132. CIRCULAR LETTER

[After *September 17, 1921*]

DEAR FRIEND,

In view of the arrest¹ of Maulanas Shaukat Ali. and Mahomed Ali and others, it is necessary for some of us to meet and consider the situation. The Working Committee meets at Ahmedabad on the 6th October. But it would be well if we could meet at Bombay on the 4th October at Laburnum Road at 1 p.m. sharp. Will you please let me know at Bombay whether you would attend ? I reach Bombay on the 2nd October.

Yours sincerely,

[PS.]

From your province I have only invited you and . . . You will please bring any other friend whose presence may be helpful.

Madras	Yakoob Hussain
United Provinces	Khwaja
Bom[bay]	Mrs. Naidu
United Provinces	Maulana Abdul Bari

¹ Shaukat Ali's arrest mentioned in the letter was on September 17 at Bombay. *Vide* "Speech at Trichinopoly", 19-9-1921.

Behar	Abdul Kalam Azad
Punjab	Stokes
Bengal	Das
Central Provinces	Jamnalalji
Punjab	Lalaji
Delhi	Hakimji
„	Dr. Ansari
Sind	Jairamdas
Madras	Rajagopalachari
„	Kasturi
United Provinces	Jawaharlal
Andhra	Venkatappayya
Maharashtra	Kelkar
Karnatak	Gangadharrao
Gujarat	Vallabhbhai
Gujarat	Vithalbhai
Behar	Rajendra
United Provinces	Hasrat
Andhra	T. Prakasam

From a photostat: S.N. 7628

133. BITTER EXPERIENCES IN CALCUTTA

I have given some description of my tour in East Bengal. There the people assembled in their thousands and yet they did not tire me. In Calcutta, however, I am completely exhausted. For one thing, I could not go to sleep till midnight and, for another, there were loud shouts of victory. It is too much for me. I get exhausted hearing them the whole day. My ears cannot endure them and, as they mean nothing, I find them painful. I am quite clear in my mind that this shouting does not help us. When people had no spirit in them, when they were afraid even to express their views, I suppose the shouting gave them some confidence in themselves. This was my experience in Champaran. Hundreds of people used to come and sit round me just in order to feel such confidence. Although their love made me feel impatient, I bore with them. Here, too, I get the same love. Shouts of victory are an indication of unthinking adoration, which profits

neither the people nor me.

I have here considered this shouting from my own point of view. Touching of my feet in reverence is equally painful. I sometimes get hurt. Sometimes I barely save myself from a fall. I shiver in fear when setting out for meetings.

I see a danger in these shouts. Let us imagine that a crowd of love crazy people has been shouting; while they are engaged in this, people hear nothing with their ears and see nothing with their eyes. Let us imagine, further, that somebody starts trouble and two or three men hit out with sticks. I see all this and I tell them with gestures and words to stop fighting. But who will listen to this frail reed-pipe? Meanwhile, let us imagine, the fighting spreads, people take sides and there is bloodshed. All this can happen without anybody wanting it. I believe this is what happened in Amritsar¹. I do not believe that anybody had planned to kill the innocent bank manager. But the people's blood was boiling and some wicked persons took advantage of that situation.

I feel, therefore, that this non-violent struggle of ours has no room for any shouts of victory, or, if at all, only for those uttered in the right manner, at the right time and repeated the fewest times. It would appear that volunteers in Calcutta have not been trained to keep order at meetings, for I have noted that, if the people are instructed beforehand, they generally obey the directions. Expression of love cannot be forced on anyone. If it is explained to the people that remaining quiet is also a sign of love or respect, they will immediately understand the idea. I tried this experiment in two meetings. My feet got crushed as I was passing through the mass of people and I was irritated by the slogan shouting. At one place, it took me twenty minutes to reach the rostrum. At both these places I devoted one-fourth of my speech to the need for remaining quiet at meetings, preserving peace and making room for the leaders to pass. The result, at both the places, was that on our leaving the meeting they made way for us, there was no slogan-shouting and the people did not get up till we had left and so, while earlier it had taken twenty minutes to make our way through the crowd, it took only one minute while leaving.

From this experience, I judge that, if the people are given instructions in advance, they will certainly understand them and act

¹ In April 1919

accordingly. It is my belief that by and large the people realize the need for preserving peace and are eager to do so

Now let us suppose the converse of all this. Imagine for a while that the people are all quietly seated. Everybody's eyes and attention are turned to the leader who is the guest. Imagine now that a quarrel starts somewhere in this peaceful gathering. Imagine that everyone remains calmly seated where he is. The result would be that the voice of the leader would reach every person in the audience. He can even go to the men who are fighting and calm them. Even if this does not happen, the fighting would not spread when nobody wants it and we would not be accused of disturbing public peace. In the army, this is how they act. Everyone keeps to his place. No person can leave his place and go elsewhere till he is ordered to do so, nor can he interfere in other matters. We, too, are a non-violent army fighting for swaraj. We also have to do our duty keeping to our own place. We need not concern ourselves with what others are doing. We know that other workers will look after matters in their respective fields. A non-violent army demands, or should insist upon, greater discipline, self-restraint and orderliness than what are necessary in an army equipped with arms.

I had a bitter experience of scheming as well as of love in Calcutta. The bitterness prevailing among the different parties in Calcutta will, I think, be hardly found anywhere else. I see nothing but poison in the writings of the English papers which oppose non-co-operation. There is no limit to the malicious criticism of the writings of non-co-operators and no end of lies which are spread against them. As if this were not enough, the writings and speeches of our great poet, Rabindranath Thakur, are used to such wicked purposes that I simply cannot understand how people have the courage to misrepresent things so completely. Observing these lies, I often picture to myself the conditions in *Ravanarajya*¹. Where there is no discrimination in the choice of means, cunning and deception should not surprise us. It would never have been possible for Ravana to carry off Sitaji if he had appeared before her as the demon which he was. He could do so only by assuming the form of a sadhu. When saintliness is thus used as a cover, destruction soon overtakes the man. I see the English papers here spreading falsehood in the name of truth. I have referred to this poisonous atmosphere merely in order

¹ Rule of Ravana, based on complete disregard for moral values.

that the non-co-operators may draw a lesson from it, that they should keep away from such falsehood. We should never forget that our weapons are non-violence and truth.

A spinning-wheel exhibition is being held here in the National College. I saw there about fifteen types of new spinning-wheels. The ingenious devices they display are endless. A good many young men have been putting their talents to good use. Some of the spinning-wheels were beautiful indeed. Some were very small. I saw one which could be carried in a little box. One could be put in a chest while another was fitted with a musical instrument. But I did not see any which could match the conventional type in producing yarn. The conclusion, therefore, which I certainly draw from all these attempts at invention was that the spinning-wheel had now become very popular and that improvements in the existing type were exercising the ingenuity of innumerable engineers.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-9-1921

134. WHAT SHOULD GUJARAT DO ?

We considered how, from the point of view of practical arrangements, we can make the ensuing session of the Congress a good success.¹ Let us now examine the matter from the point of view of larger considerations.

If a province invites a session of the Congress, it is presupposed that the province has the right to do so and is fit to exercise the right. Every province, of course, has such a right, but a province may or may not be fit to exercise it.

We have invited the Congress session and thereby increased our responsibility, have pledged ourselves to implement its resolutions more effectively than other provinces and declared our resolve to do our utmost to that end.

According to the resolution of the Congress, we must secure this year a settlement of the Khilafat issue and justice regarding the Punjab. The Congress has also indicated the means to be adopted to achieve these objectives and the All-India Congress Committee has shown how to employ them:

¹ *Vide* "Preparation for Congress", 4-9-1921.

1. Remaining peaceful.
2. Strengthening Hindu-Muslim unity.
3. For effecting complete boycott of foreign cloth, every province and every village should employ the spinning-wheel and the handloom to produce the khadi it needs.

After a tour of the Surat district, Shri Vithalbhai Patel came to Calcutta for the meeting of the Congress Working Committee. He reported that Gujarat, and particularly the Surat district, was ready for swaraj. Men and women both.

I asked him: "Are any men and women ready to go to jail, and do the rest promise to remain peaceful?"

Shri Vithalbhai replied: "In Surat district, thousands of men and women will come forward to court imprisonment and peace will be preserved even if they are imprisoned."

I was as much surprised as pleased to hear this. I was not ready for such an answer. That thousands of women of noble Gujarat should be ready to go to jail may seem unbelievable. But everything is possible with God. He is doing miracles all the time. The axis of the earth He has created never wears out! His sun never forgets to rise! Were it not that these things happen before our very eyes, would we believe them?

However, if Gujarat, or Surat, is really ready, they will have to provide some indication of their readiness beforehand. We see signs of the coming sunrise two hours before the event. Similarly, we should be able to observe the twilight hour between the vanishing of the darkness of slavery and the rising of the sun of swaraj. The fact that we have succeeded in collecting the money is one indication, but the real sign is swadeshi. Has Gujarat made a bonfire of foreign cloth or totally renounced its use? Has it stopped ordering foreign cloth? Have the people in the villages of Gujarat started wearing khadi, producing their own requirements? Do the weavers of Gujarat weave only hand-spun yarn? Have the agents in Gujarat stopped running up to Bombay for cloth? Have the *Meghawals* in Gujarat, who had left off their profession, taken up weaving again? Do all women in Gujarat spin as a matter of duty? Are the foreign cloth shops in Gujarat about to close down? The answers to these questions will decide whether it is fit.

So long as we have not started wearing khadi, so long as both men and women love foreign cloth, who will believe them even if they

declare that they are ready to go to jail ? I hope nobody will argue: “I can go to jail, but I do not have the courage to wear khadi; I feel ashamed to spin and I find weaving tedious.” If we have lost the capacity to preserve peace, our capacity to make noise at meetings should also leave us. We should be able to see thousands of people moving in perfect silence. As long as we lack such discipline, who will believe that we shall never resort to violence despite efforts to provoke us?

Shri Vithalbai, when reporting as above, also said that, If I held it necessary that we should also be rid of the uncleanness of untouchability, there was no possibility of our getting swaraj this year, for not a single school was ready to admit children of *Dheds*¹ or *Bhangis*.

I am convinced that, if we let our minds remain tainted with the uncleanness of our prejudice against the *Dheds* and *Bhangis*, God will never help us to win swaraj and the Englishmen’s contempt for us will never disappear. Self-purification is the foundation on which our swaraj is to rest. Securing swaraj is like ascending to heaven. Yudhisthira refused to enter the gate of heaven without his dog. Do we hope to get into the temple of swaraj ourselves, leaving our *Bhangi* brethren behind and running at top speed towards it? If we cherish any such hope, we are in for a bitter experience. Reaching the gates of the temple, we shall find that they are closed.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-9-1921

135. MY NOTES

WHERE WILL PEOPLE PARK THEIR SHOES?

Everybody is hoping, or fearing, that no chair will be seen at the Ahmedabad Congress. A friend, therefore, raised a query: “But where will all these people deposit their shoes?” I replied: “Everybody can remove his shoes and carry them under his arm and, to help them to do so, we shall keep small khadi sacks for sale.” People may also bring their own sacks. If shoes are removed and put into these sacks, there would be no problem whatever. Another method, followed in Europe, is that everybody deposits his shoes with a custodian and gets

¹ Untouchables

a token from him The token may be returned and one may have one's shoes back any time one likes. I have no doubt that the better way is to carry them in a sack. The test of our efficiency lies in making advance provision for everything to the minutest detail.

FOOD ARRANGEMENTS

While discussing food arrangements with people, I felt that we should maintain language-wise kitchens and instruct the secretaries of the respective regions to bring their own cooks. Our responsibility will be to supply provisions, water, plates, utensils, etc. This idea was approved by everyone here with whom I discussed it. This will leave no room for complaint about food arrangements. Very often people from one region cannot digest food from another region. Probably the Khilafat Camp will make arrangements for non-vegetarians. For those who are accustomed to living and eating in the English style, we may not make any arrangements in the camp but negotiate with hotel-keepers and communicate their rates and addresses to various Provincial Committees so that such people may make their own arrangements directly. If we do this, we shall be saved many anxieties and everybody will be provided for according to his taste. To this end, we should start correspondence with the different provinces right now and make all arrangements. We should advise them as to what we consider desirable and, after obtaining their comment, the arrangements should be finalized.

HOW MANY TO ARRANGE FOR ?

We may assume that ten thousand persons will attend the Congress, including visitors and delegates. We shall, however, do well to presume that the population of Ahmedabad will go up at least by one lakh, taking into account spectators and sight-seers. As we are bound to arrange for their boarding and lodging, it is imperative that we make the requisite arrangements in advance instead of leaving people to fend for themselves. .

EXHIBITION

As part of the Congress session there is bound to be an exhibition. I think that we should display in it only products of ancient Indian crafts and khadi, and the various steps in the processing of cotton. We need not at all exhibit mill cloth. I noticed this error in the Bombay exhibition. It will be proper for us to exhibition only

cloth in which both warp and woof are hand-spun. Ahmedabad even today remains a veritable storehouse of ancient crafts. We may well find room for carvings in wood or ivory and ancient paintings but, in respect of cloth, we should resolutely refuse to admit anything except khadi and implements required for the manufacture of khadi. I place these ideas before the Committee for their consideration. I hope that it will not be assumed during the discussion that my views ought to be accepted because they are mine; I should like the Committee to examine this suggestion impartially along with suggestions from others.

VOLUNTEERS

A great deal will depend on the sincerity, courtesy and resourcefulness of the volunteers. I saw in Bengal that all volunteers wore dhotis. In East Bengal, I found that both Hindus and Muslims wore dhotis. Muslims wore caps and Hindus did not. I did not hear any complaint from anywhere that the volunteers felt their movements restricted unless they wore trousers. I have a good deal of experience in this matter and I have come to the conclusion that peaceful volunteers uniform must not emulate that of a policeman or a soldier. The very presence of a volunteer of non-co-operation should suggest non-violence. A military uniform is inconsistent with this. It is the practice of many volunteers to carry swords or other weapons. They should give this up. At a public meeting at Howrah, a volunteer carried a dagger, but Maulana Mahomed Ali took it away from him. If we have decided that we will kill no one, that we shall lay down our own lives instead, why should we need swords? What will a sword symbolize?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-9-1921

136. SPEECH AT KUMBAKONAM

September 18, 1921

FRIENDS,

I thank you for all these addresses and the sentiments contained in them. I am sorry, and I know that you will share my sorrow, that Maulana Mahomed Ali and his Begum are not with us. Happily I have Maulana Azad Sobhani of Cawnpore with me. I hardly think that in

this din and noise you will have the opportunity of hearing his message. There are three indispensable conditions that we have to fulfil if we desire the attainment of swaraj and the redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs this year.

They are, firstly, absolute unity between the Hindus and Mussulmans, each party retaining their own ties in spite of the madness of some Moplahs. The second condition is non-violence, and the third condition is swadeshi. And it has been unfortunate to find that swadeshi has made the least headway in this Presidency. You must all discard foreign cloth and take up spinning and weaving. There is a fourth condition which must be fulfilled by the Hindus, and that is the removal of the curse of untouchability. Unless we remove that blot it is utterly impossible to get swaraj.

I know that of all places in India, Madras is the worst regarding untouchability. I hope, therefore, that the people of Kumbakonam will take care to set their house in order in this respect. We cannot keep a fifth part of the Hindu humanity outside the pale of society and claim to have swaraj. The conditions that I have mentioned to you are easy of fulfilment, and I pray to God that He may give you and me wisdom and courage to follow them out in their entirety.

The Hindu, 19-9-1921

137. LETTER TO SIDNEY BURN¹

[After *September 18, 1921*]

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 18th instant. I had intended to pass through the Pudukkottai State on my way to Chettinad. But in view of your letter², I shall alter my route.

I have, etc.,

From a photostat: S.N. 7618

¹ Sir Sidney Burn, I. C. S., Administrator, Pudukkottai State; later judge, Madras High Court

² Which read: “. . . you will not be allowed to pass through this State. If you will attempt to do so you will be stopped at the frontier by the police.”

138. LETTER TO MANAGER, EASTERN BANK

TRICHY, MADRAS PRESIDENCY,
September 19, 1921

DEAR SIR,

Will you please hand to bearer cheque for £90 received by you on my behalf from Mombasa?

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

THE MANAGER
THE EASTERN BANK
BOMBAY

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.
Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

139. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

TRICHINAPALLY,
Silence Day, September 19, 1921

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have both your letters. I do not think that all Muslims, or a majority of Muslims, commit excesses. But even if we assume that they do, their excesses are nothing in comparison to those committed by the Government. I have the same remedy for dealing with the Muslim excesses: either non-violence or, if you do not like it, brute force. But if we do not want to consider either, then there is the scheme of swadeshi. Hindus and Muslims cannot come together unless they learn the lesson of peace. All these questions arise from a misunderstanding of non-violence.

In Ahmedabad I paid no attention to the talk of proclaiming independence. We have not the strength to do it. And so long as we do not have the strength what is the use of talking about it? If we had the strength, I would certainly agree to a proclamation of independence.

You may discuss . . . 's¹ case when I come there. Right now you must concentrate on improving your health. A short sojourn in Allahabad may brace you up. If not there is Sinharh or Abu or Girnar. There are any number of such places.

I am going to have to run around for some more time. It appears I shall reach there on the 2nd.

Blessings from

BAPU

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140. SPEECH AT TRICHINOPOLY²

September 19, 1921

FRIENDS,

It gives me much pleasure to renew your acquaintance in this historic city. I thank the Municipality for its address and also the Congress Committee for its address. I know that you are all sorry that Maulana Mahomed Ali is not in our midst tonight, nor is Begum Sahiba, but you see to my right a learned Muslim divine in the person of Maulana Azad Sobhani. He has been moving amongst the Mussulmans of Trichinopoly during the day. I have no doubt that the Mussulmans of this place understand exactly what their duty is by Islam and their country. You may not all know that Maulana Shaukat Ali also was arrested in Bombay on the 17th instant, and up in the Punjab, the same honours were given to Dr. Kitchlew³. I do not know the reason that actuated the Government in arresting Dr. Kitchlew, but the Bombay Government have been good enough to inform the public of the reasons why they have arrested the Ali Brothers. The first reason stated by the Bombay Government is that they have tampered with the loyalty of the Army. The Government *communique* goes on to state how they tampered with the loyalty of the Army. The Brothers were a party to a resolution at a conference in Karachi which

¹ Illegible

² Dr. T. S. S. Rajan translated Gandhiji's speech in English into Tamil, sentence by sentence.

³ A Congress Worker from the Punjab, an associate of Gandhiji; winner of Lenin Peace Prize.

called upon the Mussulmans to warn any Mussulman against serving in the Army and telling every Mussulman soldier that in terms of Islam it was a sin to serve in the British Army. I am sorry that I was not present at that historic conference in Karachi and had I been present there and had the conference permitted me, I should also have been one of those who would have supported that resolution. (Laughter,) Only a Mussulman can say whether it is a sin for a Mussulman to serve in the British Army at the present moment, but as a Hindu and as an Indian, I know what my duty and what the duty of every Hindu, every Indian, should be on such an occasion. I know that it is a sin for a single Indian to serve either in the British Army, or in any of the civil departments of this Government, and if a public declaration of this character even in the presence of soldiers constituted the offence of tampering with the loyalty of the soldiers of the British Army, let me tell this meeting and through this meeting the Government of India, that I have committed the offence of tampering with the soldiers serving in the British Army, times without number. Nor is it a new offence it was an offence deliberately committed by me in the month of September last year, and it was an offence committed also by the Indian National Congress in the month of September at Calcutta¹ and deliberately repeated at Nagpur². If neither the Congress nor I have hitherto gone to individual soldiers and individual employees in the Government departments, it is not because of want of will, but because of want of ability. In our unfortunate country in which poverty is day by day deepening and in which starvation faces lakhs upon lakhs of our countrymen and countrywomen, it has not been possible for us, up now to call upon the soldiers individually, to appeal to them and ask them for the sake of their country and for the sake of their religion to give up their employment and do their duty. What I venture to warn the Government is that as soon as the country has received and assimilated the gospel of the spinning-wheel and swaraj and as soon as the soldiers and others are ready to take up the spinning-wheel and the handloom, I promise that if I have got still the strength left in me and the personal liberty that is vouchsafed to me by this Government, I promise that I shall undertake to go to every one of the soldiers and every one of those who are serving in the civil departments of

¹ *Vide* "The Non-co-operation resolution", 5-9-1920.

² *Vide* Appendix "Congress resolution on Non-co-operation".

Government to give up his employment and take up the spinning-wheel; but even at this very moment, I invite every soldier who calls himself an Indian and every servant in Government employment that if he has understood the message of swadeshi, it is his bounden duty to have his employment under this Government which has emasculated this country, which has put affronts upon Islam and which has made itself responsible for the tragedy of Jallianwala Bagh. I say that it is a sin for anybody to serve this Government and if they have got a hope in swadeshi they will do well to leave their employment under this Government.

The second reason given by the Government of Bombay is that these Brothers have made speeches inciting to violence. I know the Brothers, I know almost all the speeches that they have delivered and I venture from this platform to deny that charge *in toto*. The Brothers have ever, in private and in public, to my knowledge weaned the people from any tendency to violence, but I shall tell you the reason why the Government have laid their hands upon the two Brothers. They are brave, they are truthful and they are lovers of their religion and their country and they have acquired an influence upon Indians such as no other Indians have acquired during their lifetime over them. Theirs is a name to conjure with among the Mussulmans and they have found an abiding place in the hearts of millions of Hindus and Mussulmans. They stand, as no Mussulmans have stood, for Hindu-Muslim unity. This Government has no room for brave people, for fearless people, for people who are truthful, who are lovers of their country and their religion and who have acquired an influence over the masses, but whilst I must analyse the mentality of this Government, and whilst I must draw your attention to the sins of this Government, I would warn you against becoming excited and going in for violence. I tender my congratulation to our countrymen throughout India that in spite of provocation of this grave type given to the country, the country has observed what I venture to call divine peace. I hope that the peace that reigns supreme in India today is due not to the fear of the British bayonet, but is due to a consciousness of our growing strength and a consciousness of our own pledge solemnly given in September and repeated in December. If in spite of the existing provocation and in spite of still further provocations that may be in store for us, if we keep to our promise and retain this peace up to the end, I assure you that this very Government will still apologize to India for the wrong done to the Khilafat, for the wrong done to the

Punjab and for the wrong done to the Ali Brothers. Let us understand what this Government stands for. It has chiefly sustained itself for all these long years by a system of terrorism as its final refuge. We have for the last 12 months repeatedly challenged the Government to do its worst. If we deliberately and consciously run into fire, we must not blame the fire for scorching us. We have known by previous experience what this Government is capable of doing under certain given circumstances. We have lighted the fire of Government's ire, let us not now in a cowardly manner run away from it and, if we stand the rigorous test to which we are subjected today, I promise that inside of three months you will establish swaraj in India, and you will call yours a free country. Let non-violence be a weapon not of the weak, but of the strong even as it was with the two Brothers. When the Government understands that no amount of provocation will goad us into madness, but that we have proposed henceforth to remain sane, you will find that there will be nothing that this Government can do to oust us from the position that we ought to occupy. I ask the Mussulmans as also the Hindus, if they have understood the spirit of the working of the Brothers, if they have understood the spirit of the message of non-co-operation and if they are lovers of their religion and their country, I ask both Mussulmans and Hindus, not to be irritated but remain calm and firm in their determination to vindicate the honour of their religion and their country.

There is only one thing and one thing only that has got to be done by every woman and every man in India and that is to discard all the foreign clothes and all the foreign fineries which have hitherto been a sign of our bondage. It is not enough that you away a few rags from your houses and from your boxes but it is necessary for the women of Trichinopoly to part with their finest saris which they have hugged to themselves hitherto which are made from foreign yarn. That will give me the measure of your affection for your religion for your country and for the Ali Brothers and let the men of Trichinopoly, whether they are Hindus or Mussulmans, permit themselves to be measured by the same standard and let them not be found wanting tomorrow morning. You may not have the splendid organizing talent and the inexhaustible energy of Maulana Shaukat Ali. You may not have the eloquence of a Mahomed Ali, but every Hindu and every Mussulman can easily imitate their faculty for renouncing every happiness on earth for the sake of their religion and their country. You can discard even as they have done every foreign

garment about you. You can wear as heavy khaddar as these two big Brothers have been wearing for the last six months. That will be the true measure of your affection for them. That will be a tangible demonstration of your recognition of true non-violence and recognition of Hindu-Muslim unity for we are united immediately we show that we have a common purpose.

The students in Kumbakonam and the students in Madras also asked me what was their duty at a critical period of our history. Their clearest duty was placed before them in September and December and that was to leave every school which was either managed by the Government or aided by it and I congratulate those students of Trichinopoly who had the courage of their conviction and who could see the necessity for abandoning Government schools. I congratulate them on having done splendid work during these months and I render my sympathy to those students who for some reason or other could not see their way to leave their old schools, but they can still serve their country if they will. They can religiously set apart a definite hour or two, as the case may be, for spinning on behalf of India. They can adopt khaddar like everybody else. On the altar of swadeshi we can invite co-operators and non-co-operators, those who are serving the Government and those who are not serving the Government, we invite all who care to call themselves Indians. Just as it is our primary duty to eat the food that is grown in India and cooked in India, so is it our primary duty to clothe ourselves with cloth that has been spun and woven in India; and, just as we realize instinctively that the true law of economics requires that we should cook our own food in our own homes, so the law of economics instinctively demands from us that we spin and weave our cloth in our own homes.

Like the students, lawyers also have enquired of me in Bengal, in Madras and also in Kumbakonam and it is not for us to point the finger of scorn at them, if they have not seen their way to suspend practice, but I venture to invite them to follow the gospel of swadeshi and in every way possible to help the swadeshi movement, at least they are expected to have the courage of wearing khaddar in the law-courts. If they have faith in swaraj, I certainly expect them and their household to set apart an hour or two every day for winning religiously. If today people of different types and qualities have found themselves on public platforms, I hope that the lawyers will be

patient enough and realize the dignity of labour and realize the dignity of service among the rank and file. Courage, endurance and above all, fearlessness and spirit of willing sacrifices are the qualities that are required today in India for leadership. I have not a shadow of doubt in my mind that an illiterate *Panchama* brother who can exhibit these qualities in their fullness is more able than a frail person like myself to lead a movement of this character, for what we are pining for is not a complicated thing, but a very simple thing called swaraj, our birthright. I have no doubt in my mind that simple godfearing women can lead a movement of this character if they have the qualities that I have mentioned and I invite the women of Trichinopoly to play their part and give their full share on the altar of sacrifice. Seeing that our battle is non-violent, I warn everyone in this audience against the spirit of intolerance seizing hold of us. Students who have left schools or colleges or lawyers who have suspended practice may not adopt an air of superiority and look down upon those students and lawyers who have not conformed to the Congress resolution. There is room enough on the swaraj platform for the weakest and the strongest of Indians. The army of non-violence can take in children and even disabled men if they have got a true heart.

One thing more in connection with the Moplah revolt and I shall have done. I know that what has happened in Malabar has been preying upon all of us who have understood anything about the situation there. My heart bleeds to think that our Moplah brethren have gone mad. I am grieved to find that they have killed officers. I am grieved to think that they have looted Hindu houses leaving many hundreds of men and women homeless and foodless. I am grieved to think that they have endeavoured forcibly to convert Hindus to Islam and by all these acts they have done an injury. . . but all the same let us have a due sense of proportion. Their acts are not the acts of all the Muslims of India even, nor, thank God, of all the Moplahs. Every Mussulman of note that I know has repudiated every one of their acts. Let our loyalty to Hindu-Muslim unity therefore remain firm and changeless. Our loyalty to that creed may still have to suffer greater shocks, but so long as we are satisfied, that there is nothing in Islam to warrant any of the things that these misguided Moplahs have done, and so long as we are satisfied as I am satisfied that no sensible Mussulman approves of these acts, or any single one of them, our loyalty to the creed of Hindu-Muslim unity need not suffer any shock whatsoever. Let us not also for one moment imagine that had it not

been for the British bayonet, peace could never have been restored in Malabar. All the world over, wherever there are men and women they fight sometimes, they sometimes break their heads and run amok, but there has never been any difficulty about settling their own quarrels. Where was the Government and its police when the first Moplah ran amok? What is the use of a Government that knows only how to exact reprisals, but does not know how to protect life in its initial stages? Of what use is a Government whose police are never expected to run the slightest risk and which takes a thousand lives against one life. Of what use is a Government which, having known the temperament of the Moplahs for years and years, failed to bring the lesson of peace to them. Lastly, what is the use of a Government that left those Hindus absolutely unarmed for self-defence. With the Moplahs of Malabar, I know that non-violence is not their final creed as it is mine. The Government of Bombay has thrown dust into our eyes by connecting the Moplah outbreak with the arrest of Ali Brothers. Even before non-co-operation was born in India, such outbreaks have occurred all over and the Government was powerless to protect life and property in the initial stages, as it was unable hopelessly to protect life and property in Shahabad three years ago.¹ Where was its power of protection when nearly, if I am right, for a week or at least three or four days, the whole villages were given up to pillage and plunder by infuriated Hindus against Mussulmans. Therefore I hope that this big meeting will draw the only lesson that is possible from the Moplah outbreak, not to swerve an inch from our settled programme, but to go forward with redoubled effort and finish it during this very year so that we can establish swaraj.

I understand that in connection with a kind of riot in connection with a theatre Manager nearly 40 persons have been arrested. I must confess that I like the idea of that arrest. Every Congressman, certainly every Congress leader must hold himself responsible for the observance of peace in his own village and district and whether we have been in a particular affray or not, let the Government hold us as hostages, in connection with every such affray anywhere for there is no doubt about it that we must hold ourselves responsible for awakening India to life. We must hold ourselves responsible for also making the people feel their own strength, and the duty therefore

¹ The reference is to the riots which had broken out there during September-October, 1917.

undoubtedly devolves upon every one of us to see to it that people continue to remain in a disciplined state. . . We may disclaim legal liability but we may not escape moral liability for any outbreak of violence in any part. . . Let us have no noisy demonstrations, no shouts, no pressure to be put upon a single man who is a co-operator as behoves peaceful men. When we attend meetings let us make no noisy demonstrations; but, let us silently work away at the spinning-wheel and complete the boycott of foreign cloth, if possible, even during this very month. Let us occupy every spare moment at our disposal in manufacturing yarn and weaving cloth. I know no other way of winning swaraj and winning also the release of the Ali Brothers and all those who may be imprisoned who are innocent men.

I thank you for the exemplary patience with which you have listened to me, I hope that you will listen to Maulana Azad Sobhani with the same amount of patience.

The Hindu, 22-9-1921

141. MESSAGE TO CONGRESS COMMITTEE, KARUR

TRICHINOPOLY,
September 20, 1921

I am sorry that the programme already drawn up does not permit my paying Karur a visit. I know how well you have worked for temperance reform. But I was sorry to hear of the pressure put upon a theatre manager for contributions to the Tilak Swaraj Fund or a temple. If we are to attain swaraj during this year we must be able to control all the unruly elements amongst us and prevent violence from whatever cause arising . . . understand that over forty citizens have been arrested who had no hand whatsoever in the investment of the theatre. Nevertheless I congratulate those who are arrested. The arrest, I regard as a compliment paid to us. It shows that the Government expect us to keep the peace even by those who are unconnected with the movement. I hope that as true non-co-operators they will go to prison. I hope, too, that in spite of what the Government may do non-violence will be strictly observed and finally I hope that the wives and other relations of those who have been arrested will keep firm and allow the latter to go to jail without offering any defence whatsoever.

The Hindu, 26-9-1921

*142. SPEECH IN REPLY TO MUNICIPAL ADDRESS,
SRIRANGAM*

September 20, 1921

The Mahatma in the course of his short reply said that the money realized from the sale of the silver plate presented to him would go to the Tilak Swaraj Fund, for he had absolutely no boxes to keep such gifts. He drew the attention of the Municipality and in fact of every municipality which deserved its existence to three things; if they wished to take part in the great movement of national regeneration, they should see that no citizen of Srirangam should be without khaddar and no citizen had foreign cloth in his house. Secondly, they should see the drink evil was entirely obliterated in their midst. Thirdly, there should be no blot of untouchability; there was no sanction in the Hindu religion for this blot which was eating into the very vitals of India and he was sure when they got out of this curse, they were entitled to swaraj. When 22 crores of Hindus were steeped in this Satanic superstition, it was impossible for Mussulmans to make progress independent of Hindus. He therefore urged upon the people of Srirangam who had such magnificent temples which should constantly remind them of their duty to banish the idea of untouchability.

The Hindu, 22-9-1921

143. SPEECH AT MEETING, SRIRANGAM

September 20, 1921

FRIENDS,

I thank you sincerely for the beautiful address, I call it beautiful because it is printed on leaves. The beauty of it is, let me tell you, somewhat marred in that you have written your address or printed it not in your own language, or the national language, Hindustani, but in a language which has really no place in our national intercourse. English is a language of diplomacy and of international commerce. I know you will not misunderstand me because I may request use of the English language as one of the greatest of world languages. I think that there is a great deal in the English literature which we could learn with profit. But even as dirt is described as matter "misplaced" so also is our use of English in the wrong place as here obnoxious. Each time I have to use English in order to transmit my thoughts to my countrymen and each time I hear English in our mutual intercourse, I feel deeply the sting of ever-growing humiliation. And so, as you

know, I have collected from our Marwari friends Rs. 50,000 for Hindi propaganda in your Presidency. I do hope, therefore, that instead of making a vain effort to attain eloquence in the English language we shall strive earnestly to become eloquent in our own vernaculars and in the national language. In these days of unbelief it is a rare thing for one to hear the beautiful music of the Sanskrit language. I tell you, although the verses were unfortunately in my own praise, I did not mind enjoying the Sanskrit verses so beautifully pronounced by the blind poet under that leaf cottage. If we really love our country we must cultivate a taste for all that is good, for all that is noble in our country. It, therefore, grieves me when I see our women coming out of our homes bedecked in foreign garments coloured in an kinds of fantastic manner. You with your bare clean bodies and with your *tilak*¹ on the forehead are beautiful to look at. But I despair of our country why I see even you hugging foreign cloth. You who seem to be leading a state of happy and prosperous life in this little happy island, little realize what the introduction of the *videshi* clothes has meant to India. It has meant literal ruin and starvation to millions of Indian homes. Bad as is our military drain and the drain in the shape of pensions given to men who have not made India their home, bad as is the drain in the shape of home charges², nothing had so emasculated the nation as its enforced idleness by the deprivation of cloth manufacture. This disappearance of the second large source of revenue to India had driven thousands of women to a life of shame and degradation. It has unfitted us to resist the ravages of famine and disease. And so we have in India the unparalleled phenomenon of many millions of men who are undergoing semi-starvation but who are as cultured as any on the face of the earth living in almost perpetual bondage under one lakh of Englishmen. If your outward sympathy is an expression of the inner, and if you miss the presence of the Ali Brothers as I do, you will have no hesitation about discarding your garments made of foreign yarn and even the most learned among you talking to the spinning-wheel as a sacrament. Further, if the outer symbols of your Hinduism are an earnest of your inner purity, you will get rid of the curse of untouchability. As a *sanatani* Hindu I venture to assert that there is no warrant for untouchability in Hinduism. I am surprised that it has assumed a

¹ Vermilion marks

² Payments made in England for so-called services by Englishmen

virulent form in this land of Shankara and Ramanuja. I assure you, you have misread the teachings of these great men if you consider that they would have regarded the very shadow of a *Panchama* brother to be a pollution. I hope, therefore, that you will exorcize the demon of untouchability from your midst and embrace the *Panchama* as a blood brother. That ours is a movement of self purification is apparent from the fact that the drink evil is disappearing from us. I congratulate you on your share in the campaign. I hope that you will put forth greater effort in all directions and give your full quota to swadeshi, temperance, and untouchability.

The Hindu, 22-9-1921

144. REPLY TO EDITOR, "INDIAN DAILY TELEGRAPH"

[September 21, 1921]¹

Mr. Gandhi has replied to another set of questions put to him by Mr. J. M. Mackenzie, editor of the *Indian Daily Telegraph*.

[QUESTION] I : Do you think that the South African republic deserves kicking for withholding the one demand which India went to the Imperial Conference to seek and can you not pay a fresh visit to the land of your early triumphs in order that the whole of India may rest satisfied ?

[ANSWER :] The question in India is really an enlarged edition of the South African. If I succeed here, the other is automatically solved.

2: As you have not yet gained self-mastery, can you realize and mark the dismal state of the rest of us tossed about by climate which is so thoroughly debauching ?

Being imperfect I do realize the imperfections of my fellow beings and hence my belief in non-violence.

3: Do you fear that the awesome fate of Russian people may overtake your beloved country, if you compel it to part with everything but its distressing nakedness ?

I do not know the fate of Russia, but I do know Indian. This enforced nakedness is being turned into voluntary . . I am practising my theory and therefore cannot go wrong in my calculations.

4: Seeing that both Obstinate and Pliable fall into the slough of despond, don't you think that there is something to be said for the methods of Mr.

¹ Released on this date from Lucknow by the Associated Press of India.

Ready-to-halt or even Mr. Facing-both-ways or are you determined to carry your bundle to the gate of the City Beautiful?

You have given me the choice of two evils. I prefer Obstinate and Pliable to Ready-to-halt and Facing-both-ways, but I hope I belong to neither class. I own I have as my company all those lonely gentlemen of whom you have written. You will find in the end that I was a light-weight champion. I put away all my bundles at the commencement of the journey.

5: As you have collected so much money, do you not feel that country-side would appreciate a donation from you towards Queen Victoria in honour of the sovereign whose love for India must have inspired you with worthy feelings at the start of your career?

Can I persuade you to believe that I am engaged in erecting much more desirable memorial to the late Queen than the one you contemplate?

6: In view of the existing conditions, what is your solution for South African trouble ?

My solution for South African trouble is to give India what she wants. First cast out the beam and the mote will take care of itself.

The Hindu, 22-9-1921

145. SPEECH IN REPLY TO MUNICIPAL ADDRESS, DINDIGUL

September 21, 1921

CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL OF DINDIGUL,

I thank you sincerely for the address that you have given me and the sentiments contained therein. I can only expect your address as a manifestation of your desire to associate yourselves fully with the spirit of self-sacrifice that is spreading throughout the length and breadth of India. As I said elsewhere, I venture to point out to you here also three things which you can tackle usefully and without the slightest injury to our political status and that is temperance, swadeshi and untouchability. You are the custodians of the health and the interests of the citizens of Dindigul . . . and your *Panchama* brethren whom you represent in the Municipal Council . . . and therefore you should get rid of untouchability which is one of the ways to obtain

swaraj for India. Similarly it is open to you to organize boycott of foreign clothes and the manufacture of swadeshi clothes in a manner in which any authority can do satisfactorily because you control the citizens of Dindigul and also in the teetotal campaign. I can only hope that by personal example and by passing resolutions in your Council and resetting the whole machinery, you will achieve these three objects . . . I thank you once more for the address.

The Hindu, 26-9-1921

146. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, DINDIGUL¹

September 21, 1921

The citizens of Dindigul presented Mahatmaji with purse in aid of the Smyrna and the Tilak Swaraj Fund. Mahatma Gandhi then made the following speech which was translated into Tamil by Dr. T. S. S. Rajan:

When I saw your representatives in Trichinopoly insisting upon Maulana Saheb and myself coming to this town, I thought you would show me some extraordinary results of non-co-operation. I had expected you all to be dressed in khaddar homespun and homewoven. I had expected to find every house in Dindigul with a spinning-wheel. But I find only much noise and enthusiasm here.... If we want swaraj or the release of Ali Brothers and their comrades, our enthusiasm should be developed in the proper channel. You have only three hundred spinning-wheels in Dindigul; you have a population of thirty thousand of whom ten thousand are Mohammedans and twenty thousand are Hindus. Counting five to a family on an average, you should have at least 6,000 families here with 6,000 spinning-wheels running from day to day. There is no swaraj without swadeshi. Swadeshi means not only the production of our country's needs, but also getting redress for the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs in a non-violent way. I understand that you are divided into petty factions. There is certainly no swaraj if everyone wanted to mind his own business nor if Hindus wanted to observe their superiority or segregate the *Panchamas*.

Throughout my travel in this Presidency nothing had oppressed me so much as the untouchability. I claim to be a *sanatani* Hindu with a due sense of my responsibility to my religion. I venture to say that

¹ At the maidan near the Rock

there is no warrant in Hindu Shastras for untouchability. Unless, therefore, we are prepared to give up treating human beings as less than dogs, we have no right to swaraj. I have given you all the conditions necessary for the attainment of swaraj and redress for the Punjab and Khilafat grievances. If the Muslims love their Khilafat as much as their lives, if the Muslims and their Hindu brethren love Ali Brothers and if the Hindus and the Muslims want swaraj they should all take to spinning and weaving. Let Hindus and Muslims treat one another as their blood-brothers and whilst each remains firm in his faith, each must sacrifice for the other, that we should all be non-violent in spite of the gravest provocation that we might receive, that Hindus should put an end to untouchability and embrace their *Panchama* brethren. I don't want you to eat and drink with them or have inter-marriages. But your Hinduism demands you to give an equal right to all human beings. I want you to give the *Panchama* the same right which any human being has a right to ask of you and which you claim from all the rest. These conditions being fulfilled, I have not a shadow of doubt that we will have swaraj within this year. May God help us in our attempts.

The Hindu, 26-9-1921

147. SPEECH AT MADURA

September 21, 1921

FRIENDS,

I thank you for these addresses this evening. We cannot attain swaraj by presentation of ten thousand addresses even. It makes me very sad to hear all this noise and I do not propose to tax you with words which would tackle your patience. You say in your addresses that this is a dharma war. Demonstrations and noise of this kind are against swaraj. I am sorry I came to Madura to see all this babble. I hope your leaders will tell you what your duty is for the attainment of swaraj. If you want dharma raj in India you must work your spinning-wheel which is a sign of peace and Hindu-Muslim united. You should remove untouchability because the religion does not allow it. You should see that drinking is completely stopped. I hope your leaders would advise on all these points.

The Hindu, 26-9-1921

148. NOTES

BENGAL

Bengal is a big province, and the reader will not be surprised if he finds these notes predominantly devoted to Bengal doings. I have not hesitated to say in private conversations, that in point of swadeshi, of all the provinces Bengal stands at the bottom. The mass appearance in a Bengal village or town does not wear the swadeshi stamp. Khadi is least in evidence in Bengal. But the signs of a coming revival are not wanting. The charkha has not taken deep root as yet, as it has done elsewhere. But it is becoming general everywhere. I saw it in its diminutive form at Silchar and Sylhet. It is almost a toy. It is good enough for spinning, but its yield is very little. It was more in evidence at Chittagong, and of a better type. They have devised an ingenious little portable thing which the boys and girls like. It is neat, beautiful and cheap. But like the Silchar pattern it does not give as much yarn as the original type. In Barisal, on the other hand, we saw a clever contrivance in which you move the wheel with a pedal. They were not able to give me the yield of the machine. But, I should not be surprised if it gives as much as the ancient wheel. All these inventions show that the *rentio*¹ is growing in popularity and has come to stay. In Barisal, moreover, it was a pleasure to see very fine and even yarn, turned out by the boys of the National School. The quantity displayed was not to be despised. The weaving shed in Barisal appeared to be nice, neat and roomy. The looms were all fly-shuttle after the Serampur style. The organizers have under their control nearly 80 looms. In an adjoining room they had stock worth about Rs. 15,000. They have not yet learnt the absolute necessity of using only hand-spun yarn both for warp and woof. I do urge upon all Congress organisations the paramount necessity of *their* using only hand-spun yarn for both warp and woof. The mixed thing has already become marketable. And the Congress workers need not—ought not to—waste their time over things which an ordinary trader can attend to.

But, of course, these looms and the few wheels I saw cannot clothe Bengal. And Bengal cannot help the swaraj movement, if it has

¹ Spinning-wheel

to depend upon Bombay and Ahmedabad for the cloth supply. Just as a man forced to be hungry cannot be induced to think of God, so may not millions of Bengalis forced to remain in a state of semi-starvation, think of or appreciate swaraj. The first indispensable condition of swaraj is, that each province becomes self-contained for its food and clothing.

But Bengal will not lag behind when once she fully awakens. She has a fine imagination. Her villages retain their simplicity. Her sons are clever and pushful, her daughters graceful, simple and lovely. Both men and women are intensely religious. Their faith is ennobling. The memory of the charkha is still alive. Bengal has but to realize, that she manufactured the finest fabrics not merely for herself, not merely for India but for the outside world as well, and she will beat her own past record, glorious as it is. Bengal is beginning to realize, that if her millions of women have forgotten the art of spinning, no other activity has replaced it, and that the root cause of her poverty as well as of the rest of India, is the enforced idleness of her peasantry. I feel sure, that Bengal is about to understand the full message of the spinning-wheel, and then she will take India by storm.

As a friend said, Bengal has to unlearn much. Like several other provinces, she has not a clean slate to write upon. She has for instance to unlearn that cloth woven in Dacca from foreign yarn is swadeshi.

OF STRIKES

The Assam-Bengal Railway and the steamer strikes were out of the ordinary, the first attempt, as I have found, to have strikes out of sympathy for those outside labour unions. The strikes were therefore sympathetic, humanitarian or political. I had the pleasure of meeting the strikers all over the railway line, but specially at Gauhati, Chittagong and Barisal. Having talked to them freely, I have come to the conclusion, that the people did not fully realize the cost of their undertaking. But having embarked on the strike, they have endeavoured to suffer the consequences. It is always dangerous and uncharitable for an outsider to say, what he would have done if he had the handling of a situation. But if one may hazard an opinion, I think that the labourers were not ready for a philanthropic strike. In my opinion the labourers and artisans of India have not yet arrived at that degree of national consciousness, which is necessary for successful sympathetic strikes. The fault is ours. We, who have interested ourselves in national service, have not until recently studied the wants

and aspirations of these classes, nor taken the trouble of informing them of the political situation. We have hitherto believed, that only those who had passed through high schools and colleges were fit to take part in national work. It is hardly therefore proper to expect the labouring and the artisan class all of a sudden to appreciate, and sacrifice themselves for, interests outside their own. We may not exploit them for political or any other ends. The best service we can render them and take from them at the present stage is to teach them self-help, to give them an idea of their own duties and rights, and put them in a position to secure redress of their own just grievances. Then and not till then are they ready for political, national or humanitarian service.

Any premature precipitation of sympathetic strikes must therefore result in infinite harm to our cause. In the programme of non-violence, we must rigidly exclude the idea of gaining anything by embarrassing the Government. If our activity is pure and that of the Government impure, the latter is embarrassed by our purity, if it does not itself become pure. Thus, a movement of purification benefits both parties. Whereas a movement of mere destruction leaves the destroyer unpurified, and brings him down to the level of those whom he seeks to destroy.

Even our sympathetic strikes therefore have to be strikes of self purification, i.e., non-co-operation. And so, when we declare a strike to redress a wrong, we really cease to take part in the wrong, and thus leave the wrongdoer to his own resources, in other words enable him to see the folly of continuing the wrong. Such a strike can only succeed when behind it is the fixed determination not to revert to service.

Speaking, therefore, as one having handled large successful strikes, I repeat the following maxims, already stated in these pages, for the guidance of all strike leaders:

1. There should be no strike without a real grievance.
2. There should be no strike, if the persons concerned are not able to support themselves out of their own savings or by engaging in some temporary occupation, such as carding, spinning and weaving. Strikers should never depend upon public subscriptions or other charity.
3. Strikers must fix an unalterable minimum demand, and declare it before embarking upon their strike.

A strike may fail in spite of a just grievance and the ability of strikers to hold out indefinitely, if there are workers to replace them. A wise man, therefore, will not strike for increase of wages or other comforts, if he feels that he can be easily replaced. But a philanthropic or patriotic man will strike in spite of supply being greater than the demand, when he feels for and wishes to associate himself with his neighbour's distress. Needless to say, there is no room in a civil strike of the nature described by me for violence in the shape of intimidation, incendiarism or otherwise. I should therefore be extremely sorry to find, that the recent derailment near Chittagong was due to mischief done by any of the strikers. Judged by the tests suggested by me, it is clear that the friends of the strikers should never have advised them to apply for or receive Congress or any other public funds for their support. The value of the strikers' sympathy was diminished to the extent, that they received or accepted financial aid. The merit of a sympathetic strike lies in the inconvenience and the loss suffered by the sympathizers.

As to what should be done now for or by the strikers, who have in spite of threats and temptations manfully held out—and they are more than 50 per cent—I have already given my opinion to the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee. And by that I wish to abide. If the strikers struck on the sole issue of sympathy for the outraged coolies at Chandpur and without intimidating their brethren, they had every moral right to do so, and they showed an unexpected measure of patriotism and fellow-feeling. I hope that they will refuse to rejoin service, until the Government have fully and frankly apologized, and refunded to the parties concerned the monies paid for the repatriation of the coolies.

MISCHIEVOUS ASSIDUITY

There is a District Propaganda Committee at Barisal, which certainly deserves credit, if mere assiduity is any passport to credit. Experience, however, shows, that assiduity, when it is mischievous, commands not credit, but incurs discredit. Such, it seems to me, is the activity of the District Propaganda Committee of Barisal. It is avowedly against non-co-operation. When we reached Barisal, a registered letter was delivered to me containing certain questions for me to answer at the public meeting, that was to be addressed by Maulana Mahomed Ali and me. The questions were printed. They were delivered to one personally by hand also. I answered every one

of the questions fully. The next day, to my surprise, I had a report of the answers presented to me for correction. The report was a Caricature of my answers. Then followed a messenger, who handed me another batch of papers for reading and explaining. And yet up to today I do not know the author of these communications. They were all unsigned. I have never known such irresponsibility on the part of a public body. I was informed that the work was all done by Government officials, and therefore, at public expense. I missed in all this attention shown to me the slightest desire for enlightenment or attempt to convince me of my error. It would have been something, if the Committee had invited me and my companions to a discussion. It would have been still better if being a public body it had taken advantage of our presence to bring the parties together. The only thing I discovered in this assiduous attention was an unholy desire to discredit the work of local non-co-operators. I read this activity in the light of what I have seen during my Bengal tour. There seems to me to be wilful and malicious misrepresentation of non-co-operation and non-co-operators. I find misrepresentation of my views. Sentences are torn from my speeches and distorted. The latest is the exploiting of the interview I had the privilege of having with the Poet. Fanciful and unauthorized reports have appeared in the Press. Whilst there was nothing secret about it, the interview has been considered to be a secret. It almost appears to be an attempt to divide us. But it must fail. The Poet is too great to be touched. Non-co-operators must resolutely refuse to believe anything that is imputed to him. There are differences of opinion between us. They do not affect my regard for the Poet in any way whatsoever. The Poet is as good a lover of India as I claim to be, and that love is an all-sufficing bond between us. I must therefore resolutely refuse to be drawn into the controversy raging round the interview.

But to return to the questions. In spite of my feeling that the questions were mischievously put, I answered them, as I have said, at the public meeting. I do not propose to reproduce my answers here in detail. But the reader will find the questions themselves interesting and showing the manner of the precious [*sic*] propaganda.

[QUESTION:] 1. You have denounced political strikes. Your followers here have supported the steamer strikes and spent thousands of rupees from Congress funds in feeding the strikers. Is this right?

[ANSWER:] See my remarks on strikes.

2. Many hundred boys have left schools and colleges under your orders, and now spend their time, insulting and intimidating peaceful and law-abiding people. What is going to be the future of these boys? How will they earn their living?

If the boys are insulting and intimidating, it is wrong. I do not believe many of them are. The future of the boys is bright, in that they are now free. They will earn their living by the sweat of their brow. They can still receive and are receiving literary training.

3. You have condemned hartals. Your followers here have declared several hartals, and instigated the shop-keepers to refuse to sell goods to Government officers and loyalists. Do you condemn this?

I have never condemned all hartals. When there is a hartal, no one can be served. But it would be wrong to exclude from service special classes or persons. It is true that hartals should only be declared on the rarest occasions.

4. During the recent hartal the non-co-operators prevented the municipal sweepers from working for two days, stopped the water supply and caused great danger to the health of the people. Was this right?

I fear that the information contained in the question is at least partially true. We do not want to deprive our opponents of the necessary social services. They must be rendered to all, even as the sun gives his heat to all without distinction.

5. Babu Sharat Kumar Ghosh, after his arrest for inciting the crowd to insult, loyalists said that there must be no water, light, or sweeper service in the town and the place should be turned into a burning ground. Was he right or wrong in saying this ?

I have since read Babu Sharat Kumar Ghosh's speech supplied by the Committee. There are passages in the speech, which bear the meaning sought to be put upon it. But from the glowing accounts I have received about Sharat Babu's very high character and spirituality, I must refuse to believe, that there is violence in Sharat Babu. I feel sure that if he has committed a slip, he will be the first person to acknowledge his mistake.

6. All these things were done in your name by persons who shouted *Gandhi Maharaj ki jai*. Do you approve of it? If not, how will you prevent your Followers from doing such wrong in future?

My "followers", I hope, are assimilating the spirit of non-violence. But if it ever comes to pass that *they*, under cover of non-violence resort to violence, I hope to find myself the first victim

of their violence, but if by a stroke of ill-luck or by my own cowardice I find myself alive, the snow-white Himalayas will claim me as their own.

7, 8 & 9: Is there enough swadeshi cloth in the county to clothe the inhabitants? Will not the boycott of foreign cloth raise the price? Is not the price too high already? Will not this boycott cause great hardship to the poor and inevitably lead to *har*¹ looting as happened before? Are not the inhabitants of Khulna in need of cloth already? Will this boycott help them? Is it right to burn cloth which might be given to relieve their distress?

Did not the Bombay mill-owners make vast profits from high price of cloth during the war because foreign cloth was scarce? If there is boycott now, will not they make greater profits? Is it right to take money from the poor and give it to the rich?

All great nations depend on foreign trade. If imports are stopped, exports will also stop and Indian traders will be ruined. Do you desire this? Do you wish India to be a strong nation or a weak one?

These questions are either due to gross ignorance or malice. All these questions on swadeshi have been answered in these pages with sufficient detail. If the District Propaganda Committee will, instead of raising such questions, simply concentrate on multiplying spinning-wheels and looms, there will be enough cloth and to spare, for famines will practically be things of the past. Is it not a money famine in Khulna? If the people had money, they could get rice. They are able-bodied enough to work the wheel and the loom. Every one of them can by the spinning-wheel earn enough for food. Yes, indeed, the Bombay mill-owners did make profits before. But the present swadeshi scheme requires every province to manufacture its own cloth and spin its own yarn. Boycott of foreign cloth does not mean boycott of all foreign trade. India will certainly import what she requires for her growth, and export what she does not need. India cannot well be weaker or more helpless than she is today. Swadeshi, thank God, is removing that weakness.

10. How much of the crore of rupees for the Tilak Swaraj Fund has been actually realized? How much only promised? How much already promised for schools, colleges, hospitals, charity, etc., and not really available for general purposes of swaraj? How much subscribed by Bombay mill-owners in hopes of reaping great profits from foreign cloth boycott?

¹ Bazaar

The accounts of the Fund will be duly published. The framer of the question will be interested to know, that the Bombay mill-owners did not subscribe much. Only one, Maulana Haji Yusuf Sobani, gave a handsome sum, because he is a staunch non-co-operator and has given his son to the cause. The majority of the mill-owners gave nothing.

There is one thing I should add. I heard, whilst at Barisal, that Surendra Babu, when he went to Barisal, was hooted. I was deeply grieved to hear this. Non-co-operators cannot hoot anyone—not their worst enemy. Hooting after all is a form of violence. But to hoot Surendranath Banerjea¹ is to forget ourselves. We differ from him today. But we may not forget his past services. He was at one time the idol of Bengal. He gave voice to our sentiments. May we now hoot him? Surely, every leader who differs from us is not an enemy of the country. We may not attend his meetings. Having attended, we may even oppose him. But our opposition and dissent must be courteously and even respectfully expressed, especially when it is a veteran leader whom we oppose.

CHRISTIAN NON-CO-OPERATORS

A Christian student writes:

Though we are Christian students, you are national leader, and we feel that we ought to learn from you what India stands for and what is her spiritual heritage. Will you therefore send me your criticism of Western Christianity with constructive suggestions regarding organization, worship and ministry?

My inquirer did not know that he was taking me beyond my depth. It is a pleasure to me, however, that Indian Christians are taking growing interest in the national movement. I know, that hundreds of poor Christians in Bombay paid what they could to the Tilak Memorial Swaraj Fund. I know that several educated Christians are devoting their splendid talents to national work. I propose, therefore, to satisfy my inquirer—not in the way he would have me to—but in the only way I can.

India of the near future stands for perfect toleration of all religions. Her spiritual heritage is simple living and high thinking. I consider Western Christianity in its practical working a negation of

¹ 1848-1925; one of the founders of the Indian National Congress and its president in 1895 and 1902

Christ's Christianity. I cannot conceive Jesus, if he was living in the flesh in our midst, approving of modern Christian organizations, public worship or modern ministry. If Indian Christians will simply cling to *The Sermon on the Mount*, which was delivered not merely to the peaceful disciples but a groaning world, they would not go wrong, and they would find that no religion is false, and that if they act according to their lights and in the fear of God, they would not need to worry about organizations, forms of worship and ministry. The Pharisees had all that, but Jesus would have none of it, for they were using their office as a cloak for hypocrisy and worse. Co-operation with forces of Good and non-co-operation with forces of Evil are the two things we need for a good and pure life, whether it is called Hindu, Muslim or Christian.

WHAT TO DO?

I have dealt with the arrest of Maulana Mahomed Ali at length in a leading article¹. Therein I have mentioned only those things which are absolutely indispensable for gaining swaraj during the year. But there are many other things which we can do to hasten the advent of swaraj.

For instance, title-holders can renounce titles, lawyers can suspend practice, grown-up students can leave schools and colleges and take to spinning, and councillors can resign their seats.

This is a war between religion and irreligion. We are therefore expected to give up drink, gambling and incontinence. Untouchability is Satan's device. We must give that up. Then there is swaraj even before the end of October. I look upon this arrest as God's gift. Let us make the best use of it.

WHAT NOT TO DO ?

And just as these are so many things that each one of us can and should do, there are some things that we dare not do. We may not proclaim hartal. We may not burn public buildings, we may not kill anybody, we may not swear at anybody. We may not quarrel among ourselves, we may not be intolerant towards those who do not see eye to eye with us. Our tolerance will gain more recruits to our cause than our intolerance. "There is no compulsion in religion" is as true in the matter of "forcible conversions" to the doctrine of non-co-operation

¹ Vide "The Last Act?" 22-9-1921.

as to Islam. We must not fear anything and anybody except our weaknesses.

MY TESTIMONY

Friends are asking me, whether I do not consider it a breach of faith on the part of the Viceroy to have countenanced the arrest of Maulana Mahomed Ali. I cannot accuse Lord Reading of a breach of faith, because his assurance as to waiving of prosecution was gratuitous. But it is certainly up to him to show clearly the new circumstances that have arisen since his Simla speech to justify Maulana Mahomed Ali's arrest. Of course, he did not expect the Maulana to seal his lips or to water down his speeches. The apology was an act of brave and fearless men. They expressed regret, if in a heated moment they had used an expression that might mean incitement to violence. I know the Brothers to be brave, honest and godfearing. Ever since the famous statement, Maulana Mahomed Ali has been travelling with me. He has made many speeches. But whilst he has been strong in every one of them, he has been careful to preach non-violence. His work on behalf of non-violence in private has been more solid still. The Brothers have been preaching the non-violence of the strong. They have practised what they have preached. The Government of Madras knew, that we were proceeding upon an errand of peace. They knew that Maulana Mahomed Ali was bound to preach Hindu-Muslim unity. His message would have reached that Moplahs, and their fanaticism might have received a check. If he had been permitted to go to the disturbed area, he would have ensured peace without the loss of a single drop of blood. But that would have irreparably damaged the prestige of the Government and demonstrated the triumph of non-violence.

PROOF

If proof be wanted in support of my inference, it is supplied by the letter received by me from the Chief Secretary on my arrival in Madras. This is the text:

In the event of your proposing to visit Malabar District I am directed to inform you that the military authorities consider that the condition prevailing in the area under martial law make it undesirable that you should enter or stay therein. In this view His Excellency the Governor-in-Council concurs. I am further directed to tell you that the military authorities have issued instructions, that should you go to the martial law area, you should be

turned back.

The Government have hitherto credited me with good intentions. They have professed no distrust of my motives. Everybody has testified to the fact, that my presence has everywhere a peaceful effect. This prevention order—for order it undoubtedly is — forces upon me the inference, that the Government do not want peace, that they do not want exposure of the exaggerations indulged in their behalf, and what is the worst of all, they do not want to stop the second edition of the Punjab that is being enacted in unhappy Malabar.

THE CRIME OF WEARING KHADI

I propose to give only one illustration of what I mean. Respectable young men have had their khadi vests and caps torn from them, and had to witness their being burnt. One man had his cap spat into, and was then forced to wear it. Is there here a change of heart or of methods? I have many other stories of atrocities. But I do not repeat them for want of verification. Even men, who were known to have prevented looting, etc., have been arrested, simply because they were Congressmen. So respectable a man as Mr. Keshava Menon of Calicut has been prevented from leaving Calicut. The order was served on him after my visit was announced. In what way could public safety be injured by Mr. Menon's leaving the disturbed area? From all the accounts I have received, Mr. Thomas, the author of the Malabar troubles is copying Sir Michael O'Dwyer¹ without possessing the latter's frankness. Perhaps he is tongue-tied. I am doing him an injustice. The Governor of Madras has taken up the position of Lord Chelmsford. He leaves everything to his lieutenant.

PICKETING AND LOVE

A writer in the public Press indignantly asks: "How can I reconcile picketing with my doctrine of love? Is not picketing a form of violence or undue pressure?" It can be that certainly It has been that in several cases, I am sorry to say. But it has been also an act of love, I know. Several sisters and young lads have gone on picketing purely out of love. Nobody has accused me of hatred against Marwaris. Nobody can possibly accuse Sheth Jammalaji of hatred against his own caste-men and fellow merchants. And yet both he and

¹ Lieut. Governor of Punjab, 1913-19 responsible for Jallianwala Bagh tragedy .

I are countenancing picketing of Marwari foreign cloth shops. When a daughter stands guard over her erring father, she does it purely out of love. The fact is, that there are certain acts that are common to all classes of men. And when they are not in themselves objectionable, the motive alone decides their quality. My own position becomes complicated by reason of my having to invite and rely upon the co-operation of those who are not all actuated by motives of affection.

UNDER SWARAJ

Another writer, pointing to the Moplah outbreak, shows, that swaraj of the non-co-operator's dream can only be Moplah raj. I suggest a better inference. What the present Government in its essence is, is most forcibly brought home to us by the Moplah outbreak. Three things are absolutely clear:

1. In spite of all the most modern weapons of destruction at its disposal, the Government has not been able to protect life and property. It is no answer that they restored order after the event.

2. In spite of long rule the Government has criminally failed to make Moplahs peaceful citizens.

3. Whilst on the one hand they have failed to discipline Moplah valour and harness it for purposes of peace and God, they have taken no care to train the Hindus for self-protection from their lawless countrymen.

Non-co-operators have not yet attained swaraj. Whilst they may be charged with inability to have acquired control over all the forces of evil, they cannot honestly be credited with the happenings in Malabar. Assume that the non-co-operators fomented troubles, it was the duty of the Government to forestall them and prevent disorders. The clearest way of forestalling would have been to redress the wrongs on which non-co-operators have so successfully hung their theme.

It is however easy enough to say what swaraj would be like under non-co-operation regime. In the first place, no cause would be given for such grave discontent to the people. In the second place, Moplahs would have been brought under healthy influence, and thirdly, in the event nevertheless of outbreaks, peace makers would have gone out at considerable risk to themselves to restore peace. The unequal contest such as is now going on would be impossible under swaraj.

“MALICE AFORETHOUGHT”

It is useful for governments to attribute previous malice to their critics. But in Madras I have come across a clear case of previous malice on the part of the Government. They have arrested the printer, the proprietor, the publisher and three editors of an article published in May last in a Tamil paper called *Deshabhaktan*. To an average reader the article is an exhortation to observe non-violence. The Viceregal declaration on the Ali Brothers' statement had led everyone to suppose, that there were to be no prosecutions for anti-Government writings, so long as there was no violence in them. But the fact of the prosecution does not much matter. It marks, let us say, a change in the policy. After all the Viceroy's was not a declaration to bind him for eternity. What is malicious is the prosecution of the innocent printer, publisher, proprietor and all the three editors. They could have found out the actual writer and punished him. If they did not know the writer's name, they could have called upon the declared editor to disclose the name of the writer. But under the pretence of prosecuting for alleged sedition, they wanted to stop the publication of an influential vernacular newspaper. If all the six men charged were to defend themselves, they might be discharged. That would not matter to the Government. Their object was to crush the *Deshabhaktan* by any means whatsoever. They have succeeded and are happy. I call this malice aforethought. The Press Act may go. But the spirit behind it abides.

THE CONGRESS NOT A SHOW

I observe complaints about the wise action of the Reception Committee in limiting the issue of visitors' tickets to three thousand. In my opinion, even three thousand visitors are too many, if we wish to treat the Congress not as an annual show but a business assembly meeting year after year to settle the nation's programme for the ensuing twelve months. The limitation of the number of delegates presupposed a limitation of the number of visitors. It is impossible in an unwieldy assembly to carry on calm debates and take votes. I cannot therefore help feeling, that the Reception Committee was quite right in fixing a limit for visitors' tickets.

But this does not mean, that the annual gathering should lose its demonstrative character. The Reception Committee is therefore organizing lectures on popular subjects not only by the prominent

Congressmen but also by other noted speakers. An instructive swadeshi exhibition is being arranged. There will be sacred concerts too for the spectators. I believe that the Committee is providing for one lakh of spectators. Every encouragement will be given to the people to visit Ahmedabad during the season, and adequate instruction and amusement will be provided for them without in any way interfering with the business part of the programme. Thus the ideal the Reception Committee has kept before itself is, by separating the business from the show, to emphasize both.

REPRESSION IN SIND

Here is a wire received from Sind which speaks for itself:

Repression in Sind increasing. Public firm. On 24th August Maharaj Dwarka of Dadu was sentenced to one year's imprisonment. On 9th Maulvi Fatehali of Karachi got one year. On 3rd September Sheikh Abdul Majid got 2 years and Maharaj Vishnu Sharma, editor of the *Hindu* three years. Besides several pickets at Karachi and Sukkar have been sent to jail.

Besides this, I have cuttings from newspapers describing the horrible state of repression going on in that Province. I can only hope, that with the increase of repression there will also be an increase in the determination of the people to gain swaraj during the year. Not sacrifice so much as intelligence and hard work are wanted to complete our programme.

THE IMPASSABLE BARRIER

The existence of untouchability must remain an impassable barrier in the path of our progress, which we must break down with supreme effort. There seems to be a lurking thought with many of us, that we can gain swaraj and keep untouchability. They do not even see the contradiction inherent in the thought. Swaraj is as much for the "untouchable" as for the "touchable". A correspondent from Narayanavaram writes:

In our parts *Panchamas* are very badly treated by the Hindus, especially the Brahmins. In the villages they are not allowed to go about the streets inhabited by Brahmins. They must stand at a considerable distance when speaking to Brahmins.

Read "Sahibs" for "Brahmins" and "Indians" for "*Panchamas*", and see how you feel. And yet I have no doubt, that some Sahibs are infinitely better than some Brahmins. God will not let us have swaraj so long as we treat a brother as an outcaste by reason of

his birth. A man's karma is responsible for what he is, they say. But my karma does not compel me to throw stones at a sinner. Religion is made to uplift and not to keep a man crushed under the weight of his karma. It is a prostitution of the grand doctrine of karma to consign a man of lowly birth to perdition. Rama felt privileged to find himself honoured by a fisherman. The Hindu religion is replete with illustrations of great men lifting their unfortunate brethren from their miseries. Will not the modern Hindus copy their own great men, and once for all rub out the blot of untouchability that so defiles Hinduism?

Young India, 22-9-1921

149. "FRAUDULENT IMITATIONS"

TO
THE EDITOR
YOUNG INDIA

SIR,

We beg to draw your attention to the matter published in the issue of the 18th August under the heading of "Fraudulent Imitations" and to request you to clear the ambiguity existing therein.

Although the Madras letter quoted by you in your above said issue only refers to "Khadi sold in Madras at from 10 to 15 annas per yard by the Bombay Swadeshi Stores", still, however, owing to the mention of the *Bombay Swadeshi Stores* therein, many of our customers inquire after it and ask for an explanation, as our Store is generally known by the name of "Swadeshi Stores" or "Bombay Swadeshi Stores."

It is quite clear to us, that the said letter does not concern us in any way, as we have neither a branch nor an agency in Madras, nor do we keep such stuff in our Stores; but to remove the doubt or misinterpretation from the mind of our customers and the public in general, we approach you with this hope and trust, that it will receive your immediate attention and you will be pleased to clear the point in your next issue.

Yours, etc.,

MANAGER,

THE BOMBAY SWADESHI CO-OPERATIVE STORES CO. LTD.

I gladly publish the foregoing. My note was certainly based on a complaint from Madras.

Young India, 22-9-1921

150. THE LAST ACT?

The much talked of arrest of Maulana Mahomed Ali took place at Waltair, whilst we were on our way to Madras. I am writing this in the train, just after writing out a few telegrams. The train halted at Waltair for over twenty-five minutes. Maulana Mahomed Ali and I were going outside the Station to address a meeting. Hardly had we gone a few paces from the entrance, when I heard the Maulana shouting to me and reading the notice given to him. I was a few paces in front of him. Two white men and half a dozen Indian police composed the party of arrest. The officer in charge would not let the Maulana finish reading the notice, but grasped his arm and took the Maulana away. With a smile on his lips he waved good bye. I understood the meaning. I was to keep the flag flying. May God help me to prove worthy of the message of a comrade with whom it was a privilege to work.

I continued my journey to the meeting place. I asked the people to remain calm, and fulfil the Congress programme. I then retraced my steps, and went where the Maulana was being detained. I asked the officer in charge whether I could see the Maulana. He said he had orders to let his wife and secretary only meet him. I saw Begum Mahomed Ali and secretary Mr. Hayat coming out of the detention room.

Waltair is a beauty spot in Andhra. It is a sanatorium. I envied the Maulana his arrest at such a lovely place. He was contemplating staying at Waltair a few days to rest and complete his accounts of the deputation. But the unexpectedly long stay in Bengal and the Moplah outbreak had rendered it impossible.

God had willed it otherwise. He wanted to give the Maulana enforced rest. And I know that he is happy in his detention.

Here is a copy of the warrant of arrest:

TO
F. E. CUNNINGHAM, ESQ.
DEPUTY INSPECTOR GENERAL OF POLICE
C.I.D. AND RAILWAYS
MADRAS

Whereas Mahomed Ali is to be called on to show cause

why should not be bound over to keep the peace or to be of good behaviour for a period of one year under Sections 107 and 108 Cr. P.C. you are hereby directed to arrest the said Mahomed Ali and produce him before me. Therein fail not.

J. R. HUGGINS
DT. MAGISTRATE
VIZAGAPATNAM,
September 14, 1921

Is it not funny, that he who has not only been himself peaceful but has endeavoured, and that successfully, to ensure peace among others and who has been a pattern of good behaviour, should be called upon by an insolent power to be “bound over to keep the peace and be of good behaviour”? A Government that is evil has no room for good men and women except in its prisons.

What has happened to the younger is bound to happen to the elder brother. They call themselves Siamese twins. They are inseparable. And if the one has misbehaved, the other undoubtedly has. I hope, that by the time this is in print, India would have learnt of the Maulana Shaukat Ali’s arrest.

In imprisoning Maulana Mahomed Ali, the Government has imprisoned the Khilafat. For the two brothers are the truest representatives of the Khilafat. They cannot rest so long as the Khalifa remains practically a prisoner and their holy places virtually under non-Muslim control. The imprisonment of either or both means flat refusal to recognize the Khilafat claim.

The Government will however find, that they have not succeeded in imprisoning the spirit of the Brothers, and that the Khilafat struggle will rage all the fiercer for their imprisonment the spirit of the Brothers will live in every true Hindu and Musulman who will keep the Khilafat flame steady and shining

But the Brothers today stand for more than the Khilafat. They want swaraj and the redress of the Punjab wrong equally with the redress of the Khilafat wrong. They are too honourable to sell themselves even for securing the redress of the Khilafat wrong. To them the three are inextricably mixed up. It cannot well be otherwise, for to grant or to get the one is to grant or to get the other.

For me the imprisonment is a good omen. The Government were playing with the thing so long as they were arresting the rank and file. Every government that does not wish to yield to popular will

is bound to arrest popular leaders and attempt to crush the popular spirit. With the Indian Government it has become the code of honour to arrest and imprison leaders and yield to popular will when there is no grace left in the giving.

This imprisonment therefore may safely be regarded as a preliminary to the establishment of swaraj. Only the swaraj parliament can unlock the jail gate, and relieve the Brothers and their fellow-prisoners with becoming honours. For this is a fight to the finish.

The best tribute we can pay the Brothers and their fellow prisoners is to throw away all doubts, fears and lethargy. We have been doubtful as to the value of non-violence and swadeshi for attainment of our goal, and our ability to finish the programme within the year. We have entertained fear regarding our ability to undergo the necessary sacrifice, and we have been prosecuting our programme lazily. Let us imitate the courage, the faith, the fearlessness, the truthfulness, and the vigilant incessant activity of the Brothers, and we shall certainly attain swaraj. "Therein fail not" were the concluding words of the Magistrate's order. Well, the officer in charge "failed not"! Many an English officer, be it said to his credit, has lost his life in trying not to fail. The Congress and the Khilafat command, mandate, advice, whatever it may be called, is: "Therein fail not". Shall we, during the remaining period of grace, so work as to be able to report to the Congress, we have "failed not" ? The orders are clear:

1. Be non-violent even under the greatest provocation.
2. Preserve Hindu-Muslim unity even under the severest strain.
3. Boycott the use of foreign cloth even though you may have to be satisfied with the merest loin-cloth and take to hand spinning during every odd moment that can be spared.

When we have carried out these conditions, but not till then, are we ready to offer civil disobedience, that will compel obedience from the mightiest Government to a people's wish.

Young India, 22-9-1921

151. WANTED EXPERTS

Attacks on hand-spinning notwithstanding, I cling to the belief, that swaraj is unattainable without the beautiful art becoming universal in India. The reasoning applied to the proposition is incredibly simple. India cannot live unless her homes become self-supporting. They cannot become so, unless they have a supplementary occupation. It will, therefore, not avail if all our cloth was manufactured in our mills. If hand-spinning became universal, every home would get a share of the crores and without any complicated machinery being necessary. And India is able to manufacture all her own cloth. It is understood, that when spinning becomes universal, the millions of weavers and lakhs of carders will revert to their original occupation.

This is the economic aspect of hand-spinning.

It will save our women from forced violation of their purity. It will, as it must, do away with begging as a means of livelihood. It will remove our enforced idleness. It will steady the mind. And I verily believe, that when millions take to it as a sacrament, it will turn our faces godward.

This is the moral aspect of spinning.

And when it has become universal and traffic in foreign cloth has become a thing of the past, it is the surest sign that India is earnest, sober, and believes in the non-violent and religious character of her struggle.

At present outsiders do not believe in our ability to boycott foreign cloth and to manufacture enough for our requirements by hand-spinning and hand-weaving. But when it becomes an established fact, India's opinion, too, will become an irresistible force, and if necessary, she can then, but not till then, resort to civil disobedience in order to bend a recalcitrant Government to its will.

This is the political aspect.

Therefore I was sad to see, that in all Bengal I found no one who was a spinning-expert and who devoted his whole time and attention to nothing but spreading the gospel of hand-spinning, teaching, organizing and advising. I found, that the masses were ready to take it up but they did not know how to go about it. What is true of Bengal is perhaps true of most provinces. We should have in each province a

standard charkha and a body of experts to whom one can refer for advice and guidance. Much splendid talent could be utilized, if there was expert knowledge available. Who is to decide upon the utility or otherwise of over fifteen inventions that were exhibited in the National College Hall at Calcutta? I saw everywhere different kinds of charkhas in use. But I saw no attempt to test the capacity of these wheels. Thousands are spinning today in Bengal, but there is nobody to measure their work. I therefore advise all Congress Committees to set apart at least six men and six women with faith in their mission in this direction. They need not look to Satyagraha Ashram for personal guidance. What can be given is being imparted through the special articles that are being published weekly in these pages. I ask those who would become experts to study them with careful attention. But no one need expect to become an expert by merely studying those articles. Practice alone will make one perfect. Millions will spin for supplementing their resources, all will spin as a sacrament, some must spin for reducing it to a science. These latter must spin during the initial stage for eight hours per day. And as they spin on, they must match the quality of the yarn. They must measure every day their output and the exact time they have worked. They must learn the process of carding and weaving. They must know the different qualities of cotton, they must know the different types of wheels, and they must be able to execute ordinary repairs.

We will not attain swaraj, unless we have organized ourselves in a methodical, intelligent and co-operative manner. Swadeshi means non-co-operation in the second great department of national life.

We are boycotting because we are now ready for manufacture of our cloth by hand-spinning and hand-weaving. But we will not be able to sustain the boycott, unless each one of us becomes a spinner during the transition period and unless each province begins to organize its own production. This cannot be done if we have not a number of experts in each province.

Young India, 22-9-1921

152. MESSAGE ON LOIN-CLOTH, MADURA

September 22, 1921

Only a few days are left for us to complete the boycott of foreign cloth enjoined by the All-India Congress Committee. It is not yet too late if every Congress worker will devote his and her exclusive attention to the boycott. If everyone realizes that with out swadeshi, i.e., boycott of foreign cloth and manufacture of all the required cloth by hand-spinning and hand-weaving, there is no swaraj, and without swaraj there is no settlement of the Khilafat and the Punjab problems, there should be no difficulty in bringing about the desired boycott and the required manufacture.

I know that many will find it difficult to replace their foreign cloth all at once. Millions are too poor to buy enough khaddar to replace the discarded cloth. To them I repeat my advice given on the Madras Beach.¹ Let them be satisfied with a mere loin-cloth. In our climate we hardly need more to protect our bodies during the warm months of the year. Let there be no prudery about dress. India has never insisted on full covering of the body for the males as a test of culture.

I give the advice under a full sense of my responsibility. In order therefore to set the example I propose to discard at least up to the 31st of October my topi and vest and to content myself with only a loin-cloth and a *chaddar* whenever found necessary for the protection of the body. I adopt the change because I have always hesitated to advise anything I may not myself be prepared to follow, also because am anxious by leading the way to make it easy for those who cannot afford to change on discarding their foreign garments. I consider the renunciation to be also necessary for me as a sign of mourning and a bare head and a bare body is such a sign in my part of the country. That we are in mourning is more and more being borne home to me as the end of the year is approaching and we are still without swaraj. I wish to state clearly that I do not expect co-workers to renounce the use of vest and topi unless they find it necessary to do so for their own work.

¹ *Vide* "Speech at Madras", 15-9-1921.

I am positive that every province and every district can, if there are enough workers, manufacture sufficient for its needs in one month. And to that end for one month I advise complete suspension of every other activity but swadeshi. I would even withdraw pickets from liquor shops trusting the drinker to recognize the new spirit of purification. I would advise every non-co-operator to treat imprisonments as his ordinary lot in life and not think anything about them. If only we can go through the course of organizing manufacture and collecting foreign cloth during the month of October abstaining from all meetings and excitement, we shall produce an atmosphere calm and peaceful enough to embark upon civil disobedience, if it is then found necessary. But I have a settled conviction that if we exhibit the strength of character, the faculty of reorganizing and the power of exemplary self control all of which is necessary for full swadeshi, we shall attain swaraj without more.

M.K.GANDHI

The Hindu, 23-9-1921

153. SPEECH AT THIRUPPATHUR

September 22, 1921

The citizens of Thiruppathur presented Mahatmaji with an address in Tamil and a purse. Mahatma Gandhi in the course of his reply said that in India twenty-two crores of people had no work for six months in the year and that if every house would have a spinning-wheel which could be worked for a few hours during leisure time by every member of the family, surely, then they would be able to supply the whole of India with swadeshi clothes adequately. Cotton grew more than what they required for the adequate clothing of thirty-two crores of people. Till that time when all Indians were able to get adequate supply of hand-woven and hand-spun clothes, they (the Indians) should be ready even to wear a *langoti* and go out. They should take pride in wearing hand-made clothes however coarse they might be. Mahatmaji then explained why he had changed his dress and said that he would wear only a little piece of cloth until that time when Indians rich and poor alike would be able to get adequate supply of clothes. Mahatmaji then said that he was immensely pleased to see in the address that the citizens of Thirupathur had almost stopped drinking and wished that drinking should be completely stopped not only in that place but also in other places around Thiruppathur. He then exhorted them to accord an equal treatment to the *Panchamas*.

The Hindu, 26-9-1921

154. SPEECH AT KANADUKATHAN

September 22, 1921

FRIENDS,

I thank you for the addresses and purses that have been presented to me now. But we cannot get swaraj by merely the presentation of purses and addresses. If you want swaraj and redress the Punjab and Khilafat grievances and the release of the Ali Brothers, you should take the swadeshi vow and discard all foreign clothes. Both men and women should do so. You should introduce spinning and weaving in every home. You should not take pride in your money, and those who are too poor should be satisfied with a mere *langoti* and no matter what the Government might do in giving us provocation, we should all be very patient and non-violent. We must have perfect Hindu-Muslim unity. Hindus should cease untouchability. There is no warrant for untouchability in the Hindu Shastras. I am saying this as a *sanatani* Hindu who has lived for over forty years as a true Hindu. We must not drink or gamble. We should control our animal passions. If we do this, surely then we could have swaraj and redress to the Punjab and Khilafat wrongs and the release of the Ali Brothers.

The Hindu, 26-9-1921

155. SPEECH AT KOTTAYUR

September 22, 1921

FRIENDS,

I thank you for your address and purse. I shall thank you still more when you have discarded your foreign clothes. If you are not able to get enough khaddar cloth you should go about with a mere *langoti*.

Sisters, there were many like you in jail in South Africa with me. I don't want you to go to jail now. But I want you to spin yarn and discard all foreign cloth. You can colour it as you like. Unless we have swadeshi, unless we give up-drinking, unless there is perfect peace in the country, unless you are able to control your animal passions and unless there is absolute unity between the Hindus and Muslims there is no swaraj.

The Hindu, 26 9-1921

156. SPEECH AT DEVACOTTAH

September 22, 1921

FRIENDS,

I thank you for the addresses and purses presented to me just now. As I don't accept any costly gifts, your silver and gold plates will go to the Tilak Swaraj Fund. Whilst I understand and appreciate your love and affection underlying all this, I must confess to you that they bring very little consolation. This beautiful hand-spun yarn and the fact that you have forty spinning-wheels running here from day to day gives me some consolation. But 40 spinning-wheels in a big place as this is like a drop of milk in an ocean. Just as there is a horse in every house here, so there should be a spinning-wheel in every house. And as *prayaschitta* for our past sins, I expect every man and woman to spin for at least some time every day during leisure hours. I cannot be satisfied so long as I see that your dhotis are made of yarn from foreign countries. I promise you that if you wore the coarsest cloth as I wear you will be able to carry on your banking business well not only in India but also in Rangoon and other places. But if you wear fine garments for pleasure's sake and if you decline to wear garments hand-spun and hand-woven by our sisters, then there will be no swaraj for India. Your purses and addresses are good if your intention is to carry out swadeshi. But they are perfectly useless unless your purses and addresses are given as an absolute and final step towards attainment of swaraj and redress for the Punjab and the Khilafat wrongs and the release of Ali Brothers. So, I hope that from tomorrow you will boycott all foreign clothes and use only hand-spun and hand-woven clothes. I hope also that there is no drink in your village. If there is, I hope you will drive away that curse. In Hinduism there is no such thing as untouchability and we are bound to treat our *Panchama* brothers as our own brothers. I see men here, as in Andhra, are fond of wearing diamond rings and ear-rings. I wish I could persuade you to return to your original simplicity and return all that to the Tilak Swaraj Fund—or to any other Fund you like. I thank you once more for your kindness in presenting to me these addresses and purses and conclude with the hope that you will all follow the programme of swadeshi.

The Hindu, 26-9-1921

157. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

September 23, 1921

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

I have not had a single letter from you after I came to Madras. As regards swadeshi, nothing has been done about it here. It is to be seen what can be done now. You must have noticed the great change I have introduced in my dress—I could bear the pain no longer.

Shri Rajagopalachari has no doubt put in great effort in Madras, but I have send Madras lagging behind even Bengal. I am now fed up with this wandering and these shouts [of victory]. I hope you are keeping fit. Please come to Bombay on the 4th if you can.

After the letter forbidding me to go to Calicut,¹ it is very easy for me to offer civil disobedience.

I am writing this letter on my way to Tinnevely. Rajagopalachari is keeping very bad health. He has low fever, cough and asthma.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11415

158. INTERVIEW TO “DESHABHIMANI”

TINNEVELLY

September 23, 1921

The following is an account of the interview between Mahatma Gandhi and Mr. T. K. Madhavan, Editor, *Deshabhimani*, Quilon and a leader of the *Ezhava*² or *Tiyya*³ community of Travancore at Tinnevely.

T. K. MADHAVAN: Thank you Mahatmaji for having given me this opportunity of paying my respects to you. My community has been much benefited—morally much more than materially—by your charkha movement. Weaving and toddy-drawing are the two hereditary professions of my community. We supply the greatest part of labour in Malabar. Before you took up swadeshi and the boycott of

¹ For the text of the letter *vide* “Notes”, 22-9-1921, under the subtitle “Proof”.

² Considered to be untouchables

³ *ibid*

foreign clothes other communities used to mock at us . . . The enthusiasm you have created for Indian-made clothes is partly responsible for the removal of social stigma attached to weaving. We are trying to push up weaving . . .

MAHATMAJI: Very glad you push up hand-weaving.

Total prohibition forms one of the chief items of our programme. Our Guru, His Holiness Brahmasri Narayana Guru Swami issued in August last year a birthday message advising us to cease all connection with liquor . . . We are trying our best to see that tapping is stopped . . . We are also instructing our people not to bid in the ensuing auction sale of shops by excise authorities. The Government of Travancore seems to be not a little agitated over our movement for stopping toddy drawing . . .

It gives me very great pleasure to know that your Guru is advising people to follow temperance. I hope you will vigorously carry out his message.

We thank you that you have put removal of untouchability in the very forefront of your programme. So long as one-seventh of the population of India is branded as untouchables. . . you are quite right in holding that India cannot have complete swaraj.

Yes, I do hold that India cannot have complete swaraj so long as untouchability is not blotted out from India. Hence it is that I have put it down as the very first item in my programme.

We *Ezhavas* in Travancore are trying to remove the stigma of untouchability by getting all public temples thrown open to all classes of Hindus. . . We take it as a matter of reforming Hinduism. . . The removal of untouchability is an abstract idea. Temple-entry is a concrete representation of the abstract idea.

Removal of untouchability assumes a concrete shape when you demand temple-entry. On strategical grounds, I would ask you to drop temple-entry now and begin with public wells. Then you may go to public schools.

You seem to mistake our position in society for something analogous to that of *Panchamas* in British India. Except half a dozen schools including the one in Trivandrum situated just on the southern side of His Highness the Maharaja's Palace, all public schools in this state are open to us. . .

You are ripe for temple-entry then.

A committee of officials and non-officials appointed last year by the Travancore Government has recently reported that a good number of temples in Travancore are maintained out of public funds and that it is the duty of the Government to continue to so maintain them....

Well, it is a matter of civil right even here.

I was a member of the last session of Srimulam Popular Assembly.... Travancore High Court convicted some members of our community for entering and offering worship in a temple on the ground that our presence in the temple was “defiling” under Section 294 of T.P.C. . . . We have protested against that in the Popular Assembly and requested the Government to publish Proclamation abolishing untouchability as was done by the enlightened and patriotic Government of Japan. Nair Samajams have passed resolutions against untouchability. . . . This is the position of our agitation for temple-entry under the circumstances. What will Mahatmaji advise us?

I would certainly advise you to offer civil disobedience. You must enter temples and court imprisonment if law interferes. It is wrong to prevent you from entering temples on grounds of religion. You must keep strict non-violence. You must not go and enter temples in masses. Go only singly. You must act with perfect self-restraint.

What is the attitude of the Congress in the matter? . . .The gist of Mr. Sankara Menon’s¹ presidential speech was to the effect that he was not sure if the Congress Committee could take up the question without consulting the Congress authorities. . .

If Mr. Sankara Menon said that Congress Committee could not take the temple-entry question, he is wrong.

A listener pointing to a gentleman who was seated also close by said, “This gentleman here is a *Nadar*.”

T. K. M. : Our position in Malabar society is on all fours with the position of *Nadars* in Tamil society.

LISTENER: Our Congress Committee has the same difficulty in our district. The majority of the people here object to *Nadars* being admitted into temples.

You are not to care what the bulk of the people think of it. Because the majority is against you, are you going to fly away from your principles?

T. K. M.: Will you please address the Congress Committee in Travancore on the subject ?

Oh yes, gladly I will do that. To whom shall I write ?

I think you had better write to Mr. C. Sankara Menon, B.A., B.L.

Yes.

¹ An erudite lawyer; president of the Quilon Congress Committee

Are you for caste, Mahatmaji?

Yes, I am for caste.

Are you for caste, Mahatmaji, in regard to inter-dining and inter-marriage ?

I am against both on hygienic and spiritual grounds. Eating is as dirty a business as evacuating, the only difference is evacuation is a matter of relief. You mix the rice you have to eat with curry. Would you treat it as a clean thing after a few minutes ? Would you like to touch it even ? It is not good to touch it on hygienic grounds. I will not inter-dine with another and I will not inter-dine even with my son. If one man says he will not inter-dine with another owing to repugnance, I oppose that. You must get rid of that repugnance.

What is your position in regard to inter-marriage ?

I oppose that on spiritual grounds. Suppose you have to choose your wife from among the million women. You exercise your passion in respect of such a good number. If the extent of your choice is less, you restrict the exercise of your passion to that limited extent. You are benefited spiritually by curtailing the extent of your choice of women. It is better that you restrict your choice exclusively to your caste.

Suppose that a man of one caste falls in love with a woman of another caste and that woman reciprocates his love. Will you stand in the way of their marriage ?

I will not stand between them and their marriage on grounds of non-violence. Suppose my son wants to marry my daughter. I will not stand in the way of their marriage. But one thing I will do. I will not allow them room under my roof.

The time being up, Mr. Madhavan requested Mahatmaji to give an authoritative statement of his opinion on temple-entry question. Immediately Mahatmaji wrote his opinion on a foolscap paper and handed it over to Mr. Madhavan. On reading that, Mr. Madhavan said: "Nothing is mentioned in this on the part the Congress party should take in the agitation." Then Mahatmaji added the following sentence to what was already written:

Asked whether the Local Congress Committee should help in the matter, of the rights of *Ezhavas* and others, Mr. Gandhi emphatically said that it was their duty to do so.

On reading this Mr. Madhavan asked: "Does it clearly state that the Local Congress Committee should take temple-entry is an item of their practical programme?"

Yes, it is clear on that point. The word “should” is there.

Mr. Madhavan wished good bye and left his presence.

The Hindu, 30-9-1921

159. SPEECH AT TINNEVELLY

September 23, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi who appeared in a single loin-cloth . . . delivered a stirring address which was translated then and there by Mr. T. R. Mahadeva Aiyar and by Dr. Rajan. . . .

FRIENDS,

I thank you for the address and the purse for the Tilak Swaraj Fund. But more than for the address and the purse I wish to thank you for the absence of any noisy demonstrations. I must confess to you that although these noisy demonstrations are a symbol of your affection and although behind them no mischief is meant they shake my nerves. And what with the repetition of these demonstrations and with the delicate condition of my body I have become totally unfit for these noisy demonstrations. If I had felt that these noises advance the cause of swaraj and the redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs in the least little bit I would not have minded them. But I know that for the great work that lies in front of us during the coming three months these noises are not only unnecessary but are harmful to the cause that is dear to you and me. If we are to gain swaraj, if we are to redress the Khilafat and Punjab wrongs this year and if we are to receive the Ali Brothers and their associates, all our work must be silent, effective and determined. I therefore tender you my hearty congratulations and also to those leaders who have organized this great assembly upon complete absence of noise. And if all over India meetings of this character could be organized silently and expeditiously as this meeting has been I see everything that is hopeful in front of us. This deliberate, self-imposed and intelligent silence of ours is quite in keeping with our creed of non-violence. It is a matter of the keenest joy and the greatest satisfaction and for the deriving of the greatest hope that in spite of the arrest of the Ali Brothers India has remained calm and unperturbed. Any hartal in any part of India or even a universal hartal in any part of India or even a universal hartal throughout the length and breadth of India would have been a clumsy demonstration and in my opinions, be nothing when compared with what the Brothers deserve. If we are worthy of their bravery, courage, faith, energy, love of religion and country what we

need do is to follow them. We must adopt simplicity and khaddar even as these Brothers, who only a short time ago were indulging in pardonable luxuries; they have to wear heavy khaddar on account of their large build. We must realize as they have realized that swaraj and the redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs lie through our acceptance of the spinning-wheel in our homes and complete boycott of all foreign cloth and wearing only what we can manufacture in our own homes. I was therefore grieved to see a friend and fellow-worker of the satyagraha days coming to me and presenting me a rich garland of flowers, dressed in foreign cloth. I asked him why he was not dressed in khaddar and why he put on foreign garments all over his body. His sorry reply was that there was not sufficient khaddar. And it was in order to answer objectors of this character you see me having reduced my garments to a single loin-cloth and Maulana Azad Sobhani having reduced himself to the minimum of garments required by Islam. Will you tell me now that you cannot get sufficient khaddar in your district even to provide yourself with a single loin-cloth? Yours is one of the richest cotton-growing districts of India. And for people of this district to say that they have not enough khaddar cloth to go round is like people who produce rich and sufficient wheat telling that they have not sufficient food. Hundred and fifty years ago practically every woman of India knew how to spin fine yarn and millions of Indians knew how to weave that beautiful yarn into cloth. And knowing as I do both cooking and weaving I can say that the art of weaving is easier than the art of cooking. If you want to get rid of the grinding slavery of centuries, if you want to help the Mussulmans to redress the Khilafat wrongs, if the Mussulmans here feel, as I have no doubt that they do, for the Khilafat, is it too much to think that you should insist on reducing your wants to a minimum and wear the simplest cloth. What we are about is not a matter of play but a matter of seriousness. The Nagpur Congress attended by 14,000 delegates from all parts of India was not joking with the country when it announced its determination to attain swaraj within this year and when it made a concrete programme insisting on swadeshi as an integral part of it. Hakim Ajmal Khan¹, in his old age, Dr. Ansari², Maulana Abdul Bari³ and many other distinguished Mussulman countrymen of ours and Pandit Motilal

¹ 1865-1927; eminent Muslim physician and politician who took a leading part in the Khilafat movement; President, Indian National Congress, 1921

² M. A. Ansari (1880-1936); a nationalist Muslim leader; President, Indian National Congress, 1927

³ 1838-1936; nationalist Muslim divine of Lucknow who took active part in the Khilafat movement and urged his followers to refrain from cow-slaughter

Nehru, in his old age, having been born with a silver spoon in his mouth, and C. R. Das enjoying a practice that was second to none in all India, were not joking when they adopted khaddar. Their wives are not joking when they also have adopted heavy khaddar just as heavy as you see myself, Maulana Saheb and Dr. Rajan are wearing and spinning from day to day as a sacrament. I would like every one present in this audience, men and women to consider it a point of honour to attain swaraj in this year and to believe like these distinguished countrymen of ours that swaraj is to be attained through the spinning-wheel. And if you mean business you will see to it that all the carpenters of this district are busy in making spinning-wheels and handlooms; you will see that all the weavers give up weaving foreign or even Indian mill-made yarn; you will also see to it that every home in this district has a spinning-wheel working for a definite number of hours every day. I believe in the capacity of the spinning-wheel to do all these things because it is a symbol of non-violence and Hindu-Muslim unity; because I know that unless we are non-violent and believe in the efficacy of non-violence to cure all our ills we shall not be able to make the spinning-wheel a success. Just as I have mentioned to you the most potential thing we have to do, I am aware that there are some problems that stare the Hindus in the face and which require solution if we are to attain swaraj this year. You have your Brahmin and non-Brahmin question, the *Nadar* question and the question of the *Panchamas*. In my opinion all these questions resolve themselves into one, viz, untouchability. Claiming to be a *sanatani* Hindu as I do, I dare tell the whole of this audience that there is no provision for untouchability in the whole of our Shastras. I consider it, as a Hindu, to be sinful to consider that the touch of a human being can pollute me. I feel humiliated when anybody informs me that in your temples which you call the houses of God you deny admission to *Nadars*. The solution of the Brahmin and non-Brahmin problem seems to me to be incredibly simple. If my reading of the Shastras is correct, then in my opinion a Brahmin claims no privileges and sums up his life in four letters viz, "duty". It is his proud privilege to give all the posts of honour and emoluments to those who choose to take them. He remains supremely confident in the fact that his serving humanity with his knowledge entitles him to an honourable place in life. I have no doubt that if we are to win swaraj either this year or in hundred years to come we cannot get it unless the Hindus are united and are able to purge themselves of all dirt, error, superstition and sin. I would consider myself to be an unworthy partner of my Muslim companion if I could not compete with him in all that is best in Islam. So you will see that the whole problem

resolves into two things, for both the Hindus and the Mussulmans, to follow the programme of swadeshi and bring about a complete boycott of foreign cloth, and for the Hindus alone to get rid of this curse of untouchability and all that it implies. The Ali Brothers and their associates do not desire to be released from the jails of this Government except through the first Act of a swaraj parliament. May God help you and me to fulfil the condition of swaraj during this year, to redress the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs and to release Ali Brothers who are now in jail. I hope and I know that you will extend the same patience that you have extended to me to the Maulana Saheb.

The Hindu, 27-9-1921

160. TO THE MUSSULMANS OF INDIA

MADURA,

September 24, 1921

DEAR COUNTRYMEN,

Whilst the arrest of Maulanas Shaukat Ali and Mahomed Ali has touched every Indian heart, I know what it has meant to you. The brave Brothers are staunch lovers of their country, but they are Mussulmans first and everything else afterwards. It must be so with every religiously-minded man. The Brothers have for years past represented all that is best and noblest in Islam. No two Mussulmans have done more than they to raise the status of Islam in India. They have promoted the cause of the Khilafat as no two other Mussulmans of India have. For they have been true, and they dared to tell what they felt even in their internment in Chhindwara. Their long internment did not demoralize or weaken them. They came out just as brave as they went in.

And since their release from internment, they have shown themselves true nationalists, and you have taken pride in their being so.

The Brothers have by their simplicity, humility and inexhaustible energy fired the imagination of the masses as no other Mussulman has.

All these qualities have endeared them to you. You regard them as your ideal men. You are therefore sorry for their separation from you. Many besides you miss their genial presence. For me, they had

become inseparable. I seem to be without my arms. For anything connected with Mussulmans, Shaukat Ali was my guide and friend. He never once misled me. His judgment was sound and unerring in most cases. With the Brothers among us I felt safe about Hindu-Muslim unity, the value of which they understood as few of us have.

But whilst we all miss them, we must not give way to grief or dejection. We must learn, each one of us, to stand alone. God only is our infallible and eternal guide.

To be dejected is not only not to have known the Brothers, but it is, if I may venture to say so, not to know what religion is.

For do we not learn in all religions, that the spirit of the dear ones abides with us even when they physically leave us? Not only is the spirit of the Brothers with us, but they are serving better by their suffering, than if they were in our midst giving us some of their own courage, hope and energy. The secret of non-violence and non-co-operation lies in our realizing, that it is through suffering that we are to attain our goal. What is the renunciation of titles, councils, law-courts and schools but a measure (very slight indeed) of suffering? That preliminary renunciation is a prelude to the larger suffering, the hardships of a jail life and even the final consummation of the gallows if need be. The more we suffer and the more of us suffer, the nearer we are to our cherished goal.

The earlier and the more clearly we recognize, that it is not big meetings and demonstrations that would give us victory, but quiet suffering, the earlier and more certain will be our victory.

I have made your cause my own, because I believe it to be just. Khilafat, I have understood from your best men, is an ideal. You are not fighting to sustain any wrong or even misrule. You are backing the Turks, because they represent the gentlemen of Europe, and because the European and especially the English prejudice against them is due, not to the Turks being worse than others as men, but to their being Mussulmans and not assimilating the modern spirit of exploitation of weaker people and their lands. In fighting for the Turks, you are fighting to raise the dignity and the purity of your own faith.

You have naturally therefore chosen pure methods to attain your end. It cannot be denied, that both Mussulmans and Hindus have lost much in moral stamina. Both of us have become poor representatives of our respective faiths. Instead of each one of us becoming a true

child of God, we expect others to live our religion and even to die for us. But we have now chosen a method that compels us to turn, each one of us, our face towards God. Non-operation presumes, that our opponent with whom we non-co-operate resorts to methods which are as questionable as the purpose he seeks to fulfil by such methods. We shall therefore find favour in the sight of God only by choosing methods which are different in kind from those of our opponents. This is a big claim we have made for ourselves, and we can attain success within the short time appointed by us, only if our methods are in reality radically different from those of the Government.

Hence the foundation of our movement rests on complete non-violence, whereas violence is the final refuge of the Government. And as no energy can be created without resistance, our non-resistance to Government violence must bring the latter to a standstill. But our non-violence to be true must be in word, thought and deed. It makes no difference that with you non-violence is an expedient. Whilst it lasts, you cannot consistently with your pledge harbour designs of violence. On the contrary we must have implicit faith in our programme of non-violence, which presupposes perfect accord between thought, word and deed. I would like every Mussulman to realize, whilst the occasion for anger is the greatest, that by non-violence alone can we gain complete victory even during this year.

Nor is non-violence a visionary programme. Just imagine what the united resolve of seven crores of Mussulmans (not to count the Hindus) must mean. Should we not have succeeded already, if all the titled men had given up their titles, all the lawyers had suspended their practice and all the students had left their schools and all had boycotted councils? But we must recognize, that with many of us the flesh has proved too weak. Seven crores are called Mussulmans and twenty-two crores are called Hindus, but only a few are true Mussulmans or true Hindus. Therefore, if we have not gained our objective, the cause lies within us. And if ours is, as we claim it is, a religious struggle, we dare not become impatient save with ourselves, not even with one another.

The Brothers, I am satisfied, are as innocent as I claim I am, of incitement to violence. Theirs, therefore, is a spotless offering. They have done all in their power for Islam and their country. Now, if the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs are not redressed and swaraj is not

established during this year, the fault will be yours and mine.

We must remain non-violent, but we must not be passive. We must repeat the formula of the Brothers regarding the duty of soldiers and invite imprisonment. We need not think that the struggle cannot go on without even the best of us. If it cannot, we are neither fit for swaraj nor for redressing the Khilafat or the Punjab wrong. We must declare from a thousand platforms, that it is sinful for any Mussulman or Hindu to serve the existing Government whether as soldier or in any other capacity whatsoever.

Above all we must concentrate on complete boycott of foreign cloth, whether British, Japanese, American, French or any other, and begin, if we have not already done so, to introduce spinning-wheels and handlooms in our homes and manufacture all the cloth we need. This will be at once a test of our belief in non-violence for our country's freedom and for saving the Khilafat. It will be a test also of Hindu-Muslim unity, and it will be a universal test of our faith in our own programme. I repeat my conviction that we can achieve our full purpose within one month of a complete boycott of foreign cloth. For we are then in a position, having confidence in our ability to control forces of violence, to offer civil disobedience, if it is at all found necessary.

I can therefore find no balm for the deep wounds inflicted upon you by the Government other than non-violence translated into action by boycott of foreign cloth and manufacture of cloth in our own homes.

I am,

Your friend and comrade,

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 29-9-1921

161. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKER PATTANI

TINNEVELLY,
September 24, 1921

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter¹ reached me here, having wandered from place to place. I am certainly glad that you wrote to me. You have the right to do so. Though I cannot claim to have understood you thoroughly I have known you for years as my well-wisher.

You put the greatest emphasis on the Prince's visit. I think your argument about the visit is the weakest. The Prince is coming here to uphold the prestige of the present Government. His visit now is uncalled for. I do not consider him as outside the Government. Nobody will oppose him as an individual, but he should have no quarter as the future head of the present system. Your quotations from our Shastras about loyalty can hardly apply here. What a great difference between Rama and Ravana!

But what you write about other matters does weigh with me. I do not at all want to lessen children's respect for their parents. However I do believe that such sad results as you describe have followed. But this incivility is a transitory phase. Besides, just as a son should have respect for his father, the father also should have love for his son. But this also I do not find. The real malady is that both lack the religious spirit. Having said and admitted this, I may also tell you what I think about the matter. The people have on the whole benefited by our programme in regard to schools [and colleges].

I do not know anything about Shri Shukla's resignation². I know Manilal³ has a hot temper. I have been taking all possible measures in regard to such things. This is a grim struggle. I have plunged into it in the hope that in the end the people will become religious-minded. I feel immense joy when I see the beautiful transformation in the lives of many. At the same time, I am grieved to

¹ In this private and confidential letter dated 12-9-1921, the addressee had drawn Gandhiji's attention to the danger-spots in the non-co-operation movement.

² Barrister D. B. Shukla had resigned from the Kathiawar Parishad owing to sharp differences with co-workers which came to the fore at Dhrangadhra where the Parishad was held.

³ Manilal Kothari, a political worker of Gujarat

see that many have joined the fight just to feed their ego. But who am I [to judge others] ? I am not at all worried, for I am carrying on the fight with a detached mind and trust that God will save me from all sins.

I remember your repeating to me the verse¹ which you have quoted. I keep it in mind and carry my burden. Will God blame me if the cart is broken or the rider unwary?

We shall discuss things if and when we meet.

I hope to go to Bombay on the 2nd.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 3176; also G.N. 5863

162. VICTORY FOR ALI BROTHERS

I interpret the arrest of the Ali Brothers as their victory; and their victory is ours for I see in it the dawn of swaraj. The moments of child-birth are unbearable for the mother. It is darkest before daybreak. The very word “break” suggests this.

I feel the same way about the arrest of the Ali Brothers. Many others have been arrested, and many more will be arrested; but these arrests, although they are of consequence cannot have the same significance as the arrest of the Ali Brothers.

The Ali Brothers did their best in the cause of swaraj. I am perfectly sure that their sacrifice is holy. They were completely faithful to their pledge to remain non-violent. This does not mean that their speeches were altogether free from harshness or bitterness, but they prevented violence. Preventing violence does not mean keeping the people quiet by suppressing facts; it really means remaining peaceful even after one has come to see that it is impossible to tolerate this Government.

The Brothers gave vent to their indignation, described the Government’s black deeds for what they were, and yet, by example and by argument, taught people to remain peaceful.

Their non-violence is a matter of expediency. Unlike me, they

¹ तानकृत्स्नविदो मन्दान् मन्दान् कृत्स्नविन् विचालयेत् । “He who knows the truth of things should not unsettle the slow-witted who have not the knowledge” *Bhagaved Gita*, III.29

do not accept it as an absolute principle at all times and in all situations; but, at this hour and in this situation, they accept, and have persuaded others to accept, non-violence to be the highest duty. If they had chosen, they could have killed some people or got them killed, though they might pay with their lives afterwards. They have shed all fear of death but, being practical and sincerely religious men, they realized that it is a crime to kill anyone in anger and this Islam forbids. They were convinced and could fully satisfy others that the present situation is not among those in which violence is sanctioned by Islam.

This is why I assert that they have fully kept their pledge to remain non-violent and are yet brave and dauntless. Their services (in the cause of) their religion and to society are beyond doubt. When fearlessness, daring and a spirit of dedication are found together, the sacrifice is supreme. Sacrifice always brings the fulfilment of one's cherished desire. I believe, therefore, that the moment of our victory has arrived, when we shall have swaraj and justice for the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs.

There are, however, certain conditions for this victory. The *yajna* performed by one person benefits another only if the latter accepts the *yajna* as his own obligation. Victory will not be ours unless we accept the Ali Brothers' *yajna* as our own. To do this means to act as they have done, to emulate their courage, their dauntlessness and their spirit of dedication. The Brothers are in jail; who will now lead the Khilafat movement? if the Muslims take up this feeble attitude, it will mean that they have not understood the Brothers. No Hindu or Muslim should entertain the timid fear as to who will draw the chariot of swaraj after the Ali Brothers. We have very little need for leaders or guides now. It would not be an exaggeration to say that there is no need at all. We know the path and have some experience of it. There are three essential conditions both for Hindus and Muslims: remaining peaceful, Hindu-Muslim unity and swadeshi. These duties are equally obligatory on people of all religions. In addition, Hindus have to cleanse themselves of the stain of untouchability.

The Moplahs indulged in violence and invited destruction on themselves to no purpose. They have demonstrated that Hindu-Muslim unity cannot be maintained if peace is not preserved. We should not, therefore, yield to anger or lose our balance, whatever the provocation on the part of the Government.

Hindu-Muslim unity is as much of a duty as preserving peace. Some Moplahs losing their heads does not prove that all Muslims are bad. Three years ago, Hindus had done the same thing at Shahabad. That did not prove all Hindus bad. Unity between two parties means that, even when there is a difference between them, they do not act as enemies but settle the dispute peacefully. We can say that, by and large, unity prevails in a family. That does not, however, mean that the members never quarrel. I do not doubt that we shall occasionally fall out while struggling to preserve unity. Even on such occasions, our leaders will restrain us. Hindu-Muslim unity would indeed have been endangered if Muslim leaders or the leaders of Moplahs had praised the latter's madness instead of condemning it. I do not, however, think that there is any Muslim who approves of the Moplahs' lunacy. I have not come across such a Muslim. However that may be, even a child can see that, if Hindus and Muslims fight among themselves, we are bound to need the services of a third party. Thus, Hindu-Muslim unity is the second imperative condition for swaraj.

An equally important condition for swaraj is *swadeshi*, which means the spinning-wheel. The latter symbolizes Hindu-Muslim unity, our peaceful intentions, our discipline, our industry and capacity for organization, our business acumen, our benevolence, our fellow-feeling for the poor and our desire to protect women. If the Hindus alone work the spinning-wheel, they will benefit, no doubt, but we shall not have swaraj. If we are angry and our blood is boiling, we cannot think of working at the spinning-wheel. The latter is an image of peace and gives us a sense of security about our livelihood. So long, therefore, as we do not have the spinning-wheel plying in every home, our desire for peace and our unity will not be demonstrated.

The loom, the carding machine and other implements are included in the spinning-wheel. If people start using them, India will regain her light. In their absence, boycott of foreign cloth cannot be undertaken or, if undertaken, cannot be kept up. We seek mill-owners' help, we need the goodwill of importers of foreign cloth, but ultimately we have to rely upon ourselves. If we are sincere, the whole world is sincere. Nobody can ever cheat a sincere person. Hence, every one of us should boycott foreign cloth and engage himself in one or other process of cloth-making.

These, then, are the essential conditions for securing the release of the Ali Brothers. There are three of them but ultimately they are

reducible to one, namely, swadeshi, since the first two are implied in it. Strict implementation of swadeshi will lead to swaraj and the first task of the sovereign parliament under swaraj will be to demand the release of the Ali Brothers and all others arrested for non-co-operation.

These are the conditions which apply equally to Hindus and Muslims.

If the Hindus do not understand the real spirit of their Hinduism, India will never get swaraj. It seems possible to me that the Khilafat issue may be settled without untouchability having disappeared, but unless it disappears we shall never get swaraj. If 22 crore Hindus suppress a fifth of themselves, it will not be swaraj, it will be *Ravanarajya*, it will not be dharma but the opposite of it. I am writing this article from Kumbakonam¹ in Madras Presidency. The town is well-known for its temples and it has learned Dravidians among its residents. The Brahmins of the place, however, feel themselves polluted if the shadow of a *Bhangi* falls on them! The *Bhangi* may even get a good beating, will certainly be visited with a torrent of abuse. The Dyerism of untouchability is nowhere else so rampant as in Madras. How dare an untouchable ever think of entering streets inhabited by Brahmins! The untouchables are deliberately kept ignorant. If an animal becomes sick, someone may attend to it, but an untouchable has God alone to protect him. The groans of innocent untouchables are sufficient to keep swaraj away from us. In Madras Presidency, this problem is assuming an alarming character day by day. There is deep hostility between untouchable labourers and the rest and on occasion they even fight with one another. Love for untouchables, brotherly behaviour towards them and refusal to treat their touch as polluting will not only bring swaraj but also regenerate Hinduism. Hindus, who look upon cow-protection as a sacred duty, must not forsake the untouchables. We shall be fit to chant the *mantra*² of swaraj only if we treat *Antyajas* as our own brothers even though they may be unclean or eat carrion or drink, even if in fact, they have in them all the defects to be found in the world.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-9-1921

¹ Gandhiji was in Kumbakonam on September 18, 1921.

² Sacred formula

163. MARTIAL LAW

SERVED WITH A NOTICE

I received a letter from the Madras Government the day I reached Madras. It said:¹

I have not sent any reply to this letter. What reply can I give? I should like to give only one : “I have read your letter. I cannot but go. You may do what you choose.”

But how can I give such a reply? I have myself suspended civil disobedience and have asked others to do the same. In an atmosphere in which people do not know the difference between civil disobedience and criminal disobedience, how can a man in my position resort to civil disobedience all of a sudden? With these considerations in mind, I gave up the idea of sending a reply. I have in this way let slip an opportunity for winning swaraj which had presented itself to me, hoping that, in the months still left, people will grasp the full significance of civil disobedience and we shall be able to employ it without any fear and so win swaraj for all.

I am writing this article from Trichinopoly.² Here, I have been served with one more order, from Pudukkottai State. It is signed by some English official of the State. I had to pass through the territory of that State on my way to Chettinad. Fearing that even my passing through the State might have some influence on its subjects, the officer writes: “His Highness has come to know that you intend to pass through his territory. If you attempt to do so, the guards at the border will turn you back.” I have sent a reply to this. “Received your letter. I certainly intended to pass through your territory but, in view of your letter, I shall take another route to Chettinad.”

I, however, regard these to be good omens. If we know how to use these opportunities, we can certainly win swaraj this year. The means, too, are quite easy. We should devote ourselves to our work and then welcome arrest if it comes. We are not yet fit to go to jail. We have not realized the value of swadeshi and the importance of the spinning-wheel. How many workers from amongst us ply it regularly with faith and as a matter of duty ? How many have discarded all their

¹ For text, *vide* “Notes”, 22-9-1921 under the sub-title “Proof”.

² Gandhiji was at Trichinopoly on September 19, 1921.

foreign clothes? Even a blind man can see that the Government simply cannot tolerate boycott of cloth. It has been employing a variety of measures to deter us from such boycott.

Students giving up schools and colleges, lawyers giving up practice, drink-addicts giving up drinking—the Government certainly dislikes these things, but it may put up with them. It simply cannot tolerate swadeshi, however. The British came to our shores to trade in foreign cloth and rule the country to preserve this trade. Foreign cloth is the heaviest tribute being exacted from us. If we stop paying this, the Government will cease to be a ruler and will become a servant.

The end of September is nearing. I do not know what progress, even in Gujarat, boycott has made, and how many spinning-wheels are in use. I shall not be able to return to Gujarat before October. I hope that on my return I shall find khadi everywhere, on the persons of all men and women and in all homes, and shall see a spinning-wheel in every home.

The Khilafat wound is there, of course, the Punjab wound is still open; to these is now added the one in Malabar. I am sure that Gujarat can heal these wounds, if it so wills. It would not be an exaggeration to say that, to be a witness to its doing this, I have let go the auspicious opportunity of being in jail. This was one of the reasons for my forbearance.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-9-1921

164. HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

A close friend writes :¹

The correspondent is a devout Hindu who believes in the need for Hindu-Muslim unity. Even then he has this fear. If it is felt by a person who is a firm believer in unity, what wonder if it is also felt by those who have always been sceptical about unity? I, therefore, think it advisable to answer these fears publicly. If we are growing more fearless day by day, it should be possible for us to discuss all our doubts publicly. I can clearly see that the fear expressed above betrays

¹The letter which is not given here expressed the correspondent's fear that success on the Khilafat issue might embolden fanatical Muslims to attempt forcible conversion of Hindus.

ignorance of the true meaning of non-violence, of Islam and also of Hindu-Muslim unity.

Those who accept non-violence as part of dharma are convinced that no hatred or violence can survive in its presence. If the Hindus in Malabar had the spirit of non-violence in them, no Moplah could have forced them to do anything. But, it will be objected, every one cannot have such a spirit, and the objection has force in it. The reply is that, even if a small section of Hindus display real non-violence, others will be protected—such is the power of non-violence. What is my reply, however, if somebody argues that Hindus do not believe in non-violence? Well if that is so, the question does not arise, for he who does not believe in non-violence will defend himself by fighting, whether he is alone or in a group. Anything which can be won through armed might can also be won through the power of non-violence. Even the person who fights with arms is considered brave only when he opposes a powerful enemy. One who believes in non-violence faces the enemy unarmed and his strength, therefore, has no limit to it. He who cannot safeguard his dharma is not worthy of it. Those who were forcibly converted, why did they submit to force? Why did they not give up their lives? Or, why did they not fight and beat back the enemy, or die fighting? If it was the Englishman's protection which saved them, they have as good as accepted the Englishman's religion; if my protection had saved them, they would have accepted my dharma. A dharma of their own, they had none. One's dharma is a personal possession. One is oneself responsible for preserving it or losing it. What can be defended in and through a group is not dharma, it is dogma.

Islam does not sanction forcible conversion; it even prohibits the use of force. It is wrong to say that Islam has employed force. All those who profess a religion are not true followers of it. Does Hinduism sanction killing of Muslims for saving cows? No. Do we not know, even then, that Hindus lose their heads and fight with Muslims on this issue? If Islam recognizes the use of forces it is not religion but irreligion. I am positive that Islam does not sanction the use of force if it did, would not all Muslims openly avow so? No religion in this world has spread through the use of force. In my opinion, the history of Muslim empires which is taught to us entitles much exaggeration. Victory on the Khilafat issue will certainly increase the strength of Muslims and enhance their courage, but to think that they

will use these against Hindus is to suggest that Muslims have no sense of honour, that it is in their nature to return evil for good, that, in other words, they have no true religion in them ! All my experience is to the contrary. I have known honour and honesty in a great many Muslims.

Hindu-Muslim unity, however, does not mean that no Muslim or Hindu will ever make a mistake. If we remain unperturbed even if somebody makes a mistake, then only can it be said that unity is a living reality.

But let us think over this problem a little more. The Government does not forcibly cut off the tuft of hair on our head but has it left a soul in us ? Compared to the violence of the Government, I think the violence of the Moplahs is not worth speaking of. The other day, in an instant a Government official had people stripped of khadi and thus, both Hindus and Muslims, of their dharma. Who deprived both Hindus and Muslims of their manliness ? We simply do not have the strength to face the armed might of the Government. We were not reduced to such straits during the Mughal rule. I can right now devise methods of fighting the armed strength of the Moplahs with similar strength. Against the military might of the Government, however, I, though I pride myself on my knowledge of these matters, cannot discover a method of armed struggle, nor have the Ali Brothers succeeded in discovering any.

Moreover, the preservation of Hindu-Muslim unity depends upon the acceptance of peaceful methods by both the communities. Leaders of both communities must agree to settle their disputes exclusively through peaceful means, that is, through the good offices of arbitrators.

Finally, those Hindus who have been forcibly converted to Islam ought not to be looked upon as Muslims or regarded as defiled, they have every right to be counted as Hindus. They stand in no need at all of going through purificatory rites.

I should also add that every Muslim who heard the stories of Moplah atrocities was pained by them, and also that, if our people were allowed to go there at this time, the Moplahs themselves would apologize for their deeds. I am sure that they will positively apologize when we have swaraj. All that they know is fighting. They are our ignorant brethren. The Government of course has done nothing to

reform them but neither have we done anything. Is not this the fault of the Hindus of Malabar?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-9-1921

165. MY NOTES

MOPLAH RIOTS

There is no doubt that the Moplah riots have been a great set-back. In Madras Presidency, they are becoming sceptical about Hindu-Muslim unity. Many feel that people will not remain peaceful to the end. Others have been dazed. Not that they do not attend public meetings or take part in other activities; there is, however, widespread fear about how things will develop. Hundreds of Moplahs have been killed and the killing is still going on. As a result, the swadeshi movement has come to a stop in Malabar. That is what the Government wanted. The declaration of martial law has given an excellent opportunity to the Government to suppress the swadeshi movement. It is said that, with the declaration of martial law, khadi clothes worn by people were torn away and thrown into fire. Khadi caps, spinning-wheels, etc., were among the things burnt. The result was that khadi caps and spinning-wheels, which used to be displayed in the shops of Calicut, had disappeared in one day. If the Moplahs had not turned mad these intolerable consequences would not have followed. If they had not indulged in killing and bloodshed, any officer who dared to burn khadi clothes today would have been dismissed or khadi would have become more popular; but the Moplahs' lunacy has produced the opposite result. They themselves knew nothing about swadeshi and the rest are a cowardly lot. These do not mind wearing khadi but they still do not have the strength to die. Hence, out of fear, they forsook khadi and the spinning-wheel. We have an important lesson to learn from this. We wear khadi and put on a khadi cap as a matter of religious duty. It should be impossible for anyone, with threats and intimidation, to make us give them up. We ought to be ready always to lay down our lives for swadeshi and should display greater zeal for popularizing khadi.

ALL HONOUR TO THAT DEVOTED WIFE

I marvel at the courage displayed by the Begum Sahiba of

Maulana Mahomed Ali. When she returned after visiting her husband who had been arrested at Waltair, I asked her if she was in any way afraid. She said she had no fear of any sort, that the arrest was to come and that her husband had done no more than his duty. I found no trace of nervousness in her tone. Even after the arrest, she has been touring with us and has kept up her courage. She attends both men's and women's meetings, wearing a *burka*, and makes brief speeches which go straight to the heart. She advises everybody to remain peaceful, to wear khadi and ply the spinning-wheel. She appeals to Muslims for contributions to the Smyrna Fund. Only a few months ago, her love for luxury knew no limit. She was very fond of fine cloth. Today she wears a green gown made of coarse khadi. A Muslim woman needs to wear many more garments than her Hindu sister, and the Begum Sahiba carries no light body. Even so, she submits to these hardships for the sake of her religion and country. As a result, Muslim sisters too come out everywhere so that they may have her *darshan*.

I find that the attire of Muslim sisters in the Madras Presidency is very plain. While there is no limit to the variety of colours in the costumes of Hindu women, in the attire of Muslim sisters I see nothing but white, rough cloth. This is a very holy sight to me. The variously coloured saris of Hindu women disagreeable to me at the present hour. Absence of Swadeshi

The use of swadeshi seems to have spread even less in the Madras Presidency than in Bengal and, among the women one may say that it is practically nil. But I have been assured that efforts in this direction will be intensified now. Love for spinning has spread spontaneously among the poor. Merchants in Madras told me that the demand for foreign cloth in that part was very small and the sale of swadeshi goods had gone up very much. This may well be so. If it is, it is plain that the spread of swadeshi owes little to the efforts of Congress workers and that the awakening has been spontaneous.

MADRAS LEADERS

The blame for this poor spread of swadeshi certainly lies with the leaders. And yet, the number of voluntary workers in Madras is by no means small, and Shri Rajagopalachari's ability and Dr. Rajan's devotion are of the highest. But these workers had to create a new climate, and they came up against many difficulties. The fact that they have not been deterred by the difficulties and are carrying on the

work despite them is as surprising as it is gratifying. I have great faith in the Madras people's regard for dharma. The masses are as simple-hearted as in other provinces. Their capacity for hard work is unlimited. One cannot be certain, therefore, that Madras, which is in the rear today, will never be in the forefront. Madras has weavers in plenty and their skill is of the highest order. I met the chief workers among them at Kumbakonam. They have undertaken to use hand-spun yarn exclusively.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-9-1921

166. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

ON THE TRAIN,
September 25 [1921]

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your letter. Of course with me the burning¹ is not vital to the movement. One may be in it although one may not like burning. From Mahadev's talk, I gathered that probably you had begun to doubt the truth of the whole movement. I therefore wrote to you that even if you did, my affection for you would remain changeless and unaffected.² But naturally it consoles me to find that you believe in the movement as much as ever before. I do want to retain the co-operation of all the friends I can. At the same time I feel the truth of the movement so much that I shall be content even to stand alone and defend it. There is no other way of ridding ourselves of the worship of violence and all its offshoots.

I hope you will benefit by the voyage.

Do please remember me to Mrs. Petit and Mr. Petit³. With love.

Yours,

MOHAN

[PS.]

I have sent you a wire⁴ today.

From a photostat: G.N. 955

¹ Of foreign cloth

² *Vide* "Letter to C. F. Andrews", 14-9-1921.

³ Sir Dinshaw Petit (1873-1933), member, Legislative Council, Bombay

⁴ This is not available

167. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

ON WAY TO COIMBATORE,
Sunday [September 25, 1921]

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

I have your letter accompanied by your letter to Urmila Devi. I did not get the earlier one.

Bengal did indeed depress me. But Madras did still more. I know that the real work is to inspire Congress workers themselves with faith in the spinning-wheel. I looked in vain for that in Bengal, as also here, and that makes me nervous. The masses have that faith, but they want backing, they want expert training. Everyone is there to exhort people to do the spinning, but none to do it himself. Such is our plight. What can we say about Sarup and Ranjit? But I think Jawaharlal will understand. It may not be long, before I retire to the Ashram and attend exclusively to this work.

The degradation of India torments me so much, that if India refuses to be emancipated, resurrected by the end of the year, that torment may consume me. That is what I meant to say when I said I would not survive December, etc. Surely I have lost none of my faith. I am only puzzled when I trust to calculations of my intellect, and build on them. But in that dread hour the voice within whispers to me, "It is not thou, it is He who is doing it all." I then remember the dialogue of the tortoise and his mate, *mameru* and similar works and am myself again. I shall arrive in Bombay on the 2nd proximo. I hope you will be there on the 4th.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11419

168. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

ON THE TRAIN,
September 25, 1921

CHI. MANI,

Two letters from you are lying with me. Your work appears to be going on well. We shall meet there in a few days. Hence I write nothing about it.

I was much grieved to read what you write about Kumudbehn I should certainly like to meet her. I shall positively be in Ahmedabad on the 6th. I do not know how long I may have to stay there; if, however, Kumudbehn goes to the Ashram while I am there, I can have a talk with her. I want to help her and bring her peace of mind. Even this letter you may send on to her.

I hope to arrive in Bombay on the 2nd. I shall have to stay there till the 4th.

Uncle Vithalbhai way is quite different from ours. We need not worry about him. Let him do and say what he thinks fit.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

SHRI MANIBEHN PATEL
C/O SHRI VALLABHBHAI, BARRISTER
BHADRA
AHMEDABAD

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne

169. LETTER TO BANARASIDAS CHATURVEDI

ON THE TRAIN,
September 25, 1921

BHAISHRI,

I read your postcard only now.

I could not send you the money. I shall now give it to you in Bombay. I shall arrive in Bombay on the 2nd October and will stay there till the 4th. I want you to be in Bombay while I am there.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

BANARASIDAS CHATURVEDI¹

SHANTINIKETAN

BOLPUR

E. I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2578

170. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

COIMBATORE,
September 26, 1921

CHI. RAMDAS,

Today I have sat down to write to all of you brothers. I am here in a beautiful city in Madras Presidency. The atmosphere is excellent. This city, Coimbatore, is at a height of there thousand feet. Today is my silence day. It is 26th of September.

I take it that you will read the letter to Manilal which I have just finished.² If Manilal does not send it to you, ask him to do so and also send this letter to him. If I do not write to all of you brothers, I am sure you will not think that I do not remember you. There may be a reason why I do not write. But you can have no reason not to write. Even then, I get few letters from you. And from Manilal, almost none.

I have your last letter. You have done well in going back to stay with Bhai Khanderia. I see that you are still in a state of indecision. On

¹ Resigned from Chief's College, Indore, in July 1920 and joined C. F. Andrews at shantiniketan; later, co-author of his biography

² Not available

the one hand, you say you have decided to stay on there, and on the other, your letter suggests that you will return here before December. I do not understand this. It is possible, though, that you might have decided to stay with Bhai Khanderia only for a specific period of time. I will know from your next letter.

There is nothing to be surprised at in my wishing you to be here to help me. Even so, in Manilal's letter I have....¹

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

171. LETTER TO K. P. KESHAVA MENON

SALEM,

September 27, 1921

MY DEAR KESHAVA MENON²,

I have your letter. I am asking the Committee here to send you Rs. 10,000 for relief of distress among the refugees.³ Of course you will only give to those who do not receive Government aid.

I am quite clear that we cannot entrust . . . ⁴ Committee. But we can send volunteers to distribute relief under the supervision of the non-official committee. That is, the non-official committee may do that. We do not do any political work. But the money must be in our hands.

As for the budget, I shall put it before the Working Committee. Of . . . in prison should be supported. I shall see to the Bajaj Fund⁵ too for *vakeels*.

Yours sincerely,

(M. K. GANDHI)

From a photostat exhibited at the Kerala Pavilion, Gandhi Darshan, New Delhi, 1969-70

¹ The letter is incomplete.

² A Congress worker of Malabar

³ The reference is to the Moplah revolt in Malabar in which a number of Hindus were killed and hundreds rendered homeless; *vide* "Moplah outbreak", 4-9-1921, "The Two Incompatibles", 8-9-1921, "Speech at Madras", 15-9-1921 and "Speech at Trichinopoly", 19-9-1921.

⁴ The source is illegible here.

⁵ The Jammalal Bajaj Fund of one lakh of rupees given for the maintenance of lawyers who had suspended practice in response to the Nagpur resolution of 1920

*172. SPEECH IN REPLY TO MUNICIPAL ADDRESS,
SALEM*

September 27, 1921

I thank you sincerely for your beautiful address and the beautiful casket in which the address has been put. As you are aware, I have not anything to put silver plates and silver caskets into. The silver will therefore be devoted to public purposes. I congratulate the Salem Municipality on the record of progress which you have shown in your address. The more so, in that, your schools freely admit the *Panchama* children and that your Council contains a *Panchama* councillor. Nothing less can be expected of a place which has contributed to the Congress, its President¹ and one of its Chief Secretaries. You have told me that you are willing to do all that you can within the compass of your act. . . for non-co-operation. You have here mentioned the three chief things on which the attention of non-co-operators is concentrated and if you add two more things, I think that you complete very nearly the programme of non-co-operation. I have not a shadow of doubt that your Act permits you to remain non-violent and to spread the gospel non-violence throughout the Salem District or throughout your town and I am sure also that your Municipal Act does not prevent you from promoting Hindu-Muslim unity. Then the last two things and temperance can best be promoted by concentrating our attention upon swadeshi and though I see more progress in swadeshi in Salem than elsewhere in the Madras Presidency I am not at all satisfied for all you have done for swadeshi. I do not know whether the councillors have religiously carried out the gospel of swadeshi in their homes. I do not know whether the councillors have qualified themselves for swadeshi propaganda by becoming themselves accomplished spinners. I have a suspicion that in all your municipal schools you have not yet made spinning compulsory. I invite you to follow the example of the Municipality of Lahore for prescribing khaddar dress for all municipal employees, and you know what the introduction of spinning-wheel and khaddar means to your town. I assure you that it adds 25 per cent to the total income of the town. I know that you are a great weaving centre and if the Municipality will do its duty it can

¹ C. Vijayaraghavachariar

easily persuade the weavers not to touch the Japanese or any other foreign yarn and so you have a great programme of swadeshi which no act that can possibly be devised by the Madras Government can prevent you from following and you can copy the example of the Thana Municipality to undertake picketing liquor shops for yourselves and if you have sufficient funds you can devote, also like the Thana District Board, certain amount to the Congress Committee and the Khilafat Committee for picketing liquor shops. After all, our movement is one of self-purification and searching self-respect. There are other ways in which we can perform both these processes and I feel sure that the Salem Municipality will not remain behind in self-purification and assertion of self-respect, and I thank you once more for your address.

The Hindu, 29-9-1921

173. *SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, SALEM*¹

September 27, 1921

After addresses were read by the District Congress Committee, the Vanniakula Kshatriyas and the Sowrashttra community, Mr. C. Vijayaraghavachariar was voted to the Chair. Mahatmaji . . . said that the more ill-advised the prosecution was, the more innocent the Ali Brothers were, the more successful would be our efforts to attain our goal by suffering. He said that the answer to the prosecution was a complete and immediate boycott of foreign cloth and the introduction of the spinning-wheel in every house. He then laid great emphasis on the removal of untouchability. As he understood the *varnashrama*² dharma there was no warrant for the doctrine of pollution by the touch of any human being. The *varnashrama* was a scheme of service and not a scheme of privileges. Evil thoughts, words and deeds polluted men and women, not the touch of any human being.

The Hindu, 30-9-1921

¹ At Municipal Hostel ground

² The four castes and stages of life sanctioned by Hinduism

*174. SPEECH IN REPLY TO MUNICIPAL ADDRESS,
TIRUPATI*

September 28, 1921

The Mahatma . . . told them that they should spread the gospel of swadeshi within their Municipality, introduce spinning-wheels in all their schools, promote temperance, take steps to get over the curse of untouchability and devise measures to combat famine. He said they could indulge in all those pleasures without infringing the Municipal Law.

The Hindu, 5-10-1921

175. NOTES

AFFLICTED MADRAS

Madras is suffering from many afflictions. It has its Brahmin and Non-Brahmin problem, it has its *Panchama* problem, it has its labour problem, it has repression of a severe type such as is always to be met with where a Governor is amiable but hopelessly weak and dependent purely upon his advisers. The Chirala-Perala repression¹ I have already noticed. Now the Government is trying to exact from an unwilling peasantry a grazing tax which it can ill afford to pay. I understand that in its mad pursuit after collection, the Government impounded about 200 cattle, some of which were torn from their calves. The cattle were taken to a pound where there was neither sufficient water nor fodder. That took place in the Andhra country. Near Trichinopoly where I am writing these notes, there is a place called Karur with a population of about 20,000. Its people have done good work in the cause of temperance. Now about 40 persons, all members of the local Congress Committee, have been arrested for alleged complicity in all investment of a theatre by the rowdies of the place, consequent upon its manager's refusal to pay the subscription to a charity or to the Tilak Swaraj Fund—I do not know which. This investment took place some time ago. The crowd was dispersed. But now these men have been arrested. All over, there is talk of repression. And possibly there will be still more after the arrest of the Ali Brothers. The people however have kept calm, brave and non-violent.

¹ *Vide* "Chirala-Perala" 25-8-1921.

The Malabar trouble is out of the ordinary, but it has filled its cup of woe.

Panic has so far possessed the Government, that one does not know what they will do next moment. There is a Pudukkottai Raj near here. I had to go to a group of villages. I was to pass through the Raj on my way. Even this was too much for the Raj, and I received the following letter:

We have reason to believe that you are intending to proceed on the 20th instant from Trichinopoly to Chettinad; we are further informed that you proposed to travel by road through this State.

Assuming that this information is correct, I write to say that you will not be allowed to pass through this State. If you attempt to do so, you will be stopped at the frontier by the Police.

I merely wrote as follows in reply:¹

I regard everything that these States do as an indirect act of the Government. But as I consider them to be more helpless than the direct British subjects, I have always thought it necessary for non-co-operators not to give battle to them. It would create needless complications. But one cannot help noticing the insanity of refusing even a passage through a place. And what could I have done to the subjects of the State but preach on temperance, swadeshi and untouchability?

THE "PANCHAMAS"

But I must resist the temptation of dealing with the varied problems. As in all my Madras speeches, I have dealt most with the *Panchama*, i.e., the untouchables, problem, I propose to deal briefly with it in these notes. Nowhere is the "untouchable" so cruelly treated as in this Presidency. His very shadow defiles the Brahmin. He may not even pass through Brahmin streets. Non-Brahmins treat him no better. And between the two, the *Panchama* as he is called in these parts is ground to atoms. And yet Madras is a land of mighty temples and religious devotion. The people with their big *tilak* marks, their long locks and their bare clean bodies look like *rishis*². But their religion seems almost to be exhausted in these outward observances. It is difficult to understand this Dyerism towards the most industrious

¹ Not reproduced here; *vide* "Letter to Sidney Burn", after September 18, 1921.

² Seers

and useful citizens in a land that has produced Sankara and Ramanuja. And in spite of the Satanic treatment of our own kith and kin in this part of India, I retain my faith in these Southern people. I have told them at all their huge meetings in no uncertain terms, that there can be no swaraj without the removal of this curse from our midst. I have told them, that our being treated as social lepers in practically the whole world is due to our having treated a fifth of our own race as such. Non-co-operation is a plea for a change of heart, not merely in the English but equally in ourselves. Indeed, I expect the change first in us and then as a matter of course in the English. A nation that can throw away an age-long curse in a year, a nation that can shed the drink-habit as we shed our garments, a nation that can return to its original industry and suddenly utilize its spare hours to manufacture sixty crores worth of cloth during a single year is a transformed nation. Its transformation must react upon the world. It must constitute even for the scoffer a convincing demonstration of God's existence and grace, and so I say, that if India can become transformed in this wise, no power on earth can deny India's right to establish swaraj. In spite of all the clouds that are thickening on the Indian horizon, I make bold to prophesy, that the moment India has repented for her treatment of the "untouchable" and has boycotted foreign cloth, that moment India will be hailed, by the very English officials who seem to have hardened their hearts, as a free and a brave nation. And because I believe, that if Hindus will, it is possible for them to enfranchise the so-called *Panchamas* and extend to them the same rights that they claim for themselves, and it is possible for India, if she wills, to manufacture all the cloth she needs even as she cooks all the food she eats. I therefore also believe that swaraj is attainable this year. This transformation cannot take place by any elaborately planned mechanical action. But it can take place if God's grace is with us. Who can deny that God is working a wonderful change in the hearts of every one of us? Anyway it is the duty of every Congress worker everywhere to befriend the untouchable brother, and to plead with the un-Hindu Hindus, that Hinduism of the Vedas, the Upanishads, Hinduism of the *Bhagavad Gita* and of Sankara and Ramanuja contains no warrant for treating a single human being, no matter how fallen, as an untouchable. Let every Congressman plead in the gentlest manner possible with orthodoxy, that the bar sinister is the very negation of ahimsa.

COBBLERS v. LAWYERS

Babu Motilal Ghosh, whose mind is fresh like that of a youth though he is too frail even to move, summoned Maulana Mahomed Ali and me chiefly to urge us to invite the lawyers to the Congress fold and in effect to restore them to their original status of unquestioned leadership of public opinion. Both the Maulana and I told him, that we did want the lawyers to work for the Congress, but that those who would not suspend practice could not and should not become leaders. Moti Babu said, that my mention of cobblers in the same breath as lawyers had offended some of them. I felt sorry to hear this. I remember the note¹ in these pages, and it was certainly not written to offend. I have said many hard things about lawyers, but I have never considered them to be guilty of caste prejudices. I am sure, that the lawyers have appreciated the spirit of my remark. I hope I am never guilty of putting a sting in any of my writings. But I certainly meant no offence in the paragraph referred to by Moti Babu. Having been myself a lawyer, I could not so far forget myself as want only to offend members of the same profession. Nor can I forget the brilliant and unique services rendered to the country by lawyers such as Pherozeshah Mehta², Ranade³, Taiyabjee⁴, Telang⁵, Manmohan Ghose, Krishnaswami Iyer, not to speak of the living ones. When no one else had the courage to speak, they were the voice of the people and guardians of their country's liberty. And if today the majority of them are no longer accepted as leaders of the people, it is because different qualities are required for leadership from what they have exhibited hitherto. Courage, endurance, fearlessness and above all self-sacrifice are the qualities required of our leaders. A person

¹ *Vide "Notes" 25-8-1921 under the sub-title "Practising Lawyers".*

² 1845-1915; one of the founders of the Indian National Congress; twice elected President in 1890 and 1909

³ Mahadev Govind Ranade (1842-1901); economist, historian and social reformer; one of the founders of Indian National Congress; became judge of Bombay High Court in 1893.

⁴ A nationalist Muslim leader from Gujarat; former judge of Baroda High court; was one of the commissioners appointed by the Sub-committee of the Congress to report on the Punjab disorders.

⁵ Of the Bombay High Court; one of the founders of the Indian National Congress

belonging to the suppressed classes exhibiting these qualities in their fulness would certainly be able to lead the nation; whereas the most finished orator, if he have not these qualities, must fail.

And it has been a matter of keen satisfaction to me to find the lawyers all over India, who have not been able to suspend practice, readily assenting to the proposition and being content to work as humble camp-followers. A general will find his occupation gone, if there were no camp-followers in his army.

“But”, said Moti Babu, “there is a great deal of intolerance that has crept into our movement. Non-co-operators insult those lawyers who have not suspended practice.” I fear that the charge is true to a certain extent. Intolerance is itself a form of violence and an obstacle to the growth of a true democratic spirit. Arrogant assumption of superiority on the part of a non-co-operator who has undergone a little bit of sacrifice or put on khadi is the greatest danger to the movement. A non-co-operator is nothing if he is not humble. When self-satisfaction creeps over a man, he has ceased to grow and therefore has become unfit for freedom. He who offers a little sacrifice from a lowly and religious spirit quickly realizes the miserable littleness of it. Once on the path of sacrifice we find out the measure of our selfishness, and must continually wish to give more and not be satisfied till there is a complete self-surrender.

And this knowledge of so little attempted and still less done must keep us humble and tolerant. It is our exclusiveness and the easy self-satisfaction that have certainly kept many a waverer away from us. Our motto must ever be conversion by gentle persuasion and a constant appeal to the head and the heart. We must therefore be ever courteous and patient with those who do not see eye to eye with us. We must resolutely refuse to consider our opponents as enemies of the country.

Lawyers and others who believe in non-co-operation but have not, from any cause, been able to non-co-operate in matters applicable to them, can certainly do silent work as lieutenants in the matter of swadeshi. It requires the largest number of earnest workers. There is no reason why a practising lawyer should not make khadi fashionable by wearing it even in courts. There is no reason why he and his family should not spin during leisure hours. I have mentioned one out of a variety of things that can be done by practising lawyers for the attainment of swaraj. I hope, therefore, that no practising lawyer and

for that matter no co-operating student will keep himself from serving the movement in every way open to him. All cannot become leaders but all can be bearers. And non-co-operators, I hope, will always make it easy for such countrymen to offer and render service.

A PERTINENT QUESTIONS

I paraphrase below what a friend writes regarding the influence of the Moplah outbreak on Hindu-Muslim unity:

I am a staunch believer in Hindu-Muslim unity. But this Moplah outbreak has raised doubts in me. Success in the Khilafat means strength to Islam. Strength to Islam means attempts at conversion. Have we not often been given the choice between Islam and the sword? Can people such as the Moplahs learn the beauty of non-violence? And even if they appreciate non-violence for the sake of their faith, will they not use violence for the sake of spreading their faith? My belief in the necessity of Hindu-Muslim unity is there. But do you not think that the questions I have raised are relevant?

The questions are indeed relevant, if only because they have occurred to one so sane as the writer is. But in my opinion there is a misunderstanding about the whole question. Our advocacy of the Khilafat would be wrong if Islam were based on force. There is nothing in the Koran to warrant the use of force for conversion. The holy book says in the clearest language possible, "There is no compulsion in religion." The Prophet's whole life is a repudiation of compulsion in religion. No Mussulman, to my knowledge, has ever approved of compulsion. Islam would cease to be a world religion if it were to rely upon force for its propagation.

Secondly, historically speaking, the charge of conversion to Islam by force cannot be proved against its followers as a body. And whenever attempts have been made to convert by force, responsible Mussulmans have repudiated such conversions.

Thirdly, the conception of Hindu-Muslim unity does not presuppose a total absence for all time of wrong by any of the parties. On the contrary it assumes, that our loyalty to the unity will survive shocks such as the forcible conversions by Moplahs, that in every such case we shall not blame the whole body of the followers but seek relief against individuals by way of arbitration and not by way of reprisals.

Fourthly, acceptance of non-violence for organizing India's freedom involves acceptance of non-violence for Hindu-Muslim solidarity. The Moplahs have certainly broken the rule. But they were

prevented from having access to the new manifestation. Whilst they had heard something about the Khilafat vaguely, they knew nothing of non-violence.

Fifthly, we need not suspect any evil befalling India under swaraj for it is tolerably certain, that had the Congress and the Khilafat workers been permitted to penetrate the Moplah territories, they would have been able to nip the evil in the bud. As it was, it is a matter capable of proof that the Khilafat workers, wherever they could go, were able to exercise great restraining influence. To me the Moplah madness is proof of the Hindu Muslim solidarity, because we kept calm. As members of a family, we shall sometimes fight, but we shall always have leaders who will compose our differences and keep us under check.

Sixthly, in the face of possibilities of such madness in future, what is the alternative to Hindu-Muslim unity? A perpetuation of slavery? If we regard one another as natural enemies, is there any escape from eternal foreign domination for either of us? Is not the present domination worse than the possibility of forcible conversions or worse? Is Hinduism worth anything, if it cannot survive force? Cannot the Mussulmans too ask the same question as the friend has asked? Is there no possibility of a repetition of pillage and murder on the part of Hindus as happened in Shahabad three years ago? Is not the remedy therefore clearly Hindu-Muslim unity at all hazards? The Hindus as also the Mussulmans, whenever one of them goes mad, have two courses left open. Either to die valiantly without retaliation, that will at once arrest the progress of mischief; or to retaliate and live or die. For individuals both the courses will abide as long as the world lasts. All questioning arise, because we have become helpless. We have forgotten the divine art of dying for our faiths without retaliation, and we have equally forgotten the art of using force in self-defence at the peril of our lives. And Hindu-Muslim unity is nothing, if it is not a partnership between brave men and women. We must trust each other always, but in the last resort, we must trust ourselves and our God.

THE PROPER SPIRIT

A friend, in reply to a letter asking her to dedicate herself more fully to swadeshi, writes:

When I think of the little work that I have done all these months, I cannot help my tears. I wish I could open my heart to show you what is in it. In your first letter you asked me to take up this work in a religion spirit, and

I can assure that I have taken it up as my religion. In my heart I have never been able to separate religion and patriotism. For me both are one.... We profess to be many things, but when we come to self-analysis, we find we are nothing.... We have lost all our capacity of feeling. We do not feel sufficiently the pangs of slavery.... Otherwise how can people be so indifferent, while time is flying so swiftly ?

It is not possible for me to share the whole of the beautiful letter with the reader. I have simply quoted as much as I could dare, in order to induce the readers, both men and women, to copy the religious zeal of this sister, who, the reader may be informed, is rendering patriotic service in her own sweet and selfless way.

A BRAVE WOMAN

Whilst I am sharing with the reader my enjoyment of woman's work in the cause of the country, I must not deny myself the pleasure of recounting my experiences of Begum Mahomed Ali. She began, last time we were in Bombay, to assist her husband publicly in his work. She commenced with collections for the Smyrna Fund. She joined us in our arduous and incessant travels in Bihar, Assam, and East and West Bengal. She began to speak at women's gatherings. And I could perceive, that she had gifts of eloquence no less than her brave husband. Her speeches lost nothing in effect for brevity, and I do not know that she could not give lessons to her husband in the art of saying as much as possible in as few words as possible. Let the reader know, that Begum Sahiba was dressed from head to foot in heavy khadi, and a Mussulman sister has to wear many more articles of dress than her fortunate Hindu sister. She retained the orthodox veil. It would be a mercy, if some Mussulman divine were to find out authority to enable women public workers to discard the *purdah*, especially when the veil too has to be of khadi. Anyway she bore herself bravely even in the melting climate of Assam.

Her greatest trial and triumph came, when at Waltair her husband was torn away from her. I saw her, as she came out of the room where her husband was detained. She walked along the platform with a steady step. And when I asked her whether she was not happy that her husband was at last arrested, she replied without a tremor that she was, because he was going to jail for his God and his country. The reader is already familiar with the brave words with which she sped her husband on his journey. We continued our journey to Madras. There was a vast public meeting on the Beach. The audience was totally

unfamiliar to her. She attended the meeting, and spoke in her sweet Hindustani in a loud voice without faltering. And as sentence after sentence was rolling out of her lips, I could not help saying to myself that she was the brave wife of a brave husband. I felt proud of her as a companion in our journey. Here is a free rendering of her speech: My Hindu and Mussulman brothers and sisters, I am glad to be able to tell you that I am not sorry for my husband's arrest. I have asked him to be happy in his imprisonment, and I have promised to carry on his work to the best of my ability. I hope that both my Hindu and Mussulman brothers will ceaselessly work and attain swaraj. If you want to see Maulana Saheb released early, you should all wear khadi, all my sisters should spin daily for the sake of our religion and our country. In the place of Maulana Saheb, there should be many coming forward to serve Islam and India. I must also ask the Mussulman brothers here to contribute as much as they can to the Angora Fund.

WELL DONE NAGPUR

The Municipality of Nagpur certainly deserves congratulations for its public service, in that it has taken a referendum on total prohibition. The result is striking. Two thousand three hundred and forty-three voters registered their votes. Of these two thousand three hundred and thirty-two recorded their in favour of total prohibition. Six voted with reservations, and only *five* voted against prohibition. The reader will be pained to find, that of the five voters against prohibition two were graduates. It is possible to look at the revelation in another light, and say that the two graduates had the courage of their conviction to incur popular odium and vote in accordance with their conscience. There is no doubt as to the educative value of such a referendum. I wish, the Secretary of the Congress Committee at whose instance the poll was taken, had given the full strength of the electoral roll. It is to be hoped, that other municipalities would follow the example of Nagpur.

Young India, 29-9-1921

176. TAMPERING WITH LOYALTY¹

His Excellency the Governor of Bombay had warned the public some time ago, that he “meant businesses”, that he was no longer going to tolerate the speeches that were being made. In his note on the Ali Brothers and others he has made clear his meaning. The Ali Brothers are to be charged with having tampered with the loyalty of the sepoy and with having uttered sedition. I must confess, that I was not prepared for the revelation of such hopeless ignorance on the part of the Governor of Bombay. It is evident that he has not followed the course of Indian history during the past twelve months. He evidently does not know, that the National Congress began to tamper with the loyalty of the sepoy in September last year, that the Central Khilafat Committee began it earlier and that I began it earlier still, for I must be permitted to take the credit or the odium of suggesting, that India had a right openly to tell the sepoy and everyone who served the Government in any capacity whatsoever, that he participated in the wrongs done by the Government. The Conference at Karachi merely repeated the Congress declaration in terms of Islam. Only a Mussulman divine can speak for Islam, but speaking for Hinduism and speaking for nationalism, I have no hesitation in saying, that it is sinful for anyone, either as soldier or civilian, to serve this Government which has proved treacherous to the Mussulmans of India and which has been guilty of the inhumanities of the Punjab. I have said this from many a platform in the presence of sepoys. And if I have not asked individual sepoys to come out, it has not been due to want of will but of ability to support them. I have not hesitated to tell the sepoy, that if he could leave the service and support himself without the Congress or the Khilafat aid, he should leave at once. And I promise, that as soon as the spinning-wheel finds an abiding place in every home and Indians begin to feel that weaving gives anybody any day an honourable livelihood, I shall not hesitate, at the peril of being shot, to ask the Indian sepoy individually to leave his service and become a weaver. For, has not the sepoy been used to hold India under subjection, has he not been used to murder innocent people at Jallianwala Bagh, has he not been used to drive away innocent men,

¹ This was one of the articles for which Gandhiji was sentenced to six years' imprisonment.

women and children during that dreadful night at Chandpur, has he not been used to subjugate the proud Arab of Mesopotamia, has he not been utilized to crush the Egyptian? How can any Indian having a spark of humanity in him and any Mussulman having any pride in his religion feel otherwise than as the Ali Brothers have done? The sepoy has been used more often as a hired assassin than as a soldier defending the liberty or the honour of the weak and the helpless. The Governor has pandered to the basest in us by telling us what would have happened in Malabar but for the British soldier or sepoy. I venture to inform His Excellency, that Malabar Hindus would have fared better without the British bayonet, that Hindus and Mussulmans would have jointly appeased the Moplahs, that possibly there being no Khilafat question there would have been no Moplah riot at all, that at the worst supposing that Mussulmans had made common cause with the Moplahs, Hinduism would have relied upon its creed of non-violence and turned every Mussulman into a friend, or Hindu valour would have been tested and tried. The Governor of Bombay has done a disservice to himself and his cause (whatever it might be), by fomenting Hindu-Muslim disunion, and has insulted the Hindus, by letting them infer from his note, that Hindus are helpless creatures unable to die for or defend their earth, home or religion. If however the Governor is right in his assumptions, the sooner the Hindus die out, the better for humanity. But let me remind His Excellency, that he has pronounced the greatest condemnation upon British rule, in that it finds Indians today devoid of enough manliness to defend themselves against looters, whether they are Moplah Mussulmans or infuriated Hindus of Arrah.

His Excellency's reference to the sedition of the Ali Brothers is only less unpardonable than his reference to the tampering. For he must know, that sedition has become the creed of the Congress. Every non-co-operator is pledged to preach disaffection towards the Government established by law. Non-co-operation, though a religious and strictly moral movement, deliberately aims at the overthrow of the Government, and is therefore legally seditious in terms of the Indian Penal Code. But this is no new discovery. Lord Chelmsford knew it. Lord Reading knows it. It is unthinkable that the Governor of Bombay does not know it. It was common cause that so long as the movement remained non-violent nothing would be done to interfere with it.

But it may be urged, that the Government has a right to change its policy when it finds, that the movement is really threatening its very existence as a system. I do not deny its right. I object to the Governor's note, because it is so worded as to let the unknowing public think, that tampering with the loyalty of the sepoy and sedition were fresh crimes committed by the Ali Brothers and brought for the first time to His Excellency's notice.

However the duty of the Congress and Khilafat workers is clear. We ask for no quarter; we expect none from the Government. We did not solicit the promise of immunity from prison so long as we remained non-violent. We may not now complain, if we are imprisoned for sedition. Therefore our self-respect and our pledge require us to remain calm, unperturbed and non-violent. We have our appointed course to follow. We must reiterate from a thousand platforms the formula of the Ali Brothers regarding the sepoys, and we must spread disaffection openly and systematically till it please the Government to arrest us. And this we do, not by way of angry retaliation, but because it is our dharma. We must wear khadi even as the Brothers have worn it, and spread the gospel of swadeshi. The Mussulmans must collect for Smyrna relief and the Angora Government. We must spread like the Ali Brothers the gospel of Hindu-Muslim unity and of non-violence for the purpose of attaining swaraj and the redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs.

We have almost reached the crisis. It is well with a patient who survives a crisis. If on the one hand we remain firm as a rock in the presence of danger, and on the other observe the greatest self-restraint, we shall certainly attain our end this very year.

Young India, 29-9-1921

177. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

[September 1921]¹

CHI. RAMDAS,

Do you meet Mr. Kallenbach²? He may be writing to you. I remember Miss Schlesin³ every day. I believe you have not forgotten her. You should meet her even if you have to make a search for her. Her public service is such that it is never to be forgotten.

You see that I have written the letter with a fountain-pen. One day a letter written with Mahadev's pencil came to me. I had to labour to read it. Therefore, I started using a fountain-pen even using violence over my mind. I like very much to use the reed pen. But the reed pen will take double the time; hence I have taken up the fountain-pen.

Harilal is doing his own cloth trade. He makes enough income in that. It seems to me that his greed is greater. It should be considered that his health is all right. He does not have his old strength. But he is able to look after his own work. Devdas is good. I should say that I am well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Motanan Man, p. 21

178. SPEECH AT BELLARY

October 1, 1921

After the addresses were read, Mahatmaji replied in Hindi. He regretted that no address had been given to him by the Khilafat Committee. He did not know whether a Khilafat Committee was in existence or not. If there was one he regretted the omission. He stated that he had received innumerable letters from Bellary about local differences amongst *vakils*, councillors, Hindus and Mussulmans. Until there was concord and peace, there could be no Congress work and so he appealed to all to merge their differences and unite. With regard to the differences about Andhra and

¹ From the contents; *vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 1-9-1921.

² Hermann Kallenbach

³ Sonja Schlesin

Karnatak questions, Mahatmaji stated that it may be taken up after swaraj was obtained. He appealed to the people to take to the charkha and manufacture of khadi. He regretted that the response from Bellary in the matter of suspension of practice was poor, nay, practically nil. He thanked the people for having come and welcomed him in such large numbers, though it was midnight.

The Hindu, 3-10-1921

179. MY LOIN-CLOTH¹

[October 2, 1921]

All the alterations I have made in my course of life have been effected by momentous occasions; and they have been made after such a deep deliberation that I have hardly had to regret them. And I did them, as I could not help doing them. Such a radical alteration—in my dress,—I effected in Madura.

I had first thought of it in Barisal. When, on behalf of the famine-stricken at Khulna, I was twitted that I was burning cloth utterly regardless of the fact that they were dying of hunger and nakedness, I felt that I should content myself with a mere loincloth and send on my shirt and dhoti to Dr. Roy, for the Khulna people. But I restrained my emotion. It was tinged with egotism. I knew that the taunt was groundless. The Khulna people were being helped, and only a single zemindar could have sent all the relief necessary. I needed therefore nothing to do there.

The next occasion came when my friend Maulana Mahomed Ali was arrested before my very eyes. I went and addressed a meeting soon after his arrest. I thought of dispensing with my cap and shirt that moment, but then I restrained myself fearing that I might create a scene.

The third occasion came during my Madras tour. People began to tell me that they had not enough khadi to start with and that if khadi was available, they had no money. “If the labourers burn their foreign clothing where are they to get khadi from?” That stuck into my heart. I felt there was truth in the argument. The plea for the poor overpowered me. I expressed grief to Maulana Azad Sobhani, Mr. Rajagopalachariar, Doctor Rajan and others, and proposed that I

¹ First published in Gujarati in *Navajivan*, 2-10-1921. Its translation in *The Hindu* was reproduced from the *Independent*.

should thenceforth go about with a loin cloth. The Maulana realized my grief and entirely fell in with my idea. The other co-workers were uneasy. They felt that such radical change might make people uneasy, some might not understand it; some might take me to be a lunatic, and that all would find it difficult if not impossible, to copy my example.

For four days I revolved these thoughts, and ruminated the arguments, I began telling people in my speeches: "If you don't get khadi, you will do with mere loin-cloth but discard foreign clothing." But I know that I was hesitating whilst I uttered those words. They lacked the necessary force, as long as I had my dhoti and my shirt on.

The dearth of swadeshi in Madras, also continued to make me uneasy. The people seemed to be overflowing with love but it appeared to be all froth.

I again turned to my proposal, again discussed with friends. They had no new argument to advance and September was very nearly closing. What should I do to complete the boycott the close of September? That was what was for ever troubling me.

Thus we reached Madura on the night of the 22nd. I decided that I should content myself with only a loin-cloth until at least the 31st of October. I addressed a meeting of the Madura weavers early next morning in loin-cloth. Today is the third day.

The Maulana has liked the idea so much that he has made as much alteration in his dress as the *Shariat* permits. Instead of the trousers, he puts on a *lungi*, and wears a shirt of which the sleeves do not reach beyond the elbow. Only at the time of the prayers, he wears a cap, as it is essential. The other co-workers are silently watching. The masses in Madras watch me with bewilderment.

But if India calls me a lunatic, what then? If the co-workers do not copy my example, what then? Of course this is not meant to be copied by co-workers. It is meant simply to hearten the people, and to make my way clear. Unless I went about with a loin-cloth, how might I advise others to do likewise? What should I do where millions have to go naked? At any rate why not try the experiment for a month and a quarter? Why not satisfy myself that I left not a stone unturned?

It is after all this thinking that I took this step. I feel so very easy. For eight months in the year, you do not need a shirt here. And so far as Madras is concerned, it may be said that there is no cold season at all, and even the respectable class in Madras wears hardly anything more than a dhoti.

The dress of the millions of agriculturists in India is really only the loin-cloth, and nothing more. I have seen it with my own eyes wherever I have gone.

I want the reader to measure from this the agony of my soul. I do not want either my co-workers or readers to adopt the loincloth. But I do wish that they should thoroughly realize the meaning of the boycott of foreign cloth and put forth their best effort to get it boycotted, and to get khadi manufactured. I do wish that they may understand that swadeshi means everything.

The Hindu, 15-10-1921

180. TO WOMEN

[*October 2, 1921*]

DEAR SISTERS,

I have been thinking all this time about the kind of message I should send to you on my birthday, which falls today. What interest can our sisters have in my birthday? What is the reason that they know me? Pondering on this question, I feel that they do so because they recognize my love for them. They know that I value their honour and that I have shown the best means of safe guarding it. This means is swadeshi. In following swadeshi, women can do much more than men. When, in the past, the daughters of India spun and clothed themselves and others, India may have been poor but she was not as abject as she is today. It is plain to me that today the women in the country are unable to preserve their virtue as they could do in the old days. I, therefore, once again put before them the same idea.

All women should devote at least one hour daily to spinning. Realizing that simplicity is dharma, women should regard them selves adorned through it, regard as sacred whatever quality of cloth is produced from yarn spun by girls and wear such cloth for the purpose of covering their bodies.

I see, too, and I want women as well to see, that this is the only way to win swaraj.

The best way to show our regard and affection for a person is to follow his example.

My aim in everything which I ask my countrymen to do is to

revive the *satyayuga*¹.

Our first task in the country is to educate women. Education will help them to safeguard their virtue. For doing this what we require is not much erudition but strength of character.

The love you have shown me today encourages me to ask you to show love of another kind by resolving to bring back the *satyayuga*. India is certainly capable of defending herself. If we decide to use exclusively cloth made in India we shall in a very short time have ensured strong protection for the country. That is why I am trying to popularize the spinning-wheel. It enables women to safeguard their virtue. There is no other occupation which will help millions of our women to spend their time usefully sitting at home. To ply a spinning-wheel does not require much of intelligence either. The country should learn to be self-reliant. It will be so when it has brave men and brave women. The courage we should display is of the kind required in satyagraha, which is superior to the courage of arms. If we can do this, we are bound to be free. Save the millions of rupees which are drained out of the country and protect your sisters.

If you are convinced that the work I am asking you to do needs to be done, come forward, for the sake of the country, to take it up.

1. Go among the poor and, wherever you find people suffering for want of food and clothing, introduce the spinning-wheel, banish hunger and help people to become self-supporting.

2. Wherever you find the surroundings very dirty, women and children disease ridden and the general state one of moral laxity, the people should be provided with the means for a sober, clean, healthy and pure life and, in this way, be made aware of their present condition and ways of living.

3. Wherever you see the need for efforts to spread knowledge and a desire to undertake such efforts, you should provide the necessary means and should, yourselves, work actively.

For this work, it is first necessary to cultivate self-purification, that is, spiritual growth, sisterly regard for others and intellectual humility.

There is, thus, an excellent and fruitful field of work for the Bhagini Samaj², if the Samaj would take it up. The field is so large

¹ The age of truth

² A social service organization of women in Bombay

that, if it does solid work, seemingly bigger tasks will count as nothing by comparison and great service will have been rendered to the cause of Home Rule without the phrase being so much as even mentioned. In the past, when there were no printing presses and few facilities for public speeches, when we could cover 24 miles in as many hours instead of a thousand as now, there was only one effective means of propagating ideas, namely, one's work. Today, we rush from place to place with the speed of air, deliver speeches and write articles, and yet we find it almost impossible to persuade people to act as we want them to. From every direction we hear words of despair. To me it is clear that, as in the past, so in the present too we shall not succeed in impressing the people with speeches and writings as effectively as we can with work. It is my humble prayer to the Bhagini Samaj that it should attach the first importance to quiet work.

It is a huge waste if, from all these books which people read, nothing is put into practice. Try, therefore, to act upon at least an ounce of what you read in books rather than attempt to read a ton load of them.

I do not want to name the many sciences there are in the world, but it is safe to believe that you have grasped the meaning of any science to the extent that you put it into practice.

It is not proper that we pay no attention to acting on the numerous pledges that we take. Any pledge once taken should be scrupulously kept, at the cost of one's life if necessary.

Let your life be governed by high ideals. In Rome, the ideals themselves changed, but in India we have still not forgotten ours. Whether Hindus or Muslims, we are all heirs to our forefathers. We can hope to preserve that heritage only by constantly fixing our attention on high ideals of life. With our forefathers, aspiration for goodness was the central motive of their life, but it seems to have vanished from us. Wherever we turn, we find hypocrisy. We have got into the habit of resorting to lies in every small matter. We must root that out and fill our lives with truth.

Your humble brother,

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 6-10-1921

181. DHARMA OR “ADHARMA”?

I invariably start and prick up my ears when, at times, even well-wishers or others who believe in non-co-operation come out with difficult questions and tell of their bitter experience. What follows is the gist of a letter from a friend who has been moved to write out of love. He has the country's good at heart, and is no coward. Dharma is dear to him, while his experience of human nature is considerable. I give here in my own words the substance of his letter as far as I can recollect it.

While no one questions your intentions and your means too are clean, would you say that what you advocated with regard to students was altogether wise? Is it possible to be certain that your action will not have unhappy results? To me at any rate these results are visible even today. In trying to teach the spirit of freedom, we have lost domestic discipline. Filial regard on the part of children seems to have disappeared. What boots it to gain swaraj if domestic sanctities are to be its price? Is the spinning-wheel the proper thing for a child? He may do as he pleases later in life. If children disobey their parents, they cannot but lose their dharma.

It is understandable that you should have faith in your non-co-operators, but is it not likely that you are being deceived? Do you really believe that everyone is as sincere as you are? I for one see many around who are selfish, vain and hypocritical, I am sure you would not be happy to discover that you had lost the sincere men and retained only irresponsible people around you. How I wish I could lend you my eyes to see that all that glitters is not gold!

It is in the hope that you may win in the end that I have voiced these misgivings and encroached upon your time.

The original letter is even more simply and politely written than I have been able to suggest. Such letters, manifestly prompted by love, always make me wonder whether the ordinary restraints of civilized life are being violated.

Some children have possibly become rude. But, then, if the *Gita* has been used to justify the throwing of bombs, why be surprised at misconstruction of my words? I am sure, however, that the movement of leaving schools has had on the whole happy results. The original idea was sound. I am firmly of the view that it is a sin to attend schools

run by this Satanic Government. Children under the age of 16 were not called upon to join this movement, while those above 16, surely, have the necessary discretion to decide for themselves. But I always wonder if parents today have a proper understanding of their own duty. What would be the duty of children whose parents are morally depraved? When parents are dissolute and vice-ridden, what is the right course for growing sons and daughters to follow? What course should the children of slaves adopt ?

We should not be surprised if in these matters the consequence of too narrow an interpretation of domestic sanctities are unfortunate. Should the children of parents subsisting on bribery agree to being supported with such riches or should they renounce them. Simply because some Hindu parents may have forsaken their dharma, should the children follow suit?

We shall have, in this age, to set a limit to our filial devotion as much as we do to our loyalty to the State.

In a place where the king is dissolute and harasses his subjects, where he enjoys all luxuries and comforts at the expense of the people, where, instead of being a protector of his subjects he has become a parasite on them—if loyalty to such a king is not a sin, then what is called virtue must be a sin. In the past, devotion to a king meant devotion to a king like Rama, not to one like Ravana. It is understandable that at the instance of Dasharatha Rama should readily take himself to the wild forest, but Prehlada accepting the gift of kingship from Hiranyakashipu would mean the eclipse of dharma.

You may swim in your father's well but it does not mean you may also drown yourself in it.

At no stage of our struggle has the youth of the country been encouraged to adopt an attitude of licence. Only those young men who were disciplined and could endure suffering were advised to leave Government schools and colleges even though they might be getting useful knowledge in them. There are many who continue in schools to please their parents. Only a few have left schools in defiance of their parents' wishes, and of these, fewer still have subsequently taken to undisciplined ways.

There is in this world no dearth of men who in the name of conscience really gratify their selfish desires. Such men will of course bring discredit to dharma, but should that stop us from so much as

talking about conscience? I am absolutely certain that by placing the spinning-wheel in children's hands I have done the highest service to the country. I look upon the spinning-wheel movement as of lasting importance. In concentrating on the training of children's minds to the exclusion of everything else, we have done them a great wrong. A considerable portion of our lives is taken up in trying to provide the body's needs. We have committed a great sin in neglecting education in the use of the means which help us to meet these needs. The country will be happy only if this education is taken up again. By using the spinning-wheel as an instrument of vocational training, which in this case is our duty, we serve several purposes at the same time.

The second misgiving of our friend causes me concern. Dharma would get a bad name and people would come to harm if this sacred struggle is vitiated by hypocrisy. In that case people would fight shy of the very name of dharma or be content to accept orthodoxy as dharma.

Some undesirable elements must admittedly have found their way into our struggle, and I know that there are hypocrites who, under the cover of non-co-operation, are out to serve their selfish ends. But I do not think that hypocrisy has taken possession of the movement. Should that happen, our condition would be even worse than it is today because it would nurse our cowardice. Hypocrisy flourishes only where there is fear. The fear of the consequences of sin tempts the cowardly sinner to resort to a pretence of virtue and thus he becomes doubly a sinner. In order to hide his godlessness, so that he may fill his belly, he makes a big show of piety and not only wastes sandalwood¹ but adds to his sins. Whatever is humanly possible to keep such persons out of the struggle has, I feel, been done, and it is with this consideration that I have retained my freedom to act as I think best in the last resort. The moment I see hypocrisy all round me, I shall unhesitatingly flee the struggle. Hypocrites cannot be non-co-operators and it is the service of the latter I have accepted.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 2-10-1921

¹ Paste of sandalwood is applied to the forehead as a mark of piety.

182. MY NOTES

PEOPLE OF MADRAS

My tour of Madras was something of a disappointment. I am a great admirer of the people of Madras. Memories of the pleasant experience I had with them in South Africa are still fresh in my mind. I have often seen their great capacity for suffering. But in the matter of swadeshi Madras lags behind. I see that their women remain the least touched by swadeshi. And yet, an awakened Madras can do much. In contrast to the smartness of the women in Madras, Gujarati women stand now where. The former are highly intelligent. No other Indian women are as deft with their hands. Women there have the ingenuity to make the most worthless-looking thing pay.

It is not that Madras is lacking in workers either. Very few of our workers have the wisdom, the integrity and the ability of Shri Rajagopalachari. He has fully understood the meaning of our struggle and, in a moment of crisis, he can be resolute and patient.

How is it, then, that Madras disappointed me? I think there are two reasons for this. In the first place, so deep has been the influence of the English language on the region that a person in Madras who knows English cares very little for Tamil. The Bengali, too love English, but that has not made them give up Bengali. In fact, hardly any other Indian language except perhaps Urdu has been able to produce the quality of literature that Bengali has, so well has it been cultivated. Tamil in Madras has been as good as given up, with the result that not only has Tamil not prospered, but there is a wide gulf separating the English-knowing section from the Tamil-speaking class. Shri Rajagopalachari and his colleagues are making every effort to bridge the gulf, but this will take some time.

The other important reason for my disappointment is that, their genuine regard for dharma notwithstanding, people in Madras have allowed blind religious orthodoxy to take such complete possession of them that mere outward forms of religion remain and the inner spirit has vanished. The *Antyajas* in the region suffer more indignities than they do in almost any other part of the country. The Brahmins are more sharply separated from the Non-Brahmins than anywhere else. And yet no other region makes such abundant use of sacred ash,

sandalwood paste and vermilion powder. No other part of the country has quite so many temples and is so generous in providing for their maintenance. As a result of this, on the one hand the educated people are getting increasingly estranged from religion and becoming more cynical in consequence, and, on the other, total darkness and ignorance prevail among the orthodox.

In such a case, however, once the darkness has disappeared, light is not delayed. As soon as the ordinary people are convinced of the darkness that is within them, it will vanish by itself.

That is why I see rays of hope even in the midst of gloom. Congress workers tell me that, without any effort on their part, the people have taken up the spinning-wheel. Khadi is being produced even in places where they have done no work and thousands have started wearing khadi caps. The majority of the Congress workers wear khadi exclusively. If I am asked what conclusion I have reached from my experience in Madras, I would say that despite this experience, I have not given up hope of winning swaraj before the year is out.

He who fights from a sense of dharma never despairs. If one's ends are clean and one's means are pure, one ought to be confident of success. Only when such a person fails to achieve his end within the expected time will he say 'There must have been some error in my calculation, but I am sure of success along this path.'

GUJARATIS IN MADRAS

Wherever I see Gujaratis I observe that they are bringing credit to Gujarat. At every place they mix with the local population as much as they can. They readily contribute what is expected of them and try to spread the message of non-co-operation to the best of their ability. Everyone whom I ask has a good word for them. They keep out of local politics. The impression which I have thus formed of them is of a group giving priority to the claims of public service. They have been sending money even from South and East Africa, and have been taking part in the struggles there. I include among these Gujaratis Gujarati-speaking Parsis and Muslims, for I notice that Gujarati-Speaking Memons too have some work to their credit. Wherever I come across an isolated Parsi here and there, I get an experience of their love for me. I had such an experience even as far away as in the north east corner of Assam. There was only one Parsi

there, but he did not hesitate to show, as well as he could, his sympathy for the cause of non-co-operation.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 2-10-1921

183. DRAFT OF A MANIFESTO

October 4, 1921

We, the undersigned, consider that the *communiqué* of the Government of Bombay, dated regarding the Ali Brothers and others has laid down principles which are subversive of all freedom of expression of opinion, and we desire to state that it is the inherent right of everyone to express his opinion without restraint about the propriety of citizens offering their services to the Government whether in the civil or the military department.

We, the undersigned, state it as our opinion that it is not only contrary to the Muslim religion as declared by their Ulemas but also contrary to national dignity for any Indian to serve as a civilian and more especially as a soldier, under a system of Government which has brought about India's economic, moral and political degradation and which has used the soldiery and the police for repressing national aspirations, as for instance at the time of the Rowlatt Act agitation, and which has used the soldiers for crushing the liberty of the Arabs, the Egyptians and the Turks who have done no harm to India.

We are also of opinion that it is the duty of every Indian soldier and civilian forthwith to resign his post and find out some honourable means to support himself.

And with that end in view we suggest to everyone in Government employ to learn hand-spinning and hand-weaving, which whilst advancing the national cause would enable them to earn an honest and an honourable living.

We urge the country in general to finish the boycott foreign cloth and take to hand-spinning and hand-weaving and stimulate manufacture of khaddar by such means.

A complete boycott of foreign cloth and manufacture by hand-spinning and hand-weaving will enable everyone to earn his or her living without falling back upon Government employment, and enable the Congress to call out both soldiers and civilians and even to

take up mass civil disobedience.¹

From a photostat: S.N. 7633

184. A MANIFESTO

[BOMBAY,

6.50 p.m., October 4, 1921]²

In view of the prosecution of the Ali Brothers and others for the reasons stated in the Government of Bombay *communiqué* dated the 15th September 1921, we, the undersigned, speaking in our individual capacity, desire to state that it is the inherent right of everyone to express his opinion without restraint about the propriety of citizens offering their services to, or remaining in the employ of, the Government, whether in the civil or the military department.

We, the undersigned, state it as our opinion, that it is contrary to national dignity for any Indian to serve as a civilian, and more especially as a soldier, under a system of Government, which has brought about India's economic, moral and political degradation and which has used the soldiery and the police for repressing national aspirations, as, for instance, at the time of the Rowlatt Act agitation, and which has used the soldiers for crushing the liberty of the Arabs, the Egyptians, the Turks and other nations who have done no harm to India.

We are also of opinion, that it is the duty of every Indian soldier and civilian to sever his connection with the Government and find some other means of livelihood.

M. K. GANDHI

ABUL KALAM AZAD (CALCUTTA)

AJMAL KHAN (DELHI)

LAJPAT RAI (LAHORE)

MOTILAL NEHRU (ALLAHABAD)

SAROJINI NAIDU (BOMBAY)

ABBAS TAIYABJI

N C. KELKAR

KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA (GUNTUR)

G. HARISARVOTTAM RAO (GUNTUR)

ANASUYA SARABHAI

JITENDRALAL BANERJI

MUSHIR HUSEN KIDWAI (DELHI)

SHYAMA SUNDARA CHAKRAVARTI

(CALCUTTA)

RAJENDRA PRASAD (PATNA)

¹ The last two paragraphs have been scored out in the source.

² From a photostat of the draft : S.N. 7632

V. J. PATEL	AZAD SOBHANI (LUCKNOW)
VALLABHBHAI J. PATEL (AHMEDABAD)	HAZRAT MOHANI (CAWNPORE)
M. R. JAYAKAR (BOMBAY)	MAHADEO HARIBHAI DESAI
D. V. GOKHALE (POONA)	BARJORJI FRAMJI BHARUCHA
S. G. BANKER	YAKUB HASAN
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU (ALLAHABAD)	B. S. MUNJE (NAGPUR)
GANGADHAR B. DESHPANDE (BELGAUM)	JERAMDAS DOLATRAM
LAKSHMIDAS TERSI	M. R. CHOLKAR (NAGPUR)
UMAR SOBANI	V. V. DASTANE (BHUSAVAL)
JAMNALAL BAJAJ	AHMED HAJI SIDICK KHATRI (BOMBAY)
M. S. ANE (AMRAOTI)	GUDUR RAMACHANDRA RAO (ANDHRA)
S. E. STOKES (KOTGADH, SIMLA)	D. S. VIJAYRAO (LAHORE)
M. A. ANSARI (DELHI)	B. L. SUBBARAMAYYA (ANDHRA)
KHALIQUZZAMAN (DELHI)	MIA MAHOMED HAJI JANMAHOMED CHOTANI
K. M. ABDUL GAFUR (DELHI)	
ABDUL BARI (LUCKNOW)	
KRISHNAJI NILKANTH (BELGAUM)	
C. RAJAGOPALACHARI (MADRAS)	

Young India, 6-10-1921

185. LETTER TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

[Before *October 5, 1921*]

THE EDITOR OF
THE [BOMBAY] CHRONICLE

SIR,

Persistent rumours supposed to be well founded were brought to me in Madras and have been repeated with greater emphasis in Bombay that my arrest is imminent. If the rumour is well-founded the Government will certainly deserve congratulations for consistency after the arrest of the Ali Brothers and their co-prisoners, for, now the battle is being waged not against violence, so-called or real, or incitement thereto, but against the very principle of non-co-operation for which the Congress and the Khilafat Committees stand, and that principle is promoting disaffection against the established Govern-

ment and promoting non-co-operation with the Government by all classes, including civilians and soldiers. The success of that propaganda, it is obvious, means the dissolution of the existing system of Government and it would be unbecoming for those who are avowed non-co-operators to question any steps that the Government may take in order to crush the movement, and I cannot conceive a more logical step than to arrest the author of the movement, unless the administrators of the system intend to change it in accordance with the wishes of the non-co-operators. The country has shown by its dignified calm attitude after the arrests of the Ali Brothers and others, that it has realized the necessity of non-violence. I expect the retention of the same non-violent atmosphere after my arrest or that of any other worker. The people will show their true courage and appreciation of non-violence and of imprisonments for the sake of one's religion and one's country as an honour to be prized not only by remaining absolutely peaceful but by refraining from hartals or any such demonstration. Any hartal following the arrest of myself or any other worker would be a breach of discipline, and, therefore, no mark of respect or affection for the arrested worker. The only way to show one's regard is to demonstrate greater zeal in prosecuting the Congress programme of swadeshi and hasten the advent of swaraj thereby. I would certainly expect, in the event of my arrest, every man and woman in India who believes in the message of swadeshi, but through laziness or weakness has not yet discarded foreign cloth and taken to hand-spinning and hand-weaving, to discard all foreign cloth and take up the spinning-wheel and the handloom. I would expect the Hindus on no account to relax their efforts for the Khilafat or barter it away for so-called swaraj, for swaraj, without the conciliation of the Mussulmans, is, in my opinion, an inconceivable thing.

Yours etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-10-1921

186. MESSAGE TO WORKERS, CEDED DISTRICTS

October 5, 1921

Mr. Harisarvothama Rao wires from Bombay under date October 5:

Mahatma Gandhi permits the sending of the following message to the Ceded Districts workers:

Concentrate attention on swadeshi, boycott, completely maintain perfect silence at meetings, avoid demonstration of all description as the first essential discipline of deliberate peaceful action. Teach volunteers to down sticks and stand to duty. I request all to meet at Tadpatri on the 14th instant.

The Hindu, 6-10-1921

187. NOTES

FAMINE RELIEF

The visit to the Ceded Districts brought abundant proof of the spinning-wheel being the greatest insurance against famine, and being also the best measure of relief. There is a severe famine raging in some parts of these Districts. One of the workers told me that a woman not being able to support herself and her children had drowned herself and her children. It is not possible to give doles of charity to hundreds of thousand of men. And men who live on charity lose all sense of self-respect. It is not as if there is no corn to be had in the affected area. People have no work and no money. The Government's relief works consist in breaking and carrying stones. A friend remarked that the Government had roads torn down and repaired in order to find work for the men and women in distress. Whether roads are torn down or not, road repair is the only relief work the Government provides. I understood, that the actual wage that found its way into a woman's hands was an anna or five pice, and not more than ten pice into a man's hands. I saw on the other hand, that a Congress Committee was paying three annas per day to *Panchama* women working at the spinning-wheel for eight hours a day. And what is being done for the *Panchama* women can be done for thousands of famine-stricken women and for that matter men. In these Districts three annas a day, even for men, is a veritable boon. But the

spinning-wheel has possibilities which no other occupation has. For it involves the preliminary processes of ginning and carding and the subsequent process of weaving. In the Ceded Districts it is possible without much difficulty to teach weaving. And if the whole of cloth manufacture can be organized, thousands of men can find permanent occupation in their own homes. Every worker freely acknowledged, that both the workers and the afflicted people had begun to realize the possibilities of the spinning-wheel, and already the people were filled with hope and the workers had commenced organizing spinning and weaving everywhere. I met people who told me, they used to laugh at my statement that the spinning-wheel was the best famine insurance, but practical experience convinced them of the truth of it.

I know, this is but the commencement of the transformation. But when it is complete not a man nor woman having sound hands need beg or starve. Today we have the humiliating and debasing spectacle in a famine year of thousands, though well able to work, living on charity and semi-starvation for want of useful work.

THE ONLY ACTIVITY

Therefore I suggest to every Congress and Khilafat worker the advisability of organizing hand-spinning and hand-weaving in his respective district to the exclusion of every other activity. We should be ashamed of resting or having a square meal so long as there is one able-bodied man or woman without work or food. I would urge moneyed men against giving indiscriminate charity or free meals. We shall be cursed by the future generation, if we divide India into givers and receivers of alms. If we want the nation to have any self-respect at all, we must provide against the recurring scarcity. Let those, therefore, who wish to feed the poor, find spinning-wheels for them and provide facilities for learning the various processes.

EXPRESSION OF OPINION

When in any movement violence is religiously eschewed, it becomes a propaganda movement of the purest type. Any attempt to crush it is an attempt to crush public opinion. And such the present repression has become. Why should I not express my profound conviction,

1. that it is sinful to serve the Government in any capacity whatsoever, especially that of a soldier,
2. that it is sinful to drink intoxicating liquors,

3. that it is sinful to wear foreign cloth,
4. that it is sinful to gamble or speculate in foodstuffs or cotton ?

The Government may, as it is carrying on a counter-propaganda, successfully draw recruits for civil and military employment, by various methods induce people to drink and wear foreign cloth and speculate in foodstuffs and cotton and thus continue to govern so long as people intentionally or ignorantly co-operate with it. It will fall the day the people are convinced to the contrary. And just as I carry on my propaganda among the winebibbers and the cotton speculators to wean them from their evil ways, I claim the right to tell the soldier face to face what is his duty in accordance with my opinion. Why should the soldier be kept in ignorance of what is going on in the country ? Is the Government afraid, that if he comes to know the truth, he will no longer serve it? A Government worth the name should be able fully to educate the soldiery and hold its loyalty. But in India everything is armed, —peace, loyalty and opinion. Only the people are disarmed. Our duty therefore is clear. We must claim, even though it be on the gallows, to hold and openly to express any opinion we choose, so long as we do not directly or indirectly cause violence. That is the battle of non-violent non-co-operation. It must be fought to the finish. I warn the public, that the prosecution for “tampering with the loyalty of the army” is but the precursor of prosecutions for tampering with the loyalty of the people to foreign cloth. What was the burning of the khadi vests and caps of the young men of Calicut? What is the crusade against the students of the Vizagapatam Medical School, if it is not an insensate crusade against khadi?

THE SOLE TEST

But this is exactly the kind of test through which we must pass, if we are to gain swaraj. If it is true that this Government exists for its special interests which are antagonistic to those of the people at large, it must vindicate its position at any cost, and we must not be angry with it on that account. Its attempt at suppressing the growth of free public opinion is no new discovery. We have known these attributes of the Government and it is for our knowledge of their existence that we are seeking to destroy the system under which it is being carried on. It exists for the slow but certain exploitation of India and her raw products, and for so enervating India as to make her perpetually

subservient to the foreign exploiters, in other words to imprison us in our own homes. And the system devised to bring about such a state of things is one of rewards and punishments, rewards in the shape of titles and emoluments for those who assist the system, and punishment, even terrorism, for those who seek to end or mend it. So the Government is bound to make a desperate attempt to stifle all expression of opinion and all activity that would injure its special interests. Let us not delude ourselves into the belief that the Government has been generous enough to stay its hands up to the last moment. Let us admit at once that the Government is the most powerful and resourceful corporation the world has ever seen. It bides its time, it does allow its opponents to play; but it strikes immediately they betray seriousness. There can be no question of generosity about a robber who holds on to the stolen property as long as he ever can allow the robbed to make all the childish attempts possible for the recovery of stolen property, but is ready to cut him down as soon as he becomes serious and is likely to succeed in his attempt at recovery. When a robber acts in such a methodical manner, we consider him to be clever in his unscrupulousness and we regard him as hypocritical when he puts on the air of injured innocence. Our resourcefulness lies in not playing into the hands of this Government. We must not be goaded into madness and violence by its imprisonments whether mild or dramatic. We must not flinch from the gallows. I love the Ali Brothers as I love my blood-brothers. But I would not plead with the Government if its judges sentenced them to be hanged. I would know that it was a glorious death they had died and would envy them their good fortune. If they are sentenced to penal servitude for life, I would know that I would release them by the establishment of swaraj at the earliest opportunity.

The only remedy (and it is a most efficacious remedy) open to us is to let the Government do its worst, believe that its worst is the best for the country, and therefore to remain unruffled by repression and prosecute our appointed programme to the finish in the full belief that it must bring the relief we are seeking. That programme is the introduction of hand-spinning and hand-weaving in every home and village.

AN APT ANECDOTE

Maulana Azad Sobhani, who has been doing wonderful work for swadeshi, was telling me a thrilling story of Egyptian coolness and

bravery. He told me that once the soldiers surrounded an Egyptian mosque and wanted to prevent nationalist propaganda inside it. The congregation was listening to a young man speaking to it. He would not desist and was shot. The congregation remained unmoved. Another young man took up the discourse and was shot whilst he was going on, and thus seven young men were shot till the discourse was finished, the congregation remaining unmoved all the while the glorious sacrifice was going on. The Egyptians do not believe in non-violence. But they are fine soldiers. They did not want the mosque to be blown to pieces nor the whole congregation in a vain attempt to retaliate. They wanted to show that they would not be cowed down, and no orders could bend their spirit. And so, as if nothing had happened; the discourse was finished. Death and life became with the congregation synonymous terms. The moral of the story is unmistakable. We who are pledged to non-violence are endeavouring to cultivate the bravery of the seven young Egyptians and the congregation. We must acquire the courage to face death in the pursuit of our goal without even wishing to kill, and victory during the remaining three months is a certainty.

THE THICKENING PLOT

For the Government is marshalling all its forces. I have just learnt, that Mr. Phookan, a barrister and member of the aristocracy of Assam has been called upon to file security for keeping the peace. I had the pleasure of meeting him during my tour. He is a soldier and a sportsman. But he has become a convinced non-violationist. He believes, that nothing but non-violence can possibly put hope in the Indian breast and make swaraj possible during the year. But Mr. Phookan is a brave worker. He and his co-workers wish to revive swadeshi to the full, and the Assam Government do not like the idea. In Andhradesha a powerful zemindar, Kumar Raja of Gampalagudem, has been similarly treated, because he had the courage to do temperance work. These are but two stray instances I have come across in the papers I have been able to secure during my travels. I have no doubt that many such workers are being silenced and manymore will be. This is all good news, if we who remain behind will continue the work of our more fortunate comrades who are being imprisoned. I do call them fortunate, for it is the privilege of the oppressed to be in prison. Where tyranny rules, prison for a just man is an honourable place. It is the price that a tyrant exacts from those

who cross his path or purpose. These imprisonments should teach us to persist in our effort. We need no leaders when the way is mapped out for us. We are in the happy position of knowing what to do and how to do it. Let us show ourselves worthy of swaraj by feeling not despondent but elated over the incarceration of leaders and going on with our work with the calm courage of the Egyptian congregation in the anecdote related by me.

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, Chettiand, Tinnevelly 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 the 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 the 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 soldier 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.

“ETHICS OF DESTRUCTION”

Bada Dada (Dwijendranath Tagore, Shantiniketan) has sent me the following upon reading the article headed “Ethics of Destruction”¹. It is naturally a source of joy to me that one so venerable and learned should agree with the ethical position taken up by me in opposition even to those whose opinion I value and respect. The reader will be glad to find that in Bada Dada we have a *rishi* who in his quiet seclusion follows the national movement with the avidity of a young man of five and twenty, and is constantly thinking of it and praying for its success. Here is the letter:

There was a merchant who suddenly became bankrupt, and was reduced to utter poverty; at the same time his wife was bed-ridden, suffering from acute rheumatic pain. There was an apothecary who dealt in patent medicine and always wanted cash payment from his customers. A doctor friend came to see the lady, and at the same time her daughter also came from her father-in-law’s house to see her sick mother and brought with her a ten-rupee note so that she might buy the patent medicine which could cure her pain immediately. She handed over the note to the doctor, and told him to get the medicine from the apothecary’s shop which was near at hand, and went back. The doctor said that the medicine, no doubt, would give her instant relief, but at the same time it would injure her health to such a degree that she would remain decrepit throughout her life. However, the doctor said that he knew an electrician who

¹ Dated 1-9-1921

was a next door neighbour and could cure rheumatism by electric treatment, his charge being Rs. 10/- per day. In a month he would perfectly cure the disease for good without in the least injuring her general health.

But the patient insisted that she wanted immediate relief, and repeatedly asked the doctor for the bank-note so that she might send for the medicine at once. But the doctor repeatedly said that he could not conscientiously give her the note for the purpose, and he considered it to be a sin to do so. But the lady implored and beseeched him to give her the note. The doctor then took the match-box from his pocket and burnt the note to ashes; and said that she need not be afraid, for he was going to bring the electrician immediately at his own expense, which her husband would pay back as soon as he repaired his fortune. When the hope of obtaining instant relief was thus frustrated in a moment, the patient said to the doctor, "Do as you think fit". So the doctor immediately brought the electrician who assured her that she would be permanently cured within a month, if she allowed him to treat her. Then the doctor did what he had promised to the satisfaction of all parties.

Was the burning of the note a virtuous or a sinful act?

The above is exactly analogous with Mr. Gandhi's cloth-burning. Mr. Gandhi refuses to give to the poor the relief that could have been given by distributing the foreign cloth among them. In order to avoid making them permanently miserable creatures, he promised to make them permanently happy by providing them with clothes made by their own hands.

Young India, 6-10-1921

188. HINDUISM

In dealing with the problem of untouchability during the Madras tour, I have asserted my claim to being a *sanatani* Hindu with greater emphasis than hitherto, and yet there are things which are commonly done in the name of Hinduism, which I disregard. I have no desire to be called a *sanatani* Hindu or any other if I am not such. And I have certainly no desire to steal in a reform or an abuse under cover of a great faith.

It is therefore necessary for me once for all distinctly to give my meaning of *sanatana* Hinduism. The word *sanatana* I use in its natural sense.

I call myself a *sanatani* Hindu, because,

1. I believe in the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Puranas and all that goes by the name of Hindu scriptures, and therefore in avatars

and rebirth,

2. I believe in the *varnashrama* dharma in a sense in my opinion strictly Vedic but not in its present popular and crude sense,

3. I believe in the protection of the cow in its much larger sense than the popular,

4. I do not disbelieve in idol-worship.

The reader will note that I have purposely refrained from using the word divine origin in reference to the Vedas or any other scriptures. For I do not believe in the exclusive divinity of the Vedas. I believe the Bible, the Koran, and the Zend-Avesta to be as much divinely inspired as the Vedas. My belief in the Hindu scriptures does not require me to accept every word and every verse as divinely inspired. Nor do I claim to have any first-hand knowledge of these wonderful books. But I do claim to know and feel the truths of the essential teaching of the scriptures. I decline to be bound by any interpretation, however learned it may be, if it is repugnant to reason or moral sense. I do most emphatically repudiate the claim (if they advance any such) of the present Shankaracharyas and shastris to give a correct interpretation of the Hindu scriptures. On the contrary I believe, that our present knowledge of these books is in a most chaotic state. I believe implicitly in the Hindu aphorism, that no one truly knows the Shastras who has not attained perfection in innocence (*ahimsa*), truth (*satya*) and self-control (*brahmacharya*) and who has not renounced all acquisition or possession of wealth. I believe in the institution of gurus, but in this age millions must go without a guru, because it is a rare thing to find a combination of perfect purity and perfect learning. But one need not despair of ever knowing the truth of one's religion, because the fundamentals of Hinduism as of every great religion are unchangeable, and easily understood. Every Hindu believes in God and his oneness, in rebirth and salvation. But that which distinguishes Hinduism from every other religion is its cow-protection, more than its *varnashrama*.

Varnashrama is, in my opinion, inherent in human nature, and Hinduism has simply reduced it to a science. It does attach to birth. A man cannot change his *varna* by choice. Not to abide by one's *varna* is to disregard the law of heredity. The division, however, into innumerable castes is an unwarranted liberty taken with the doctrine. The four divisions are all-sufficing.

I do not believe, that inter-dining or even inter-marriage

necessarily deprives a man of his status that his birth has given him. The four divisions define a man's calling, they do not restrict or regulate social intercourse. The divisions define duties, they confer no privileges. It is, I hold, against the genius of Hinduism to arrogate to oneself a higher status or assign to another a lower. All are born to serve God's creation, a Brahmin with his knowledge, a Kshatriya with his power of protection, a Vaisya with his commercial ability and a Sudra with his bodily labour. This however does not mean that a Brahmin for instance is absolved from bodily labour, or the duty of protecting himself and others. His birth makes a Brahmin predominantly a man of knowledge, the fittest by heredity and training to impart it to others. There nothing, again, to prevent the Sudra from acquiring all the knowledge he wishes. Only, he will best serve with his body and need not envy others their special qualities for service. But a Brahmin who claims superiority by right of knowledge falls and has no knowledge. And so with the others who pride themselves their special qualities. *Varnashrama* is self-restraint and conservation and economy of energy.

Though therefore *varnashrama* is not affected by inter-dining or inter-marriage, Hinduism does most emphatically discourage inter-dining and inter-marriage between divisions. Hinduism reached the highest limit of self-restraint. It is undoubtedly a religion of renunciation of the flesh so that the spirit may be set free. It is no part of a Hindu's duty to dine with his son. And by restricting his choice of a bride to a particular group, he exercises rare self-restraint. Hinduism does not regard a married state as by any means essential for salvation. Marriage is a "fall" even as birth is a "fall". Salvation is freedom from birth and hence death also. Prohibition against inter-marriage and inter-dining is essential for a rapid evolution of the soul. But this self-denial is no test of *varna*. A Brahmin may remain a Brahmin, though he may dine with his Sudra brother, if he has not left off his duty of service by knowledge. It follows from what I have said above, that restraint in matters of marriage and dining is not based upon notions of superiority. A Hindu who refuses to dine with another from a sense of superiority misrepresents his dharma.

Unfortunately, today Hinduism seems to consist merely in eating and not-eating. Once I horrified a pious Hindu by taking toast at a Mussulman's house. I saw, that he was pained to see me pouring

milk into a cup handed by a Mussulman friend, but his anguish knew no bounds when he saw me taking toast at the Mussulman's hands. Hinduism is in danger of losing its substance if it resolves itself into a matter of elaborate rules as to what and with whom to eat. Abstemiousness from intoxicating drinks and drugs, and from all kinds of foods, especially meat, is undoubtedly a great aid to the evolution of the spirit, but it is by no means an end in itself. Many a man eating meat and with everybody but living in the fear of God is nearer his freedom than a man religiously abstaining from meat and many other things, but blaspheming God in every one of his acts.

The central fact of Hinduism however is cow-protection. Cow-protection to me is one of the most wonderful phenomena in human evolution. It takes the human being beyond his species. The cow to me means the entire sub-human world. Man through the cow is enjoined to realize his identity with all that lives. Why the cow was selected for apotheosis is obvious to me. The cow was in India the best companion. She was the giver of plenty. Not only did she give milk, but she also made agriculture possible. The cow is a poem of pity. One reads pity in the gentle animal. She is the mother to millions of Indian mankind. Protection of the cow means protection of the whole dumb creation of God. The ancient seer, whoever he was, began with the cow. The appeal of the lower order of creation is all the more forcible because it is speechless. Cow-protection is the gift of Hinduism to the world. And Hinduism will live so long as there are Hindus to protect the cow.

The way to protect is to die for her. It is a denial of Hinduism in and ahimsa to kill a human being to protect a cow. Hindus are enjoined to protect the cow by their *tapasya*¹, by self-purification, by self-sacrifice. The present-day cow-protection has degenerated into a perpetual feud with the Mussulmans, whereas cow-protection means conquering Mussulmans by our love. A Mussulman friend sent me some time ago a book detailing the inhumanities practised by us on the cow and her progeny. How we bleed her to take the last drop of milk from her, how we starve her to emaciation, how we ill-treat the calves, how we deprive them of their portion of milk, how cruelly we treat the oxen, how we castrate them, how we beat them, how we overload them. If they had speech, they would bear witness to our

¹ Penance austerity

crimes against them which would stagger the world. By every act of cruelty to our cattle, we disown God and Hinduism. I do not know that the condition of the cattle in any other part of the world is so bad as in unhappy India. We may not blame the Englishman for this. We may not plead poverty in our defence. Criminal negligence is the only cause of the miserable condition of our cattle. Our *pinjrapoles*¹, though they are an answer to our instinct of mercy, are a clumsy demonstration of its execution. Instead of being model dairy farms and great profitable national institutions, they are merely depots for receiving decrepit cattle.

Hindus will be judged not by their *tilaks*, not by the correct chanting of *mantras*, not by their pilgrimages, not by their most punctilious observance of caste rules but by their ability to protect the cow. Whilst professing the religion of cow-protection, we have enslaved the cow and her progeny, and have become slaves ourselves.

It will now be understood why I consider myself a *sanatani* Hindu. I yield to none in my regard for the cow. I have made the Khilafat cause my own, because I see that through its preservation full protection can be secured for the cow. I do not ask my Mussulman friends to save the cow in consideration of my service. My prayer ascends daily to God Almighty, that my service of a cause I hold to be just may appear so pleasing to Him, that He may change the hearts of the Mussulmans, and fill them with pity for their Hindu neighbours and make them save the animal the latter hold dear as life itself.

I can no more describe my feeling for Hinduism than for my own wife. She moves me as no other woman in the world can. Not that she has no faults. I dare say she has many more than I see myself. But the feeling of an indissoluble bond is there. Even so I feel for and about Hinduism with all its faults and limitations. Nothing elates me so much as the music of the *Gita* or the *Ramayana* by Tulsidas, the only two books in Hinduism I may be said to know. When I fancied I was taking my last breath, the *Gita* was my solace. I know the vice that is going on today in all the great Hindu shrines, but I love them in spite of their unspeakable failings. There is an interest which I take in them and which I take in no other. I am a reformer through and through. But my zeal never takes me to the rejection of any of the essential things of Hinduism. I have said I do not disbelieve in idol-worship. An idol does not excite any feeling of veneration in me. But I think that idol-worship is part of human nature. We hanker after symbolism.

¹ Shelters for crippled and aged cattle

Why should one be more composed in a church than elsewhere? Images are an aid to worship. No Hindu considers an image to be God. I do not consider idol-worship a sin.

It is clear from the foregoing, that Hinduism is not an exclusive religion. In it there is room for the worship of all the prophets of the world. It is not a missionary religion in the ordinary sense of the term. It has no doubt absorbed many tribes in its fold, but this absorption has been of an evolutionary imperceptible character. Hinduism tells everyone to worship God according to his own faith or dharma, and so it lives at peace with all the religions.

That being my conception of Hinduism, I have never been able to reconcile myself to untouchability. I have always regarded it as an excrescence. It is true that it has been handed down to us from generations, but so are many evil practices even to this day. I should be ashamed to think that dedication of girls to virtual prostitution was a part of Hinduism. Yet it is practised by Hindus in many parts of India. I consider it positive irreligion to sacrifice goats to Kali and do not consider it a part of Hinduism. Hinduism is a growth of ages. The very name, Hinduism, was given to the religion of the people of Hindustan by foreigners. There was no doubt at one time sacrifice of animals offered in the name of religion. But It is not religion, much less is it Hindu religion. And so also it seems to me, that when cow-protection became an article of faith with our ancestors, those who persisted in eating beef were excommunicated. The civil strife must have been fierce. Social boycott was applied not only to the recalcitrants, but their sins were visited upon their children also. The practice which had probably its origin in good intentions hardened into usage, and even verses crept in our sacred books giving the practice a permanence wholly undeserved and still less justified. Whether my theory is correct or not, untouchability is repugnant to reason and to the instinct of mercy, pity or love. A religion that establishes the worship of the cow cannot possibly countenance or warrant a cruel and inhuman boycott of human beings. And I should be content to be torn to pieces rather than disown the suppressed classes. Hindus will certainly never deserve freedom, nor get it if they allow their noble religion to be disgraced by the retention of the taint of untouchability. And as I love Hinduism dearer than life itself, the taint has become for me an intolerable burden. Let us not deny God by denying to a fifth of our race the right of association on an equal footing.

Young India, 6-10-1921

189. NOT GOOD ENOUGH

The report of the Repressive Laws Committee would have excited thrilling interest fifteen months ago. No one now cares whether these laws are repealed or retained. They have ceased to frighten us because we have ceased to fear arrests and imprisonments. We are now seeking not repeal of particular laws or regulations but a total repeal of the system that has made them possible. We know now that the Government could have done (under ordinary law) all the things (with slight variations) that they have hitherto done under the laws that are to be repealed. Under pressure of necessity the law-advisers of the Government have discovered a potency in Sections 144, 107 and 108 of the Criminal Procedure Code of which they were before unaware. The fact is, that even if the ordinary law were to be changed without a change of spirit the people of India will not benefit by it.

Though therefore the report has no interest for the people, it is a document of abiding interest to the student of the political situation in the country. The report could have been written in identical language ten years ago by the most reactionary of the civilians. The Committee concludes:

Their retention (of Prevention of Seditious Meetings Act and part 2 of the Indian Criminal Law Amendment Act 1918) is necessary in view of recent occurrences and possible developments which we cannot but regard with the greatest apprehension.

I have no doubt that every repressive measure that has ever been undertaken has been passed under the same “stern sense of duty” under which the laws mentioned are being retained.

I refuse to think that the officials who passed all the repressive laws took wanton delight in repression. Lord Curzon¹ certainly considered the partition of Bengal a matter of public necessity, and the opponents of the measure as enemies of progress. Sir Michael O’Dwyer honestly believed that the educated classes were idiots who did not know their own welfare, meddled in things they never knew, and were no benefactors of the masses in whose name they professed to speak. General Dyer undoubtedly thought, that unless he could

¹ Viceroy of India, 1899-1905.

teach us a lesson, every Englishwoman's life was in jeopardy. Only, in all these three cases we (including the majority of the members of the Committee) considered the officials to have perverted minds incapable of understanding the proud spirit of Bengal, of understanding the agony of educated India which knew by instinct the wants of the masses more truly than the officials in spite of their winter picnics amongst them, and of knowing that Indians would not be guilty of such diabolical unmanliness as General Dyer in his unsoldier-like manner thought us to be. We then used to think the officials were wrong in overriding the people's wishes even though the latter might be in error. We argued to our complete satisfaction, that we were the best judges of our own condition. But now a change has come over some of us. Some of us occupy the position analogous to that of the officials. These consider themselves to be "trustees" for the ignorant masses who are being misled by visionaries, if not also by unscrupulous agitators, and therefore in the teeth of their stubborn opposition (ignorant it may be), they carry on "reformed" legislatures, suppress a revolt in Malabar by sacrificing precious blood although we have offered men ready to go to Malabar unarmed and persuade the Moplahs to stop their mad career of pillage and plunder. They sincerely believe that by so doing they are serving the country.

Thus we are no better than before; probably, if not certainly, we are much worse off. For now there is not only a foreign bureaucracy to cope with, but we have also a national bureaucracy to contend against. Well has Lala Lajpat Rai remarked in his forceful analysis of the report, that what we want is not a change of masters but a change of the system, a change in the relations between the people and the state. The latter must represent the people or be ended. The reason for the strange phenomenon disclosed in the report is to be found in the fact, that the non-official members are irresponsible but they sincerely feel that they know our interests better than we. How can any tinkering therefore answer the aspirations of a people that are awakened and are prepared to suffer for what they understand to be their rights?

Young India, 6-10-1921

190. 30TH SEPTEMBER

The All-India Congress Committee after a full debate fixed 30th September as the final date for completing the boycott of foreign cloth. The choice lay between 30th September and 30th October. The argument advanced in favour of September was, that if boycott could be completed in October, it should be possible in September. It must be confessed that we have failed in fulfilling our resolution. Much work has certainly been done. Khadi has become much more popular and even fashionable. In many places the quality has also improved. There are certainly many more spinning-wheels working, many new looms have been made, and in the ordinary course the progress made would be consider satisfactory. But as a war measure tile record is altogether small.

After all the success of the movement depends upon the consumer. The importer has certainly helped. But the consumer has been satisfied with a partial boycott. He has given up his cap chiefly. Some have parted with their vests but very few with the their *dhotars*¹. The consumers have not helped manufacture to an appreciable degree. Manufacture of yarn has been confined to the poor. The consumer has not realized the necessity of a complete change. He has not visualized the new life we must lead under swaraj. It is not by temporizing we shall succeed. A complete transformation is a necessity of the case.

At the same time I saw in Bengal as well as Madras that the desire was there. Most people were hopeful, and said that with a little more time they would be able to organize manufacture without difficulty. In the matter of swadeshi the women presented greater difficulty. They could not reconcile themselves to the change so readily as men. But it is the overcoming of these difficulties that would give us courage, hope, stamina and above all knowledge of the true condition of India. Swadeshi means a real industrial revival and consequent of grinding and growing pauperism in the land. And when we have found ourselves able to become self-contained without state aid regarding our cloth supply and have solved what had appeared to be an insoluble problem for the poverty of India, we shall have confidence in our ability to manage our own affairs.

¹ Dhoti

Today Sir William Vincent¹ is able to make us dance to his tune. He makes the self-styled representatives of the people believe, that the British power alone can protect the interests of the minorities; he is able to convince them that all those long years India has proved unable to find officers and men who could defend her borders against invaders.

But all this will be changed. Sir William himself will play a different tune, when he finds that without the British power and indeed in spite of it, we are able to dispense with foreign aid for the supply of our vital needs.

Swadeshi is our Khilafat, it is our cow of plenty. When we have protected swadeshi, we shall find that we have the power to protect the Khilafat, and that we have the ability to manage our own affairs including the defence of our borders.

If thirty crores of people *will*, if the crore members of the Congress *will*, I am sure that we can boycott foreign cloth and manufacture enough for our wants during this month. Three conditions are necessary: we must discard all foreign cloth, do with the least possible cloth during the transition stage, and get all the khadi we need woven by the village weaver out of yarn spun by ourselves or our neighbours.

Young India, 6-10-1921

191. PITFALLS IN SWADESHI

The letter given above² has been written by a merchant friend. He has filled his coffers with a roaring trade in foreign cloth, but he has now come to understand where the good of the country lies and to appreciate the importance of the spinning-wheel, that is of khadi. We should give serious thought to all the dangers he mentions.

We try needlessly to encourage the use of mill cloth, and it is also a mistake to go running to buy it. Indian mill cloth will always be in demand. If, by our actions, we tempt the mill-owners, the quality of cloth is bound to deteriorate and the traders in such cloth, who are concerned only with their profits, will be tempted to put up the prices. We cannot expect the dealers to conduct their business

¹ Member, Governor-General's Executive Council

² Not given here. The letter drew attention to the danger posed to the swadeshi movement by people's growing interest in mill cloth in preference to khadi.

for the good of the country till the people themselves have that good at heart. Which is easier of the two, that I should put up with the discomfort of wearing khadi,—if discomfort it is—and, if its price is high, pay that price; or that the mill-owners should forgo their profits of crores of rupees ? It is foolish to expect any big sacrifices from the mill-owners. They will be the last, not the first, to wake up, and we should conduct our struggle on that assumption. To blame them on this ground is to blame human nature. In their place we would certainly behave in much the same way. Those of us, therefore, who have accepted swadeshi as a religious duty should not use mill-made cloth.

Naturally, therefore, hand-spun and hand-woven khadi is all that is left to us. In the name itself, “khadi”, there is no magic. The magic lies in its virtues. In appearance, too, it is not very attractive. We would have readily taken to hand-spun and hand-woven cloth if, instead of looking like khadi, it had the softness and the finish of muslin. But let it be inscribed in letters of gold that it is only through universal use of hand-spun and hand-woven cloth that the country’s poverty can be abolished and that, only if this is done, will swaraj be possible. In short, khadi imported from Japan or produced in our mills is not khadi but something which merely looks like it, and we must keep away from it.

A man from Nadiad should not have to go to Ahmedabad or Bombay for real khadi. He should himself produce it in Nadiad, for the idea is to save that much money for the people of Nadiad. Or, he may use khadi woven in his own district from yarn also spun in the district. This simply cannot be expensive. A home-made loaf is always cheaper than that sold in the market. It works out cheaper in the long run that I should give two annas to a neighbouring weaver than one pice to Manchester, for something from these two annas will return to me whereas, by starving him to feed a weaver in Manchester or Bombay, I shall make my neighbour a burden on myself. I shall have to open an alms-house for his benefit. In this country, we have been deluding ourselves with the notion that in opening such charitable homes we do a virtuous deed. We do not see, rather we do not want to see, that behind the circumstances which necessitate the starting of such home lies a moral wrong. How would we relish it if someone were to deprive us of our property and then start a charity home for us? Or, if through long practice we become used to begging, what

kind of an impression about us will a stranger carry away? Yet, by giving up our age-old crafts of spinning and weaving, we have actually become beggars and, if we do not take heed, will become worse still. Finally, according to the principle that he who eats without having performed a sacrifice is a thief, we shall have proved ourselves thieves.

The false pride of Bengalis does not disturb me. Even if Gujarat alone carries out the pledge of swadeshi, Bengal will certainly follow suit. It certainly does not seem easy to wean the people in Madras from their love of attractive clothes but, at such a moment of spiritual awakening, we should not be surprised to see those who seemed to be in the forefront falling behind while those who seemed to be lagging behind forge ahead. Efforts are being made in Bengal too.

Not knowing the truth about picketing in Bengal, the correspondent has been unfair to the Bengalis. Those who picketed in front of the Marwari shops were Marwaris and volunteers of the Khilafat Committee. The Bengalis had no hand whatever in the matter. The picketing was started with the purest motive and was throughout carried on in a disciplined manner. A Marwari gentleman like Sheth Jamnalalji took a leading part in it.

But it is about the women that I am most worried, We have so far kept them totally ignorant about such vital issues and it is only recently that they have started taking interest in them. Until their love of foreign cloth is exorcised from them, the cause of swadeshi will not prosper. Fortunately, there has been, within a short time, so great an awakening in their midst that I observe profound changes coming over them. It is most necessary, however, that men atone to the full for their indifference in the past. Once foreign cloth has disappeared completely from their midst, the women will not take long to catch up. But even men have not ceased to care for outward show. They have not yet completely overcome their fondness for fine cloth. Dhotis, for example, they must always have mill-made, and the heaviness of khadi seems an inconvenience. How can we expect anything from women when men themselves have not completely turned away from such things? There are, thus, many obstacles in our path of swadeshi. When we have removed them all, we are sure to see the sun of swaraj rising on the horizon.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 6-10-1921

192. MY NOTES

EAST AFRICA

We read reports in our newspapers about the plight of Indians in East Africa and friends over there also keep me informed about things.¹ But I rarely refer to the matter in *Navajivan* or *Young India*. I hope this will not be taken to imply that I am not aware of their plight or that there is a falling off in my sympathy for them. I am in the position of a person who, attacked with swords from all sides, ignores pinpricks. The pathetic condition of India's economic, political and religious life pains me so deeply that by comparison all other misfortunes seem of no account to me. It is also clear to me that the solution of East Africa's problem will have to wait till India's problem is solved. When the well is full, water is bound to flow into the trough; in the same way, once India's ills are cured those of the Indians in East Africa are bound to be. If we were not busy applying effective remedies for India's malady, all of us would have instantly combined to take up the East Africa problem.

This is not to suggest that Indians in East Africa should not make any efforts on their own. That they must do. All that I mean is that they will get, and have been getting, real help from India not on their specific account but as part of the struggle to cure India's ills. India's strength, they realize, has grown so much that it is a constant help to them. Their own strength, too, has increased.

The whites in East Africa have crossed the bounds of decency and seem determined to disregard all canons of English law. This is uncivil disobedience of law. When disobedience of law is for selfish ends, it is not civil disobedience. The whites sought General Smuts' help in their attempt, but have received none from that quarter. I am confident that Indians in East Africa will come to no harm, provided they display courage, keep within the bounds of civility and propriety and remain truthful. An untruthful man is always a coward. The intentions of the British in East Africa are evil and, therefore, if the Indians scrupulously keep on the path of truth, the insolence of wickedness in the British will remain curbed. Keeping on the path of

¹ The reference is to the disputes that had arisen between European and Indian colonists concerning proposals for racial segregation in residential and commercial areas.

truth means that Indians should see that their case is strong, that it is not overstated and should overcome their own failings. One charge which as always levelled against us, and which is justified, is that we do not know what is cleanliness, that even when we are reasonably well off, our homes are dirty, that we make things dirty everywhere and huddle together. To the extent that there is truth in this, we should reform ourselves.

The other charge is that we cheat the Negroes. This charge is baseless. In fact, those who make it are themselves greater cheats, out we should of course change our ways in so far as it is true.

The third charge, which is not brought but which we know can be levelled, is that we are incapable of working unitedly. It is true we are free from racial pride, but we hardly think of the community's good in our preoccupation with private and selfish ends. When we display this failing in foreign countries, despite the fact that we are a small number there, it stands out conspicuously and shows us in the most unfavourable light.

If the Indians in East Africa remain free from these failings, or get rid of them, and keep up their courage, they will come to no harm.

RISHIKESH

Rishikesh is an important place of pilgrimage on the way from Hardwar to Gangotri. From here the pilgrims begin their slow climb of the mountain range. Nature has lavished all her beauty on the place. The hills, the dancing, impetuous Ganga and her clear waters, all compel admiration for the foresight of the *rishis*, for their aesthetic sense and their simplicity. At the time of the Kumbh fair, however, I saw what the place had been reduced to by their descendants. Unscrupulous sadhus, with little else but the name of sadhu about them, were busy robbing the innocent pilgrims. The sight of physically unclean pilgrims fouling this holy place all over brought tears to my eyes. The *rishis* of old used to go miles out into lonely jungle to answer such calls. But Rishikesh today has a sizable population. That they should shamelessly foul the banks of the Ganga and then believe that they have been "out in the jungle" is the utmost limit of lethargy, ignorance and uncleanness. I had seen all this myself five years ago, but my heart cries out and my head hangs in shame on reading the terrible account sent by a correspondent after an experience of three months in the place. There is no limit to the wickedness which fills this holy place.

The person who has sent this account has given all particulars of names and addresses, and there is no suggestion from him that the account should not be published. But I do not have the courage to publish it with all these particulars. Some portions of the account are unprintable. The writer gives a vivid picture of the licentiousness of the sadhus their love of pomp and luxury and their debauchery. There is also a painful description of the diseases they are prone to. We are told how poor pilgrims are robbed and how, in innumerable cases, the sadhu's garb is used to gratify selfish desires, why it is that Swargashram gives just the contrary impression. Who can clean up all this moral filth? The letter suggests that Shankaracharya and I should do something to remedy this state of affairs, but, for the present at any rate, I do not think it is within my power to attempt any such cleansing. The most I can do is to publish a summary of the letter. If any persons living there are moved by this narrative to do something, let them make the attempt. The moral corruption to be found in the holy places of the Hindus is so dreadful that no improvement is possible unless there is a fundamental change of attitude in a majority of them. The transformation of these places from dens of vice into abodes of virtue depends on the degree to which there is a change of heart among the Hindus during this holy struggle. Cleaning up these places will really mean regeneration of Hinduism. This will require the highest *tapascharya* and effective local work.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 6-10-1921

193. LETTER TO GANGADHARRAO DESHPANDE¹

[Before *October 8, 1921*]

DEAR GANGADHARRAO²,

I hear that it is your turn now to have the good fortune of living in the jail palace. I envy your luck. You and others who go to jail add to the burden of those who remain outside. But we will surrender all our worries to God. I am sure you will insist on having a spinning-wheel while in jail. Rest assured we shall not allow you to enjoy the

¹ This letter was read out at a public meeting at Hubli on October 15 by Rangarao Ramachandra Diwakar who was acquitted on October 8. *Vide* also "Speech at Public Meeting, Bombay", 17-11-1921.

² A political worker of Karnatak; popularly known as the "lion of Karnatak"

pleasure of living in jail beyond the end of this year.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-10-1921

194. FOREWORD TO "TO AWAKING INDIA"

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

October 8, 1921

In the following pages Mr. Stokes has not only given his argument in support of burning foreign cloth, but he has also given the economics of swadeshi in a nutshell. If we will but remember that destruction is as useful and necessary as construction for any organic growth we should have no difficulty in understanding the necessity of burning foreign clothing for the quick programme set before the country. But Mr. Stokes' effort must prove helpful at a time when there is a fierce attack being made against burning.

To me this opposition shows the strength of attachment we have cultivated for foreign fineries and an inadequate appreciation of the misery that the use of foreign cloth has brought to millions of the homes of India. But I must not enter into argument; I write this merely to commend Mr. Stokes' able essays to the attention of the reader.

M. K. GANDHI

To Awakening India

195. SPEECH AT FUNCTION OF WORKERS' SCHOOLS, AHMEDABAD¹

October 8, 1921

I have come to you after a long time. It is now two and a half months since I met you last. Many things have happened during the interval and neither you nor I know what things are yet in store. We must live as God may ordain.

¹ At the Sevashram of Anasuya Sarabhai; Lala Lajapat Rai and C. Rajagopalachari were present.

Before explaining to you what is happening in the country today, I shall first deal with your own problems. I hear that there are some differences between the workers and the mill-owners. The arbitrators are to meet shortly to consider these matters. The award of the arbitrators should be patiently awaited. In the past the workers had on one occasion lost their patience, but ultimately they heeded their advisers and postponed the strike.

The mill-owners have not been able to start grain shops as they had promised to do. I shall exert whatever influence I have to get this done. We should not become impatient. Strikes should not be resorted to in a hurry. Those who demand justice should learn to wait. We have accepted the method of arbitration. We should be content with what is awarded by the arbitrator. It is possible that those workers who are not members of the Union may get benefits which they would not have got otherwise.

Sometimes we get whatever we demand; but we should not put forward unreasonable demands. If we do, we shall be open to the same charge which is levelled against the mill-owners. They are accused of taking unfair advantage of people's hardships. What else can be the meaning of the rise in prices? We should not follow their example. Our demands should be reasonable. Generally the workers' demands are so.

The relationship between workers and employers should be one of partnership. It is fitting that this relationship should be like that between father and son. As the son benefits from the wisdom and experience of the father, so should the workers from those of the employers. I am working to create conditions in which employers will not exploit workers and workers will not cheat employers.

I now come to the present situation. The relationship between a government and its citizens should also be like that between father and son. But the Government wants to exploit India as much as it can. We are not likely to get anything from it. If at all we get anything it will be something similar to what they have done in whisking away the Ali Brothers. This is like the relationship between a master and his slave. We have to secure their release not by fawning upon the Government or petitioning it, but by winning swaraj and then exercising our power under swaraj. We have to break these shackles by means of khadi, as was described in the song sung by the student here. The thousands of innocent men and women who will go to jail hereafter will have to

secure their release in the same manner. This will not be a difficult task if we embrace swadeshi. But we are not yet ready to give up foreign cloth. For workers, khadi is the only thing. Workers are not so poor as not to afford khadi. They should wear only khadi, which is a dress of culture. They can have their own yarn, their own spinning-wheel and loom and they should wear khadi woven with their own hands. Till this becomes possible it is better that they wear, if necessary, no more than a loin-cloth as I do.

I insist that even khadi for your use you should not buy. You should wear only hand-made khadi woven by yourselves. After you have done this, you may ask me why the Ali Brothers have not been released, why we have not got swaraj and why justice has not been secured on the Khilafat issue. I shall be ready to answer all these questions from you.

It is rumoured that the Government will arrest me. It has a right to do so. I have used language similar to the Ali Brothers'. We should not fear the Government; we may fear God alone. According to my dharma, as I understand it, violence is a sin and, as long as the compact between Hindus and Muslims remains, violence should be taboo even for the latter. If they arrest me, you should not start setting fire to buildings, nor should you get angry or use abusive language. If today you are not enthusiastic about swadeshi, see that, after my arrest, you pursue it more vigorously and ply the spinning-wheel day and night. If the Hindus harbour any unworthy thoughts about the Muslims, they should banish such thoughts and so should the Muslims with regard to the Hindus. No workers should take liquor, commit theft or treat the *Dhed* or the *Bhangi* as untouchable. This is what I expect from you.

I do not want to go on touring. I have no new ideas or arguments. I now wish to see only solid work.

I shall not be able to attend such gatherings henceforth. It is difficult for me to spare even as much time as I have done on this occasion. I should, therefore, be spared such duties. Please give up adoring me and get busy with the work which I have called upon you to take up. If you do that, swaraj is as good as in our hands.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-10-1921

196. TELEGRAM TO GOPABANDHU DAS¹

[After October 8, 1921]

ONLY FILE BOLD TRUE STATEMENT. NEVER MIND
CONSEQUENCE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7636

197. IF I AM ARRESTED

Rumours are afloat that I may be arrested. Everyone says that he has reliable news. In Madras a gentleman even sent a telegram saying that I had been arrested.

It would not be surprising if the Government did arrest me. The Government has the right to do so. I have committed the very same crime for which the Ali Brothers and their companions have been arrested. It would not be wrong to say that I am the real culprit behind their crime. What is the sense in leaving the root alone and chopping off the branches? I was the person to assert that one could openly tell even soldiers that they were committing a sin in serving this Government. Again it was I who called for the destruction of the present system. If the Ali Brothers can be arrested for these two crimes, why not I?

Why should anyone be angry if I am arrested? How else would the Government know whether my views are shared by large sections of the people or only by a handful of them? Only that man may be said to hold certain views who is prepared to suffer for them. Why should the Government not test whether I really hold the views which I claim to do?

This is how non-co-operation works. Either the Government mends itself or arrests non-co-operators, fines them or sends them to the gallows.

If people are true non-co-operators, if they are brave and wise, they will not be cowed down or yield to anger or resort to violence or

¹ In reply to his letter dated October 8 in which, as editor of the *Samaj*, an Oriya weekly, the addressee had asked for the advice of Gandhiji whether he should defend or not in a complaint of alleged defamation of police constables by his journal

strikes in the event of my or any other non-co-operator's arrest. They should rejoice at the arrests as if nothing unexpected had happened or, rather, that only the expected had happened. They should be happy to think that we would now soon arrive at the destination.

Whoever loses his self-control takes to violence or goes on a strike, will only disgrace me and cause me pain, will be a traitor to the motherland. If such a man claims to be a non-co-operator, he would be violating his own pledge.

The way in which the country remained peaceful on the arrest of the Ali Brothers was, in my view, simply grand. I see our victory in that. I hope for a similar or even a better demonstration of peace on my arrest. We have to win, and so live by dying and not by killing.

I wish and hope that my arrest will have only one result, namely, that men and women will then understand what even now I find it difficult to explain to them, discard all sluggishness and hesitation about it and act upon it and so win swaraj. If we still have any weakness for foreign cloth left in us, I wish that it should disappear. At present people consign to the fire only a small part of their stock of foreign cloth; on my arrest they should immediately make a bonfire of all foreign cloth in their homes, no matter how large the stock. Really speaking, this should have been done on the arrest of the Ali Brothers. Following their arrest swadeshi activity has considerably increased among people, but not enough.

I hope that, on my arrest, every man, woman and child who has not yet started plying the spinning-wheel will immediately do so. I do hope that they will learn to have regard for *Antyajas*, will mix with them and share their sufferings.

I also hope that the *Antyajas* will reform themselves, desist from drinking and give up other addictions, abandon meat-eating, observe cleanliness and earn an honest living by spinning and weaving.

Everyone should remain peaceful and see that others also do so.

Hindus should be ready to lay down their lives for the sake of Muslims and Muslims for Hindus. They should honour one another's religion; accordingly, Hindus should think that the defence of the Khilafat is their religious duty, so much so that, if necessary, they should be ready for delay in swaraj for its sake. Muslims can have no interest in swaraj if the Khilafat issue is not settled.

Nobody should think that it would be all darkness after Gandhi.

It is not right to think in that way; on the contrary, it is a sign of weakness. If we are fit for swaraj no leader should be considered indispensable. Everybody should have the capacity to understand and protect the interests of the motherland.

It is, however, necessary to appoint someone to be the leader. Hence we should immediately proceed to appoint as leader any person whose views, methods and character appeal to large numbers and, though we may occasionally quarrel and argue with him, one should finally display perfect discipline and obey him. Once we have known the means of winning swaraj and understood how we may serve the cause of the Khilafat, there will be nothing about which we do not know what to do. There are no more things for us to learn. All that is necessary is to act; India will reap as she sows.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-10-1921

198. GUJARAT'S TEST

I have returned to Gujarat to know what truth there is in the good reports I heard about it while I was touring. It was the first to accept non-co-operation. Even at that time I had said that complete non-co-operation by Gujarat alone would of course win swaraj for it, but that it would also do so for the rest of the country. I still hold that view. Failure to win swaraj by the end of this year will be a matter of shame to me no doubt, but it will be so to the whole country as well and especially to Gujarat. I shall certainly disclaim responsibility by saying that the conditions I had laid down were not fulfilled and that, therefore, it was none of my fault. But what excuse will Gujarat be able to give? It can only say: "We could not keep the pledge we took, and serve us right too." It is, therefore, the duty of every Gujarati to see that such a humiliating confession does not become necessary.

I heard Gujarat being praised, but I find Gujaratis have not resigned Government jobs. Only a few of the lawyers have given up practice. The students have done reasonably well, but only relatively.

What, then, is the work for which Gujarat is being given credit ?

It is in regard to swadeshi. What more can we say about Gujarat than that it has done reasonably well in this field too? Swadeshi is the one thing in which we really believe. Until every province and every district spins and weaves the cloth it requires and boycotts foreign

cloth, swaraj will remain an impossibility. Hence the credit which is being given to Gujarat is justified only if it is with regard to swadeshi.

The other matter is the movement concerning untouchables. I have referred to it in my notes. We can undoubtedly claim that in Gujarat untouchables can freely attend public meetings. But can we be satisfied with that? We cannot even think of securing a kind of swaraj from which they will be excluded. To think of it would mean that we wanted to shake off our own slavery to others while remaining slave-owners ourselves. Will God ever tolerate that? Is this ever possible, either? Are the slaves themselves likely to permit it? Again, can we be sure that our owners too will not take care to win over our slaves to their side and have an alliance with them against us? We, Gujaratis, therefore, should carefully consider whether we have really prepared ourselves for swaraj, whether we have scored full marks.

I know we have done very good work for the Tilak Swaraj Fund. Our meetings are well organized. We have also achieved considerable success in propaganda against drink. We see that khadi is becoming quite popular in Gujarat. Ordinarily all this would be considered satisfactory as signs of a sleeping Gujarat waking up. A person who has put forth great strength in swimming but has not strength enough for the final dash to the shore will be drowned and it will certainly be said that he put forth too little strength. We have to look at the matter in this light. Have we put forth enough strength to win swaraj? I do not say we have, nor do I say we have not, for we have still two and a half months left and we can do a great deal in that time. It does not matter that our first deadline, which was September, has passed, for that only reflected my optimism. We should remember, however, that the same programme was accepted by the Congress in December with full knowledge of its implications. We did so well between September and December [in 1920] that the delegates felt confident and adopted the one-year time limit. In effect, therefore, the nation's pledge commenced from December and, considering what Gujarat has done so far, we need not be surprised if it is able to achieve its goal in the two and a half months which still remain. It will be a sad thing if it does not.

I am told that people in Gujarat are ready for imprisonment, that there are some for whom even hanging holds no terror and that, in any case Gujarat will preserve peace till the very end. This remains to be seen, however. Truly speaking, we have had no occasion to go to

jail in the last twelve years. But that is no matter for regret, for we do not wish to seek imprisonment by violating moral values. For the present, it is enough that we are mentally prepared.

But let us be clear as to what is meant by being ready for imprisonment. The day on which we are imprisoned without being guilty, that day we should regard as auspicious. Our relatives, too, should not be unhappy or shed tears at our imprisonment and we should be able to look upon the hardships of jail-life as so many comforts.

Being prepared for imprisonment also means that we should not be disturbed if our property is confiscated and auctioned. I have even met “brave” men who told me that they were ready to go to jail but not to have their property attached and that, if it was, they would not be able to bear the loss. This state of mind does not suggest readiness for imprisonment. Under an unjust rule, owning property is beyond the reach of most. Only a few can own it and these latter are partners in injustice, or become so at the crucial moment, that is, when injustice shows itself in its true colours. Being ready for jail, therefore, implies being unconcerned at loss of property.

The truth is that we use the word “jail” as a synonym for suffering. Readiness for jail means nothing less than the refusal to submit to the Government, whatever the penalty. This includes readiness to be hanged, though ordinarily we do not understand imprisonment to include hanging. It remains to be seen how many are ready to fight and uphold the honour of the country and respect for dharma even at the risk of being hanged.

The sacrifice we wish to make is a pure one. The least our self-purification should include is

1. acceptance of swadeshi,
2. giving up the practice of untouchability,
3. unreserved acceptance of truth and non-violence, and
4. Hindu-Muslim friendship.

I should like every Congress Committee and the Khilafat Committee to draw up their accounts on this basis.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-10-1921

199. MY NOTES

END OF THE TOUR

Hardly anyone could have toured India as I have done in the last 13 months. The tour was as good as a *pradakshina*¹ of the country. It was in the nature of a pilgrimage to me. I covered the country from Karachi in the west to Dibrugarh in the east and from Rawalpindi in the north to Tuticorin in the south. I have said what I wished to say and there is nothing new for me to say. I have already explained the conditions for securing justice on the Khilafat and the Punjab issues and winning swaraj. The responsibility now rests entirely with the people. They can follow swadeshi and win swaraj. Without swadeshi, there can be no swaraj.

I should not now be troubled with invitations to visit places, for it is necessary that for the three months that remain I should retire to one place, think, write and answer people's doubts.

Much can be done by the people in three months. If all took a vow of silence and gave themselves wholly to solid work, our goal would definitely be achieved. Work alone, not words, will win swaraj.

SILENCE IS WORK

Who can hope to rival the perfect silence of God, and His work, too? He needs no time even so much as to stretch Himself, or to sleep. When we are asleep He is awake. He does not interrupt His work even to find time for eating. Can we say, either, that He sits down to relax? Who can ever fathom His way? He has no rest, nor does He want any, such is His misfortune. And with all this, He never makes mistakes. This believer in swaraj has voluntarily forsworn the ability to make mistakes. If we but learnt something from Him, be it ever so little, swaraj would be ours in no time. Always silent, He is most active. Why do we not learn from Him that the best strength lies in silence? Let us leave the Government to its doings and its babbling and go on doing our duty—the duty of civil obedience and disobedience of law.

MEANING OF SILENCE

This divine silence is no evidence of inertness, of the darkness of ignorance or of weakness. It signifies, rather, serenity, illumination of

¹ Circumambulation of an object or person regarded as holy

knowledge and dauntless courage. He who treats his body as mere stone and acts accordingly may sit motionless at one place and yet move the whole world. Will anyone want to hit a stone? You may crush it to powder, but it will never apologize, nor will it act and build a house for you. You will merely spend yourselves hitting at it. The more you hit it, the more obstinately it will refuse to work for you and build. Who can ever vanquish one whose body has been toughened in this way? In man, God and the stone meet. Man is but a stone endowed with consciousness, and so it is that the Shastras tell us that he alone is truly victorious who has subjugated his body. Silence, therefore, means subjugation of the body. If we have become slaves of the Government, it is because we have become slaves of our bodies, of physical comforts. We can throw off slavery if we can subjugate our bodies. We become free only to the extent that we shed our fond attachment to our bodies.

How can the Government suppress us ? What could it do if we refused to avail ourselves of its benefits? If we can reject the riches it offers, the peace it has established and the comfort it has made possible, we can shake off our slavery this very day.

SILENCE IN PRACTICE

Not everyone, however, can observe complete silence, can train his body to have the toughness of stone. That is why we live in communities and, adding up small measures of silence, rest content with a little happiness. The way we have found for practising such modest subjugation of the body is that of swadeshi. There is no reason why everyone, whether young or old, cannot make even this small sacrifice, for a little spinning and weaving cannot be burdensome to anyone. The spinning-wheel is the symbol of Hindu-Muslim unity, the thing which brings home to us the fact of our being one, the people in Madras, the Kannadigas, the Bengalis, the Gujaratis, the Maharashtrians, the Punjabis, the Sindhis, the Marwaris and the rest. Anyone who, knowing this, refuses to ply the spinning-wheel and yet talks of swaraj is a beggar begging for things to which he has no right. There can be no swaraj for beggars. Hence, those who aspire after it should, silently and ever repeating inwardly God's name in thoughtful devotion, spin golden yarn as an expression of their love of the country. Only when we see every Indian himself weaving yarn produced in his home or getting it woven by his neighbour and wearing exclusively cloth so, made even as he eats only what is

cooked at home, then shall we have swaraj, and not before.

Is there anyone who doubts that what I am suggesting is within the capacity even of a child? Nothing could be easier. We have needlessly made out the thing to be difficult and, having done so, feel helpless, suffer the ravages of famines, invite misery upon ourselves through our notions of untouchability and feel, that we, Hindus and Muslims, are mutual enemies.

A DOCTOR'S EXPERIENCE

There is a doctor in Hansot. He and his wife spin for not less than three hours daily. He learnt to spin only four months ago. After two months' practice, he was turning out yarn of 30 counts. In that period he had produced more than enough yarn for two long shirts. He now wears shirts made from this yarn. With great love, he made a present of the extra piece to me at Guntakal. I carry it with me and show it proudly everywhere. The doctor's wife spins yarn of even finer count. If he keeps up his effort, the doctor should be able to produce annually 36 yards of fine khadi. No man surely needs so much in a year.

HOARDING OF COTTON

I should like to draw the reader's attention to the warning about cotton given by my friend, Laxmidas Purushottam. The prices of cotton, he says, have gone up and are still going up. Some say the increase in prices is the result of speculation in cotton. According to a close friend, the increase is due to a poor harvest of cotton in the U.S.A. The truth lies in the two explanations taken together. The bullish trend is due to both poor harvest in the U.S.A. and speculation. I had [let us suppose] 50 maunds of cotton till yesterday and, selling it at Rs. 22 a maund, I was making a profit of Rs. 4. Having come to know today about the poor harvest in the U.S.A., I raised the price from Rs. 22 to Rs. 38. How am I entitled to the additional Rs. 16? The whole world is being made to suffer through this perverse economics, a practice unworthy of a *Vanik*¹. The science which tells us that America's need is our opportunity is a science not for men but for monsters. Swaraj is nothing but shaking ourselves free from the hold of this idea. Laxmidas has suggested how to do this in one field. Although prices have risen, everyone should at this time buy and store some cotton, no matter even if he or she does not know

¹ Member of the trading community

spinning. Every farmer, moreover, should be warned that under no circumstances should he sell his whole crop of cotton. He may sell the surplus if the crop exceeds his needs. He will be a short-sighted farmer who, tempted by the prospect of immediate gain, sells his entire crop. Every farmer should in fact store his requirements of grain and cotton, preferably for the whole year so that he can face one bad harvest at any rate.

I am not saying anything new. Our ancestors, who, far from being barbarians, were a civilized and intelligent people used to do exactly this 100 or 150 years ago. Many used to act in this way even as late as 30 years ago and counted themselves happy. We of today, short-sighted that we are, sell our cotton at a high price, waste our free time doing nothing and then buy cloth at higher prices and flatter ourselves as being civilized! I would call our “uncivilized” ancestors more sensible and far-sighted. I certainly wish that we stopped living according to our notions of how *Patidars*¹ should live and become real farmers.

THE CEDED DISTRICTS

Some of his best territory which the Nizam handed over to the British Government and which is a part of the Telugu or Andhra region is known as the “Ceded Districts”. My visit to that area was the last lap of my tour of the country. For three days and nights there, I practically did nothing but address public meetings. In these three days we covered Kalikiri, Chittoor, Tirupati, Renigunta, Razampet, Cuddapah, Tadpatri, Guntakal, Kurnool and Bellary. Most of these places are under partial or complete famine. The population of the Districts is some 28 lakhs. Starvation through famine has become so acute that some prefer to drown themselves with all members of their families. It is not that there is no grain in the market, but people do not have the money to buy it with nor do they have work which would earn them the money. Only a few can go and do the work, offered by the Government, of repairing public roads, which means carrying and breaking stones. In this work, women earn barely five pice and the men nine daily. Again, the wage may be three annas, but for every anna there is the inescapable commission of one pice to be made over to the supervisor. Thirty years ago the people of this District used to spin and weave, and even today the women have not lost the skill. In

¹ Community of farmers

Tadpatri, I saw *Antyaja* women spinning with great facility in the Congress House. They make three annas for an eight-hour day, and there is no commission to be paid. No scoundrel can cast his evil eyes on them, and they make more than the men who work at breaking stones. Thousands of men and women in the Ceded Districts blessed me for reviving the sacred work of spinning. If the respective Congress Committees of the different areas do good work, there will be no famine in the Ceded Districts next year. Prices may remain high but, through spinning and weaving, people will be able to make enough with which to buy food.

MALICIOUS GOVERNMENT

A close friend points out that those who inveigh against non-co-operation seem to forget that all these years the Government has non-co-operated with our culture, our language and our race. We would be the biggest fools if we do not resort to non-co-operation against this system. A fresh example of the Government's non-co-operation even at the present day, and an example which reveals its meanness, is seen in its dealings with Mr. Godrej. This large-hearted gentleman has donated money to the Tilak Swaraj Fund earmarking the contribution for the uplift of the untouchables and for propaganda against drink. This provoked a secret circular from the Government to the effect that no Godrej safe should be ordered for any of its departments, which used to go in for numbers of them in the past. Because Mr. Godrej contributed to the Tilak Swaraj Fund, the just Government has boycotted his safes. How should the people deal with such a malicious and vindictive Government, if not by resorting to non-co-operation with it?

DIWALI

Diwali is the day on which we celebrate Rama's victory, and Rama's victory is the victory of dharma. Diwali can, therefore, be properly celebrated only by one who follows dharma. Self-respecting and self-reliant people alone can celebrate it. Till we have won swaraj, I deem it our dharma to abstain, during Diwali days, from merry-making and feasting. I fail to understand how, at a time when hundreds of innocent men are in jails for the sake of their dharma and their country, we can indulge in any pleasures at all. Can anyone whose brother gets nothing better in jail than thick cakes of *bajra* to eat feast on *shrikhand* outside? Is anyone whose brothers and sisters

are starving without food likely to think of dances and parties? We generally buy “dazzling” foreign cloth for Diwali. I suggest that nobody should buy a single piece of cloth which he does not need and, if one must, one should buy hand-spun khadi, though even this sparingly.

ALI BROTHERS’ COMPANION

Even in jail the Ali Brothers think of the spinning-wheel. A telegram from them says that they and their companions in jail have asked for some spinning-wheels to be supplied to them, so that they could spend their free time in spinning! If all of us were as conscientious as this, we should certainly get swaraj very soon. It remains to be seen how the Government treats this request.

ABOUT “ANTYAJAS”

We should now ask ourselves what we have been doing for the *Antyajas* in Gujarat. Is every Congress Committee doing something in the matter? The Committee in Tadpatri has provided work to *Antyaja* women on its own premises. People are free to mix with them, and they with people. We can, in this and many other ways, demonstrate that *Antyaja* men and women are our own brothers and sisters. Only, we need to be serious about the matter. How many wells have we dug for them? How many new schools have been opened for them? How do we ourselves treat them at home? Do we give them left-overs to eat? This last question should particularly engage the attention of women. Removal of untouchability does not mean merely that we no longer take a bath on coming into contact with an *Antyaja*, believing ourselves polluted by such contact. We should, rather, think over the meaning of this practice and rid ourselves completely of the terrible contempt which lies behind it. Till we have done this untouchability will persist. Its disappearance is bound to be felt by every *Antyaja* man and woman.

OUTRAGE IN NAME OF RELIGION

Tomorrow is the last day of *Navaratri*¹. Last year the officiating priest in the temple of Bhadrakali was prevented by the *mahajans*² from sacrificing a goat to the Goddess. An understanding was arrived

¹ The first nine days of the bright half of *Asvina*, which generally fall in October

² Associations of traders

at under which the latter agreed to pay him Rs. 600 every year, and the priest was to perform other ceremonies but refrain from sacrificing a goat.

This year the priest says that he is not bound by the previous year's agreement. If he says this, he is guilty of one more sin, that of breaking one's pledged word.

I understand that a stay order forbidding the priest from sacrificing a goat is likely to be issued. We should not? however, be concerned at all whether such an order is issued or not.

Those who regarded themselves as Hindus can never be a party to such a sacrifice. I am firmly of the view that it is the negation of dharma to sacrifice any animal in the name of religion. The place in which such sacrifices are made can be no temple, and a Hindu can never think of visiting it. Mother Kali demands no animal sacrifices. If anything, she wants us to sacrifice ourselves. It is only by slaying our Sins, our evil, that we can make ourselves fit to stand before her. To those Hindus who desire to offer a sacrifice on the eighth day, I suggest that they should, dressed in hand-spun khadi, take a pledge to follow truth, practise non-violence and strive to subjugate the body. Anyone who does so will certainly be offering the purest sacrifice and such a person will also have become fit for swaraj. I, therefore, hope that, should the priest be obstinate and stick to his intention to kill a goat, no Hindu will visit the temple and be a party to the sin of offering the sacrifice and thus blaspheme against God.

Saturday, Aso Sud 7 [October 8, 1921]

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-10-1921

200. SPEECH ON WORKING COMMITTEE RESOLUTION, BOMBAY

October 9, 1921

Mrs. Naidu presided at the meeting and Mahatma Gandhi moved the resolution before the meeting, supported by the various leaders like Lala Lajpat Rai, Maulana Azad Sobhani, Babu Rajendra Lal, etc. . . . After the resolution, which was similar to that of the Karachi Resolution, was passed all standing, the Mahatma lighted the heap of foreign clothing and it burned on merrily amidst the loud noise of crackers and bursting flames. . .

Mahatma Gandhi moved:

This meeting of the citizens of Bombay re-affirms the following resolution of the Working Committee held in Bombay on the 5th instant:

The Working Committee congratulates the Ali Brothers and their comrades upon their prosecution and having considered the Resolution of the Khilafat Conference held at Karachi, regarding Military Service under the Government, the Working Committee is of opinion that the Resolution virtually reaffirms the principle laid down by the Congress at its special session in Calcutta, and its ordinary session in Nagpur last year, that it is contrary to national dignity and national interest for any Indian to engage or remain in the service of a Government in any capacity what so ever, a Government that has used the soldiers for the purposes of crushing the national spirit of the Egyptians, the Turks, the Arabs and other nations. The Working Committee has been only deterred from calling out the soldiers and the civilians in the name of the Congress because the Congress is not yet ready to support these Government servants who may leave Government service and who may not be able themselves to find means of livelihood. The Working Committee, however, is of opinion that in pursuance of the spirit of the Congress Resolution on non-co-operation it is the clear duty of every Government employee, whether soldier or civilian, who can support himself without Congress assistance to leave such service.

The Working Committee draws the attention of all Indian soldiers and police to the fact that carding and hand-spinning and hand-weaving afford them, by undergoing training for a brief period, an honourable means for independent livelihood. The Working Committee is further of opinion that the reasons given for the prosecution with reference to the said Karachi Resolution constitute an undue interference with religious liberty.

In proposing the resolution Mahatma Gandhi said it divided itself into two parts. The first part dealt with the Karachi Resolution and was intended to be its confirmation from the national standpoint, And if it was a crime in the Ali Brothers and their fellow prisoners to have supported the Resolution, it was a crime for the speaker and the audience to propose and pass the resolution. He considered it their duty to state their position clearly. It was their duty to inform the sepoy that it was wrong to help a Government which had forfeited the confidence of the country. The speaker was informed that the resolution was said to be worded cleverly after the fashion of a lawyer so as to avoid the clutches of the law. It was said that, like the Khilafat Resolution, the present one did not require everyone to tell the sepoy to lay down arms. He differed from that view. He was of opinion that by the resolution everyone endorsing it told the sepoy that it was his duty to give up service if only he

could support himself otherwise. If his voice could reach the sepoy he certainly told him that if he believed in his faith whether he was a Hindu or a Mussulman or believed in his own country, he should leave the service even if he had to earn his livelihood by breaking stones. One who wanted to be a soldier of India could not be a sepoy of a Government which has served against India. Those who murdered the innocent men of Jallianwala were no soldiers; they were mere animals. Those who ran no risks, but only killed were again no soldiers but animals. He had, therefore, no hesitation in telling the sepoy through the audience that he should lose no time in severing his connection with the Government if he cared for his country and religion.

One thing the resolution did not require the people to do namely to carry on secret propaganda. They had ruled out secrecy from their book of non-co-operation. They were ashamed to say in secret what they were not prepared to say in public. If therefore the Government held it a crime to recite the creed of non-co-operation, he invited them to arrest those who took part in the evening's proceedings. If it was a crime to tell the soldier that it was unlawful for him to serve the Government in terms of his religion and nationalism, he (the speaker) invited Government to arrest him and those who supported and carried the resolution.

The other part of the resolution pointed out to the soldier the way to an honourable livelihood. It referred to swadeshi. He asked the audience not to carry that resolution if they did not believe in swadeshi and the power of the spinning-wheel to banish poverty from the land. The resolution told the soldier that he could earn his living by carding and weaving. He verily believed with Maulana Mahomed Ali that they did not need lead and gunpowder. Yarn balls were their lead and the spinning-wheel was their gun. He said last September that it was possible to gain swaraj, to redress the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs during the twelve months following if they fulfilled certain conditions. Twelve months had passed but there was no swaraj. The fault was theirs. They had done much but had not fulfilled the minimum required. He wished to share the blame.

He was sorry that he had not the power of convincing every lawyer that it was wrong to practise before the courts which gave no justice. He was sorry that his *tapasya* was not enough to carry conviction to every student that it was wrong to belong to Government schools. He knew that he had not been able to convince every man and woman of Bombay that it was sinful to wear anything but khaddar. But they need not mind him. If the country still carried out the swadeshi programme during the month, swaraj was a certainty during the year and so was redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs. He adhered to his faith in the spinning-wheel. He had no doubt that it and it alone could solve the problem of India's poverty. Its acceptance, to him, was a test of the reality of Hindu-Muslim unity and [of freedom] from violence. He would not be party to general civil disobedience if they could not fulfil the swadeshi

programme. He would not be satisfied unless khaddar had become universal; foreign cloth a rarity. He wanted to see the men and women of Bombay to be dressed in khaddar only. He was told that the sale of khaddar was to the extent of Rs. 18,000 in July, Rs. 13,000 in August and Rs. 7,000 into September in Khadi Bhandar. He wanted to see lakhs worth of khadi sold. He wanted to see the spinning-wheel at work in every house in Bombay. Bombay had led in the matter of Tilak Swaraj Fund. Let Bombay lead in swadeshi and gain the privilege of offering general civil disobedience. He had erred in the April of 1919 in hastily embarking on civil disobedience. He was a very imperfect human being, liable to err. God alone was free from error. But he was knowing enough not to err twice about the same thing. He could not advise civil disobedience without swadeshi. He knew the science of civil disobedience. He knew its power and its risks. A completely non-violent atmosphere was a necessity, and it could not be ensured unless the nation had recognized the tower of the spinning-wheel and settled down to it. If they believed in swadeshi and its results, he expected to see a spinning-wheel at work in every home, he expected all castes and creeds to take up the spinning-wheel and khaddar. He expected princely men to take to charkha and the mill-hands to take up the spinning-wheel. And when they had done that they would safely go to individual soldier and openly ask him to give up his service.

He had found many shedding tears to see him reducing his dress to a mere loin-cloth. He could not do otherwise after having witnessed what he had. He wanted no pity for himself but he did want India, if he was to revert to his normal dress, to adopt full swadeshi. He had visited the Ceded Districts. It was going through a famine—women were reported to have drowned themselves and their children for want of food. It was not possible for him to wear mote clothing than he did after knowing such deep distress.

He would presently put the torch to the pyramid of clothing in front of them. To him it was a symbol of the fire raging in their breasts. This burning was a mere show unless it was a replica of internal fire.

They revered the memory of the Lokamanya. They need not go to his commentary on the *Gita* to learn Tilak *Gita*. The speaker could tell them what it was in one word. The first half was supplied by the Lokamanya himself viz., “Swaraj is our birthright”. He would supply the second half. The spinning-wheel is the means to attain it. He was sure that if the deceased had been alive, he would be on the same platform with them. Was he not a lover of swadeshi? Had he not practised it as it was then practised for years? He, the speaker, knew that the deceased believed in non-cooperation. He certainly doubted the country’s ability to follow it up. Let them remove the doubt and by complete rehabilitation of swadeshi establish swaraj during the year. He invited the Mussulmans who felt so deeply for the Khilafat and the Hindus who felt

equally for the cow to take up the spinning-wheel and ensure the success of swadeshi.

The Bombay Chronicle, 10-10-1921

201. SPEECH TO WOMEN, BOMBAY

October 9, 1921

Under the auspices of the Rashtriya Stree Sabha a public meeting of women was held on Sunday afternoon at the Marwari Vidyalaya Hall, when Mahatma Gandhi, Lala Lajpat Rai and others spoke on "The Present Situation". The meeting was for ladies dressed in khaddar and swadeshi clothes alone Mrs. Naidu presided.

Mahatma Gandhi said before him were sitting Hindu, Mohammedan and Parsi women. They had come there, knowing well that they had to attend in khaddar dress only. He personally had come there not to tell them anything new, but to give them an account of the country's doings. By becoming members of the Congress they had shown their willingness to follow its mandates, come what might. They knew that eight of their country's leader had been arrested in Karachi for passing certain resolutions and he wanted the meeting to pass those very resolutions and to go to jail if necessary. They should not think that because they were women they would not; that was wrong. They must know that the Government would do anything to gain their object. They knew from what had happened in South Africa that the Government were not willing to leave their women free. Lala Lajpat Rai had asked them to steel their hearts so that they should not shed a single tear when their nearest and dearest were arrested. They had to Follow the example of the mother of the Ali Brothers and Maulana Mahomed Ali's wife. Although none of their religions taught them to weep for the dead, still they did weep and mourn for their dead relations. That was wrong. They should not mourn to those who were sent to Jail, because they knew that they were fighting for dharma raj, for swaraj. The swaraj he wanted to establish was dharma raj, it was Rama raj. So long as a single Indian was starved to death, whatever rights the might get in the parliament, real swaraj was not theirs; so long as there was godlessness in the country, what was the use of getting rights and votes. He wanted dharma raj, a raj based on all that was good and virtuous. They would get that only when they were resolved upon getting it. Lalaji had already told them that they should not shed a single tear ever if their leaders were hung by their necks by their Government. He hoped that the women would do that and never forsake their dharma.

Coming to the question of swadeshi, Mahatma Gandhi said he saw before him many women who were not wearing even swadeshi clothes; some of the were wearing mill-made clothes. He asked them whether they had empty their boxes of all their foreign clothes. They must also remember that mill-made clothing was for the poorest of the poor and not for the well to do likethose present

here. They must only wear those clothes which they had made with their own hands. Formerly people were known by the dress they wore and a man's worth was assessed by his clothes. That mentality they should change in these days. He had been to see a village called Dattamandal in the Nizam's dominions and he saw there people starving for the last four years on account of famine. Those men and women had no work to do and they were slowly dying, starving. If he but told the audience what he had seen in that place they would cry for mere shame. People were dying uncared for. He regretted much that although he had been preaching to them swadeshi for the last one year not much progress was done. He had seen in this country men, women and children dying of hunger—mere bags of bones, mere skeletons —because they had no work to do. They were ready to do any work, but they were unable to do it for there was none for them. Sometimes, Government was employing them to break stones on the road sides. Seeing all these things, how could Indians, men and women, clothe themselves in fineries? If they wanted to abolish poverty from this land, and abolish nakedness, then they must use the charkha. Crores of their people would then be able to get their living by keeping their self-respect. If Indians would accomplish this, swaraj was theirs. Indians had no right to waste their money in luxuries and also waste their time. Whatever they saved they must give to the poor. God was to be found in the houses of the poor, of the *Chandalas*, of *Dhed* and of *Bhangis* and not in the houses of the rich and the great. He would only pray to God that if he should be born in this land he might be born a *Dhed*. The boycott of courts, the boycott of schools, the giving up of titles, boycotting of the councils—all those had not been done successfully and people had failed in their duty towards the country. The time was for the women to act now. They had to use the charkha with a view to get victory. Without dharma they would never get swaraj, they would never be able to right the wrongs of the Punjab, and they would never get their Khilafat wrongs righted. If they could achieve swadeshi nothing would be able to stop them from their goal. If they had the necessary virtues for the swaraj, which they were striving for, no government would be able to stop them from their goal. The time was short. They had failed to achieve swaraj before the end of last month, and would they have the necessary *shraddha*, the necessary faith ? The charkha was their only means now. In conclusion he asked them to cast off their foreign clothing, use khaddar and adopt the charkha as their weapon for fighting for swaraj.

The Bombay Chronicle, 11-10-1921

202. SPEECH ON SWADESHI, SURAT¹

October 12, 1921

Mahatmaji addressed the audience for about half an hour and exhorted the people to concentrate their attention on swadeshi only. He said he knew Surat and Surat knew him. He had heard very good reports about Surat during his recent tour, and the sea of white caps before him was not surprising to him. He was, however, pained to find his sisters of Surat yet not taking to khaddar. If, he said, swaraj was to be established through Gujarat, and if Surat was to lead, much yet remained to be done within the short period of two months and a half.

Good work was no doubt done by Surat till then, but yet much remained to be done. Swadeshi must permeate every particle of their blood. It ought to be realized that it was a sin to touch foreign cloth. Mahatmaji said he had explained and said all he had to say and explain up till then. Swadeshi was the only work now to be done. For perfect peace, for Hindu-Muslim unity, for relief to the poor and the famine-stricken, for the chastity of the women, there was but one thing, viz., the charkha. Khaddar cap or a coat for the meeting only was not enough, though that was something. He was now thinking of economizing his time and energy and instead of wasting words was going to employ himself whole-heartedly in khaddar production only. That would be a better service to the country. He then explained why he adopted the present change in his dress and took only to the loin-cloth. He wanted to set an example, when so many of his own countrymen and women were going naked. Hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar was the need of the hour, and if Surat alone did this no civil disobedience will have to be resorted to. They should give up all processions and even meetings. Time was to be spared for spinning and weaving. That was more eloquent than his own speech. He was going to set the example shortly. His message to Surat was swadeshi and swadeshi alone. Time though short was enough for the honest and determined persons. This was a religious crusade and they could not cheat God. To Hindus he especially pointed out the sin and curse of untouchability. God would not forgive them if untouchability remained. God hears these six crores of untouchables and he has consequently made their oppressors untouchables to the rest of the world.

The Bombay Chronicle, 22-10-1921

¹ On the bank of the Tapti near the historic old castle

203. NOTES

ALL ABOUT THE BROTHERS

It is the good fortune of the Brothers to have staunch friends. It is equally their good fortune to have strong critics. A friend writes to me that I am so infatuated with them that I refuse to see anything bad in them. He is right. It is the privilege of friendship not to be suspicious. But he is a bad friend who does not know his friend's weaknesses. I know those of the Brothers, but having weaknesses myself I am tender towards theirs. I feel that they are the best and the bravest among co-workers with whom I have had the privilege of working. So much for the general charge.

THEIR INCONSISTENCY

But here is a particular charge against them. Says a crorespondent:

May I put before you the following problems, which I have even after a very long and deep deliberation been unable to reconcile with the non-co-operation doctrine. Will you kindly say whether my difficulties are something real or only superficial?

Non-co-operation requires that no accused should give any help whatsoever to the proceedings in the British court in which he is tried. But, is not the statement given by the Ali Brothers, a sort of help given to the court? This the Crown Prosecutor himself made clear, when he said that his work was much lightened by the utterances of the accused. . . .

The second problem which perplexes me is this. We have not as yet launched on civil disobedience. Hence we all must obey at present the orders of the British officials. Even you did not infringe the order which prohibited you from entering Malabar. If so, was it proper for Maulana Mahomed Ali to disobey the Magistrate of Karachi and lose temper with him, when he asked him to sit down? Was this not an express breach of the Magistrate's order? Was it creditable to Maulana Mahomed Ali to ask the Magistrate whether he did not believe in God, and to decline to sit down when asked to do so and say, "Let me see what you can do"?

To my mind, even when civil disobedience is started, we all must be humble. A non-co-operator must be humility incarnate. He must never under any provocation whatsoever lose temper or show any force. He must not know impudence except in name only. If these remarks be just, this

action of the Ali Brothers is wholly unjustifiable, and may well be reckoned as a piece of impudence, pardon me for using this word.

I think it would have been far better, far more prudent and worthy of leaders like the Ali Brothers to have remained tongue-tied, as it were, in the court instead of helping it in any way or behaving with the authorities impetuously.

I know this last remark may cause unpleasantness to you. If so, I solicit your pardon, but I could not help making this remark. I know you would justify the Brothers' action anyhow, but how, I know not.

The letter is frank but well meant. Many friends have put the same questions to me, and I have endeavoured to satisfy them to the best of my ability. But the foregoing letter requires public treatment. If there is inconsistency, it is due to the All-India Congress Committee which has permitted statements. One may question the soundness of the Committee's decision, but one may not charge the Brothers with inconsistency.

The All-India Congress Committee based its decision upon my advice. I owe it perhaps to the public to give my reasons. The statement enables the accused to declare his own position, and if it is made before the court, it is permanently on record. Moreover I have faith in India's ability to win swaraj during the year. I expect tens of thousands to be in jail before swaraj is established. I expect the swaraj parliament to discharge all non-co-operation prisoners who have not been proved guilty of moral crimes. The statements will be a valuable aid to the judges under swaraj. Again I am most anxious, that criminals do not take advantage of non-co-operation and making no statement leave the public to infer their innocence. A statement to satisfy this test must always be brief, to the point and not at all argumentative.

Maulana Mahomed Ali's statement does not fall under that category. He entered into a long and elaborate dissertation of the law of Islam. He evidently "used" the court not for defence but for advertising the cause. People have read his statement before the court with avidity. If he had written it as an essay, it would have fallen flat. I am therefore prepared neither to condemn nor defend the statement.

It could certainly have been much briefer. But it has become impossible for Maulana Mahomed Ali to be brief. I have known him to take an hour over his speech under a promise of being brief! The second charge is more serious. In the refusal to sit down, there was no

question of civil or uncivil disobedience. But it was a question of taste. All the scenes jarred on me. There was certainly no impudence but there was unnecessary defiance. I admit that a non co-operator should be all humility. And the behaviour of the prisoners was far from humble.

But I have again been unable to condemn the behaviour of the prisoners. They have answered a purpose and not a bad purpose at that. We are much cowed down. The courts have an overawing atmosphere about them. Respect for law and the courts is one thing. Fear of them is another. In my opinion the Brothers and their fellow-prisoners were out for mischief. They wanted to rob the courts and prisons of their terror. They therefore deliberately hurled defiance at the court. If the magistrate had entered into the humour of the situation, the Brothers would not have been assertive as they were. The court wanted to stand on dignity. The Brothers would have none of it. I do not deny that there was a better way, but I verily believe that the Brothers have rendered a service to the cause even by their defence¹. They could have damaged the cause by putting on humility. They have once more proved themselves to be truthful and natural. That to me is their most lovable trait. We must remember, that we do want the present courts brought into disrepute because we believe them to be disreputable. But whilst I cannot condemn the Brothers' defiance, I do not present it as a pattern to copy. Those who try will fail. For let me tell the reader, that the Brothers have no feeling against the magistrate, and I have no doubt that they are as courteous to the magistrate when he is off the Bench as they are to me.

AN EYE WITNESS

The reader will perhaps better judge the scene from the following letter received from an eye witness.

You must have read the proceedings of the case in the Press, but I consider it my duty to write to you the impressions of a silent Spectator. At the very outset an attempt was made to snub the "Hero" accused, but the unfortunate Mr. Magistrate was facing none else, but Maulana Mahomed Ali. The gentleman had his "well-merited rebuke".

I confess that it was for the second time in my life that I entered a court to hear a case. . . . The so-called court of justice of Lord Reading's regime

¹ Misprint for "defiance"; *vide* "Notes", 27-10-1921 under the sub-title "In Defence of Mr Tyagi".

in a country governed by law and order is in no way better than a theatre. Sir, I am wrong. The actors in a theatre play their part honestly to please the spectators who pay for their amusement. But the “Daniel” of the British Court, whether white or black, knows no such thing as fair play, and I am confident that justice is not the word in their dictionary.

I am not a lawyer, so I could not follow the technical irregularities of the case, but if law has anything to do with common sense, then I can dare to say that the whole show in the Khaliqdina Hall was one great farce . . .

It was amusing to hear the witnesses and the way in which the conspiracy was being proved, and the speech made by the Government counsel in summing up the case hardly needs any comment.

I have personally come to the conclusion, that the making of a statement also in these courts is nothing but a cry in the wilderness, unless it be to serve the purpose of propaganda in the form of a last appeal to the countrymen.

A CONTRAST

The following letter from Bulandshahr will still further elucidate the point I am trying to make.

I have to bring to your notice the most unbecoming action of the District Magistrate during the course of a political trial which began on the 3rd instant.

Mahashaya Mahavir Prasad Tyagi¹ was prosecuted . . . in the court of Mr. Dobbs, the District Magistrate. . . . When the examination-in-chief of the witness was over, the Court asked the accused if he wanted to cross-examine the witness. Thereupon the accused said that he did not. He only wanted to have the fact noted, that the English translation of the notes² did not tally with the original as frankly admitted by the Government pleader before the Court.... The Magistrate declined to make the note and said, “You speak nonsense”³. The accused was offended at the remark and retorted, “I suppose it is yours”. Thereupon the Magistrate ordered Balwant Singh, constable No. 55 who was in charge of the accused to slap him. The constable hesitated and most unwillingly gave the accused a light stroke on the back side of his neck. Thereupon the District Magistrate again ordered him to give a sharp slap on the face which he did when so forced to do. The accused patiently suffered the insult and humiliation. The accused was all along undefended. . . .

The extreme action of the District Magistrate has created a strong

¹ b. 1899; member, A.I.C.C since 1923

² Of the speech delivered by the accused

³ According to Mahavir Tyagi, the Magistrate actually said: “It is your folly”

sense of excitement and indignation amongst the public here. . . . A mass meeting. . . was held . . . and appropriate resolutions passed. . . .

The resolutions passed at the public meeting held in Bulandshahr congratulate the accused on his self-control, bravery and resignation. But I have grave doubts as to the propriety of the use of the adjectives. Why did not the accused utter a word of protest? Why did he not refuse to be tried by the so-called Magistrate? The Magistrate clearly committed a crime, and so did the unwilling constable. Did the accused remain dumb because of love and humility? Silence or passivity must not be used as a cloak for fear or worse. Was not the attitude of the Brothers more manly and natural? There are occasions such as the one at Bulandshahr, when a man's own strength must be his sole protection. And I have no doubt, that the Brothers, when they defied the court, had in mind the political debility of their countrymen.

HINDUSTANI IN COURTS

Dr. Kichlew deserves congratulations for his having declined to speak in English. Save on rare occasions we should certainly insist on giving evidence before the courts in our mother tongue. The best of us are at a disadvantage, when we have to speak or argue in English. And if all refused to use any but their own language, we should soon get rid of translators, and the judges will be obliged to *know* the language of the province in which they serve. In no other part of the world are judges ignorant of the language of the people among whom they dispense Justice.

CAUSE OF DECAY

A correspondent asks, "Is it not true that the loss of Hindu kingdoms is on account of the people having attained to the highest order of spirituality?" I do not think so. We know as a matter of fact, that the Hindus have lost each time for want of spirituality, in other words moral stamina. The Rajputs fought amongst themselves for trifles and lost India. Of personal bravery there was a great deal, but of real spirituality there was a great dearth at the time. Why did Ravana lose and Rama with his monkeys win if it was not for the latter's spirituality? Did not the Pandavas win because of their superior spirituality? We often confuse spiritual knowledge with spiritual attainment. Spirituality is not a matter of knowing scriptures and engaging in philosophical discussions. It is a matter of heart- culture,

of immeasurable strength. Fearlessness is the first requisite of spirituality. Cowards can never be moral.

THE ROOT CAUSE

The same correspondent further asks, “Don’t you think that the success of the present foreign Government is due to the oppression of the poor, the weak, of the so-called untouchables by the higher classes?” This oppression by us of our own kith and kin is certainly the root cause. It is a fall from spirituality. The curse of foreign domination and the attendant exploitation is the justest retribution meted out by God to us for our exploitation of a sixth of our own race and their studied degradation in the sacred name of religion. Hence it is that I have put the removal of untouchability as an indispensable condition of attainment of swaraj. Slave-holders ourselves, we have no business to quarrel with our own slavery if we are not prepared unconditionally to enfranchise our own slaves. We must first cast out the beam of untouchability from our own eye before we attempt to remove the mote from that of our “masters”.

EVEN AGAINST WOMEN

Mrs. Sengupta is a cultured Englishwoman married to a cultured Bengali. Whilst Mr. Sengupta¹ was under arrest, Mrs. Sengupta went out to the cloth bazar in Chittagong to tell the consumers to buy khadi and avoid foreign cloth. This was a serious offence for a woman to commit, and therefore she received a notice under Section 144 ordering her to desist. She has obeyed the notice because of the Congress embargo. Whatever may be said of men, Mrs. Sengupta could not be suspected of any intention to create trouble or offer any intimidation. Her inspiring presence would no doubt have shamed buyers into abstaining from going to foreign-cloth dealers. And that would have been bad from the Magistrate’s standpoint. The order, therefore, is a virtual prohibition against swadeshi propaganda. But it will not surprise me in the least, if this Government, which chiefly rules to protect merchandise in foreign cloth, must end when foreign cloth is boycotted. The Government must grow madder with the progress of real swadeshi.

ECHO FROM GAUHATI

What has happened in Chittagong has been copied in Gauhati.

¹ A leading barrister of Bengal

There the workers have been prohibited from peacefully warning consumers against making purchases of foreign cloth for the Puja holidays. The order is issued against

all persons within Gauhati Municipality to abstain from intimidating or causing annoyance to all persons engaged in sale or purchase of goods by threats or shouts or gestures or show of force, to abstain from loitering in the public roads or in the neighbourhood of shops or markets for purposes aforesaid, to abstain from doing other or any such acts as are likely to cause annoyance to persons lawfully engaged or disturbance of public tranquillity.

Mr. Bardoloi who has wired the text adds, "This is only a device to stop peaceful picketing".

THE REMEDY

I would advise workers to be chary of cloth picketing except when it becomes imperatively necessary. But when it does, the Working Committee has now given leave to disregard orders like the Chittagong and Gauhati ones, and fearlessly continue picketing, and court imprisonment. Prisons will be palaces, when we fill them for swadeshi which is the oxygen of national life.

Young India, 13-10-1921

204. *THE GREAT SENTINEL*

The Bard of Shantiniketan has contributed to *The Modern Review* a brilliant essay¹ on the present movement. It is a series of word pictures which he alone can paint. It is an eloquent protest against authority, slave-mentality or whatever description one gives of blind acceptance of a passing mania whether out of fear or hope. It is a welcome and wholesome reminder to all workers that we must not be impatient, we must not impose authority no matter how great. The poet tells us summarily to reject anything and everything that does not appeal to our reason or heart. If we would gain swaraj, we must stand for truth as we know it at any cost. A reformer who is enraged because his message is not accepted must reti to the forest to learn how to watch, wait and pray. With all this one must heartily agree, and the Poet deserves the thanks of his countrymen for standing up for truth and reason. There is no doubt that our last state will be worse than our first, if we surrender our reason into somebody's keeping. And I

¹ "The Call of Truths" by Rabindranath Tagore in the October issue

would feel extremely sorry to discover, that the country had unthinkingly and blindly followed all I had said or done. I am quite conscious of the fact that blind surrender to love is often more mischievous than a forced surrender to the lash of the tyrant. There is hope for the slave of the brute, none for that of love. Love is needed to strengthen the weak, love becomes tyrannical when it exacts obedience from an unbeliever. To mutter a *mantra* without knowing its value is unmanly. It is good, therefore, that the Poet has invited all who are slavishly *mimicking* the call of the charkha boldly to declare their revolt. His essay serves as a warning to us all who in our impatience are betrayed into intolerance or even violence those who differ from us. I regard the Poet as a sentinel warning us against the approach of enemies called bigotry, lethargy, intolerance, ignorance, inertia and other members of that brood.

But whilst I agree with all that the Poet has said as to the necessity of watchfulness lest we cease to think, I must not be understood to endorse the proposition that there is any such blind obedience on a large scale in the country today. I have again and again appealed to reason, and let me assure him, that if happily the country has come to believe in the spinning-wheel as the giver of plenty, it has done so after laborious thinking, after great hesitation. I am not sure, that even now educated India has assimilated the truth underlying the charkha. He must not mistake the surface dirt for the substance underneath. Let him go deeper and see for himself whether the charkha has been accepted from blind faith or from reasoned necessity.

I do indeed ask the Poet and the page to spin the wheel as a sacrament. When there is war, the poet lays down the lyre, the lawyer his law reports, the schoolboy his books. The Poet will sing the true note after the war is over, the lawyer will have occasion to go to his law books when people have time to fight among themselves. When a house is on fire, all the inmates go out, and each one takes up a bucket to quench the fire. When all about me are dying for want of food, the only occupation permissible to me is to feed the hungry. It is my conviction that India is a house on fire, because its manhood is being daily scorched, it is dying of hunger because it has no work to buy food with. Khulna is starving not because the people cannot work, but because they have no work. The Ceded Districts are passing successively through a fourth famine, Orissa is a land

suffering from chronic famines. Our cities are not India. India lives in her seven and a half lakhs of villages, and the cities live upon the villages. They do not bring their wealth from other countries. The city people are brokers and commission agents for the big houses of Europe, America and Japan. The cities have co-operated with the latter in the bleeding process that has gone on for the past two hundred years. It is my belief based on experience, that India is daily growing poorer. The circulation about her feet and legs has almost stopped. And if we do not take care, she will collapse altogether.

To a people famishing and idle, the only acceptable form in which God can dare appear is work and promise of food as wages. God created man to work for his food, and said that those who ate without work were thieves. Eighty per cent of India are compulsorily thieves half the year. Is it any wonder if India has become one vast prison? Hunger is the argument that is driving India to the spinning-wheel. The call of the spinning-wheel is the noblest of all. Because it is the call of love. And love is swaraj. The spinning-wheel will "curb the mind" when the time spent on necessary physical labour can be said to do so. We must think of millions who are today less than animals, who are almost in a dying state. The spinning-wheel is the reviving draught for the millions of our dying countrymen and countrywomen. "Why should I, who have no need to work for food, spin?" may be the question asked. Because I am eating what does not belong to me. I am living on the spoliation of my countrymen. Trace the course of every pine that finds its way into your pocket, and you will realize the truth of what I write. Swaraj has no meaning for the millions if they do not know how to employ their enforced idleness. The attainment of this swaraj is possible within a short time, and it is so possible only by the revival of the spinning-wheel.

I do want growth, I do want self-determination, I do want freedom, but I want all these for the soul. I doubt if the steel age is an advance upon the flint age. I am indifferent. It is the evolution of the soul to which the intellect and all our faculties have to be devoted. I have no difficulty in imagining the possibility of a man armoured after the modern style making some lasting and new discovery for mankind, but I have less difficulty in imagining the possibility of a man having nothing but a bit of flint and a nail for lighting his path or his matchlock, ever singing new hymns of praise and delivering to an aching world a message of peace and goodwill upon earth. A plea

for the spinning-wheel is a plea for recognizing the dignity of labour.

I claim that in losing the spinning-wheel we lost our left lung. We are therefore suffering from galloping consumption. The restoration of the wheel arrests the progress of the fell disease. There are certain things which all must do in all climes. The spinning-wheel is the thing which all must turn in the Indian clime for the transition stage at any rate and the vast majority must for all time.

It was our love of foreign cloth that ousted the wheel from its position of dignity. Therefore I consider it a sin to wear foreign cloth. I must confess that I do not draw a sharp or any distinction between economics and ethics. Economics that hurt the moral well-being of an individual or a nation are immoral and therefore sinful. Thus the economics that permit one country to prey upon another are immoral. It is sinful to buy and use articles made by sweated labour. It is sinful to eat American wheat and let my neighbour the grain-dealer starve for want of custom. Similarly it is sinful for me to wear the latest finery of Regent Street, when I know that if I had but worn the things woven by the neighbouring spinners and weavers, that would have clothed me, and fed and clothed them. On the knowledge of my sin bursting upon me, I must consign the foreign garments to the flames and thus purify myself, and thenceforth rest content with the rough khadi made by my neighbours. On knowing that my neighbours may not, having given up the occupation, take kindly to the spinning-wheel, I must take it up myself and thus make it popular.

I venture to suggest to the Poet, that the clothes I ask him to burn must be and are his. If they had to his knowledge belonged to the poor or the ill-clad, he would long ago have restored to the poor what was theirs. In burning my foreign clothes I burn my shame. I must refuse to insult the naked by giving them clothes they do not need, instead of giving them work which they sorely need. I will not commit the sin of becoming their patron, but on learning that I had assisted in impoverishing them, I would give them a privileged position and give them neither crumbs nor cast-off clothing, but the best of my food and clothes and associate myself with them in work.

Nor is the scheme of non-co-operation or swadeshi an exclusive doctrine. My modesty has prevented me from declaring from the house top that the message of non-co-operation, non-violence and swadeshi is a message to the world. It must fall flat, if it does not bear fruit in the soil where it has been delivered. At the present moment

India has nothing to share with the world save her degradation, pauperism and plagues. Is it her ancient Shastras that we should send to the world ? Well, they are printed in many editions, and an incredulous and idolatrous world refuses to look at them, because we the heirs and custodians do not live them. Before, therefore, I can think of sharing with the worlds I must possess. Our non-co-operation is neither with the English nor with the West. Our non-co-operation is with the system the English have established, with the material civilization and its attendant greed and exploitation of the weak. Our non-co-operation is a retirement within ourselves. Our non-co-operation is a refusal to co-operate with the English administrators on their own terms. We say to them, "Come and co-operate with us on our terms, and it will be well for us, for you and the world." We must refuse to be lifted off our feet. A drowning man cannot save others. In order to be fit to save others, we must try to save ourselves. Indian nationalism is not exclusive, nor aggressive, nor destructive. It is health giving, religions and therefore humanitarian. India must learn to live before she can aspire to die for humanity. The mice which helplessly find themselves between the cat's teeth acquire no merit from their enforced sacrifice.

True to his poetical instinct the Poet lives for the morrow and would have us do likewise. He presents to our admiring gaze the beautiful picture of the birds early in the morning singing hymns of praise as they soar into the sky. These birds had their day's food and soared with rested wings in whose veins new blood had flown during the previous night. But I have had the pain of watching birds who for want of strength could not be coaxed even into a flutter of their wings. The human bird under the Indian sky gets up weaker than when he pretended to retire. For millions it is an eternal vigil or an eternal trance. It is an indescribably painful state which has to be experienced to be realized. I have found it impossible to soothe suffering patients with a song from Kabir. The hungry millions ask for one poem—invigorating food. They cannot be given it. They must earn it. And they can earn only by the sweat of their brow. . . .¹

In these verses is contained for me the whole truth of the spinning-wheel as an indispensable sacrament for the India of today.

¹ Here followed in the source verses 8 to 16 from the *Bhagavad Gita*, Ch. III. For their English rendering, *vide* "Notes", 20-10-1921, under the sub-title "The Charkha in the *Gita*".

If we will take care of today, God will take care of the morrow.

Young India, 13-10-1921

205. WHAT WILL BOMBAY DO ?

The first bonfire of foreign cloth was lighted by me in Bombay on 31st July. The second bonfire, of the same magnitude, was lighted last Sunday. The 31st of July was also a Sunday.

It was Bombay which displayed generosity and upheld the country's honour, completing the target for the Tilak Swaraj Fund. Bombay has laid the foundation for swadeshi. Swadeshi and Hindu-Muslim unity were discussed for the first time at the mammoth meeting for satyagraha held on the Chowpatty sands.

There are both Hindus and Muslims in Bombay; it is the principal centre of the spirited Parsis. Bombay has worthy Gujaratis and, tough, mountain-bred Marathas. It has also merchant-warriors, Memons, Bhatias, Parsis and Sindhis. The Bombay people are enterprising. They make a fortune one moment and lose it the next and give no thought to the matter.

Bombay has Strength enough to win swaraj, if only it would use that strength.

It is now accepted on all hands that swadeshi is the key to swaraj.

The help of merchants and women is necessary for winning the battle of swadeshi.

Merchants in other regions have not taken the same interest in the swaraj movement as those in Bombay. Will they help by sacrificing their interests? If they but think, they will see that no sacrifice is involved, as they had no right to the profits they have been making from foreign goods. In fact, the country has suffered heavily through this trade. Nothing has harmed the country as much as trade in foreign cloth. If, therefore, the merchants who carry on this trade understand the truth, they will expiate their sin and purify themselves. Will they overcome their greed ?

And why should they not ? Japan's awakening came after her wealthy people had sacrificed their wealth and the power that wealth brings. The strength to fight comes from self-sacrifice. A people who can fight has learnt to fight only by sacrificing their wealth and property. Physical strength and soul-force both presuppose sacrifice

of wealth.

In this movement, however, no such sacrifice is involved. When we undertake any work after mature consideration, it involves the least sacrifice. If merchants voluntarily and consciously give up trade in foreign cloth, they can make an honest living by starting business in khadi. We need some people to take up business of such capital investment that it will ultimately yield an annual profit of 60 crore rupees. How many merchants and shop-assistants would be required for such a business?

One thing, of course, is essential. Merchants should be ever active and thoughtful. Those lazy merchants who merely follow others, gamble or carry on business left by their father and make what profit they can in the ordinary course of things—these merchants will earn nothing unless they shake off their lethargy. A lazy man can never be brave; he can never win swaraj. Swaraj and lethargy are born enemies of each other.

The women of Bombay, like its merchants, are awake. Where shall we find women as advanced as in Bombay? The swadeshi movement can make no progress without their support, which means that we cannot win swaraj without it. We should not ask their help merely that they may give us the benefit of their presence. They are not invited just to make speeches. The country today begs of them the favours of utmost simplicity and hard work. Women will have to have good understanding and patriotism. If they do not shake off their fascination for foreign cloth and they obstinately insist on having dreadfully coloured saris, satins and muslins, what can poor men do?

Nor can women be forced to take the vow of swadeshi. If that is the only way to make them swadeshi-minded, I would rather that they continued with foreign cloth. Swaraj lies in their awakening, in the sacrifices voluntarily made by them. If women give up foreign cloth, they must do so out of a sense of duty. Muslim women should understand the cause of the Khilafat, Hindu women should understand the importance of the cow and all women should understand their responsibility for the eradication of poverty, which is a duty they owe to their neighbours. If, thus, the women in the country realize that it is morally wrong to wear foreign cloth, regard it as their duty to wear khadi and to ply the spinning-wheel every day, swadeshi will spread with the speed of wind. Bombay women can do this.

This also applies to the men in Bombay. They should overcome

their love of fine clothes and take up the spinning-wheel. This alone will advance the cause of swadeshi.

I am convinced that, if the country understands the idea of complete swadeshi, she will secure swaraj without having to resort to civil disobedience or non-violent revolt. It is possible, however, that such good fortune may not be ours and thousands of Indians may have to go to jail or die. If one province alone adopts complete swadeshi, that may not have so powerful an effect as to usher in swaraj. Should, however, one province or district be fully prepared, why may it not have the freedom to revolt? Is it unlikely, besides, that the strength of that one province or district will win freedom for the whole country? I am emphatically of the view that this is possible. Can we expect Bombay to be ready to take the lead in this manner?

Bombay alone can answer this question. Those who do not adopt complete swadeshi have no right to revolts for they will not be able to control their anger and, at the critical moment, they will not find it possible to remain peaceful. We would then lose the battle we are about to win. We must not make this mistake.

That Bombay has learnt the lesson of peace and has become responsible, that it has determination and the Hindus, Muslims and Parsis living in it have become of one mind and heart—all this will be shown by people taking up carding, spinning and weaving, by khadi, in short. The citizens of Bombay will be fit to rise in peaceful revolt if men, women and children in their thousands take to carding, spinning and weaving and to wearing khadi.

This does not mean that every man and woman must spin or wear khadi. It is likely that Englishmen or the advocates of co-operation will not wear it. It is also possible that Government servants may not muster the necessary courage. We may, therefore take it that a stray shop selling foreign cloth will continue to do business on account of these customers. But the scene in bazaars, mosques, temples, at gatherings and marriage-parties will certainly have changed. At all these places and on such occasions we shall see nothing but khadi. Things on the stage and in theatres will also wear a different look. If people dislike foreign cloth, will they go to see plays in which such cloth is used? It seems impossible to me that the use of khadi can spread unless people's fascination for foreign cloth disappears. I would certainly expect the exclusive use of khadi in all places frequented by ordinary, free citizens.

Bombay can bring this about by the end of this month. When it has, it may start a peaceful revolt by itself.

I hope no one will ask what connection khadi has with peaceful revolt. I have explained above that the spinning-wheel is a symbol of our peacefulness. When, besides, people are being invited to take it up as such, those who have no faith in peace will not ply it at all or do so with zeal. Since we invest the spinning-wheel with the qualities of courage, honesty, simplicity and peacefulness, it will become the means of promoting more and more virtues.

The revolt for winning swaraj and saving the Khilafat cannot succeed with only a few people. It requires thousands. If we wish to generate through Bombay alone the necessary strength to win swaraj, we need a hundred thousand fighters. This may include both men and women, of any age over 16 years. No institution or organization can provide food for all these fighters. If the Congress starts doing this, we are bound to lose the battle. If we calculate the daily expense at the rate of eight annas each, even then it comes to 50,000 rupees. If we take that the battle will last for a month, the expense for feeding this number will by itself come to one and a half million. If it becomes necessary to provide for their families, it is simply impossible to estimate the expenditure. In any case, the figure I have mentioned will have at least to be doubled.

We are not prepared for an expenditure of this order and, even assuming that such an amount is not too much for Bombay, we shall gain nothing from it; on the contrary, we shall lose the struggle. One cannot be sure of the type of people who will join. Those who volunteer to bear the burden of the country's struggle should be first-rate men in respect of character, honesty and courage. The test for judging even this is the spinning-wheel and other work connected with the processing of cotton. Till the fighters realize that they can earn their livelihood by carding or weaving, it will be impossible for us to recruit hundreds of thousands of them.

We are now in a position to consider what Bombay should do in order to lead the way.

1. Every intending fighter should learn the processes of carding, spinning and weaving before the end of this month. He must spin for not less than an hour daily.

2. The people of Bombay should start wearing principally hand-spun khadi before this month is out.

3. Before the end of this month the scene in the markets, temples, mosques and theatres of Bombay must undergo a transformation so that nothing but khadi will be seen in any of these places.

4. The city's men and women should spend their spare time in carding, spinning or weaving.

5. If the citizens of Bombay have still a lingering faith in the efficacy of violence, they should give it up.

6. If there is still anything wanting in Hindu-Muslim unity, any coldness, the deficiencies should be overcome.

If all this can be done by the end of this month, then in November Bombay can launch upon civil disobedience of laws on a mass scale.

The Prince of Wales will land in Bombay on November 17th. Can Bombay display its strength before that date? Bombay should rise in revolt only after, and not before, it has fulfilled the simple conditions laid down above. Only that province which does so can start civil disobedience.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 16-10-1921

206. MY NOTES

LOSING INTEREST

When I am told that people have lost interest, that they should be given something new, I get worried. I then conclude that people have not realized the meaning of swaraj, of a war of dharma.

The means to swaraj can be constantly changing only if swaraj itself means something new every day. I for one cannot think of any means other than swadeshi. If, therefore, we have lost interest in swadeshi, we shall eventually lose it in swaraj as well.

A man who is too weak to breathe cannot have long to live. A healthy man does not even realize that he is breathing, or that his pulse is beating or that his eye is doing its work. Such a man never feels strain in carrying out essential functions. A poet never feels fatigued for using his powers. If anyone does, he is no poet. One who can so play on a *sarangi* that it seems to play of itself will never tire of the instrument. Similarly, if we have been permitted through and

through by the spirit of swadeshi, we cannot lose interest in it. On the contrary, we shall realize that the distance we have travelled towards swadeshi is the distance we have travelled towards swaraj. And just as we can feel no fatigue on the road to swaraj, so can we feel none on the road to swadeshi. As we near the goal of swadeshi, we should feel invigorated much as a man who gets nearer to pure and refreshing air does. Our strength increases with every step in our journey of swadeshi. Where are they now who a year ago used to laugh at the spinning-wheel? Shri Prafulla Chandra Ray¹, one of our foremost scientists, a peer of Shri Bose², an expert on delicate instruments and one who is associated with a number of business houses, has had to confess that for the four and a half crores of men and women of Bengal the only hope is the spinning-wheel. Those who tire of an activity of this nature simply do not understand it.

Moreover, what can a tired soldier accomplish? The soldier who is always changing his strategy is bound to lose. We, on the other hand, have all the time been going forward. We have been able to make a few inroads into the citadels of the legislature, of the title-holders, of the lawyers and of the students, and could manage with what little we won. But foreign cloth stands in our path obstructing all progress. Till that fortress has fallen, we should not expect swaraj. Swaraj is possible only after its complete destruction. Hence, without demolishing this bastion of foreign cloth, whether it takes one month or many, we cannot hope to advance. We have been able to pass the other forts by digging our way through them.

Swaraj is something that has to be experienced. Only the patient can say finally whether he has been cured. Because a patient's complexion has regained colour and he has put on weight, the doctor will say that he is well even if he cannot sit up. The patient, however, will not agree that he is well. In much the same way, every person will have to be a witness to himself and say whether swaraj has been won. If, therefore, it is established that the people are tired of spinning, carding or weaving, of khadi, I shall conclude that they do not want swaraj. A man who has been fasting or, leaving rice, consuming bran is out, we would say, to commit suicide. Similarly, it can be said of anyone who chooses to keep away from swadeshi that he does not desire swaraj.

¹ 1861-1944; scientist and patriot

² Sir J. C. Bose, F.R.S., botanist

Can it be said that the workers and the members of their families have adopted swadeshi so completely that they like to hear no more of it? Till a non-co-operator has adopted complete swadeshi for himself and his family, it is much too early for him to lose interest or get disheartened. I am certain that the whole country will go swadeshi once all non-co-operators have become genuine followers of swadeshi as a matter of duty. Our loss of interest today is like a child's. When it finds sums difficult, it wants to do something else. The teacher who indulges the child when it loses interest in this way or feels defeated acts as its enemy. The child must be made to finish the sum on which he is working. In the same way, we must, we cannot but, complete the swadeshi *yajna* which we have undertaken. Our loss of interest comes from our inadequacy and ignorance. We do not know the price that swaraj demands or, if we do, we are not ready to pay it. Our love of Khilafat goes no further than attending meetings and contributing money. If this is how things stand, we shall never get swaraj. Before we can get it, we shall have to be hard workers and give up our love of meetings, processions and speeches. If we think that there is still need for such playthings, we must admit that swaraj is far off.

VOLUNTARY OBEDIENCE

A friend put to me the following questions:

QUESTION: Shall we need some laws under swaraj?

ANSWER: Yes, we shall.

If so, surely people will have to respect them?

Of course, but they will do so willingly. The laws will have been enacted with their consent and will, therefore, be readily respected. Does this surprise you in any way?

To be sure, yes. I must admit I have my doubts about this.

I asked him why he said this.

From experience.

That startled me. I asked: Kindly tell me what you mean. I feel disturbed.

Let us see. Twenty thousand persons passed the resolution for non-co-operation at Nagpur. Naturally it was binding on those at any rate who passed it. Can we claim, however, that all those 20,000 have implemented it? Have all the lawyers who attended the session given up practice? Have all the students present there left schools and colleges? Have all carried out the pledge of swadeshi?

Have they all taken up the spinning-wheel ? But we may leave all this. Have the resolutions of the Congress Working Committee been implemented everywhere ? And what could be said of the Congress could also be said of less important bodies. In how many of our institutions do members abide by the rules they themselves have framed ? I have some experience of public life. I observe that people rarely respect their own rules. Can we enjoy swaraj till we have corrected this failing? Don't you feel that swaraj lies in our readiness to respect the rules we prescribe for ourselves in our present plight? If we lack this today, we are not likely to get it after we have won swaraj. In other words, swaraj is impossible if we cannot respect our own rules. Moreover, nothing could be easier than obeying laws we have ourselves laid down. In this, we do not have to go and ask others to do anything. The matter concerns only those of us who raised our hands [in support of the resolutions], and I refer only to those Congressmen who are non-co-operators. When I think about them, my heart sinks, I feel doubtful whether we shall get swaraj this year.

In reply I said: There is some truth in what you say. Not all of us obey the rules we lay down. You will admit, though, that we are not today as negligent in this matter as we were twelve months ago. We can say that people have by and large respected the Nagpur Resolution. Where they have not respected it, they admit their weakness and are trying to overcome it.

With this reply, I partially succeeded in satisfying the questioner but I was myself not satisfied. The doubts seemed to be serious enough. I was set at thinking. I told him at the moment that I would write about the matter in *Navajivan*, but I find that as I write this I feel more troubled by his doubts. While my defence of the people seems justified, I can see that we shall need greater readiness on our part to implement our own resolutions. We cannot rest content with the logic of "on a heath a castor-oil plant is king". We are being tested by the touchstone of swaraj, and do not prove pure gold. There is in our gold more than the usual admixture of other metals. Only the expert can discover how much of gold there is in what he tests. So far as we are concerned, we should reveal in the test the highest degree of purity necessary for winning swaraj. Till we do so, how can we have the needed strength? The questioner's argument is also valid, namely, that we members of the Congress should be able to prove ourselves, without any special effort on our part, gold of one hundred per cent purity. It is evident that all of us do not obey the resolutions of the Working Committee and our respective provincial committees with machine-like regularity.

There is a reason for this negligence. All this time, we have been raising our hands in support of resolutions without proper consideration, out of fear or a sense of shame or through hope of some gain. This does not become a lover of freedom. Even if he is in a minority of one, he would vote against a resolution with which he does not agree, and in a democratic organization he would be congratulated on his boldness and respected. We may, thus, oppose any resolution which we disapprove, discuss every resolution threadbare and adopt it only if we are convinced finally that there is good in it. But having once adopted a resolution, we should carry it out whole-heartedly. Assuming that one such man in a thousand would enable us to win swaraj, we need 300,000 men who would fully implement the resolutions of the Congress and try to get others to do the same. There has been an increase in the number of such men, but I know for certain that their number does not come to 300,000.

Moreover, we have in the past always looked to the Government. Our resolutions were addressed to it and we had, therefore, little else to do besides passing resolutions. During the past 12 months we have been stressing one thing exclusively, and that is that we ourselves should act.

It is not too late yet. If we work hard and fully implement all the resolutions which have been passed, I think we shall advance very far.

Many things remain neglected owing to lack of planning, inefficiency and disinclination to work hard. It is our duty to shed lethargy, to improve our efficiency and to learn to think out everything carefully. A swarajist cannot afford to be wanting in these respects.

WEARING KHADI AT THE TIME OF MARRIAGE

The distinction of being the first to be dressed exclusively in khadi at the time of their marriage goes to a Parsi couple. Last Sunday, Mr. Lavangia, President of the Khandwa Congress Committee, was married to Miss Dinbai Patel. The couple were dressed exclusively in khadi. The priests had also khadi robes on them and the guests, too, were requested to come dressed in khadi, so that at the function one saw for the most part khadi on every side. In other matters, too, a simplicity about the ceremony was maintained. The bridegroom's father had offered Rs. 500 to the Swaraj Fund. Let us hope this regard for swadeshi and simplicity will be widely emulated. I am sure every reader will join me in wishing this couple a long life of service to the

nation.

COLOUR BAR

Shri Manilal Barrister has to his credit many services to the people of Fiji. On being deported by the Fiji Government, he went to live in New Zealand. He tried to set up practice there and applied the court for enrolment. The white Law Society of New Zealand made inquiries in Fiji. The Government of Fiji expressed doubts about Shri Manilal's loyalty and, in consequence, his application was rejected. The conclusion is that Shri Manilal cannot work and earn a living in New Zealand. No offence has been proved against him in Fiji, and there was nothing against his conduct in New Zealand either. Shri Manilal's disloyalty consisted in the colour of his skin, in his services to his fellow-men. If a brown-skinned person, who is also an Indian and serves his fellow-countrymen, is not disloyal in the eyes of the white men, who else would be? And yet there are many simple-minded and liberal Indians who argue that we shall, that we can, come into our own only through co-operation with the Government.

EAST AFRICA

Everywhere, I see only the bitter fruits of co-operation with the Government. The whites of East Africa do not like even Mr. Andrews' going there and are, therefore, preparing to oppose him. This means that they wish to do him some harm. Simultaneously, they are having discussions with the British authorities and trying if they can deprive us of our rights. So far the British authorities have not told them categorically that Indians shall not be deprived of a single right of theirs. If indeed Indians have to lose their rights, that would be daylight robbery. It is my earnest hope that the Indians there will not compromise their rights. The only way in which India can help them in the matter is by herself acquiring the strength to help. This strength consists in swaraj.

FRUIT OF UNTOUCHABILITY

Why have we thus become untouchables everywhere? The reason is clear to me. God's ways of punishing man for his sins are mysterious. The world treats us as we have been treating six crores of our brethren. This stigma we carry with us wherever we go. I have noticed that even the Negroes of Africa look down on us as slaves. We shall not become worthy of the world's regard till we feel genuine

compassion for the untouchables. Since we deceive ourselves and become indolent in the name of religion, we fall ill the more low. Our own plight seems to me more pitiable hand that of the untouchables, because we have to receive kicks both from God and the world. The untouchables, on the other hand, suffer only our kicks. They will get none from God. Even I regard to their failings, arguments in their defence, the facts of their disabilities, will be advanced and will be accepted as valid. To cleanse ourselves of this filth of untouchability is to cleanse our hearts. Till that is done, nothing that we may do is likely to yield fruit. There is no hope for a man whose heart has hardened and, when it is in the name of religion that a person has become cruel, we can say that his heart has hardened indeed. It is difficult to convince a person who sacrifices animals in the name of religion that his action is cruel. It is easier to convince one who gets them killed for the sake of his palate. We shall, therefore, be able to rid Hinduism of this evil only if we give serious thought to the problem and dispel from our hearts the contempt we harbour. Unless this is done, not objecting to contact with an *Antyaja* will not by itself save one from sin. Free contact with *Antyaja* will mean that we have expelled the poison which has come to permeate the otherwise wholesome system of caste-restrictions: it means abandoning our notions of high and low and developing a sense of brotherhood in all our relations. Only when this is done can we say that we have ended the practice of untouchability. As things are today the evil has become so pervasive that even among *Antyajias* there are established distinctions of high and low. By shunning contact with *Dheds*, *Bhangis* and others, we have bred in their hearts too the desire to claim superiority over some others. Disappearance of the idea of untouchability means being free from such a desire, and this precisely is the meaning of the line, "The notion of being defiled by touch is like a superfluous limb."

Congress workers should never show themselves indifferent in this matter. Whenever they see evidence of any distinction of high and low, they should set their face firmly against it. While we do not wish to destroy the customary restraints which people accept as religious, we do not want, either, to see ignorance accepted as religious restraint. The essence of such restraint lies in suffering oneself, not in making others suffer. Anyone who inflicts suffering on others is a man of self-indulgence not of self control. Forcing others to perform all kinds of actions in order that one may enjoy the pleasures of heaven

is not the way to live a life of self-control. For eradicating the practice of untouchability and shedding the cruelty that lies behind it, it is very important that we always do something for the service of the untouchables, understand their difficulties, look after their orphans, go to their dwellings and do some useful work for them, admit a few of their children to our schools, if we are running any, and explain to the other children in our charge the necessity of doing this, visit their neighbourhood in every village and secure for them the facilities which they lack. The habit of thus looking on them with love and understanding will have such an effect on us that we ourselves shall be purified in the process and our hardness will melt away. Swaraj in fact means the development in us of a desire to share the sufferings of all.

CONVENIENCE OF PUBLIC

There will be so many changes at the forthcoming session of the Congress that, if the people do not understand them, they may go away dissatisfied and even disorganization may follow. The success of the session depends no less on the people than on the office-bearers and the volunteers. If the people appreciate the value of organization and respect the regulations, the arrangements will succeed completely, otherwise we may certainly expect trouble. Many are not happy about the restriction on the number of spectators announced already, but a little reflection will convince them of its necessity. The Congress is the executive organ of the nation. When thousands congregate to watch it at its work, making arrangements for those thousands comes to be the biggest practical problem. When, therefore, the Congress is engaged in implementing decisions and formulating policies, it is not a spectacle for thousands to watch.

One solution is not to admit spectators at all, but this cannot be done immediately. Some at least have to be allowed. The Reception Committee, therefore, has decided to make arrangements for a maximum of three thousand spectators. Who these three thousand should be has still to be decided. Paid admissions have been stopped, and the Committee has reserved to itself the right to admit a few prominent individuals. Having thus restricted the number, the Committee has decided to meet every possible need. People should accept these restrictions in good spirit.

Everyone, however, will be able to see and attend every part of the proceedings worth attending. A payment of four annas do will entitle a person to remain on the campus the whole day. He will be

able to attend all the functions, music programmes, speeches, etc., at the session. Only, he will not be allowed inside the enclosure when the Congress is in session. He will also be able to hear every speaker. Thus a payment of four annas will enable all to satisfy their curiosity. I expect not less than 100,000 spectators for the session, and they will find satisfactory arrangements made for everything which may be of instructive value to them.

PARSI VOLUNTEERS

Mr. Shapoorji Behramji Gotla writes from Navsari:¹

I hope others will take up this suggestion and, if it is not possible to form a separate unit, they will at any rate join one of the units; already formed.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 16-10-1921

207. LETTER TO A. G. KANITKAR

SABARMATI,

October 17 [1921]

DEAR FRIEND,

I was pleased to receive your letter.

I do not believe in the present scouts organization. Nor could I possibly advise anyone to associate himself with any welcome to the Prince who is being brought here to support a hideous wrong. I quite agree with you that our fall is due to our departure from our ideals of simplicity and love. Not till we have reverted to swadeshi and removed untouchability is any peace possible for India.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

A well-behaved English boy should be as dear as a brother.

From the original: C. W. 5799. Courtesy D P. Joshi

¹ The letter is not reproduced here. It appealed to Parsis to raise a volunteer corps of their own for the forthcoming session of the Congress in December and the writer offered his services to become one of its members.

208. *LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA*

SABARMATI,
*Monday [October 17, 1921]*¹

BHAISHRI BEHRAMJI,

I saw your letter only today. If I find a good *Dhed or Bhangi* boy, I shall send him to you. It is difficult to get such boys. I didn't know at all that you take vegetarian diet.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the original : C.W. 4360. Courtesy : Tehmina Khambhatta

209. *LETTER TO BANARASIDAS CHATURVEDI*

[*Before October 19, 1921*]²

BHAISHRI,

I have your letter. There is no need for you to take a job, nor is it necessary to go to the office of the Association when you have no work there. I also saw your letter to Shri Petit. I was pained to read it. I see that it is full of anger. When you had left the matter to me, you need not have written to him.

This will also make my work a little difficult; but you need not worry. My hint is for the future.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

BANARASIDAS CHATURVEDI

HIRABAG

GIRGAUM

BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2579

¹ From the postmark

² From the postmark of arrival in Bombay on October 19, 1921

210. TELEGRAM TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR¹

[October 19, 1921]

C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARYA

SALEM

HOW CAN NEHRUJI² DISREGARD WORKING COMMITTEE³
RESOLUTION? SORRY YOU ARE ANGRY. HOW CAN
YOU THREATEN SCHISM? MEETING MUST BE HELD.
YOU SHOULD DO AS CONSCIENCE DICTATES.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7640

211. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL NEHRU

AHMEDABAD,

October 19, 1921

I AGREE WITH YOU THAT THE PRESIDENT CANNOT
DISREGARD THE WORKING COMMITTEE'S RESOLUTION.
THE COMMITTEE SHOULD MEET IN DELHI AS
RESOLVED.

The Bombay Chronicle, 22-10-1921

¹ In reply to his telegram dated October 19 which read: "Nehruji threatens fight by counteracting. He would fight shadow. I shall start schism or faction. Pray wire him insisting on your inborn gospel of love or our noble cause would suffer needless civil ridicule. Will fix any date or place you wish. Only Hyderabad or Karachi soon after trial appeals morally politically best. I will attend sharing risks."

² Pandit Motilal Nehru, General Secretary of the Congress

³ Which convened the All-India Congress Committee meeting on November 4.

212. LETTER TO G. V. SUBBA RAO

SABARMATI,
October 19, 1921

DEAR FRIEND,

Agriculture is no doubt better than weaving as an occupation, but it requires a greater outlay of capital expenditure and an amount of patience, perseverance and outdoor labour, which is not likely to be suited to a Government servant fresh from his deskwork, whose means, again, generally speaking may be so limited as to make it impossible to begin farming even on a modest scale.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : G.N. 3622

213. LETTER TO K. P. KESHAVA MENON

SABARMATI,
October 19, 1921

MY DEAR KESHAVA MENON,

I am sorry in the midst of rush I have overlooked your application to the Bajaj Fund. I have got the list but it does not say how much you require. Please wire your requirements.

As to the grant you may use your discretion but I would like you to consult Mr. Mathuradas about spinning.

I hope the delay in dealing with the lawyers' papers will not cause inconvenience.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

Have you not been paid anything out of the Bajaj [Fund]?

From a photostat exhibited at the Kerala Pavilion, Gandhi Darshan, New Delhi, 1969-70

214. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

ASHRAM,

Wednesday [On or after October 19, 1921]¹

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

I cannot but retain the cheque you have sent me. You will have to draw upon me when you require it. It seems as if Motilalji will never be free from the illnesses [in the family].

Is it not a shortcoming of my *tapascharya* that I cannot convince people in the matter of swadeshi? A perfect *tapasvi*, though silent, does influence through his sincere feelings. Some do so by a mere hint, some by word of mouth and some by writing. What is the meaning of all this ? Those who wear khaddar only in my presence do so out of love for me and not owing to my *tapascharya*. Surely, a free India of the future is not going to import its foodgrains from abroad. Nor will it import cloth. Are we going to import bottles of water and medicines from England ? Our dharma will change when our country ceases to grow cotton. We shall then have to leave the land.

I hope you are aware that Kishorelal has retired to a hut set up in a solitary place.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 1060

215. NOTES

THE CHARKHA IN THE "GITA"

In the last issue I have endeavoured to answer the objections raised by the Poet against spinning as a sacrament to be performed by all. I have done so in all humility and with the desire to convince the Poet and those who think like him. The reader will be interested in knowing that my belief is derived largely from the *Bhagavad Gita*. I have quoted the relevant verses in the article itself. I give below Edwin Arnold's rendering of the verses from *his Song Celestial* for the benefit of those who do not read Sanskrit.

Work is more excellent than idleness;

¹ Kishorelal Mashruwala, mentioned in the last para of the letter, retired to a hut on Friday, October 14, 1921.

The body's life proceeds not, lacking work.
 There is a task of holiness to do,
 Unlike world-binding toil, which bindeth not
 The faithful soul; such earthly duty do
 Free from desire, and thou shalt well perform
 Thy heavenly purpose. Spake Prajapati
 In the beginning, when all men were made,
 And, with mankind, the sacrifice— "Do this!
 Work! sacrifice. Increase and multiply
 With sacrifice! This shall be *Kamadhuk*,
 Your 'Cow of Plenty', giving back her milk
 Of all abundance. Worship the gods thereby;
 The gods shall yield ye grace. Those meats ye crave
 The gods will grant to Labour, when it pays
 Tithes in the altar-flame. But if one eats
 Fruits of the earth, rendering to kindly heaven,
 No gift of toils that thief steals from his world."
 Who eat of food after their sacrifice
 Are quit of fault, but they that spread a feast
 All for themselves, eat sin and drink of sin.
 By food the living live; food comes of rain.
 And rain comes by the pious sacrifice,
 And sacrifice is paid with tithes of toil;
 Thus action is of Brahma, who is one,
 The Only, All-pervading; at all times
 Present in sacrifice. He that abstains
 To help the rolling wheels of this great world,
 Glutting his idle sense, lives a lost life,
 Shameful and vain.

Work here undoubtedly refers to physical labour, and work by way of sacrifice can only be work to be done by all for the common

benefit. Such work, such sacrifice can only be spinning. I do not wish to suggest that the author of the Divine Song had the spinning-wheel in mind. He merely laid down a fundamental principle of conduct. And reading in and applying it to India I can only think of spinning as the fittest and most acceptable sacrificial body labour. I cannot imagine anything nobler or more national than that for say one hour in the day we should all do the labour that the poor must do and thus identify ourselves with them and through them with all mankind. I cannot imagine better worship of God than that in His name I should labour for the poor even as they do. The spinning-wheel spells a more equitable distribution of the riches of the earth.

BENGAL'S RESPONSE

For the satisfaction of those who have not studied the Poet's article, let me inform them that the Poet is not altogether against the spinning-wheel. He does not see the necessity of spinning for all. But I am convinced, that as we go forward there will be no one doubting the efficacy and supremacy of the charkha for banishing India's distressful and growing poverty. Dr. P. C. Ray's frank recognition of the charkha is a valuable acquisition. More than all this recognition is the news coming through letters, that wherever Deshabandhu Das and his devoted wife go, crowds give up their foreign clothing and take up the charkha. Here is the translation of an extract from a letter received by a Bengali friend from his father living near Chandpur made known to India by the Gurkha charge on that dreadful night when helpless coolies were driven away from the station-yard.

Yesterday there was mass singing in procession, an exhibition of hand-spun yarn and a huge mass meeting at the Nirode Park. . . . There was a huge bonfire in which such a large mass of topis and cloth was burnt as I cannot describe. The Shah merchant of Pal's market brought over to the meeting his whole stock of foreign cloth and threw it into the fire. The charkha has not yet spread so much, but I am expecting better results now. In my family your mother, sister and three brothers are all spinning very good yarn.

This is merely a sample of what is happening all over Bengal. I doubt not, that when Bengal's imagination is touched, she will find herself in the front.

THE HONOURS LIST

The Honours List is daily increasing. If we are renouncing one

kind of titles from the Government, we are asking for another and true variety. Gangadharrao Deshpande is the latest selection. His name and the names of many I can think of convince me of the approaching victory. Only we must remain steady under the volley. If we continue to respond to the Government warrants without fuss, without noise and without anger, we may feel certain of immediate success. I continue to receive letters from friends inquiring what will happen when all the leaders are taken away. The questioners betray their unbelief in, if not their unfitness for, swaraj by putting the question "What will happen when all the leaders die?" Our fitness for swaraj can only be demonstrated by our capacity to continue our work in spite of the withdrawal of leaders by death or imprisonment. Surely the memory of imprisonment should act as a spur to greater and more disciplined action. Another friend who felt disappointed when I was not arrested as was rumoured I would be on the fifth, showed a robust faith in himself and the cause. We must be able to stand on Our own legs without support even as we breathe naturally and without artificial aid. If Karnatak is the country I have imagined it to be, Gangadharrao Deshpande's arrest and imprisonment must mean complete boycott of foreign cloth and much greater production of khadi. Karnatak cannot rest satisfied till by its own effort it has secured the freedom of the imprisoned and still-to-be-imprisoned patriots.

OTHER LEADERS

There is little doubt that the Government of Bombay are going about their business in a methodical manner in picking out leaders. For in Pir Turab Ali Shah and Pir Mujadid they have arrested two Mussulmans who have a very large following and whose influence was exercised in order to curb the violent tendency among the rank and file. Of course, Mr. Deshpande's unrivalled influence in Karnatak was also for peace. One would almost think the Government of Bombay was ashamed of its own moderation and was trying to make up for past neglect. The Dharwar judgment and the Sind and the Karnatak arrests point to the fact that the Bombay Government is almost inviting people to violence. But let us hope that it has become awakened too late for the purpose. The country seems to have understood which way lies its interest and will not play into the hands of the Government. Given Hindu-Muslim unity, intelligent acceptance of non-violence by the masses, and systematic work in swadeshi, and nothing can possibly keep us from attaining swaraj during this year.

A MAGISTRATE'S APOLOGY

The reader will recollect the assault instigated by the District Magistrate of Bulandshahr upon Mr. Tyagi who was being tried in his court and who was therefore under his protection.¹ I have now before me the apology he tendered to the accused. Here it is.

PRISONER AT THE BAR,

Before today's proceedings go any further, I wish to say something.

I do so for two reasons,—the first, that I am trying you, and it is not right that you or anyone else should suspect that you will not be tried fairly and in a proper manner. The second, that no officer of Government can wish that any incident should happen to give any section of the community reasonable grounds for resentment, especially as unscrupulous persons are ready to exaggerate such incidents.

At the first hearing I was impatient and you were insolent. I did wrong in having you slapped; and I regret that I did so.

I now tell you, that if you are respectful to the Court, you will find me courteous. If you do not behave properly, I shall find proper means of dealing with you. You will in any case be tried fairly and patiently; and you will have a full opportunity at the proper stage to make any relevant remarks you have to offer.

I may add that out of regard to the loyal members of your community who are doing good work in this District, if you are proved innocent of the offence of which you are accused in this or in any other court, I shall send 50/- to the Malabar Relief Fund.

W. E. J. DOBBS

It is evident to me that the apology was offered under pressure, even as Sir Michael O'Dwyer was made to apologize to the late Council for his offensive remarks. Insincere and mechanical as the wording is, at that very sitting the magistrate broke his promise of giving the accused a patient hearing by expunging from his statement a passage which he did not like. His offer to pay Rs. 50/- to the Malabar Relief Fund for the sake of the loyalists if he was proved to be innocent shows the incorrigibility of the magistrate. The donation was meant to purge the offence committed by the magistrate. The "loyalists" could have nothing to do with the innocence or guilt of

¹ *Vide* "Notes", 13-10-1921, under the sub-title "A Contrast".

the accused. Why then should the donation be conditional upon proof of the accused's innocence? This assault by the magistrate raises an issue of the gravest import. Could such a man occupy, the position of a magistrate for a single day under any civilized Government? Could for instance the Lord Chief Justice of England assault a prisoner being tried before him and still retain his high office ? If the Government of India was not in reality a lawless and totally irresponsible government, the magistrate would have been suspended and prosecuted as a common felon. An assault by a judge upon an accused whilst he is on his trial before that judge is not an ordinary assault that could be treated lightly.

There should be limit even to co-operating patience. Do the Indian ministers concerned feel an easy conscience over the magistrate's crime against the nation ? Or do they think that they have no responsibility because the magistrate does not belong to their department ?

A non-co-operator's duty is simple. Each such violation of law and morals on the part of Government officials must result in making us more determined in our purpose. We may not be satisfied till the system under which such atrocious conduct is possible is uprooted.

ACCUSED'S STATEMENT

Two days before the second hearing of the case Mr. Tyagi sent to the magistrate the following statement:

Vandemataram

In the Court of the District Magistrate, Bulandshahr.

From Mahavir Tyagi accused under Sections 124 and 153 I.P. Code.

I, Mahavir Tyagi, an innocent accused, am compelled to file the following statement: I want to say through this writing that as the said Magistrate, while proving his tyranny and incompetency on the 3rd instant, treated me in the open Court in a way which was calculated to insult and wound myself, my creed and my nationality, by forcing me to stand with "attention", threatening to have me kicked by the Police and actually getting me slapped, an action on the part of the Magistrate which was absolutely illegal and barbarous, therefore in order to preserve my national, religious and personal honour and self-respect, I have, as a protest, decided to take a vow of silence and make a "speech strike" in this Court which has set every law at naught.

(Note:—The following words here in the statement were, against the wishes of the accused, expunged by the Court and signed and dated : "*Jaisi ki*

Punjab main meri Bahnaun ki behurmati ki gai our voh behurmati insaf ke liye Darbar-i-illahi main pesh hai", i.e., just as my sisters in the Punjab were insulted and their outraged honour is seeking its justice before God, in the same way) I leave to God my own insult which is far less than the outrage on the honour of my said sisters. It is possible that the extraordinary treatment meted out to me was intended to provoke the general public, but, I, from my own experience, would say that now Indian public is sufficiently educated. They can put up with every tyranny but would not go a step behind in the non-violent course chalked out for them by the Mahatma (Gandhi).

Praying to God for the liberation of my country,

I am,

The Silent,

MAHAVIR TYAGI

BULANDESHAHR JAIL,

October 4, 1921

It is a courageous and outspoken statement, and if it represents Mr. Tyagi's own sentiments, it requires a modification of the view questioning his courage at the time he was assaulted. As the case is of very considerable importance, involving as it does the question of the bodily safety of prisoners, it is necessary to examine somewhat fully the issues arising from it.

In my opinion the "speech strike" and adopting the title of "the silent," do not help at all. It was the clear duty of the prisoner on the day he was struck to refuse voluntarily to remain in the court. He should have refused there and then to submit to further trial by the so-called judge. He should certainly have sat down as a mark of disowning the court's jurisdiction. All this would have probably meant more assault certainly more punishment. But the secret of non-violence treated as a weapon of the strong means the inviting of suffering and personal injury in order to avoid tyranny. Ordinarily the movement requires or permits us to attend courts under warrants, because it did not anticipate duct such as the Bulandshahr magistrate's. But the extraordinary conduct of the magistrate requires an extraordinary remedy.

The statement rightly emphasizes non-violence. But I do not wish to be misunderstood. The pledge of non-violence does not require us to co-operate in our humiliation. It therefore does not require us to crawl on our bellies or to draw lines with our noses or to

walk to salute the Union Jack or to do anything degrading at the dictation of officials. On the contrary our creed requires us to refuse to do any of these things even though we should be shot. It was therefore, for instance, no part of the duty of the Jallianwala Bagh people to run away or even to turn their backs when they were fired upon. If the message of non-violence had reached them, they would have been expected when fire was opened on them to march towards it with bare breasts and die rejoicing in the belief that it meant the freedom of their country. Non-violence laughs at the might of the tyrant and stultifies him by non-retaliation and non-retiral. We played into General Dyer's hands because we acted as he had expected. He wanted us to run away from his fire, he wanted us to run on our bellies and to draw lines with our noses. That was part of the game of "frightfulness". When we face it with eyes front, it vanishes like an apparition. We may not all evolve that type of courage. But I am certain that swaraj is unattainable this year if some of us have not the courage which enables us to stand firm like a rock without retaliating. The might of the tyrant recoils upon himself when it meets with no response, even as an arm violently waved in the air suffers dislocation.

A RELEVANT QUESTION

And just as we need the cool courage described above, we need perfect discipline and training in voluntary obedience to be able to offer civil disobedience. Civil disobedience is the active expression of non-violence. Civil disobedience distinguishes the non-violence of the strong from the passive, i.e., negative non violence of the weak. And as weakness cannot lead to swaraj, negative non-violence must fail to achieve our purpose.

Have we then the requisite discipline? Have we, a friend asked me, evolved the spirit of obedience to our own rules and resolutions? Whilst we have made tremendous headway during the past twelve months, we have certainly not made enough to warrant us in embarking upon civil disobedience with easy confidence. Rules voluntarily passed by us and rules which carry no sanction save the disapproval of our own conscience must be like debts of honour held far more binding than rules superimposed upon us or rules whose breach we can purge by paying the penalty thereof. It follows that if we have not learnt the discipline of obeying our own rules, in other words carrying out our own promises, we are ill-adapted for disobedience that can be at all described as civil. I do therefore

suggest to every Congressman, every non-co-operator, and above all to every member of the All-India Congress Committee to set himself or herself right with the Congress and his or her creed by carrying on the strictest self-examination and by correcting himself or herself wherever he or she might have failed.

THE NEXT MEETING

The forthcoming meeting of the All-India Congress Committee will nearly decide our fate so far as the attainment of our three ends during this year is concerned. We must have a programme which, if we vote for it, we must carry out at the cost of our lives. I am hoping that everyone will come with the fullest information about his own constituency on every point. I hope that everyone will come with a clean slate so far as his own obligations under the programme are concerned. Let every member realize, that he or she is a representative of the people and especially his electors in a manner in which the stalwarts in the reformed councils cannot claim to be. Let him think out the meaning of his responsibility, if he as a representative is to play his part in attaining the national goal during the next two months.

MORE SIGNATURES

Telegrams and letters have poured in upon me from Deshbandhu Das downwards authorizing me to insert their signatures to the Manifesto¹ on the Karachi Resolution. I am not announcing all the names, because I hold it to be unnecessary. It was a demonstration to show the Government that the Mussulman divines were not the only ones who held it sinful to serve the present Government, and the Ali Brothers and their co-accused were not the only persons to approve of the Karachi Resolution. The others will sign the Manifesto, if the Government will graciously honour the signatories with arrest and imprisonment.

CONGRESS FINANCE

I have seen criticism in the Press regarding the collection and the administration of the Tilak Memorial Swaraj Fund. The public have certainly the right to know all about the Fund and other Congress collections. In my opinion the Congress finance has never been in a more satisfactory condition. It will be possible to speak with

¹ *Vide* "A Manifesto", 4-10-1921.

greater definiteness, when Mr. Sopariwala who has been appointed all-India auditor has inspected all the Congress branches and reported upon their condition. The announcement made on the 1st of July as to the collections stands. There was a mistake made by me in reading Mr. Das' wire. My reading was, that fifteen lakhs were collected and ten more were as good as collected. I learnt on meeting him, that fifteen lakhs were definitely promised, and he expected to bring up the figure to twenty-five lakhs. When I was last in Calcutta, Mr. Das had not succeeded in collecting fifteen lakhs that were definitely promised, but he certainly expected to collect that and the additional ten lakhs. In any case the crore was assured without the ten lakhs. The figures for all the other provinces were an understatement. Most of the monies have certainly been collected. Some debts are still outstanding. Every province knows its finance. The accounts are kept by each province and they are open to the inspection of every member. In some provinces, I know, the accounts are published periodically and are also audited by local auditors. Most branches have prepared their budgets and are spending according to the budgets sanctioned. It is possible that some provinces have spent more extravagantly than others, it is equally possible that in every province extravagance in some department or other may be proved by an outsider. But I do know that in the majority of cases monies have been and are being spent with the knowledge and sanction of the members of provincial bodies. In every province, in so far as I am aware, the chairmen are men of highest probity. In Messrs Jamnalal Bajaj and Umar Sobani the All-India Congress Committee has treasurers who command universal respect, and in Messrs Nehru and Ansari and Rajagopalachari it has secretaries whom it will be difficult to surpass in ability, industry or integrity. I have therefore no hesitation in assuring the busy reader who is solicitous about the Congress finance that all that is humanly possible has been done by the Congress authorities to ensure proper collection and administration of all new Congress funds.

FOREIGN POLICY

The draft resolution on foreign policy approved and circulated by the Working Committee has created a mild sensation. That some people are surprised at the Working Committee seriously discussing the question shows that in their opinion India is not ripe for swaraj. I have endeavoured to show before now, that everybody and every

nation is always ripe for swaraj, or to put it another way no nation needs to undergo tutelage at the hands of another. Indeed whilst we are maturing our plans for establishing swaraj, we are bound to consider and define our foreign policy. Surely we are bound authoritatively to tell the world what relations we wish to cultivate with it. If we do not fear our neighbours, or if although feeling strong we have no designs upon them, we must say so. We are equally bound to tell the world whether we want to send our sepoy to the battle-fields of France or Mesopotamia. We must not be afraid to speak our minds on all that concerns the nation.

A correspondent from Ludhiana has sent me a string of questions, showing how the public mind is agitated. He begins:

1. Shall India's foreign policy be governed by any other consideration but that of its population ?

Naturally the interest of India must be given preference over all others.

2. Should Indian men or money be used for fighting the battles of England, etc. ?

Yes, if India has entered into treaty obligations to fight for other nations.

3. Shall the law of the land be subordinate to the special interest of any Sect, league or society ?

Certainly not. But the law may be such as to provide assistance to friendly neighbours as we would, if we were free today, be assisting the Turks with men and money to the best of our ability.

4. Should any government be made a tool for the protection of any religion, race or class?

The swaraj government to be worth the name will certainly protect the religions professed in India and the races domiciled in India.

5. How are things to be settled when Shastra or *Shariat* says one thing and the country's need is against it?

The question is really irrelevant. The need of one sect or the religion professed by it must be the need of the country.

6. Should the relations between the zemindars and the ryots be based on mutiny?

I hope they never will be so based under swaraj, but that then they will be happy and mutually beneficial.

7. Should loyalty to one's motherland be conditional, and if so, how ?
Loyalty to the country is always subordinate to loyalty to God.
Young India, 20-10-1921

216. HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY A CAMOUFLAGE?

The editorial notes in the current number of *The Modern Review* contain reflections on Hindu-Muslim unity, which deserve a reply. The talented editor has headed them with the word "camouflage" and has evidently come to the conclusion that the unity is only so-called. In my opinion, however, it is not only not a camouflage but is fast becoming a permanent reality. I have made the admission in these pages that it is still a sapling requiring delicate handling. But it is certainly not a pretension or make-believe if only because both realize the truth of the common danger.

It is unfortunately still true, that the communal or the sectarian spirit is predominant. Mutual distrust is still there. Old memories are still alive. It is still true that at elections considerations not of fitness but of religion prevail. But to recognize these facts is to recognize the difficulty of union. When both parties know them and are honestly trying to achieve unity in spite of them, it is hardly just to call the attempt or the limited achievement a camouflage.

It is not correct to say that the appeal of the Khilafat associations against cow-killing leaves the Mussulmans cold and unresponsive. In the first place, is it not a cheering phenomenon that the Khilafat workers themselves are Mussulmans working to prevent cow-killing? In the second place, I venture to that the appeal has had wonderful success in almost all the parts of India. Is it a small matter that the burden of cow-protection has been taken over almost entirely by the Mussulman workers? Was it not a soul-stirring thing for Hindus to witness Messrs Chotani and Khatri of Bombay rescuing hundreds of cows from their co-religionists and presenting them to the grateful Hindus?

It is certainly true that both Maulana Mahomed Ali and I are careful enough "not to tread on each other's corns". But for frankness of treatment it would be difficult to bear us. For us the unity is not "a house of cards" as the writer cruelly suggests, but it is such a substantial fact that we would die to keep it intact. Let me inform the reader that throughout all our journeyings there has never been a jar

between us, never any mental reservations. The cruellest cut however is given in the following sentence:

Reading between the lines of their speeches, it is not difficult to see that with one of them the sad plight of the Khilafat in distant Turkey is the central fact, while with the other the attainment of swaraj here in India is the primary object in view.

I claim that with us both the Khilafat is the central fact, with Maulana Mahomed Ali because it is his religion, with me because in laying down my life for the Khilafat I ensure the safety of the cow, that is my religion, from the Mussulman knife. Both hold swaraj equally dear because only by swaraj is the safety of our respective faiths possible. This may seem a lower ideal. But there is no concealment in it. For me the attainment of the Khilafat through India's power is the attainment of swaraj. Love is the basis of our friendship as it is of religion. I seek to gain Mussulman friendship by right of love. And if love persists even on the part of one community, unity will become a settled fact in our national life. It is unjust to suggest of Maulana Mahomed Ali that he speaks in elegant Urdu understandable of the majority of Bengali Mussulmans. I know that he has been trying his best to introduce into his Urdu speech as much simplicity as possible.

It is unfortunately true, that there are still Hindus and Mussulmans who out of fear of one another consider foreign domination a necessity. And that has not a little to do with the delay in the attainment of our goal. We do not yet clearly perceive that the possibility of a free fight between the two communities is a lesser evil than the existence of foreign domination. And if it is the interposition of the British Government which keeps us from fighting one another, the sooner we are left free to fight, the better for our manhood, our respective religions and our country. It will not be a new phenomenon if we fought ourselves into sanity. The English carried on internecine warfare for twenty-one years before they settled down to peaceful work. The French fought among themselves with a savage ferocity hardly excelled during recent times. The Americans did nothing better before they evolved their commonwealth. Let us not hug our unmanliness for fear of fighting amongst ourselves. The able writer of the "notes" loves unity as much as any of us and suggests that there must be "a root and branch change, a radical transformation and reconstruction from the foundation". But he leaves the reader to

guess the remedy. It would have been better if he had made concrete suggestions. He would evidently have us inter-marry and inter-dine if only by way of a beginning. If that is the radical transformation desired by him and if it is a condition precedent to the attainment of swaraj I very much fear that we would have to wait at least for a century. It is tantamount to asking Hindus to give up their religion. I do not say that it is wrong to do so, but I do suggest that it is reformation outside practical politics. And when that transformation comes, if it is ever to come, it will not be Hindu-Muslim unity. And what the present movement is aiming at is to achieve unity even whilst a devout Mussulman retains his faith intact and a devout Hindu his. It have therefore often said to my audiences, that the Ali Brothers and I serve as an object-lesson to all Hindus and Mussulmans in Hindu-Muslim unity. We both claim to be devoted to our respective faiths. In spite of the greatest regard for the Brothers I would not give my daughter in marriage to one of their sons, and I know that they would not give theirs to my son, assuming that in spite of his being a Hindu, he so far reformed himself as to covet the hand of their daughter. I do not partake of their meat foods, and they scrupulously respect my bigotry, if my self-denial may be so named. And yet I do not know three persons whose hearts are more united than those of the Ali Brothers and myself. And I wish to assure the reader, that the unity is not a camouflage but it is a lasting friendship based upon exquisitely delicate regard and toleration of one another's views and habits. And I have no manner of fear that when the protecting hand of the British is withdrawn from me, either the Brothers or their friends would violate my freedom or attack my religion. And I base this security from fear first upon God and His promise of safety to every creature of His who endeavours to walk in His fear, and then upon the honourable conduct of the Brothers and their friends, although I am aware that physically any one of them is more than a match for twelve like me put together. And so from the particular instance I have generalised for the whole of India, and shown that Hindu-Muslim unity is possible if only we have mutual toleration, and faith in ourselves and therefore in the ultimate goodness of human nature.

Young India, 20-10-1921

217. THE MEANING OF THE MOPLAH RISING

A correspondent from Scotland takes me to task for not dealing sufficiently with the Moplah rising in these columns. The result, he says, has been that those in Great Britain who are in the habit of studying Indian affairs have been induced to believe that an Islamic kingdom is established in India. The reproof is not wholly undeserved, but I have not shirked duty in the matter. I have been simply helpless. I wanted to go to Calicut and reach the bottom of the trouble as I believed I could have. But the Government had willed it otherwise. I am sorry to believe but it is my belief, that the men on the spot do not want to end the trouble. They certainly do not wish to give non-co-operators the credit for peacefully ending the trouble. They are desirous of showing once more, that it is only the British soldier who can maintain peace in India. And I could not then give battle to the Government by disregarding the instructions not to enter the disturbed area.

I should like to think better of the men on the spot. It is contrary to my nature to believe in the depravity of human beings. But there is so much evidence about me of the depravity of the bureaucratic mind that it will stop at nothing to gain its end. It is the literal truth I tell, when I say that before I went to Champaran, I did not believe the stories I was told of atrocities committed against the peasantry of Champaran. When I went there, I found the state much worse than was described to me. I had refused to believe that innocent people could have been Murdered in cold blood without warning as they were in Jallianwala Bagh. I had refused to believe that human beings could be made to crawl upon their bellies. But on reaching the Punjab, I found to my horror that much more than what I was told had happened. And all this was done in the name of peace and order so-called, but in reality for the purpose of sustaining a false prestige, a false system and an unnatural commerce. It is true that a strong Lieutenant-Governor was able to attain justice in Champaran in the face of overwhelming opposition. But that was really an exception due to exceptional causes. And so I feel the Moplah revolt has come as a blessing to a system that is crumbling to pieces by the weight of its own enormity.

The Moplah revolt is a test for Hindus and Mussulmans. Can

Hindus friendship survive the strain put upon it? Can Mussulmans in the deepest recesses of their hearts approve of the conduct of the Moplahs? Time alone can show the reality. A verbal and forced philosophic acceptance of the inevitable is no test of Hindu friendship. The Hindus must have the courage and the faith to feel that they can protect their religion in spite of such fanatical eruptions. A verbal disapproval by the Mussulmans of Moplah madness is no test of Mussulman friendship. The Mussulmans must naturally feel the shame and humiliation of the Moplah conduct about forcible conversions and looting, and they must work away so silently and effectively that such things might become impossible even on the part of the most fanatical among them. My belief is that the Hindus as a body have received the Moplah madness with equanimity and that the cultured Mussulmans are sincerely sorry for the Moplah's perversion of the teachings of the Prophet.

The Moplah revolt teaches another lesson, viz., that each individual must be taught the art of self-defence. It is more a mental state that has to [be] inculcated than that our bodies should be trained for retaliation. Our mental training has been one of feeling helpless. Bravery is not a quality of the body it is of the soul. I have seen cowards encased in tough muscles, and rare courage in the frailest body. I have seen big bulky and muscular Zulus cowering before an English lad and turning tail if they saw a loaded revolver pointed at them. I have seen Emily Hobhouse with a paralytic body exhibiting courage of the highest order. She was the one noble woman who kept up the drooping spirits of brave Boer generals and equally brave Boer women. The weakest of us physically must be taught the art of facing dangers and giving a good account of ourselves. What was more detestable, the ignorant fanaticism of the Moplah brother, or the cowardliness of the Hindu brother who helplessly muttered the Islamic formula or allowed his tuft of hairs to be cut or his vest to be changed? Let me not be misunderstood. I want both the Hindus and Mussulmans to cultivate the cool courage to die without killing. But if one has not that courage, I want him to cultivate the art of killing and being killed, rather than in a cowardly manner flee from danger. For the latter in spite of his flight does commit mental *himsa*. He flees because he has not the courage to be killed in the act of killing.

There is yet another lesson the Moplah outbreak teaches us. We dare not leave any section of our countrymen in utter darkness and

expect not to be overtaken by it ourselves. Our English “masters” were uninterested in the Moplahs becoming orderly citizens and learning the virtue of toleration and the truth of Islam. But we too have neglected our ignorant countrymen all these long centuries. We have not felt the call of love to see that no one was left ignorant of the necessity of humaneness or remained in want of food or clothing for no fault of his own. If we do not wake up betimes, we shall find a similar tragedy enacted by all the submerged classes. The present awakening is affecting all classes. The “untouchables” and all the so-called semi-savage tribes will presently bear witness to our wrongs against them if we do not do penance and render tardy justice to them.

Young India, 20-10-1921

218. TO THE READER

I have said elsewhere in this issue that, as far as lies within my power, I shall spend the remaining part of this year in Gujarat, and that too in the Ashram.

My only reason for doing so is to have as much time as possible to myself for thinking and writing and for meeting those whom I should meet. I cannot do this if persons drop in at all hours simply to see me. People’s affection for me is such that there is a stream of visitors throughout the day. In such conditions I cannot work as much as I should like to do.

I would, therefore, request those readers of the *Navajivan* who are regular visitors to the Ashram not to come merely to see me. The better course for them would be to devote in carding, spinning and weaving the time they would spend in coming here to see me. Those who wish to put any questions to me would get a reply if they write to me.

Those who needs must come would save their time if they do so by appointment, or come between three and four in the afternoon. I would request that no one should in any case come in the morning, except by special appointments, as I devote my mornings to writing and such other work.

We shall accomplish our task in the time which remains with us only if we, who wish to serve the public, put ourselves and others to the best possible use from the point of view of public service. In doing so, I expect the fullest co-operation from the readers of *Navajivan* at

any rate, and I believe that if all readers of *Navajivan* make the best possible use of the advice given in it and act upon it, even that would take us to our destination in time. Truth, courage and hard work are essential. If we do not get swaraj this year, we shall have only our indolence to blame.

Hard-working men and women should take stock each day how their time has been spent and maintain a daily balance-sheet. They should not waste a single moment in idle talk, and should keep the good of the country in mind while earning living. They should go further and devote their spare time wholly to national work.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-10-1921

219. MY NOTES

MY SURAT EXPERIENCES

I have come back after a day's visit to Surat, where I had gone just to see how things were going.

There were invitations to visit Navasari, Kathor and other places, but I could not accept them. If in Gujarat too I go on visiting places, the purpose for which I have stopped touring would be defeated. It is best that I remain in the Ashram, write and make what suggestions I can from there.

I have done enough talking. If it is felt at any place that only my presence would infuse some strength into the people there, I think it is necessary that we should learn to do without such strength for the present. It is more necessary to increase our strength wherever we have acquired some and organized it so that it can be effectively employed. Only then shall we succeed in our resolve to win swaraj this year. Swaraj, in my view, lies in the skill with which, we are able to exploit the awake-ning in the country. At this stage, therefore, I can be of better service to the people by offering guidance and setting an example in spinning.

I had gone to Surat on a sort of inspection tour to see for myself how far it was ready for swaraj. I saw there a veritable sea of white caps and found khadi being used on a fairly large scale. I am not, however, likely to be taken in by these things. There is little enthusiasm for khadi among women in Surat. They attended the meetings in large numbers but, I noticed, in saris of foreign material. With all that,

the work they have done in the Surat District is quite considerable. At present, it seems to me, the competition is between Surat and Kheda. Nevertheless, I feel that Surat is still not strong enough to start civil disobedience. Not all the [Congress] workers of Surat have yet become proficient in carding, spinning and weaving. The city still does not have thousands of men who feel confident that, in the event of their imprisonment, their families will be able to maintain themselves without support from public funds by carding, weaving, etc.

But I do believe that Surat can be ready in this manner within a month. People there have come to appreciate the real value of swadeshi, only it has to be put on a firmer footing. For that, I think it is necessary that the workers in the District devote their energies exclusively to this work. Spinning and weaving should be given the first place in the existing schools. Teachers too should take up this work. There should be many, not just one, who can identify the varieties of yarn, its count, staple, etc. Till we are permeated through and through with the spirit of khadi, till our women have fallen in love with it, we shall not be fit for swaraj, for, till then, we shall not be in possession of the means of banishing hunger from the land and shall not, in consequences be well-equipped for the service of the poor. Till we are, we lack the qualification to start civil disobedience.

I was asked in Surat what was to be done if people would not increase the use of khadi still further and take greater interest in spinning and weaving. The answer is simple. Do those of us who ask this question themselves spin and weave? If there is nothing further to be gained from trying to persuade others, why should we not utilize every moment of our time in making a science of carding, spinning and weaving and acquiring the highest proficiency in them? Should we not believe that by attaining perfection ourselves we shall be teaching perfection to others ? A creeper needs a hedge against which to grow. There is no point in complaining that swadeshi is making no progress or that people take no interest in it. We do not have even 100 workers in every district who are experts in carding, weaving and spinning. With those hundred, we can train 1,00,000 more. But what can we do if we have none? I would, therefore, advise workers of the Surat District to attain and help others to attain perfection in swadeshi. They can certainly do this much, if not more, in this month. Swadeshi then will automatically spread everywhere. If with all these efforts we do not succeed, we shall know that we are still not ready for

swaraj. This is our work, whether we do it now or later.

NON-CO-OPERATION IN RANDEK

While I was on my inspection tour of Surat I also visited Rander. I had been to Rander earlier too, and had then expressed my disappointment at people's lack of interest there.¹ But all that has changed. There is now a fine national school there, the wine shop has closed down and everywhere you see men in khadi. There is virtually no demand for foreign cloth. There is a large Muslim population in Rander, and some of them are millionaires. These last have set apart Rs. 60,000 worth of foreign cloth for being sent to Smyrna. Sons of wealthy Muslims have taken up picketing wine shops. Thus, from every point of view Rander has made great progress in non-co-operation. All this enthusiasm has come during the past two months, in the wake of Maulana Shaukat Ali's last visit to the place. True, the Rs. 25,000 which the people of Rander have contributed to the Angora Fund is far from enough for a community which can give lakhs, and the revered Maulana Azad Sobhani gave them a piece of his mind for that. I hope that, though the citizens of Rander have entered late in the race, they will outstrip all others in the Surat District in every matter. For this to happen, every youth and every woman in Rander should get busy with the spinning-wheel or the loom. The notion that a wealthy person need do no work should be banished from our minds. It has bred idleness and poverty among us. The rich too should work for the good of the people. Aurangzeb had little need to work, but he used to sew caps. We, who are already so poor, are doubly under obligation to work. Since we have become slaves through the use of foreign cloth, it is trebly our duty, for promoting swadeshi, to card, spin and weave.

FOOLISH SUPERSTITIONS

A gentleman in Surat gave me ten rupees saying that the gift was in fulfilment of a resolution he had made. It seems someone had recovered from an illness after he had vowed that he would make an offering to me if he did so. I accepted the money, since it was for a charitable purpose, but asked the person who gave it to me not to accept in future money offered on such grounds. Our country labours under a crushing weight of superstitions and

¹ *Vide* "Experiences in Gujrat", 24-4-1921.

addition to it in my name would pain me very much indeed. We shall not be able to take the country forward by adding to the number of our superstitions. The practice of making vows of this kind is an ancient one. It may be, as some people believe, that the element of faith in it is a good thing in itself, but I am convinced that the practice does not deserve to be encouraged. Hence, wherever people are found using my name in that way, they should be dissuaded from doing so. Such resolutions may be made in anyone's name and the practice will spread. If all those who vow to make an offering in a particular manner if they recover, some are bound to recover. The poor fellows do make the offering, but what connection could their recovery have had with their vow? I can understand those recovering from illness making some offering to me, if those who do not recover despite their vow could fine me. In the latter event, I would become bankrupt paying the fines and be left fit for no social service. But since I am not prepared to pay a fine to those who do not get well, I do not wish to accept gifts from those who do. It seems best to me that we should refuse a contribution even to a public cause, if it is offered in this manner.

What is true of superstitious vows is true also of the practice of offering reverence [to a human being]. The practices of touching a person's feet, of bowing with the whole body prostrated on the ground, waving lights before him, etc., also deserve to be discontinued. How much of people's time would be wasted if lakhs of them did these things? I am put out by all these people coming for my *darshan*. I would be driven crazy if all of them decided to prostrate themselves in reverence before me, or I would be compelled not to show even the courtesy of noticing them. I would, therefore, suggest that we should stand at a distance and fold our hands to the other person or salute him and give up all other formalities. People can come to no harm if we do so, for mutual respect is a matter of mental attitude and we can express it at the proper time. The only worship that I ask for, if I have at all earned it, is that the people should promptly act upon any suggestion of mine which they approve of and secure swaraj. That is the only real worship worth offering; worship in any other manner may be misplaced and we should refrain from offering it.

NATIONAL QUALITY OF NATIONAL SCHOOLS

A correspondent asked a few questions some time ago to know

in what the specifically national quality of a national school consisted. Of these I answer some which are likely to be of interest.

QUESTION: will a student graduating from a national institution of learning be free from the worry of finding work for a living?

ANSWER: He should certainly be free from such worry. That is no knowledge which does not confer even this freedom. That alone is knowledge which helps one to win three kinds of freedom—economic, social and spiritual. One who does not have freedom of the first kind cannot possibly have that of any other kind.

Should not self-sacrifice be the sacred duty of everyone serving in a national institution?

Of course it should be. He who cannot give up self-interest cannot, in my opinion, become the servant of the nation.

Should not a *snataka*¹ dedicate his life to the service of the nation?

This principle does not apply always. After a nation's life has been organized on moral principles, whoever lives an honest, fearless life is doing some service.

When we say that Government schools do not build character at the same time that they impart knowledge, do we not mean that in a national institution character-building will get special attention?

That is certainly what we mean. Even imparting knowledge should aim at character-building. Knowledge is the means and character-building is the end.

You would, then, consider it essential that teachers of national institutions should have a strong moral character ?

Of course.

Does this not mean that a teacher who smokes and drinks should be kept out of such institutions?

We have certainly risen to a high enough level to be able to do without a teacher who drinks. I dare not say the same thing with regard to smoking. I know from experience that a person who smokes may be upright in other ways. It is necessary to remember, while observing the moral character of others, that we do not become self-righteous watchmen.

It is pathetic, is it not, to see students becoming physical wrecks by the time they matriculate and being almost completely spent by the time they graduate ?

¹ Graduate of the Gujarat Vidyapith, a national university of Ahmedabad established in October 1920

If I have any say in the matter, I would stop further education of any boy who had lost his health.

Is it not necessary that all the faculties of a pupil receiving national education should be developed?

Yes, of course, they should. He alone is healthy in mind who is healthy in body, and when the mind is healthy the soul also is healthy—this is obvious.

Is it not desirable to keep married students under the age of 21 out of national schools?

They should be, in theory. Married life and studies do not really go together.

Don't you think our education should spread the idea that a widower should not marry again?

I should certainly like education which does that.

Should corporal punishment have any place in a scheme of national education?

Certainly not.

If a student develops contempt for national education, whom would you hold responsible?

Generally, the teachers and the students both are responsible, but more often the teachers.

Don't you think languages figure too prominently in our school curricula ?

Several languages of the same family cannot be much of a burden on the students. I believe that one can learn, for example, the four languages, Hindustani, Gujarati, Marathi and Bengali, without any strain. But English, Greek, Latin and Arabic have no common ground.

Shouldn't the teacher have a higher status in society than a minister? If the Viceroy could be paid Rs. 1,000, should not the teacher be paid Rs. 2,000?

There is a price on the Viceroy's services; there is none on the teacher's. He will, therefore, always be poor. He should be happy earning enough for his minimum needs and teaching. The Viceroy puts down his price; if the teacher did that, he would be useless as a teacher.

I give here my reply to a question put by another correspondent, since it concerns our present subject.

Should a teacher marry a girl who is his student? Likewise, should a boy marry a girl studying in his class?

I at any rate would consider both very improper. A girl who is my student should be as safe [with me] as my daughter, and a girl in

my class as safe as a sister. That pure brother-and-sister relationship is the only proper relationship between boys and girls studying together. This is all I should like to say in reply to this question, but it is an important enough question for a fuller discussion. I have no doubt in my mind about the correctness of my reply to the first question. With regard to the second, however, I see some difficulties in these modern times when thousands of boys and girls attend the same school. In any case, in every institution that I have managed I have insisted on the foregoing rule being followed and the results have always been happy.

FLATTERING WEAVERS

A friend wonders whether it would not be profitable to plead with weavers as we have done with lawyers, merchants, students, etc. I have indeed said something about this in a previous issue and, if I do not write oftener on it, that is because weavers as a class are not literate and cannot read. There can be no doubt that, if a desire for serving the nation can be aroused among the artisans, and particularly among weavers, we would achieve the goal of swadeshi in a short time. Millions of weavers in the country—Hindus and Muslims—help foreign interests. They use foreign yarn worth millions of rupees in weaving, and some produced in our mills too. If, however, they exclusively accept hand-spun yarn for weaving and go on improving the quality, the country's face would brighten up and crores of rupees would find their way into the homes of our people.

If the weavers wake up and decide exclusively to weave hand-spun yarn, not only would millions earn a little by spinning but, along with them, thousands of others employed in ginning, carding and starching would get more work to do. The daily earnings of thousands of carpenters and blacksmiths would go up. Total swadeshi would not only bring a straight gain of 60 crores of rupees to the nation, but create work in other professions which would earn many more crores and revive beautiful arts and crafts which once flourished in the country. At present we have degenerated into mere unskilled labourers.

Everyone, therefore, can see the importance of inducing the weaver class to work for the service of the people. We can do this best by ourselves becoming weavers. It is one thing to approach weavers because we need their help, and quite another to tell them something for their own good. The only way to serve their good is to learn their

profession ourselves, understand the science of it and explain it to them.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-10-1921

220. LETTER TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

SABARMATI,

October 21, 1921

I have received the ruling and the statement of the President of the All-India Congress Committee and have read the statement thereon issued by Pandit Motilal Nehru. In my humble opinion the President's position is wholly untenable. It is for the All-India Committee to pronounce the final judgment on the President's ruling. But it will be against all constitutional usage to override the resolution of the Working Committee to convene a meeting of the All-India Congress Committee for the 4th November. I entirely endorse the position taken up by Pandit Motilal Nehru and hope that every member of the All-India Congress Committee will attend the meeting at Delhi on the 4th November. At the same time I recognize that the President feels conscientiously that the Working Committee has gone wrong in not disturbing the elections in Madras and Bengal. But it was equally a matter of conscience for the Working Committee not to disturb them. The All-India Congress Committee alone can be the final arbiter.

The Bombay Chronicle, 24-10-1921

221. OPTIMISM

Optimism indicates faith; only an atheist can be a pessimist. The optimist lives in fear of God, listens with humility to the inner voice, obeys its promptings and believes that God ordains everything for the best.

The pessimist vainly thinks that it is he who does everything. When he fails in some undertaking, he leaves himself out and blames others; indulges in vain prating about not being sure whether God exists and, finally, concluding that this world is worthless and he alone good, but that his merit is not recognized, puts an end to his life. If he does not do that, he merely endures an existence which is little better

than death.

The optimist lives delighting in thoughts of love and charity and, since there is none whom he looks upon as his enemy, he moves without fear whether he is in the forest or in the midst of men. He has no fear of ferocious animals or equally dreadful men, for his soul cannot be bitten by snakes nor pierced by the sinner's sword. Such a one will not give too much thought to his body, will rather look upon it as a fragile vessel of glass which is fated to break some day and will not go roaming all over the world to preserve it in health. The optimist will not kill or harass any human being. With his inner ear ever attuned to the sweet music of his soul, he will live floating on an ocean of joy.

The pessimist, being himself a prey of violent attachments and dislikes, looks upon every person as his enemy and fears him. He has of course no such thing as the inner voice. Like the honey bee, he flits from pleasure to pleasure, daily tiring of them and daily seeking new ones and, finally, dies, unloved, unwept and unsung.

Such being my views, I hope no one will believe that I ever told anyone I would commit suicide if swaraj was not won this year. Except for saving oneself from rape, suicide is, according to me, a major sin and an act of cowardice. Why indeed should I commit suicide because India may not have won swaraj? If she sincerely desires swaraj, let her fight for it and get it. She has realized its value, and has even tasted of it. If now she cares enough for it, let her pay the price and secure it. Whether or not she does so, what reason is that for me to commit suicide?

I did, however, mention one thing before some friends. When asked what I would do if we had not got swaraj by January, I said I had so great a faith in the country that till the very end of December I would continue to believe that we would definitely get swaraj. What, therefore, I would do in January, I did not know at all, I said. With people's leave, I would retire to a solitary place and live by myself, or would welcome helping the country, to the best of my ability, in drafting its constitution under swaraj. I should not like to remain alive next year if we have not won swaraj by then. I am, in that event, likely to be pained so deeply that this body may perish—I would desire that it should.

I have seen so much suffering in the country, economic and moral, that, if I have not perished in the flames, it is because of the

hope which people have inspired in me. “We shall have purified ourselves in a day”, and “Today our millions will get some flesh on their skeletons”—I am sustained from day to day by such hopes. I believe that one year is enough in which to realize them. In September [1920], I was the only one who believed and said that this was possible.

In December, others unanimously took up the programme. If now the Congress fails to fulfil its pledge, what would be the position of a person like me? It would surely mean bankruptcy for me no less than for the Congress. If, putting my trust in the Congress, I issue a draft and then find that it is not honoured, where should I turn? I very much desire that in the event of our failing to get swaraj [in this year], everyone else should suffer on January 1 as much as I would. Everyone should feel the want of dharma as much as of food.

A friend asked me if this was not cowardice. I do not think so. I see in it an expression of compassion; it is plain common sense to me. There is no point in continuing to give service when it is not valued as such and none in living if there is no good in it. When the body itself is worn out, would it not be better to live on the Ganga water and let it slowly perish than to keep it alive, a mere skeleton, by treating it with *vasantmalati*¹ or some such stuff? As far as I can see today, I shall never advise any course but “adopt swadeshi and win swaraj”. If I cannot think of anything else at all, of what service can I possibly be?

We are now on the last rung of the ladder. To take a step further up without recouping ourselves where we stand would ultimately mean a set-back for us. I remember, when I was climbing the ghat for going up to Sinhgad², a point came beyond which I simply could not continue to climb. I could resume the climb only after I had rested for a while and regained my strength.

We are in the same position. Till we have completely succeeded in the swadeshi programme, we shall not get the strength to push forward. My remaining alive, therefore, or continuing to live in society, depends on the success of swadeshi.

This is how I see things; this is the state of my mind today. What tomorrow will bring, God alone knows.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-10-1921

¹ An Ayurvedic drug.

² A mountain fort near Poona in Maharashtra

222. TO MILL-WORKERS

BROTHERS,

Ever since my return to Ahmedabad at the end of my tour, I have been hearing that the drink habit has decreased among all sections of people but that the liquor-booths which are frequented by mill-workers continue to flourish, that, moreover, the customers there pay no heed to volunteers, actually abuse them and even beat them. I do not know what truth there is in this. I am sure that there are hundreds of workers who would not approve of such conduct.

Those who are labouring in your cause have been doing so in the hope that you will reform yourselves and be happy, that you will give up your bad habits, learn to save money and pay off your debts, that you may have good houses to live in and your children may get education, that you will learn to be clean and, in your free time, will read good books and reflect over them, in every way, you should enjoy a good reputation in society.

Those who are trying to help you will not be satisfied by merely getting a wage-rise or some bonuses for you. If you accept their services only for securing an increase in wages and do not change your way of life, you will lose their services and public opinion, which today is on your side, will no longer be there.

Not only should you become good, but you should also take part in the holy movement of self-purification going on in the country today. You should understand and do your duty about the Khilafat and the Punjab agitations and in the movement for swaraj. If you wish to do so, you must give up your vices. We are carrying on this struggle in the name of God. Do you think God would help a drunkard, a gambler or a dissolute person? How can a Muslim addicted to drink serve the cause of the Khilafat? What help can a Hindu, who is given to drinking, render to his Muslim brother?

Whenever I raise with your employers the issue of wage-increase or bonus for you, they simply ask me: "What good do you hope to do by asking for increase in wages? Do you think the workers will spend the money to eat better food? Will they purchase better clothes? Will they educate their children? Will they not rather, spend, it on drinking more?" When I hear this, I hang my head in shame. You should save me from this humiliation, and that you can do only

by giving up drink.

You, readers, most likely do not drink; how, then, can you be held responsible for your co-workers ? The answer to this question is that swaraj lies in accepting responsibility for one's associates. It is for you to win over other workers and shame them into reform. You should keep a watch on those of them who are drink-addicts. Yours should be the burden of improving them. It is only when, in this manner, you bring about a daily improvement in your conditions, that you will have earned a wage-rise, bonus and so on. You can easily see that public sympathy will not remain on your side for ever if you do not improve. I hope, therefore, that you will make every effort to rid yourselves of the evil of drinking.

Your well-wisher,

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-10-1921

223. MY NOTES

CONDITIONS FOR VISITING

I keep getting requests to visit various parts of Gujarat. It was suggested that I should go to Dakor and other places. I also received requests to visit Petlad and Sojitra. I have, however, begged to be excused, till the end of this month at any rate. I have then to go to Delhi. After returning from Delhi, I intend to go round a little in Gujarat. I have certainly not given up my hopes of Gujarat. I assuredly cherish the hope that Gujarat will make every sacrifice in this holy fight and, therefore, I expect that I shall be taken to such places only where men and women use khadi for all purposes—on public holidays and important occasions, at home and outside. Everyone should see to it that my time is not wasted. Even if we have only one district well prepared, we shall be able to put up a strong fight and win. I shall be ready to encamp in such a district. For that, however, the following conditions must first be fulfilled:

1. Hindus and Muslims there should be living like blood-brothers; not in fear of each other, but in loving harmony.

2. The Hindus, Muslims, and Parsis in the district, all should be convinced in their hearts that victory on the Khilafat issue with India's

help is possible only through a peaceful struggle.

3. The people of that district should have realized that, together with the spirit of non-violence, they need to have courage even to mount the gallows. At least one in a hundred must have such courage; that is, in a population of five lakhs, there should be not less than 5,000 such persons quietly determined to face death.

4. The Hindus of that district. should have I learnt to regard untouchability as a sin and to treat the *Bhangis*, *Dheds* and others with kindness.

So much by way of action on the mental plane. Besides this, as a token of their sincerity and proof of their zeal,

5. over 90% of the people of that district should have renounced the use of foreign cloth and should be wearing khadi made from yarn which they themselves have spun and got woven in their own district, and should possess one spinning-wheel for every ten persons among them, and this should be in actual operation.

It is not at all difficult to satisfy these conditions, and even one such district will be able to win swaraj. The whole of Gujarat prepared in this way, then, would undoubtedly win it. Similarly, if any district has one man in ten who is ready, if necessary to lay down his life for the cause, then, too, swaraj would be a certainty. The reader will see that there is but one explanation for all this. We describe our struggle as one of truth and non-violence. If our lives are filled with these, the fulfilment of the conditions mentioned should be but child's play to us. Moreover, we should all remember that we must not hate or abuse or insult our opponents—be they Englishmen or advocates of co-operation wearing the same skin that we do. We have to fight relying on our own strength, not maligning these people.

Ours is a civilized struggle, and to a civilized man none in this wide world is an enemy, none whatsoever.

DIWALI

Diwali is near at hand. I have already indicated once before¹ how to prepare for it, but I touch upon the subject again. Let us purify ourselves in preparation for Diwali. The worship of the spinning-wheel is worship of the goddess Lakshmi, and so everyone should equip his home with one spinning-wheel of the best

¹ Vide "My Notes", 9-10-1921.

quality. We should produce at least some yarn on it and, for that purpose, it should be kept working for the whole day by every member of the family taking a turn at it. The yarn so produced should be credited in our books to the country's account.

Children will of course want new things. Girls may be given dolls made from hand-spun khadi and boys may be given attractive satchels of khadi. Ropes made out of hand-spun yarn could be given to the children for a game of tug-of-war. We should get at least one garment of such khadi made for every person in the family, though we should spend on buying only as much even of khadi as we need.

Children who ask for crackers should be told that the time for them will come only when we have got swaraj and hunger has been banished. Till hunger has disappeared, we simply cannot spend anything on crackers; but, in order to cleanse ourselves we could have on the Diwali day a pretty good bonfire of whatever foreign clothes still remain with us and enjoy the sight of our own garments in flames.

A Jain correspondent, however, points out that innumerable insects perish in these bonfires and there is so much destruction of life—the sight is simply unbearable. Would it not be better, he asks, to put away our garments of foreign cloth and lock them up? From the present Jain point of view, this is a relevant question. That the smallest insects are our kin, our brethren, and that it is our dharma, therefore, to have compassion on them,—these are deathless words. But we cannot stop there. Despite their truth, we light ovens and cremate dead bodies. Creation as much as destruction is a form of violence. There is no destruction not followed by creation and no creation which is not preceded by destruction. We cannot escape paying for our own actions. If we admit that we must give up the use of foreign cloth, destroying it through fire does the least degree of violence. In a situation in which we are obliged to choose between two forms of violence, we can do no more than choose the lesser one. If the garments are locked away, white ants, etc., will get at them and the work of destruction and creation will proceed so rapidly that destruction through fire would have been a much lesser evil. There is less violence in at once killing a man than in letting him starve to death. This is why I have said that it is against the principles of our struggle to refuse to supply food and water to anyone living in our midst. For the present, however, I shall not go deeper into this question, for we can discuss it more fully when we have an

opportunity some other time. Here, I shall only state my opinion that setting fire to garments of foreign cloth is, from every point of view, an act of lesser violence and is necessary for the good of India and hence for that of the world.

But what can Diwali possibly mean to Muslims ? It is purely a Hindu festival. For this very reason I would suggest that Muslims too should associate themselves with it. The religious part of it will of course be for the Hindus only, but as it is for them a festival day, the Muslims too might join in and, to the extent that it can be used to serve the cause of the whole nation, they and all the other communities should join in celebrating the day. We should also offer our greetings to Muslims, Parsis and Christians on their respective New Year Days and join in any public celebrations they may have on those days. It is surely our duty to share one another's joys and sorrows. I hope, therefore, that during this Diwali festival of the Hindus, all the other communities will join in the celebrations and help forward the cause of swadeshi in every possible way.

MESSAGE OF SPINNING-WHEEL IN THE "GITA"

In last Sunday's issue of the *Navajivan*, I tried to answer the Poet's' arguments on the subject of the spinning-wheel. I said in the course of my reply that personally I read the message of the spinning-wheel even in the *Gita*. In support of my argument, I quoted some verses from Chapter III. I know full well that the meaning I have read into them will not be found in any of the commentaries on the book, interpreted literally. It is not recently that I have come to read the meaning which I do; I have read it, the commentaries notwithstanding, since 1909. The verse says that he is a thief who eats without performing *yajna*. If here we understand the meaning of *yajna* rightly, there will be no difficulty in accepting the interpretation I have put upon it. The straightforward meaning of the line, "*Yajna* brings rain"² can only be that, if man labours trees will grow and if trees grow they will attract rain. Physical work for the welfare of the people is the only true *yajna*. The *yajna* in which some living creature, or be it even fruit, is given as an offering is no true *yajna*. Agriculture is one such *yajna* for the welfare of all. The farmer

¹ Rabindranath Tagore; the reference is to a Gujarati translation of Gandhiji's article, "The Great Sentinel", 13-10-1921.

² *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 14

consumes only a part of the fruit of his labour; whether he means to or not, he toils chiefly for the people. Not everyone, however, can take up this work; it requires a strong body hardened by work in cold and heat. But everyone can operate the spinning-wheel. Even a scientist like Dr. Ray has convincingly showed how a man, though he may not be able to support himself exclusively by the spinning-wheel, may still help in meeting the people's needs. Today, moreover, when the country is on the verge of ruin, the spinning-wheel is the only means of saving it. Spinning, therefore, is a true *yajna*. "He who does not conform to this universal wheel lives merely for the gratification of his own desires, lives his life, in other words, to no purpose."¹ At the present time, that universal wheel can mean for us only the spinning-wheel. It is possible that, when the verse in question was written, the great poet and seer might not have had the spinning-wheel in mind, but then poets write for all time and it is the perfection and beauty of a poem that it lends itself to meanings which its author never had in mind. As statements of principles, such lines are timeless. They yield rich fruit. It is my humble opinion that we have a right to pluck any number of beautiful fruits which may grow on the tree of such priceless and imperishable able poetry. Poet and menial, master and servant, mistress and maid, all must work for the common good. The millionaire may not work or ply the spinning-wheel for himself, but he must for the sake of the country and the people; otherwise, in the words of the *Gita*, he lives his life to no purpose.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-10-1921

224. SPEECH ON SWADESHI, AHMEDABAD²

October 23, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi said that the subject of swadeshi was worn threadbare, and, if after twelve months of preaching in season and out of season, he had not driven conviction home to the people, no useful purpose would be served by crying himself hoarse at the present moment, more particularly because there were some in the audience who had apparently cast his message to the four winds. In the columns of *Navajivan* he had week after week been ringing changes on the immutable truth that if they wanted to see *Rama-rajya* once more restored in India, he could conceive of no

¹ *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 16

² Under the auspices of the Ahmedabad Rashtriya Stree Mandal

other efficient weapon than the determined effort put forth by women to wear khadi. Had they followed in the footsteps of Sita, the history of India would have been written far otherwise. With the spirit that flinched not at the privations of forest life she went into a voluntary exile, and were the same constancy to prevail in India, the attainment of *dharma* was only a question of time.

If they desired to compel respect after the manner of Sita, they should set aside indolent repose and turn with ever increasing earnestness and enthusiasm to the charkha.

The yarn they would turn out by assiduously plying the spinning-wheels would cover the nakedness of India and deliver her from the slough of economic serfdom.

Proceeding, Mahatma Gandhi went on to observe that service was in the nature of religion to women. Animated by the will to serve they would bring about the salvation of the country far more effectively than the graduates in their midst. India wanted men and women who would freely move among the working classes and share their joys and sorrows. Indiscriminate charity which deprived beggars of all incentive to work was fraught with danger to self-reliance and the only way to strike at the root of mendicancy was to induce the beggar to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow by means of the spinning-wheel. He had decided to put on a loin-cloth in consideration of India's nakedness and would be ill at ease until all and sundry worked at spinning-wheels to clothe the scantily-clad millions. If they were attracted to the meeting out of curiosity to see him dressed in a loin-cloth, if they put on khadi to keep up appearances they would be practising a trick on him. They might deceive him and even deceive themselves by dissembling their real sentiments, but by no means that human ingenuity could devise, could they deceive God. It was idle to continue to wear foreign clothes on the ground of exhausting the existing stock. Would they drink liquor if they had a bottle of wine in stock. On no specious excuses could they justify the use of foreign clothes, when once they were convinced of their impurity. Did not Sita reject the costly garments in preference to the *valkals* (leafy clothing) in the Ashoka Forest ? It was her heroic defence of chastity against numerous temptations and threats that secured her primacy of position in the salutation: "Sita-Rama". If they excelled in the refinements of the culinary art, they could as well show proficiency in spinning the finest yarns. He looked forward to seeing them all dressed in khadi on the occasion of the forthcoming session of the Congress. They had hitherto cheerfully given anything he demanded and he felt confident that the response to his demand for delivering foreign clothes would be equally generous.

The Hindu, 11-11-1921

225. MESSAGE TO TEACHERS OF BOMBAY NATIONAL
COLLEGE¹

October 24, 1921

Card, spin, weave;
Spin, weave, card;
Weave, card, spin.

Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi, p. 117

226. LETTER TO BANARASIDAS CHATURVEDI

SABARMATI,
October 24, 1921

BHAISHRI BANARASIDAS,

Your letter. I wish you too should now write nothing to Mr. Jehangir Petit.

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 2560

227. LETTER TO D. B. SHUKLA²

SABARMATI,
Tuesday, Aso Vad 9 [October 25, 1921]

BHAISHRI,

You are pressing me to visit Kathiawar. I am also eager to go and see for myself the enthusiasm which has spread and the self-purification which has come about among the people of Kathiawar, and see the blessed sight of thousands of women dressed in sacred khadi.

But you know I am helpless at present. I can only say that I will take the first opportunity to go there. All India now knows that there is no limit to my greed, and it will [of course] not be satisfied as long

¹ Asked by the teachers of the College for advice as to how they should best spend their vacation, Gandhiji, who was observing silence, wrote this.

² This was sent by the addressee to *Gujarati* for publication in its Diwali, issue. It was, however, published in a subsequent issue under the caption "Gandhiji's Message to Kathiawar".

as there is a single home without a spinning-wheel or a single street without a handloom or a carding-bow. You have done much but I know for a certainty that you have not done this. It is, therefore, my special appeal to one and all that they devote their attention to carrying out the swadeshi [programme] even if that means putting aside other activities. I can say from the experience of my own deficiencies that, until the volunteers become expert in carding and weaving, they cannot work properly.

I hear that in Kathiawar the *Antyajas* are looked down upon and ill-treated. They still encounter hardships on trains. We have not come to regard them as our own brothers and sisters and, so long as we lack this spirit of love, I would consider the so-called self-purification as no more than make believe. I pray that Kathiawar will not tolerate this outrage which is being committed in the name of religion.

I am convinced that Kathiawar need not rule out the other activities which are part of the struggle being specially carried on in British India. I know that in some places the relations between the princes and their subjects are strained. I am confident that, if people devote themselves to the two activities I have mentioned above and go on working silently the other difficulties will automatically be solved. I would advise the people to put up with the hardships they may have to suffer meanwhile.

I believe that the position of the princes is worse than that of their subjects. Moreover, the chaotic conditions in the Indian States about which I hear are, in my view, but an echo of the far greater chaos prevailing in British India. And why should we get involved in this matter at the present juncture? If we have come to know God, why not trust to Him in regard to all our inevitable sufferings? Those who fear God become free from other fears. I should, therefore, like you to give up all fear.

Respects from

Your younger brother

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 6-11-1921

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU'S NOTE ON REPRESSION IN THE UNITED PROVINCES

Repression in U.P. has on the whole not been of the flashy type—the arrest of prominent leaders, etc.—but it has been very thorough and there are few who have not felt the force of it. It may be considered under three heads :

1. In its relation to the *kisan* movement,
2. The trial and conviction of young workers,
3. The use of Security Sections and Sec. 144.

1. THE "KISAN" MOVEMENT

A very determined and persistent effort made by Government to kill this movement. Early in February, Ramchandra, Kedarnath and Deo Narain were arrested. There was no disturbance of any kind and Government was emboldened to take concerted action to crush the *kisans*. Columns of cavalry, artillery and infantry were marched through the principal districts and people were forced to supply *rasad*¹, etc., to the troops. In one place schoolboys were made to salute the European troops.

In Rai Bareli and Fyzabad, large numbers of *kisans* were arrested ostensibly for the part they took in the looting in January. Most of these *kisans* were innocent and their sole offence was that they were *panchas*². Hundreds were kept in jail and then released without trial. Hundreds are still in jail awaiting trial. Some weeks ago there were nearly 700 *kisans* in the Fyzabad jail. They had been there for three months without trial. Prisoners who have been released say that the men in jail are given such bad food that cholera has broken out and they are dying in numbers.

In Sultanpur and Pratapgadh districts there was no disturbance of any kind. But even here hundreds of *panchas* and *sarpanchas*³ are in jail or have been made to give security. The usual offence charged against them is: तुम सभाके सरगना हो और लोगोंको सभामें शरीक होनेपर मजबूर करते हो।⁴ Sometimes it is added that नाउधोबी बन्दकर दिये गये हैं।⁵ There was some truth in these allegations in December last and in January. But since then, there has hardly been a single case of social boycott in these districts. False cases are started on these allegations and conviction almost invariably follows. Most of these cases are instituted by private parties at the instigation of the local police or zamindar.

¹ Provisions

² Village officers.

³ *ibid*

⁴ "You are a ringleader of the Sabha and you force others into joining the Sabha."

⁵ "The services of the barber and the washerman have been withheld."

instigation of the local police or zemindar.

The Seditious Meetings Act has been in force in Fyzabad, Pratapgadh, Sultanpur and Rai Bareli. Before this Act was applied, all meetings were prohibited under Sec. 144 in some of these districts. This order was obeyed and no meetings were held. In spite of this the Seditious Meetings Act was enforced.

Our workers in these districts are harassed in a variety of ways. A host of C.I.D. men and uniformed policemen follow them and precede them. Villagers are threatened lest they join the Congress or help us in any other way. They have been told orally that to use a charkha is against the law, to shout "*Mahatma Gandhiki jai*" is a heinous offence, to sign the Congress form is illegal, etc., etc. Men who have signed are threatened with legal proceedings and bribes are extorted to hush matters up.

Six young student workers in Pratapgadh were sent to jail for distributing leaflets. They were asked to give security but they refused to do so. A similar case was started against six others at Sultanpur but it has been withdrawn. Two workers have been sentenced to 6 months' rigorous imprisonment on a false charge of breaking the provisions of the Seditious Meetings Act. One of these was beaten and kicked by a policeman.

It is difficult to give a proper idea of the hundred and one methods by which Government has tried to crush the *kisans*. The zemindars and the few local persons who call themselves Moderates have allied themselves to the Government and have succeeded in making the life of the average *kisan* a burden almost too great to be borne.

In the other districts of the U.P. a similar attempt, but on a much smaller scale, has been made to put an end to the *kisan* movement.

2. CONVICTION OF WORKERS

A considerable number of Congress and Khilafat workers have been proceeded against and sentenced. None of the leaders of the movement have so far been touched but many of their efficient lieutenants have gone. Among the more prominent persons against whom sedition cases have been started may be mentioned Pandit Dev Ratan Sharma of Dehra Dun.

Hamid Ahmad, a Khilafat worker in Allahabad has just been sentenced under Sec. 121 A to transportation for life and forfeiture of property. His offence was having made a speech in which, after enjoining non-violence for the present, he said that if N.- C.- O. failed, Muslims would resort to the sword.

A number of Congress officials in the districts have also been sentenced under Sec. 108 or 124 A.

Some volunteers have been sent to jail in connection with the anti-drink campaign.

3. SECURITY SECTIONS AND SEC. 144

There has been an extraordinarily wide use of the sections and there is hardly a prominent worker who has not been served with a notice under Sec. 144. Even Maulana Mahomed Ali has received such a notice. I have a list of over a hundred with me and this is very incomplete.

Sec. 144 has also been used to proclaim whole districts and prohibit meetings there. It has been made to serve the purpose of the Seditious Meetings Act.

In one case at least a notice under Sec. 144 ordered that no Khilafat receipts should be sold and the person concerned should not belong to any such organization.

Security Sections are also taking the place of the Press Act. Securities amounting to Rs. 30,000 were demanded from the editor and printed of the *Pratap* for certain articles written therein. The securities have been given.

4. MISCELANEOUS

Many gun licences have been confiscated. Government servant have been threatened with dismissal because their relatives were non-co-operators. Orders have been issued prohibiting the use of the Gandhi cap. Notices have been issued threatening those who collect and those who pay subscriptions to the Swaraj Fund.

Congress and Kisan Sabha offices have been raided by the Police.

In Banaras, some students and others were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment.

Young India, 18-8-1921

APPENDIX II PROF. T. L. VASWANI'S REPLY¹

DEAR SIR,

Your letter dated 30th reached me by post yesterday.

I could have no objection to a friendly meeting. I am still of opinion that a meeting in the mood reflected in your letters will be fruitless. In your last letter, indeed, you seem to suspect that I am an "agitator" using that mock-trial as a "political dodge", and "the unhappiness of my friend"? for "the purposes of political agitation." For the love and esteem I have for friends in Europe, for the reverence I have for her poets and prophets of freedom, I must bear with what my European brethren in this country may say of me and my motives.

I am glad you say the sentence passed upon my friend seems to be very severe. I am an optimist; and I yet hope when you look into the matter carefully, you will agree with me, that the sentence is *absolutely unjust*. Justice demands his *acquittal*.

¹ This was written on the "Tilak Day" as indicated in the letter.

The “decision of an Indian magistrate”—you say. As I sat in that room hearing the case and then the judgment, I felt my Great Motherland was insulted. It looked as though conviction was pre-arranged. It, certainly, was not a judicial trial.

You say: “There are means open to you for getting revision” (of the sentence). Why not take them? *The only just revision would be the Swami’s acquittal.* But he will not appeal to the higher court. Why not? you ask. Then let me quote you this from a letter of the Poet Tagore: “I remember when in my school days I used to get blows and insults from a teacher who was particularly foul in his language and unjust in his dealings, I refused to complain or to cry. In fact I tried to *maintain my dignity by ignoring my punishment and thus I had my moral victory.*” Doesn’t it explain the Swami’s attitude? And the longer he is locked up, the smaller must look the Government in the eyes of honest men.

Yes,—there is unrest—and deeper than you may know of. The way to lessen it? I indicated it in my last letter. Sind officials must be just and responsive to the New Spirit. You value ideas, you say, for their worth in practical application. And it is in practical application that the ideas of freedom and equality and justice professed by the official class have failed us again and again. From my point of view, indeed, *the true idealist is practical* and the *man sincerely practical is an idealist*; there is *idealism* in his action. In the sentence inflicted on the Swami, I see the desire to show *strength. Such strength is weakness.* For power which tramples upon justice is weakness,—*the weakness of violence.*

Your culture and travels notwithstanding, you justify, so it seems to me,— the policy of Government. I can account for this only in one way,—you know nothing of the humiliation and sufferings experienced by a subject nation. Dyer shot down between 300 and 400 Indians; and he enjoys a pension of £900 a year and his European admirers presented him a purse, I believe, of about £30,000! But innocent Indians, like the Swami, are rotting in jail—for loving their country! There was a time British officials were credited with great virtues,—tolerance, sympathy, justice; and even in 1914 when the War broke out, the National Congress resolved that “India would stand by the Empire in all cases and at all hazards.” Today, the Congress is boycotting the visit of the Prince of Wales,—for no fault of His Royal Highness ! Why ? The unrest is deepening everyday. Why? The gulf between the State and the Nation, Government and People, is widening day by day. Why? Government is only too anxious to brandish the big stick; Government has faith *in force.*

Do you know how many of our young men are in jail today for political opinions ? Writing on the Tilak Day, can I forget that some of the best among those who have worked for India have had their patriotism penalized at one time or another?

Tilak the Scholar, Tilak the Patriot was sent to jail,—more than once. Annie Besant was interned, Lala Lajpat Rai was deported. Bipin Chandra Pal was not allowed to enter the Punjab. They were no rebels. But they loved India! How many young men in Bengal were sent to jail for the politics of national freedom? And some of them,—how were they sent to jail? A Bengali professor was interned,—without being convicted of any crime! He was interned in a distant jail,—without the knowledge of his mother. She took long to know of her son’s plight. She petitioned for a proper inquiry into her son’s case. She was informed that her son was in solitary cell and had become insane! Two ladies were arrested in a village by police. They were sent to jail. The press exposed the police *zulum*. Government confessed the mistake and ordered the release. But the ladies were still detained in prison,—for a fortnight! A telegram ordering their release had been mislaid! And after their release, no policeman was punished! Only last week, the police fired upon an unarmed crowd in Matiari, a village in Sind, one man died; about a dozen were wounded; a white-washing official version ran round the Press; a non-official version was held back by the telegraph authorities in Sind as “objectionable” ! The story of Jallianwala is known to you. Where, I ask, where in any civilized European country will such things be permitted, today? Deportations, internments, and imprisonment of innocent men! Flogging and whipping and shooting of innocent men! This is the story of India for years as of no other country in Europe which I have seen and known. The reason is not far to seek. *They are free: India is in bondage.*

I spoke of British Imperialism. I said it was in conflict with the Spirit of Man in Asia, in Persia, in Mesopotamia; in Egypt, in India—its dominant motive has been economic control of the East; and here in this country we are trying by peaceful swadeshi to resist its “peaceful penetration”. In Egypt and India and now in Muslim lands,—as in Ireland,—the Empire is in conflict with the principle of nationality. But this is a subject which needs a separate discussion.

You refer in your letter to the “true ideal of personal liberty” and ask for my remarks. I saw it in the *Gazette*—most hurriedly, I regret; and it is not before me at this moment. But I suppose your idea is to show that picketing the liquor shops is in conflict with the true ideal of personal liberty. I speak,—subject to correction. I should be sorry; indeed, if you really thought picketing inconsistent with personal liberty. Personal liberty is an ideal dear to the Frenchman. It is not in conflict with picketing as the Swami practised it. His picketing was *moral persuasion*. Drinking is disallowed in Hindu and Muslim scriptures. In a country like India, a national

government would pass a measure of prohibition. The Government here resists popular opinion and national instincts; and the people wish to achieve by picketing what a national government easily would, by *prohibition*. Gokhale, I believe, started picketing at Poona years ago and some of the most earnest reformers regard picketing a moral duty. Picketing, however, may like several other innocent things be abused and become coercion. All *intimidation, coercion, social boycott, violence, in conflict with my ideal of personal liberty*. I do not know if the Swami would, in theory, subscribe entirely to my view of personal liberty. I know many of my friends would not; they would not object to putting an end to the scandal of liquor-traffic by means of *social boycott*. One thing I am sure of. The Swami was always for *persuasion*, never for *intimidation or coercion*. One thing I repeat with emphasis. He did *not* assault a policeman; he did not use any criminal force. I asked him the question; his answer was an emphatic “no”; he would not tell a lie; and I would believe him against all your policemen. He did *not* assault anyone, I say, and he used no criminal force. But he did something more dangerous! He carried on his anti-drink campaign with energy ! He threatened to reduce revenue derived from an immoral traffic! And a giddy Government clutching at a policy of coercion have sentenced him to 12 months’ rigorous imprisonment to “create impression”! The sentence *has* created “impression.” For as the news will spread from town to town, India will know how justice and common sense are mocked in Shed—in this “new era” of “reforms”!

Yours truly,

T. L. VASWANI

Young India, 25-8-1921