

I. NOTES

MUNICIPALITIES BEWARE

The Government of Bombay note regarding the Ahmedabad, Surat and Nadiad municipalities shows that it refuses to see the writing on the wall. Its dictatorial tone is now no longer in keeping with the rising spirit of the people. Its incitement to the individual ratepayers to sue the councillors who believe they have performed their duty is hardly dignified. The proper course for the Government was to let the municipalities take their own course and not to invite trouble. As it is, the Government note is calculated to precipitate a crisis. The councillors must take up the challenge and dare the Government to disregard the municipalities if they choose. The municipalities must have the right to misgovern themselves if they wish. If a city is misgoverned, it is as much the ratepayers' fault as is the councillors'. But our wise Government whilst recognizing the independent existence of the municipalities wants to stick to the letter of the law which killeth and would itself rule instead of letting the municipalities alone so long as they do not cost the Government anything. The municipalities must now take up the challenge and prepare for action on their part. Government may succeed; in getting a few ratepayers to file suits. That will be the least it can do. The most it can do is to disband the municipalities concerned. And the most of the Government should prove most welcome, if only the protestants are a strong body. Assuming that they are, they must simply educate the ratepayers to understand what is happening and to prepare them for battle. I can see swaraj peeping even through the Government note if the latter take and the former are ready for action. So long as there is no disbandment, the municipalities have all power; as soon as there is disbandment, the Government is powerless assuming of course that the ratepayers are strong, intelligent and united. The ratepayers are all that but they require to be organized for action. Hitherto the people have been the football of officials or so-called representatives. Non-co-operation enables the people to become the players in the game. Representatives *must* represent or they perish.

THE VISITORS TO THE CONGRESS

The Reception Committee of the Congress is trying to make the Congress session a purely business session. In its anxiety to do so, it

has restricted its own number and the number of visitors. It was impossible to avoid limitation of the number of visitors when the number of delegates was limited. The question therefore before the Committee was to devise a method of selection. The only qualification possible was a monetary qualification subject to free tickets for a few distinguished guests. The idea is purely to restrict the number of applicants, not to make money. For the first time, the annual gathering will cease to be an instrument for collecting funds for the annual expenditure. Elaborate preparations including exhibition, musical concerts and popular lectures by all the celebrated speakers of the day for a fee of eight annas per day are in progress. The prohibitive fee has been imposed only for visitors to the Congress session, the idea being to discourage applications from visitors. I am anxious that the public should understand and appreciate the position of the Reception Committee upon whose shoulders devolves the responsibility of organizing the first session under the new constitution and under exceptional circumstances. The success of the Congress depends principally upon the willing and hearty co-operation of every member of the public.

WAR ON THE KHADI CAP

Mr. Dharamadas Udhamam of Karachi writes, saying that he was cashiered by his employers Messrs Forbes Campbell and Co., for having dared to wear the khadi cap. I congratulate him upon his courage in accepting dismissal rather than giving up his cap. If he were not demoralized, every clerk serving no matter where would invite dismissal by a simultaneous adoption of the khadi cap. This would really have the effect of the firms recognizing the inevitable and seeing the folly of warring against harmless dress. Indeed this war is being waged to strike awe among employees and keep them submissive and even unmanly. In Madras the Director of Public Instruction will not allow the inspectors of schools to introduce spinning-wheels if only because, the Director says, they are given a political significance. On the same reasoning even a lecture on abstinence should be taboo because it has for non-co-operators a political significance. This war against swadeshi in a variety of ways shows that it is distasteful to the Government. In other words the Government cannot tolerate the economic independence of India. Should these indications not make us resolute in the prosecution of the swadeshi programme?

SOLDIERS

The prosecution of the Brothers and their companions and the Manifesto¹ have reached the barracks, and soldiers are inquiring how they can support themselves if they leave. One correspondent asks on their behalf as to what would happen to them under swaraj. As for the first, the Working Committee has shown them the way. Every soldier can easily become a weaver and carder. Carding requires strength of arm which every soldier must have. And a carder in Bombay earns anything between two to three rupees per day. Many weavers of the Punjab have left the handloom for the sword of the hireling. I consider the former to be infinitely preferable to the latter. I refuse to call the profession of the sepoy honourable when he has no choice as to the time when and the persons or people against whom he is called upon to use his sword. The sepoy's services have more often been utilized for enslaving us than for protecting us, whereas the weaver today can truly become the liberator of his country and hence a true soldier.

A friend has suggested, that agriculture should also be added to weaving and carding advised by the Congress. It cannot be as an immediate measure, because, agriculture cannot be taken up with ease, and it requires a capital outlay which renders it impracticable for our purpose.

What will happen during swaraj is easily answered. The soldiers will not then be hirelings, but they will form the national militia for defensive and protective purposes alone. They will have a voice in the moulding of the affairs of the nation. And they will certainly never be sent to cut down inoffensive Turks or Arabs in the West or equally inoffensive Chinese or Burmese in the East.

IN DEFENCE OF MR. TYAGI

Babu Bhagwandas who has been closely following the movement has sent in the following learned note² in defence of Mr. Tyagi.

The reader will note that I made some amends last week as soon as I saw Mr. Tyagi's statement.³ I considered the caution to be

¹ On the Karachi Resolution; *vide* "A Manifesto", 24-10-1921.

² Not reproduced here

³ *Vide* "Notes", 20-10-1921, under the sub-titles "A Magistrate's Apology", and "Accused's Statement".

necessary because of my experience of our silence being a result of our weakness. Unfortunately it is not confined to the individual. It has become a national vice. When I cited Mr. Tyagi, his case was merely the latest illustration of that vice. As I have explained before now, bad as the Moplah madness is, the fact of others having submitted to the madness is worse. Why did they live to tell the tale of their forcible conversions? Nobody can keep our religion for us. Each one of us man or woman must be one's own defender. God who has given us religion has given also the power of defending it. Everyone has not the power to strike; all, the lame, the blind and the dumb have the power to die. The cowardly assault by the magistrate was an attack on Mr. Tyagi's manhood and therefore his religion. By some act of his, be it called defiance, impudence, insolence, he ought to have invited more slaps and "created a peaceful scene". This would have, been truest non-co-operation. But I do not blame Mr. Tyagi or anybody. Manliness has been deliberately killed out of us. And we have been disarmed into mute submission. As the author of non-violence in its modern presentation I am anxious to guard myself against our weakness being apotheosized. I would far rather not shower congratulations for bravery till we are positive about it. For the rest, we have every reason to be thankful for the progress we have made in shedding our fear and awe of authority. Non-co-operation arms both the weak and the strong with a powerful weapon. And I should not be ashamed of our submission to insults even out of weakness so long as we realized that it was due to weakness and attempted every time to outgrow it.

Babu Bhagwandas is curious to know what could be worse than fear. I had in mind cowardice.

It is curious to note that whilst Babu Bhagwandas has in view of Mr. Tyagi's statement and in ignorance of my amends, rightly protested against my condemnation of weakness I hastily inferred in Mr. Tyagi's case, Maulana Mahomed Ali has, as will appear from his letter¹ printed elsewhere, energetically protested against his action being called a defiance. The word "defence" occurring in my notes at the end was a misprint for "defiance".² These protests are to me most welcome signs of the national desire to be correct to a fault. The Maulana will not appropriate even credit for

¹ *Vide* "A Gaol Letter", 27-10-1921.

² *Vide* "Notes", 13-10-1921, under the sub-title "Their Inconsistency".

an act which might, judged from the highest standard, be considered a breach of culture, and Babu Bhagwandas will not let me impute fearsomeness to an act which might be capable of being understood to be strictly in accord with non-violence of the brave. Let us close the controversy with the hope and the prayer, that our country may become brave and yet gentle and chivalrous to a nicety.

Young India, 27-10-1921

2. TO CORRESPONDENTS

BISHANDAS CHADDAH: You should visit important centres in India and study the indigenous art before proceeding elsewhere. You will find the German spinning-wheel producing no more than ours.

BHAGIRATH MISHRA: When you are non-co-operating in respect of a whole system which you deem evil, you cannot co-operate with it because another crops up. You must, in that case, non-co-operate in respect of both. Hence my "threat" to seek the shelter of the Himalayas, should violence become universal in India and should it not have engulfed me.

M. S. SHANKARARAMAN: Ritual is often a help to worship. Prayer is the intensest longing of the soul and is indispensable to our evolution.

BINDUMADHAV: One thing at a time is a golden rule. If we were to taboo many things, we shall succeed in tabooing everything else we desire. When you have shaken the centre, The rest falls at a touch.

Young India, 27-10-1921

3. A GAOL LETTER

"NONE SHALL PREVAIL BUT GOD"

JAIL,
KARACHI,
October 18, 1921

DEAR BAPU

Naturally I have long been thinking of writing to you, but for one reason or another I put it off from day to day. However, when I read in the papers more than one reference from your pen to my wife's action after my arrest at Waltair and to her subsequent activities, I felt impelled to write to you, if only a line,—a thing so difficult for

me as you have publically admitted!—just to tell you how deeply you have touched me. As I have told you once perhaps, ours was a "love-marriage" from the very first, which is somewhat uncommon in India; but even apart from that every year of our married life made my wife a dearer partner to me than she was before, and the way she took the last few eventful years of internment and incarceration and of the "risks" we have been running since our release at the end of 1919, endeared her to me more than ever. But to tell you the truth she was never half so dear to me as I found her at Waltair when she stepped into the little Railway Police station, and jauntily asking me not to worry about her or the girls, bade me good-bye and marched off steadily to the train—all within a minute or two. Well, I have read more than one reference in your writings, to my own self or to "the Brothers" all too complimentary and I am too "natural" to deny that every such reference gave me pleasure and quickened my pulse. More than once I have read a "defence" or an "apology" from your pen when you stood up for us against some critic's onslaught and cheered us up at a time when we were tempted to be not a little irascible. But nothing you have yet written in praise or in defence of us has gladdened my heart so much as your repeated reference to my dear brave wife! Indeed I have been so deeply touched that I am even inclined to forgive you and not be jealous of you for the seductive praise you have showered on her! So there! I only hope this very trying trial will now soon be over and she will be free once more to continue her work and earn more seductive praise from you.

By the way, I wonder if you ever saw my letter to Tairsee in which I gave him some idea of the things as they actually happened on the fourth day of the Magisterial Inquiry. You who know how vilely even the *Chronicle* reported my speeches can perhaps understand how risky it is to form one's opinion about affairs and incidents "reported" by "amateur" journalists innocent of all knowledge of stenography and so interested in hearing and seeing things when they become unusually lively as to ignore altogether the duty of noting them down for the paper they represent. When I was not in a prison, I had not enough time at my disposal, nor enough patience to go about correcting *every day* the inaccuracies in the reports of my speeches. Now that prison life gives me more leisure and preparation for a convict's life necessitates the cultivation of greater patience, I am not as free as I used to be to leave such inaccuracies uncorrected. But surely that is no reason for people to

place implicit reliance in the printed word. When I read the meagre and inaccurate and wholly misleading reports of the court proceeding of the fourth day, I felt that we would be misjudged by some people at least, and as I was referring in my letter to Tairsee to the awful topsyturvydom of the *Chronicle* which misplaced paragraphs and sentences by the dozens in the report of my statement, I also took the opportunity of mentioning some of the circumstances which led to the "defiance" of the Court. But really we were *not* "out for mischief". For three days the proceedings went on smoothly and the Court could not accuse us of "defiance" any more than the Counsel for the Crown could accuse us of "defence." But the trouble began with Maulana Hussain Ahmed Saheb's statement. The Court refused to call a qualified interpreter, and it was this that led Kitchlew to insist on speaking in Urdu when the Magistrate wanted to begin with another of the co-accused for whom the interpreter would not, he said, be needed. On the following day the atmosphere was entirely changed though we do not know what led to the change over-night. It was the Court that was "defiant". Kitchlew's statement which was on the same lines as mine was objected to at every fresh sentence and the Magistrate would not take it down. Then he insisted on asking the Shankaracharya to get up if he wanted to make a statement, which, the Shankaracharya said, he could not do on religious grounds. It was this which compelled me to expostulate with the Magistrate *without any passion*. I asked him whether he would insist on a religious personage of the Shankaracharya's position in the Hindu hierarchy paying respect to the conventions of a court even if he thereby had to show disregard of what he considered divine law itself. The Magistrate belonged to a community the origin of which in the history of India dated back to a migration from its own motherland for fear of having to disregard what it considered divine law. He had such a great belief in the respect due to a British law-court. Had he no belief in God? And all that appears in the papers is the bare interrogatory: "Have you no belief in God?" His reply to my appeal was an order in the worst possible tone to sit down. But while I refused to comply, I *never* said, "Let me see what you can do" I said he could use *force*; but there was no law which could compel an accused person to sit down. Poor Shaukat did his best to placate the Magistrate and pleaded with him not to interrupt him while he was making his statement, as it put him off completely. But clearly the Magistrate was determined that nothing like my statement of the previous day should go on record

now or be even heard by those co-operations and others who attended his court. When Maulana Hussain Ahmed Saheb began his statement, he neither got it interpreted by the Court interpreter (who had already confessed his incompetence to interpret an exposition of Islamic law) nor made the least effort to understand what the Maulana Saheb was saying. Nothing was taken down. But even this was not enough. His indifference was impudent enough, but he added to that one or two direct insults, such as, "It is not necessary to recite the entire Quran here." Maulana Niser Ahmed Saheb's very brief statement fared no better. And so indifferent was the Magistrate to every requirement of law and procedure that he committed us to the Sessions *without* having received the remainder of my statement which *at his own request* I had promised to give in writing if he sent me a shorthand typist. But then the whole thing was *meant* to be a farce; for on the very *second* day when even the Prosecution evidence was not half-finished, he passed order on the Public Prosecutor's application for summons being issued for two witnesses to the effect that it served no purpose to lengthen proceedings unnecessarily, and it would suffice if these witnesses were summoned for the Sessions trial! A foregone conclusion even for the Magistrate!! And on the 29th before the inquiry was over, the Judicial Commissioner comes himself to inspect the Hall for the Sessions and discusses the plans with the Public Prosecutor!!! As I said to the Courts they might as well have sent the carpenters to prepare the scaffold! When any reference was made to Islamic law, the Magistrate was impatient and used to say, "We have nothing to do with *fatwas* here". Shaukat was so exasperated that he said to him, "What is the use of your asking me about such trifles? Ask me what Islamic law lays down for such a set of circumstances." But all in vain, and even Shaukat, could stand this no longer and "the whole blessed show"! But would you believe it, soon after this inquiry was over and the Magistrate retired for a time, he was a new man once more! In the second case against Shaukat and in the next case against me, he was once more the man he had been on the third day. What brought about this second metamorphosis I cannot say. But you can judge of the "normal" atmosphere of the Court (including the accused) from the fact that on the last day the Public Prosecutor came hurrying to me and asked, "Will you mind coming back into the court? One of the witnesses has put in the wrong exhibit and I should like to recall him." I agreed and said: "Anything you please," and when the C.I.D. reporter had sworn again that the exhibit he was then

putting in was my speech, I pleasantly told the Magistrate I waived my right of demanding the witness's prosecution for perjury for swearing before that quite another document was my speech, and the Magistrate equally pleasantly thanked me! The fact is the Magistrate, as we all knew, was always an automaton (and I told him on the eventful day I was sorry that a fellow countryman of mine was being used to do a dirty job), but on the day following my statement he came "wound up." Since then, I understand, even those from whom he expected praise for his loyalty and compliance have expressed their indignation at his spoiling a "historic state trial", which was intended to typify "justice" under "the New Dispensation" by his disregard of law and procedure. That is why Ross Alston of Allahabad and Alim are coming to improve the thing as best they can, and a qualified interpreter is coming from Lahore. But the whole thing was a farce and nothing can improve it. For our part, we have no desire to be defiant and are not out for mischief. Nevertheless we are not going to be dumb driven cattle, and non-violence does not require that passivity. Violence has much to answer for and many a Mussulman will have his eyes opened on the day of judgment when the true limits of "violence" are to be defined once more by his own leading case. But non-violence too has a good deal to answer for, and I already see that its apostle is already disillusioning some of its meek votaries who would cover cowardice with that label.

And good-bye now. Love to Devdas and the little ones and affectionate salaams to Ba.

The cheque must have been sent to the Khilafat Fund. Mother and my wife do not need any financial assistance, but we are such awful beggars that we will swallow everything for our cause. Our affectionate greetings to your own great and dear self.

Yours ever,

MAHOMED ALI

I am sure that the reader will appreciate my sharing the foregoing letter with him for more reasons than one. In my opinion it is a human document showing the whole of the man in the Maulana. The letter had naturally to be passed by the Magistrate. I had not the heart to expunge a single word from the letter.

Young India, 27-10-1921

4. HONOUR THE PRINCE

The reader must not be surprised at the title of this writing. Supposing that the Prince was a blood brother in a high place, supposing that he was to be exploited by neighbours for their own base ends, supposing further that he was in the hands of my neighbours, that my voice could not effectively reach him and that he was being brought to my village by the said neighbours, would I not honour him best by dissociating myself from all the ceremonial that might be arranged in his "honour" in the process of exploitation and by letting him know by every means at my disposal that he was being exploited? Would I not be a traitor to him if I did not warn him against entering the trap prepared for him by my neighbours?

I have no manner of doubt that the Prince's visit is being exploited for advertising the "benign" British rule in India. It is a crime against us if His Royal Highness is being brought for personal pleasure and sport when India is seething with discontent when the masses are saturated with disaffection towards the system under which they are governed, when famine is raging in Khulna and the Ceded Districts and when an armed conflict is raging in Malabar; it is a crime against India to spend millions of rupees on a mere show when millions of men are living in a state of chronic starvation. Eight lakhs of rupees have been voted away by the Bombay Council alone for the pageant.

The visit is being heralded by repression in the land. In Sind over fifty-six non-co-operators are in jail. Some of the bravest of Mussulmans are being tried for holding certain opinions. Nineteen Bengal workers have been just imprisoned including Mr. Sengupta, the leading barrister of the place. A Mussulman Pir and three other selfless workers are already in jail for a similar "crime". Several leaders of Karnatak are also imprisoned, and now its chief man is on trial for saying what I have said repeatedly in these columns and what Congressmen have been saying all over during the past twelve months. Several leaders of the Central Provinces have been similarly deprived of their liberty. A most popular doctor, Dr. Paranjapye, a man universally respected for his selflessness, is suffering rigorous imprisonment like a common felon. I have by no means exhausted the list of imprisonments of non-co-operators. Whether they are a test of real crime or an answer to growing disaffection, the Prince's visit is, to say the least, most inopportune. There is no doubt that the people do not

want His Royal Highness to visit India at the present juncture. They have expressed their opinion in no uncertain terms. They have declared that Bombay should observe hartal on the day of his landing at Bombay. It is a clear imposition upon the people to bring the Prince in the teeth of their opposition.

What are we to do in the circumstances? We must organize a complete boycott of all functions held in the Prince's honour. We must religiously refrain from attending charities, fetes or fireworks organized for the purpose. We must refuse to illuminate or to send our children to see the organized illuminations. To this end we must publish leaflets by the million and distribute them amongst the people telling them what their duty in the matter is and it would be true honour done to the Prince if Bombay on the day of his landing wears the appearance of a deserted city.

But we must isolate the Prince from the person. We have no ill will against the Prince as man. He probably knows nothing of the feeling in India, he probably knows nothing about repression. Equally probably he is ignorant of the fact that the Punjab wound is still bleeding, that the treachery towards India in the matter of the Khilafat is still rankling in every Indian breast, and that on the Government's own admission the reformed councils contain members who, though nominally elected, do not in any sense represent even the few lakhs who are on the electoral rolls. To do or to attempt to do any harm to the person of the Prince would be not only cruel and inhuman, but it would be on our part a piece of treachery towards ourselves and him, for we have voluntarily pledged ourselves to be and remain non-violent. Any injury or insult to the Prince by us will be a greater wrong done by us to Islam and India than any the English have done. They know no better. We can lay no such claim to ignorance, we have with our eyes open and before God and man promised not to hurt a single individual in any way connected with the system we are straining every nerve to destroy. It must therefore be our duty to take every precaution to protect his person as our own from all harm.

In spite of all our effort, we know that there will be some who would want to take part in the various functions from fear or hope or choice. They have as much right to do what they like as we have to do what we like. That is the test of the freedom we wish to have and enjoy. Let us, whilst we are being subjected by an insolent bureaucracy to a severe irritation, exercise the greatest restraint. And if we

can exhibit our firm resolve to have nothing to do with it by dissociating ourselves from its pageant at the same time that we show forbearance towards those who differ from us, we would advance our cause in a most effective manner.

Young India, 27-10-1921

5. THE SECRET OF IT

There is no doubt that non-co-operation is an education which is developing and crystallizing public opinion. And as soon as it is organized enough for effective action, we have swaraj. We cannot organize public opinion in a violent atmosphere. Just as those who have been forced by the Moplahs to recite the *kalma* are no Mussulmans, even so those who call themselves non-co-operators from fashion or compulsion are no non-co-operators. They are a hindrance and no help. Our tyranny, if we impose our will on others, will be infinitely worse than that of the handful of Englishmen who form the bureaucracy. Theirs is a terrorism imposed by a minority struggling to exist in the midst of opposition. Ours will be a terrorism imposed by a majority and therefore worse and really more godless than the first. We must therefore eliminate compulsion in any shape from our struggle. If we are only a handful holding freely the doctrine of non-co-operation, we may have to die in the attempt to convert others to our view, but we shall have truly defended and represented our cause. If however we enlist under our banner men by force, we shall be denying our cause and God, and if we seem to succeed for the moment, we shall have succeeded in establishing a worse terror.

We shall also retard our cause if we suppress opinion by intolerance. For then we shall never know who is with us and who is against us. The indispensable condition therefore of success is that we encourage the greatest freedom of opinion. It is the least we can learn from the present "masters". Their Penal Code contains drastic punishments for holding opinions they do not like. And they have arrested some of the noblest of our countrymen for expression of their opinion. Our non-co-operation is a defiantly open protest against that system. We may not in the very act of fighting the restraint on opinion be guilty ourselves of imposing it on others. These reflections are due to a sense of uneasiness I feel about

publishing the names of correspondents who express opinions we may not relish. I do not wish to expose them to the mental violence of the readers who may not like those opinions. We must have the courage and the charity to hear or read all sorts of nasty things said about us or to us. It gives us an opportunity of converting them. I propose to make the attempt in respect of a correspondent who has sent me a formidable list of questions about the struggle which deserve public notice. He commences thus:

You will admit that both your followers and non-followers are in a state of suspense as regards the aims of your political activities. Can you therefore be charitable enough to enlighten them by answering the following questions?

1. Are you really a Mahatma?

I do not feel like being one. But I do know that I am among the humblest of God's creatures.

2. If so, will you define the word Mahatma?

Not being acquainted with one, I cannot give any definition.

3. If not, did you ever tell your followers that you are not one?

The more I repudiate, the more it is used.

4. Is your "soul-force" attainable by the ignorant masses?

They have it already in abundance. Once upon a time an expedition of French scientists set out in search of knowledge and in due course reached India. They tried hard to find it, as, they had expected, among the learned ones but failed. Unexpectedly they found it in a pariah home.

5. You say, machinery has been the bane of civilization. Then why do you allow yourself to travel in railway trains and motor cars?

There are certain things which you cannot escape all at once, even whilst you are avoiding them. This earthy case in which I am locked up is the bane of my life, but I am obliged to put up with it and even indulge in it as this friend knows. But does he seriously doubt that the machine age was responsible for the organized murders during the late war? Asphyxiating gas and such other abominations have not advanced us by an inch.

6. Is it a fact that formerly you travelled third-class in railway trains and now you travel in special trains and first-class carriages?

Alas! the correspondent is correctly informed. The Mahatma-ship is responsible for the special trains, and the earthy case for the degradation to the second-class.

7. In what relation do you stand to Count Tolstoy?

As a devoted admirer who owes much in life to him.

8. Why do you not define swaraj? Do you not feel that you are in duty bound to define the word at least to your followers?

In the first place the word is indefinable in the second place, if the correspondent will turn to the file of *Young India*, he will find a workable definition there. I will try another here. It means complete freedom of opinion and action without interference with another's right to equal freedom of opinion and action. Therefore it means India's complete control of sources of revenue and expenditure without interference from or with any other country.

9. What will be your own position when swaraj is obtained?,

I would certainly like a prolonged and perhaps well-deserved holiday.

10. When swaraj is attained, how are the political and religious interests of Mussulmans to be safeguarded?

They will not need any safeguarding, because every Indian will be as free as every other Indian, and because there will then be mutual toleration, respect and love, and therefore mutual trust.

11. Do you honestly believe that Government will pack up and beat a hasty retreat from India on the 31st of October 1921 or at any other time within this year that you will be pleased to fix?

The Government is the system, and I do believe that it can be destroyed even before the 31st October, if the Hindus, the Mussulmans, the Sikhs, the Parsis, the Christians and the Jews of India *will*. I am still hoping that they will destroy it before the end of the year. But under the new system not a single Englishman who wishes to remain in India as her faithful servant need leave the country.

12. Do you not think that the Government is too weak to check your propaganda?

I certainly do, and it is becoming daily weaker.

13. Would you leave your own son undefended if (which God forbid) he was being prosecuted for murder, not for sedition?

I really believe that I have the courage to do so. I certainly had the hardihood to give that advice to many a dear friend. I have already advised a dear friend of the Andhra district to stake the whole of his valuable property by not defending a civil suit which has been brought against him from pure political malice.

14. What should your son (for example) do if some one defrauded him of some money and had made himself scarce?

My son if he is a good non-co-operator would certainly let the thief keep the money. Maulana Shaukat Ali was robbed of Rs. 600 nine months ago. He knew the person who had robbed him. He thought no more about it.

15. What was the effect of your satyagraha on the Punjab?

Sir Michael O'Dwyer would not let the message of satyagraha reach the Punjab. Some Punjabis therefore got excited; a few went mad. Sir Michael O'Dwyer became madder still and butchered innocent men by deputy. But satyagraha is a powerful tonic, and now the Punjab is as lively as any other province of India, and is showing in spite of her mercurial population a degree of self-restraint that is worthy of emulation by the rest of the provinces.

16. Do you really believe that non-co-operation Call remain non-violent?

Certainly. The wonderful restraint shown by the people over the arrests in Sind, Karnatak and East Bengal is proof of it.

17. How do the forcible conversions of Hindus and pillage of Hindu homes reflect upon the unity of Hindus and Mohammedans in India?

They have put a severe strain upon Hindu patience, but it has stood the strain and its survival proves that the unity is based on knowledge. No Mussulman approves of the Moplah fanaticism.

18. What is the actual cause of this rupture of Hindu-Muslim unity in Malabar?

There is no rupture of the unity in the disturbed area. The Moplahs could not at any time have considered Hindus as their brethren. The causes of the violence are that as in the Punjab in 1919, so in Malabar now the message of non-co-operation was only vaguely delivered when its progress was arrested by the authorities. The Moplahs were never particularly friendly to the Malabar Hindus. They had looted them before. Their notions of Islam were of a very crude type. They were kept in utter darkness by the Government and neglected both by Mussulmans and Hindus. Being wild and brave but ignorant, they have mistaken the mission of the Khilafat and acted in a savage, inhuman and irreligious manner. It is quite improper to judge Islam or the Mussulmans of the rest of India by the present conduct of the Moplahs.

19. Can you say what made you to couple the Khilafat with the Punjab wrongs?

The Khilafat wrong was born before the Punjab wrong, and I

made it my own in the year 1918 at the Delhi War Conference (*vide* my open letter to the Viceroy)¹. Non-co-operation was conceived at Delhi in 1919 before the Punjab wrong had taken definite shape. The latter was tacked to the Khilafat, when it became clear that it required as drastic a remedy as the Khilafat.

20. Can you say why the Mohammedans of India are so demonstrative for the Khilafat, when the Mohammedans of other Islamic countries do not seem to care for it?

I do not know that non-Indian Mussulmans do not care for the Khilafat, but if they do not and the Indian Mussulmans do, for me it is proof enough that the latter have developed greater religious consciousness than the former.

21. Since the Sultan of Turkey has failed to defend the Muslim holy places, has he any right now to be considered a Khalifa?

This is hardly a question for a Hindu to answer. But if I may venture a reply, the Khilafat rests in the Turks by right of valiant defence for hundreds of years. The Sultan may have failed, the Turks have not. The Khilafat agitation does not centre round an individual but round an idea, which is at once temporal, spiritual and political. If the Turks cannot defend, if the Mussulmans of the world do not by their power of opinion and active sympathy stand by the Turks, both they and the latter will suffer irretrievably. Such an event will be a calamity for the world, for I believe that Islam has its place in the world as much as Christianity and every other religion. Chivalry demands the support of the Turks in the hour of their need.

22. Is the economic law that man must buy in the best and the cheapest . market wrong?

It is one of the most inhuman among the maxims laid down by modern economists. Nor do we always regulate human relations by any such sordid considerations. An Englishman pays more (and rightly) for the English collier in preference to cheap (say) Italian labour. Any attempt to introduce cheap labour into England will lead to a revolution. It would be sinful for me to dismiss a highly paid faithful servant because I can get a more efficient and cheaper servant although the latter may be equally faithful. The economics that disregard moral and sentimental considerations are like wax-works that being life-like still lack the life of the living flesh. At every crucial

¹ Vide "Letter to Viceroy", 29-4-1918.

moment these new-fangled economic laws have broken down in practice. And nations or individuals who accept them as guiding maxims must perish. There is something noble in the self-denial of the Mussulman who will pay more for food religiously prepared or a Hindu who will decline to take food unless it is ceremonially clean. We lost when we began to buy our clothing in the cheap markets of England and Japan. We will live again, when we appreciate the religious necessity of buying our clothes prepared by our own neighbours in their cottages

23. Is picketing non-violent?

It certainly has been non-violent in the vast majority of cases. It was the easiest thing to resort to violence in picketing, but the volunteers all over have exercised great restraint.

24. Do you explain the beauty (spiritual or otherwise) of bonfires, when many people are going half-naked in the country and are shivering at the thought of the coming winter?

I do; for I know that their half-nakedness is due to our criminal neglect of the fundamental law of life in India that she should wear only hand-spun just as she must eat only home-cooked food. My giving my discarded foreign clothes to them will only prolong the agony. But the warmth generated by the bonfires will last for the coming winter, and if the bonfires are kept up till the last piece is burnt, the warmth will last for ever, and each successive winter will see the nation more and more invigorated,

Young India, 27-10-1921

6. UNTOUCHABILITY IN HINDU SHASTRAS

I gladly publish the fore-going¹ so that the readers of *Young India* may have the other side. Mr. Aiyar is a learned *vakil*, and one would have expected of him better knowledge of my position than he betrays in his letter. I laid emphasis in all my speeches in the Madras Presidency on the unreasoning and cruel prejudice against the untouchables. Do we treat the "untouchable" *Panchamas* as we treat our mothers and sisters whilst they are untouchable? I still confess my

¹ R. Krishnaswamy Aiyar's letter in defence of untouchability, quoting texts from Manusmriti and other Shastras, published in *Young India*, 20-10-1921 and 27-10-1921; not reproduced here

literary ignorance of the Shastras, but I do profess to understand the secret of Hinduism. And I venture to say in all humility but with all the strength I can command, that to perpetuate untouchability in the manner we have done is a serious blot in Hinduism, an unwarranted abuse of the *Smritis* and a negation of love which is the basis of Hinduism. I therefore do not hesitate to call "untouchability" as practised today a Satanic activity. I invite Mr. Aiyar to devote the talents God has given him to the service of the outcastes among his countrymen, and I promise that he will see the meaning of life that I see in the Hindu Shastras.

Young India, 27-10-1921

7. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

October 27, 1921

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Where is the time to write to you at all? The amount standing in the name of Nirmalabehn should be sent to Vallabhbai and placed in the account of Harijan work. The amount standing in the name of Bharucha should be held over. If it is possible to get some interest on it, it should be done. It represents the award money for a biography of Tilak. It may take another year before the payment is made. Devkarandas is not likely to be persuaded right now. If I have conquered the six enemies¹, then people may accept what I say as the word of experience. But I am myself not aware of any such conquest. Have I yet given up fear of snakes and the like? That I have not done so is because the Self in me is stupefied by ignorance.

How is your health? Do come to Delhi if you feel like coming. I shall not be going to Delhi from Bombay.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

¹ Viz., kama, krodha, lobha, mada, moha and matsara (lust, anger, greed, intoxication, delusion and jealousy)

8. SPEECH ON SWADESHI, AHMEDABAD

October 29, 1921

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I do not have a single word to say now. I cannot think of one, even if I try hard. My present mental condition does not permit me to make a speech anywhere or to take part in a procession. In any case, why should I have to make speeches or take part in processions in Bombay, Ahmedabad or Gujarat?

The work should be carried on as if I was not present in Gujarat. If I have still to rouse Gujarat through my exhortations, then I must admit that we shall not get swaraj this year. The very meaning of swaraj is that Gujarat should be ready to stand on its own feet and even forget me. Young and old, all should show such fearlessness that, even if the best and the most important men fall or are imprisoned, people will remain undaunted and say that the struggle started by Gandhi is now, theirs, that, if Gandhi has gone mad and lost his head, they will not follow his example. When we have this temper, it will be swaraj.

When I was invited to come here, I asked them to consult Vallabhbhai. I follow the wishes of that leader. The leader who has been shaking the whole of Gujarat knows best whether or not I should speak here. I can never do anything in disregard of his wishes. I can offer him advice and make suggestions, but I cannot do anything against his wishes. Not to trust anyone, in the first instance, is a sign of wisdom. But having trusted a person, one must trust one's head to his judgment. It will not then do to find fault with him over every little matter.

What else may I tell you today? Whatever I had to say I have told you already. I like to light an oven. If I am asked to apply the match-stick to any oven, I would do it only too readily. I am a believer in non-violence. There is non-violence and love in every fibre of my being. I have no desire to harm anyone; I have never wished ill to anybody; I have never thought of killing anyone. Though a believer in non-violence, I love to consign foreign cloth to fire because, in burning foreign cloth, we commit no sin but only effect self-purification. We commit sin even when we bathe, eat or cook. Likewise, we may be committing sin when we burn foreign cloth, but today we have no choice but to do so. We cannot live without

breathing or drinking water or cooking; we know these things to be essential and do them all, though we know that we commit sin while doing them. The Hindus even aspire to escape from the encumbrance of this body, but do not commit suicide for that purpose.

Today we have no other way to break the chains of slavery. We would, if we could, break them speedily without adopting swadeshi. But how can that be? In this very capital of Gujarat, women, and some men, have the courage to join processions and attend meetings dressed in garments made of foreign yarn. As long as this is so, how can we hope to break the chains? Even mill-cloth is meant not for us but for the very poor. If we reserve this cloth for us and offer khadi to the poor, the latter will ask, "Why don't you yourselves wear khadi? You give us coarse khadi while you cannot do without fine muslin, *jagannathi* and calico." I have already said that one who wishes to serve the poor should give up all adornment. An atmosphere will then have been created in which the poor will not be able to plead in this manner and will not ask for mill-cloth. They will feel ashamed and tell you that they, too, should be given the khadi which you wear.

But thousands of men and women in Ahmedabad still wear garments of foreign cloth. The women, moreover, entertain all manner of fancies, that it is inauspicious to burn clothes which they have been wearing all these days. How can burning dirt be inauspicious? How can we cling to our filth? This way of arguing is wholly the result of viewing one's duty upside down. When we do not preserve our rotting corn, how can we preserve foreign cloth which is the sign of our slavery?

Now we do not have even two full months. The Congress will be meeting on December 25. If we do not have the flag of swaraj unfurled by that time, what will be the use of having convened the Congress? How can we accomplish this? I told Vallabhbhai that there is a reason why Chitta Ranjan Das has not sent a telegram accepting the presidentship of the Congress. He is trying to make Bengal feel ashamed. He has been saying to Bengal: "You are sending me right to the western end of India; what account shall I give there? I do not want to bring shame on Bengal. What is the reason that the whole of India has chosen a Bengali for the Congress presidentship? People elsewhere think so well of Bengal that they believe it must have something to show." This is how Deshbandhu Das has been appealing to Bengal. His sending telegram depends on the people's response.

Just as the Ali Brothers could at the last moment attend the

Amritsar Congress, if in like manner we cannot welcome here at the Ahmedabad Congress non-co-operators like the Ali Brothers, Maulana Mujadid and those others who are about to be sent to jail, or have already been jailed, what is the point in holding the Congress at all?

As I said in Bombay, this bonfire is good if it is a symbol of the fire which has been raging in our hearts. What shall we gain if we merely enjoy lighting this bonfire just as children enjoy firing crackers? If that is all there is in it, this bonfire is a meaningless blaze, mere mischief. If, however, it was a sign of the fire in our heart, I would ask whether the women present here would have dared to come dressed in garments of foreign or mill-made cloth.

When the women wear whatever khadi, coarse or fine, is available, just as they eat bread made at home, whether thick or thin, and then question me why Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali have not been released, why other fighters are not being released, why we do not get swaraj, I will say that I had miscalculated, that there was nothing left in swadeshi now and, therefore, would suggest something different to them. Today, however neither India nor Gujarat nor Ahmedabad is in a position to ask me this question.

It is true that there has been a great deal of awakening in us and that the use of khadi has increased; however, if I am asked how many people there are in Ahmedabad who have burnt all their clothes, I would say that I do not know, but that there may not be more than ten or twelve such persons. About a thousand women in Ahmedabad have started wearing khadi, but how can this suffice? Of what account are a thousand women in the whole of Gujarat? How many men and women in Gujarat ply the spinning-wheel in their free time?

Dr. Ray writes to say that all the men and women in his factory have started plying the spinning-wheel. And he adds that he has not seen in any machine the magic which he has glimpsed in the spinning-wheel. Have the men and women in Ahmedabad done so much for swaraj that they can ask me questions about it?

Swadeshi is beneficial to crores. It is a sign of a union of hearts between Hindus and Muslims, of compassion towards the poor. We should never think of burning down Government buildings or of engaging in violence when leaders are arrested. If they want to arrest me at this meeting, there should be such an atmosphere that even a peon can fearlessly take me away in the presence of you all. At that

time, no one should shed tears; rather, there should be a brighter glow on the faces of all and everyone should think that now swaraj has been won.

When I am arrested, everyone should discard all his garments of foreign cloth. Women should leave here as many of their garments as they can consistently with their modesty and discard others when they reach home. Just as, after their periods, women bathe in order to cleanse themselves, so polluted by foreign cloth, their should take a bath and resolve not to wear it in future.

Staying in Gujarat, I go from place to place and address my appeals to people. My own desire is, if there is any taluka where swadeshi is being completely followed and where men and women are ready to go to jail or even to mount the gallows, to go and work from there. The conditions on which I may be invited have already been given in *Navajivan*, but I recount them here again:

1. Complete swadeshi should be followed.
2. Contempt for *Dheds* and *Bhangis* should be shed and they should be looked upon as our blood-brothers.
3. Hindus and Muslims should regard one another as blood-brothers.
4. Everyone should realize that there is no other means as effective as peace for winning swaraj.

If we are able to do something, it is because we have learnt to remain peaceful and acquired courage. It is because we did not lose our heads when the Ali Brothers were arrested that the latter could play with the court as they liked. Had we lost our senses, they could not have done this. If, now, the Government says that it will not tolerate their conduct, the Ali Brothers will ask the Government to quit. The court has seen this fearlessness of the Brothers and, therefore, it says nothing. If we lose our heads, the Government will lose its.

There are three essential conditions for winning swaraj:

1. We should preserve peace and see that others too do so.
2. We should relieve the sufferings of the poor.
3. As Hindu-Muslim unity is still a tender plant, it should be nursed carefully.

How can Hindus and Muslims afford to be angry with one another? I get many letters about Malabar. One of the correspondents

says that "there is no union of hearts between Hindus and Muslims". I am convinced that this reflects only the writer's belief. The hearts of both Hindus and Muslims are soft. Muslims should not believe that they and the Hindus are the only parties concerned. There is also a third, God, between them. Why should not the Hindus, too, believe that the Muslims will not kill those who love God? Only if they are complete hypocrites will they kill such persons. At present, however, neither the Hindus nor the Muslims give up hypocrisy, and yet both talk about winning swaraj, of saving the Khilafat and protecting the cow. If the Hindus wish to protect the cow, they should leave the matter to the goodwill of the Muslims. Then God will certainly come and reside in the hearts of Muslims and protect the cow. Islam does not forbid killing of cows, but it is the Muslims duty to refrain from doing anything that may hurt their neighbours' sentiments. The Hindus and the Muslims will not be able to win swaraj with timid hearts; they will be able to do so only if they are clean in their heart, and then they will also be able to save the Khilafat and protect the cow.

Even if only one taluka of Gujarat shows such heroism, it will win swaraj for itself and secure it for others. Let the bonfire that we are lighting today generate such strength in us that we do not rest till we have reached our goal.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 6-11-1921

9. LETTER TO DR. M. S. KELKAR

[After October 29, 1921]¹

MY DEAR DOCTOR,

I really must not publish your letter. The foolish questions were published because they came from a hostile party and I think I have turned the folly to good account.²

You have not understood the psychology of my statement about December³. Such must be my feeling today.

¹ Inferred from the contents

² The reference to "the foolish questions" appears to be to the article "The Secret of It"; vide "The Secret of it", 27-10-1921.

³ The "statement about December" probably is the reference made during the "Speech on Swadeshi" dated 29-10-1921, *ibid*, p. 360.

There is no danger of Civil Disobedience being postponed now.
I should be delighted if you succeed in waking up the Jalgaon weavers.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 6644; also C.W. 3298. Courtesy: Dr. M. S. Kelkar

10. HOW STRONG?

How strong the municipalities of Ahmedabad, Nadiad and Surat are should be known in a few days. All the three have rejected Government control over their education departments and have been growing from strength to strength till this day. It is said that now the Government has decided to test them. Its note is in the nature of a threat [to the municipalities] and incitement to ratepayers. It says that those who supported the resolution to free education [from Government control] have rendered themselves liable to prosecution by any ratepayer. We know the motive behind this suggestion. The Government's second step now is likely to be to get some ratepayer to sue one of the councillors. I trust that the Government will find no ratepayer to sue a councillor who has acted out of a sense of duty and I also trust that, if tiny such ratepayer comes forward, the councillor will remain fearless. If we do not develop the strength to brave such risks, how can we claim to be fit for swaraj?

Another thing the Government can do is to suspend the municipalities and to carry on the administration of the cities itself by appointing committees. This is the utmost it can do. If it does that, I see in the situation the possibility of our winning swaraj. If the Government acts in this manner and if we are ready, we shall get the battle we wanted; how can a battle coming thus unexpectedly fail to please a warrior?

As a drowning man clutches at a straw, the Government catches hold of whatever comes to hand and sinks the deeper. Are we ready?

If the residents of the three cities are ready, the Government is bound to beat a retreat. It will certainly be ridiculous of the Government to get someone to file a suit. The second step is to supersede the municipalities. It is a step which should be welcomed. So long as the municipalities are not superseded, power will remain in the hands of the councillors themselves. When they are superseded,

power will certainly not pass into the Government's hands but it will be in the hands of the people. This is the meaning of civic power. The power which the councillors have has been given to them by the citizens, not by the Government.

As long as the citizens had not awakened, they counted for little with the officials and the councillors. They could make the former dance as they pleased. Now times have changed. The citizens have ceased to be puppets, they have become, or should become, actors in a drama. The Government, therefore, will not have a picnic after suspending the municipalities.

Do the citizens have this degree of awakening among them? Are the councillors really and in truth the voice of the citizens? This will be known now. The councillors should explain the Government note fully to the citizens and make them understand their duty. Only three things are to be pointed out:

1. If the Government starts its own schools, we should not send our children to them.

2. If the Government, having suspended the municipalities, wishes to take civil administration into its own hands, the citizens should not pay rates. Let the Government get money from outside and clean the latrines.

3. If the Government takes over control, we should take the civic administration in our hands.

Ours is a fight with truth as a weapon, so that neither will the Government succeed if it resorts to fraud nor we if we are guilty of hypocrisy. If the citizens have really acquired consciousness, no one can deprive them of it. If they have not, the councillors cannot create it. If, therefore, we explain to the people every step of the Government and consult them in our march forward, we shall discover, and also show to the Government, that it has no strength at all. The Government's strength lies in our weakness. If we acquire strength, we ourselves shall be the government; and our acquiring strength means the mental, emotional, social and political education of the two and a half lakh people of Ahmedabad, the thirty-five thousand people of Nadiad and the one lakh people of Surat. They should know with their minds whom to trust and, through their hearts, that happiness can only follow suffering; should know with their minds and their hearts that, just as our dealings in the family should be pure, so also must our social conduct be pure; this means that, as our homes should be clean,

so our streets and our towns should be clean; as the home should be free from strife, so should society be free from it and, as we would be ready to lay down our lives for the family, so should we be ready to lay it down for society; they should know, as following from all this, that, if the relationship between the king and his subjects becomes vitiated, that is, becomes a relationship between the privileged and the unprivileged, between the employer and the employee, or between master and slave, we should have no more to do with that king, with that system of government. From this, we can deduce rules to guide our conduct in all matters.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 30-10-1921

11. UNDERSTANDING AS DISTINCT FROM LITERACY

My plight is beyond description. A *Garasia*¹ friend of the *Gohel* class wrote a letter to me on 12th April, which I have kept aside all these days. It was not written for publication, but discusses suggestions for action by me. It has been travelling all along with me. Every week I take it up and put it away hoping to deal with it later on. The letter is written in a beautiful and legible handwriting, but is rather long. Anyone who writes a letter of nine pages to me can hardly expect me to read and think over it. It is because I liked the opening sentences that I preserved the letter, and I have now been able to read the whole of it.

I should like this gentleman and others who may write to me to understand my position. They should bear in mind that, as a rule, one who expresses all his ideas in a clear hand on a single page will receive an early reply. If the best of ideas have been expressed in a single sentence; why cannot we state in one sentence what we want? As we go ahead with our work, we shall realize that we can carry on public work with the fewest words. I have nowhere come across such compressed language as the "military" language of the British. I have seen orders being given in a single word. Even words are abbreviated. There are strong reasons for this. Where action is required, the maze of words is cut down to a minimum. It would be almost a crime to speak of a commanding officer. He is referred to in correspondence merely as C.O.

¹ Name of a community in Gujarat and Saurashtra

In other words, where there is understanding, letters, i.e., knowledge of the letters is not very necessary. Would he, who has truly understood what *moksha*¹ means and realized the *atman*, read the Vedas? What would one whose stomach is full do with *basudi*?² Of what use is a book showing the way to the Himalayas to one who has already seen them? It is for this reason that I had written with reference to *Garasias*, *Kathis*³ and others that it was understanding more than literacy which they needed for improvement in their conditions.

That prompted this same *Garasia* friend to write to me: "If you think that understanding is more important than literacy, you are the right person to awaken it in us. We are addicted to drink and opium and are given to idling away our time. Barring this, we suffer from no such caste intrigues as trouble other communities. You want people to have greater strength for self-defence. Actually, we have this as part of our inheritance. If we realize what we are, we can once again become true servants of the country—we aspire to be so. Tell us how we may become this." This is the substance of the letter.

My task has become simpler as I am replying to this question after six months because, during this period, I have written a great deal and, if this has been read with understanding, I need not add a single word. Moreover, if anyone reads all my writings at a stretch, I am sure he could make the following criticism. "This man has said the same thing day in and day out. He must have become the editor of *Navajivan* for doing this." The criticism would be justified. I have burdened myself with *Navajivan* in order to go on repeating the same truth.

I, who was born in the land of the *Mers* and the *Vaghers* in Kathiawar, know their virtues and vices, and of *Kathis* too. It, apart from others, they alone become true to themselves, they could rouse Saurashtra and also do great service to the country as a whole. The legend goes that when Mulu Manek and Jodho Manek, after their arms had been smashed, used their feet to fire their guns and went on fighting, and all for a trifle, their courage knew no bounds. If, however, they are sung in songs even today, it is not because they could aim straight but because they had the strength to hold out

¹ Liberation from phenomenal existence as the supreme end of life

² A preparation of boiled milk

³ A community in Saurashtra

against a big force and could carry death in their pockets, so to say. There was only one battle of Thermopylae in Greece, but I fancy that in Barda¹ there have been many such battles.

I expect only one thing of the *Kathi* Rajputs. Your forefathers died fighting for their *garas*². If you wish to be worthy of your inheritance, then, for the sake of a *garas* like India, be true Kshatriyas and get ready to lay down your own lives, giving up all thought of killing others. Killing is not the dharma of the Kshatriya. The Kshatriya who kills anyone weaker than himself is not a Kshatriya but a murderer; one who stands up against a strong man in order to protect the weak and kills him is forgiven his violent action; but the true Kshatriya is he who, not killing even a strong man, dies defending the weak. His dharma is to die, and not to run away. It is not his dharma to inspire fear of death in others it is to be rid of this fear himself. This explains why he is ready to defend others. One who would do this needs to shed the fear of death more than he needs to learn wrestling. What should an unarmed *Kathi* youth do against a giant who is armed from head to foot and protected by armour? Will he let a poor girl fall into the latter's hands or will he lay down his life before the giant, trusting the girl to God's protection, and thus teach her too a lesson in unarmed courage? Why did Sita rest her eyes on two boys in saffron robes, ignoring other giant-like men? She had felt Rama's soul-force. That innocent girl was unaware as yet that he had the strength to lift Shiva's bow.

But who can give the kind of protection which Rama could? One who is a *brahmachari*, who has conquered sleep and eats little, one who is free from vices and is truthful, one who speaks little, who suffers because he thinks of others' sufferings and refuses to keep with himself anything beyond his immediate needs since he would not have what is denied to others. Some persons will have to have hearts as large as the sea for such compassion. I admit that Rajputs, if they decide, can be ready for this earlier than others. Today, however, there is in the country only one class of people, a new one,—that of slaves.

As long as India is in bondage, a true Kshatriya can neither sleep nor rest in peace nor enjoy wearing good clothes. Anyone who

¹ In Saurashtra

² Share in State lands as inheritance

wants to be such a Kshatriya can become one. People of all the four castes and all religions should become Kshatriya enough to protect themselves. Kshatriyas take upon themselves the sufferings of others and also protect them. All of us cannot become Kshatriyas; some will remain weak. This movement of ours is for drawing up a census of Kshatriyas. The day for presenting our accounts is at hand. But one who cannot use the spinning-wheel cannot become a Kshatriya capable of freeing India in this age.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 30-10-1921

12. MY NOTES

MESSAGE TO THE "DHEDS"

A leaflet in Gujarati under this heading has been distributed by the Government among our *Dhed* brothers. The leaflet says that a rumour is current to the effect that the houses of those *Dheds* who do not join non-co-operation will be burnt down and that the Government will not protect them. The message states that these rumours are false, and that "measures are being taken for the progress of all sections of the people, without any distinctions".

If anyone has threatened our *Dhed* brothers or burnt the house of any of them, then he cannot be called a non-co-operator, or a Hindu or even an Indian. I simply cannot believe that such a threat has been held out by anyone. If it has been held out, however, what protection can the Government offer the *Dhed* brothers? What protection has it given in the past? How has the Government been able to protect *Dheds* when rude Hindus abuse them in trains? What protection does it give to those who, on their identity being discovered in offices, are harassed by the officers themselves, and to those who are without wells, houses and schools? I should indeed like to know what the Government has done to improve their condition.

Yes, the Government has certainly done one thing. There is no doubt that it has got much forced work out of them, taught some of them to eat beef and encouraged them in their vices. Their moral condition has not been improved one bit. Permission has, of course, now been given for a meeting of theirs to be held in the Town Hall. The meeting is for honouring the Prince. This serves the

Government's own interest. So far as I know, this is the first time that a meeting of *Antyajjas* is to take place in the Town Hall in Bombay. This is nothing but flattery or bribing. Moreover, the Government will readily welcome anyone who may want to join in honouring the Prince. By acting thus, it is insulting the innocent Prince of Wales and using him to serve its own interest. If the poor man knew how he is to be honoured, it is doubtful whether he would come to India at this time; if, nevertheless, he did come, it would speak no end for the British people's sense of discipline. At the call of duty, both the King and his subjects would be ready to make any sacrifices. If the sacrifice was not for base self-interest those who made them would be fit for *moksha*.

But my purpose is more to point out to the Hindus their duty than to dwell on the shortcomings of the Government or of the British. It is because the Hindus have not understood their dharma that we see attempts being made to lure our *Dhed* brothers with inducements. I visualize endless occasions of quarrelling in these attempts to drag them to opposite sides. Hence these two developments, the Government's message and the Town Hall meeting, hold a lesson both for the *Antyajjas* and the others. The former should not allow themselves to be deceived by the message or the meeting in the Town Hall. Let them fight the Hindus in a civilized way for what they consider their rights, respect the rules of Hindu society, give up eating meat, etc., especially beef, clean themselves physically after doing sanitary work, give up dissoluteness and so clean their hearts as well. Other Hindus should show regard for the *Antyajjas*, admit them in Congress committees, understand their hardships, defend them if they are molested by anyone, look upon them as their own brothers and get rid of the notion that contact with them is sinful.

However, a thoughtful and considerate Hindu told me in the course of a conversation that, according to the Hindu religion, touch, even the vibrations emanating from *prana*¹, have an effect on the other person and it is, therefore, considered advisable that one should stay away from such people. He added: "It is because the Hindus knew about such intangible effects and guarded themselves against them that they have survived for thousands of years and have been able to compose wonderful Shastras."

Stated thus, the idea is true. Contact with dirt—association with

¹ Life-force

the wicked—defiles us while the company of the good cleanses us. But all this is not said in the Shastras to foster contempt or teach exclusiveness. It is said to persuade people to live in solitude and exercise self-control, and refers not to contact with *Antyajas* but to contact with all human beings. We have to purify ourselves inwardly and we can do this better by serving our *Antyaja* brothers and improving their lot. We put our hands even into gutters in order to clean them, and are none the worse for contact with their contents. If, moreover, we always think of others' evils and keep away from everyone, we should become utter hypocrites because, when we dwell on others' evils, we regard ourselves as so perfect that we think we have nothing to set right. In other words, we become the lowest of the low. The *Dheds* and the *Bhangis* are within ourselves. We need to rid ourselves of them, take a bath on coming into contact with them. Many of the *Dheds* and *Bhangis* outside of us, though engaged in sanitary work, are so simple, so good and upright that they deserve reverence. The *Dheds* and *Bhangis* have no monopoly of vice nor have the other communities of virtue. We should, therefore, take care lest, failing to understand the meaning of certain statements in the Hindu Shastras and some of their ideas, we stick to their letter and fall.

SWADESHI AND "BRAHMACHARYA"

A friend writes to say that while swadeshi is gathering momentum in the country, there is no advance in regard to *brahmacharya*. How will swaraj be achieved so long as men and women do not hold their minds under control? This seems a fine idea, but there is no necessary relation between the two things. Swadeshi and *brahmacharya* are two distinct matters. Khadi is sacred as compared to foreign cloth. The wheat from Charotar is sacred as compared to American wheat. But just as one who eats wheat from Charotar may yet be wicked and sensual, so may also be a person who wears khadi. Therefore, by attributing greater sanctity to khadi or swadeshi we shall only be harming ourselves. It would not be possible to propagate swadeshi at all if khadi dress came to be regarded as the means to perfection. The good and the wicked, the healthy and the sick, the righteous and the sinful— all should purify themselves at least to the extent of adopting khadi. There is patriotism in it, and it comprehends the duty of compassion and friendship towards one's countrymen and one's neighbours. Hence I regard wearing of khadi also as a form of self-purification. If crores of people achieve even this little measure of self-purification, the sum total of the merit

earned thereby would be so high that we would regain that birthright of ours which we have lost. At present, we are striving for government by ourselves, whether perfect or imperfect. For this, swadeshi is essential and sufficient.

Only a few will observe *brahmacharya*, though we wish that all should. If everyone observed it, we would gain the kingdom both of this world and the other. It is part of our dharma to observe it but, by linking it up with swadeshi, we make the latter, which is easy to follow, as difficult as *brahmacharya*.

Having thus seen and explained the difference between the two, I would certainly add that every worker whether man or woman, should observe *brahmacharya* till we have won swaraj. We, workers, are so few in number and, on reflection we shall find that we are so poor, too, that we have neither the time for begetting children nor the means of bringing them up. Who would benefit by children being born to a diseased person? What an immoral thing it would be for a consumptive to beget children? If this is so, what are we to say about slaves? The great tragedy is that, while thinking of the gratification of our desires, we do not think at all about the offspring. We are such slaves to our desires that we have lost all good sense. The birth of children is the accidental result of our indulgence, and not the desired, worthy and sacred fruit of a man of self-control having done his duty as a householder to limited extent only. Very often it is an unwanted and painful fruit.

I am certain that those dedicated persons at any rate who are engrossed in the service of the people cannot possibly desire sex-pleasure. How can they spare time for it, either? It is in the hope that there will be no such person that I am making my modest offering to this *swaraj-yajna*. If the ultimate aim is merely to get power transferred to the people, I am sure I am not so childish as to spend myself in meaningless efforts to secure this toy. I indeed believe that those who accept even this outward freedom as their goal for the present and work for it will realize that they will not achieve it till they become truthful, compassionate, brave and fearless, adopt simplicity in their lives and follow swadeshi. While making this effort, some at least cannot escape laying their hands on the *ratnachintamani*¹. I have joined this effort and am ever unperturbed because I know that it will raise the moral level of the nation, and I certainly wish, therefore, that

¹ A fabulous jewel supposed to have the virtue of fulfilling a wish instantly

volunteers, both men and women, will take a pledge to observe *brahmacharya* till we have won swaraj. They should not cheat themselves when taking it, should not take it at my asking. They will be able to keep the pledge and it will bear fruit only if it is taken with understanding and determination

THE NAMES RAMA AND RAHIM

Writing to me, a Sikh gentleman says that swadeshi is all right, but I who believe in God, why do I not put the name of God before all else? Why do I not ask everyone to pray, repeating the name by which he knows God, Khuda, *Ishwar* or Rama, whichever it may be? It is true that I do not do this. I am certain that one cannot attain heaven through mere repetition of words. One must be fit for such repetition. I believe that, so long as we wear foreign cloth, we are not fit to take the name *Ishwar* or Allah. A man who cuts another's throat with Rama's name on his lips profanes that name. Likewise, the Indian who, refusing to use the cloth woven by the hands of another Indian, gets his requirements from hundreds of miles away and so cuts the throat of his brother, too is not fit to take the name of God. In this connection, I have already pointed out the importance of the spinning-wheel. Spinning is such restful work that, as we make the hand one with the yarn, we can attune our hearts to God. Devotion to God, like *brahmacharya*, cannot be linked with swadeshi. Even a person whose lips do not utter God's name would, if he follows swadeshi, gain to that extent. Even an atheist following swadeshi would benefit himself and the country thereby. One who has God ever in his mind and heart will of course do much good to himself and the country. Swadeshi is the power which takes us towards God, as it raises us higher. I have written all this about the suggestion of this friend in order to make it clear that, if we do not worship God, we cannot look upon our struggle as a holy one. We who are fighting to defend our dharma should certainly not forsake God's name, should ever keep repeating it in the depth of our hearts. We should repeat it with each heart-beat, that is, unceasingly. Swadeshi helps us to do this, but the two ideas do not mean the same thing. While swadeshi is the dharma attaching to the body, chanting the name of God is a property of the *atman*.

“PEOPLE'S FAIR”

“People's Fair” means a fair for the people. Two Parsi sisters

write to me to say that a people's fair is to be held at the time of the Prince of Wales's visit and some persons believe that people could attend it. They say that they can understand the idea of not joining in honouring the Prince, but why should one not attend fairs, fireworks, etc., of which the municipality will bear the cost? This argument is not correct for, if expenditure is the only thing to be taken into consideration, the Prince will be honoured at our cost. The money which the Government spends is ours. Our argument is that we should not attend a function in arranging which we have had no voice, even if the expenses are met with our money. If a robber held a feast at our expense, would we attend it? Even so, I can see no difference between a party for honouring the Prince and a function for celebrating his visit. If we should keep away from one, we should keep away from both.

INTELLIGENCE AND THE SPINNING-WHEEL

I have been receiving numerous criticisms on a statement made by the Poet in his article¹. It is to the effect that the spinning-wheel will curb the mind of the man who plies it. I do not wish to publish the criticisms since the Poet's statement is merely an inference. Millions of spinning-wheels are in use in the country today. I know that among the people who ply the wheel are lawyers, doctors and philosophers from all provinces. Suffice it to say that the evidence of their experience is against the Poet's inference. I have questioned hundreds of students and they have not found the spinning-wheel to be an enemy of intelligence. The experience of doctors and lawyers is similar. A well-known novelist of Bengal once came to see me merely to tell me his experience. He said that he plied the spinning-wheel regularly and that, in consequence, his art had improved. I do not wish to read too much into all this. I only wish to show that the intelligence of the intelligent is sharpened by body labour of any kind and, if the work is beneficial to the people, it becomes sanctified. Spinning, being clean, light and pleasant work is the best form of such body labour and is, in the present plight of the country, the wish-fulfilling tree of heaven for us.

"APPEAL TO ISMAILI FIRKA JAMAT"

Writing under this heading, Mr. Fidahussain Daudbhai

¹"The Call of Truth" by Rabindranath Tagore in the October issue of The Modern Review, Calcutta

Poonawala says that all Muslims, Khojas, Bohras and others owe it as duty to give the fullest co-operation in swadeshi; if they do not, they will have to suffer in future. This is my belief too. Those who do not adopt swadeshi fully will certainly be left behind. The appeal is a long one. I have only mentioned the central idea. I have not considered it necessary to publish the whole of it as the other arguments advanced in it are well-known.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 30-10-1921

*13. LETTER TO MAIN MOHAMMED HAJI
JAN MOHAMMED CHOTANI*

October 31, 1921

DEAR CHOTANI MIAN,

I thank you for your letter offering one lakh spinning-wheels. I am sure that the fact of your very liberal donation will strike the imagination of India and particularly the Mussulmans. In forwarding your letter to the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee I shall ask the Secretaries to bear in mind your desire that the members of the Maiman Community should receive preference. I do not know whether you have fixed any particular sum in your own mind that you wish to devote for the purpose, for experience teaches me that a cheap spinning-wheel in time becomes an expensive wheel. A good wheel, substantial and heavy, will not cost less than six rupees. If, therefore, you do not want to make so large a donation I would suggest your reducing the number of charkhas. And I would also suggest you not using the whole of the amount you may wish to devote so much for spinning as for paying a somewhat higher rate to the poor women for the yarn that they might spin and for engaging a special staff for doing the work. This will enable you to use your donation practically under your supervision and in the most economical manner as is being done in Kathiawar. Of course, I venture to send you these observations for your guidance. The merit of your act is in no way affected by them.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7649

14. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

New Year's Day¹ Silence Day [October 31, 1921]

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

New Year's Day and Silence Day—this is a happy coincidence for me. My vow of spinning begins from today—to spin half an hour every day before the second meal, and forgo the meal in case I fail to do so. This is not a very great thing, but, thanks to the vow, my spinning will now be somewhat regular. The vow is not binding when I am in a train.

I have received your letter of Diwali greetings and the *bhajans*. Why did you write these? Your duty was to leave your [sick] bed early. How can you wake up Durga, or for the matter of that anybody else, for this work? I received your telegrams too. One of them has the phrase "Emblezon University" which none of us here could understand. Vijayaraghavachari is not a cunning man, nor is he a *rishi*. He may have dropped "not" through oversight; but why did he not correct himself in reply to my strong wire to him?

My blessings to you both—may you enjoy health of body, mind and heart during the new year.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11423

15. LETTER TO RANCHHODLAL PATWARI

SABARMATI,

Padvo,² October 31, 1921

MU. BHAISHRI,

How good of you to think of your younger brother on the Diwali day². Your blessings have borne fruit. For the present, I have no intention of going to that side.

What may I wish you?

Pranam from

MOHANDAS

MU. BHAISHRI RANCHHODLAL PATWARI

DIWAN SAHEB

GONDAL

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 34025

¹ The first day of the month of Kartika according to the Vikram era

² That is, Kartik Sud 1, observed in Gujarat as the New Year Day

16. CABLE TO PARSİ RUSTOMJI

November 1, 1921

PARSİ RUSTOMJI¹

DURBAN

POWER POSTED TRUST REQUIRES MODIFICATION. AUTHORIZE
USE FORTY THOUSAND WEAVING SCHOOL AND SEND MORE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7725

17. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

November 1, 1921

It is dawn. Your letter is lying before me. Why should you apologize for what you wrote?

There may be an element of egoism in my article or conduct without my being aware of it. The word *klesha* [anguish] here should be interpreted in a different way, though I cannot say how. I feel pain when I see others suffer. It is the nature of compassion that whenever one is unable to relieve the suffering of others one suffers unbearably. Logic will not avail when one is describing the condition of one's mind. I have given a graphic description of my feelings. It may be that these feelings were not quite pure. However, my state of mind at the time of writing the article² had also in it a yearning for *moksha*—my aspiration for *moksha* was by no means weak then—but the fact is that I am no more than an aspirant after *moksha*. But I am not yet fit for *moksha* in this life. My *tapascharya* is not intense enough. I can control my passions no doubt, but I have not yet become completely free from them. I can control the palate, but the tongue has not yet ceased relishing good food. He who can restrain the senses is a man of self-control; but the man whose senses have become, through constant practice, incapable of enjoying their objects has transcended self-control, has in fact attained *moksha*. I would not be tempted to give up my striving after *moksha* even for the sake of *swaraj*, but that does not mean that I have attained *moksha*. You will, therefore, notice many

¹ Indian merchant of Natal; took prominent part in Gandhiji's satyagraha campaigns in South Africa

² Vide "Optimism", 23-10-1921.

defects in my language. For me, even the effort for attaining swaraj is a part of the effort for *moksha*. Writing this [letter] to you is also a part of the same effort. If I find it a hindrance in the path of *moksha*, my pen would drop down this very moment, such is my yearning for *moksha*. Nevertheless, the mind is like a drunken monkey; mere effort is not enough for controlling it. Our [past] actions also must be coming in our way.

In my article "Optimism" I have suggested a rule of conduct, viz, that we should cease to have any dealings with a person who breaks a promise. This is the sign of a detached person. If even next year I find that the atmosphere in India is unfavourable and still we go on harping the same tune, it would be an outrage. In that case, I must first acquire the necessary fitness. This is why silence has been considered the best speech. Whatever I may do will be, I am sure, quite natural to me, for I will say and act upon nothing but what I believe to be the truth.

But "Enjoy what you get today, who ever has seen tomorrow?" has been accepted as their motto alike by libertines and the self-controlled.

May the new year bring happiness to you.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, pp. 38-9

18. LETTER TO VALJI DESAI

ON THE TRAIN,
Wednesday [November 2, 1921]¹

Please ask the Press to send the proofs of *Young India* for this time only at the address of the Rajasthan Seva Sang, Ajmer. They should be posted on Wednesday evening or early morning on Thursday so that they may reach Ajmer by the morning mail.

Vandemattaram from

MOHANDAS

BHAISHRI VALJI DESAI

YOUNG INDIA

AHMEDABAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 6040. Courtesy: Valjibhai Govindji Desai

¹ The letter bears the postmark: "Ajmer, November 3, 1921". It was written while Gandhiji was on his way to Delhi. He returned to Ajmer on Wednesday, November 11, 1921.

19. NOTES

HUNGER STRIKE

I cannot sufficiently warn non-co-operation prisoners against the danger of hastily embarking upon hunger strikes in their prisons. It cannot be justified as a means for removing irksome jail restrictions. For a jail is nothing if it does not impose upon us restrictions which we will not submit to in ordinary life. A hunger strike would be justified when inhumanity is practised, or food issued which offends one's religious sense or which is unfit for human consumption. It should be rejected when it is offered in an insulting manner. In other words it should be rejected when acceptance would prove us to be slaves of hunger.

AT LAST

Mr. Sengupta the leader of Chittagong and the soul of the Assam-Bengal Railway strike movement has at last got his imprisonment with eighteen others. It is not a long spell. He and his companions have got only three months' rigorous imprisonment. Mrs. Sengupta writing about her husband says he was quite happy over the prospect of being sentenced. I was told whilst in Chittagong that its citizens had nearly attained swaraj. "Nearly" is an elusive word. It may be next to completion or it may be farthest away from it, and yet "nearly" may be used for either state. But if the people of Chittagong want to attain swaraj completely, they must spin and weave all their cloth in their own homes and offer no temptation to dealers in foreign cloth. Its courts must be deserted and the Government schools must be empty. In that case the citizens may not even need civil disobedience. But they may not have that measure of strength or unanimity. Still if the majority desire swaraj, it cannot be stopped by the minority. The majority however in order to establish its authority must go through the fire of suffering, by means of civil disobedience.

WHY SUFFER?

Let there be no mistake about the meaning of these imprisonments. They are not courted with the object of embarrassing the Government, though as a matter of fact they do. They are courted for the sake of discipline and suffering. They are courted because we consider it to be wrong to be free under a Government we hold to be wholly bad. No stone should be left unturned by us to make the Government realize that we are in no way amenable to its control. And

no government has yet tolerated such open defiance however respectful it may be. It might safely therefore be said that if we are yet outside the prison walls, the cause lies as much with us as with the Government. We are moving cautiously in our corporate capacity. We are still voluntarily obeying many of its laws. There was, for instance, nothing to prevent me from disregarding the Madras Government's order and courting arrest,¹ but I avoided it. There is nothing to prevent me save my prudence or weakness from going without permission into the barracks and being arrested for trespass. I certainly believe the barracks to be the nation's property and not that of a Government which I no longer recognize as representative of the people. Thus there is an apparent inconsistency between the statement on the one hand that it is painful to remain outside the prison walls under a bad Government and this deliberate avoidance on the other hand of arrest upon grounds which are not strictly moral but largely expedient. We thus avoid imprisonment, because first, we think that the nation is not ready for complete civil revolt, secondly, we think that the atmosphere of voluntary obedience and non-violence has not been firmly established, and thirdly, we have not done any constructive corporate work to inspire self-confidence. We therefore refrain from offering civil disobedience amounting to peaceful rebellion, but court imprisonment merely in the ordinary pursuit of our programme and in defence of complete freedom of opinion and action short of revolt.

Thus it is clear that our remaining outside the jails of a bad Government has to be justified upon very exceptional grounds, and that our swaraj is attained when we are in jail or when we have bent the Government to our will. Whether therefore the Government feel embarrassed or happy over our incarceration, the only safe and honourable place for us is the prison. And if this position be accepted, it follows that when imprisonment comes to us in the ordinary discharge of our duty, we must feel happy because we feel stronger, because we pay the price of due performance of duty. And if exhibition of real strength is the best propaganda, we must believe that every imprisonment strengthens the people and thus brings swaraj nearer.

SOMETHING STRIKING

But friends whisper into my ears, we must do something striking

¹ Vide "Notes", 29-9-1921, under the sub-title "Afflicted Madras".

when the Prince comes. Certainly not for the sake of impressing him, certainly not for the sake of demonstration. But I would use the occasion of his imposed visit for stimulating us into greater activity. That would constitute the most glorious impression upon the Prince and the world, because we would have made an impression upon ourselves. The shortest way to swaraj lies through self-impression, self-expression and self-reliance, both corporate and individual. I would certainly love the idea of filling the jails before the Prince arrives, but I see no way to it except after very vigorous swadeshi. There is great progress undoubtedly in that direction, but there is not revolutionary or lightning speed. Arithmetical progression will not answer, geometrical progression is absolutely necessary. It is not enough for us to be washed by the swadeshi spirit, we must be flooded with it. Then thousands of us involuntarily, as if by a common impulse, will march forward to civil disobedience. Today we are obliged very rightly to measure every step for want of confidence. Indeed, I do not even feel sure that thousands of us are ready to suffer imprisonment, or that we have so far understood the message of non-violence as never to be ruffled or goaded into violence.

WEEDING OUT

The Government of Madras is fast weeding out all tall poppies. Mr. Yakub Hasan and Dr. Varadarajulu are the latest victims. Mr. Yakub Hasan is known to everybody as an indefatigable Khilafat worker and nationalist. He has already suffered imprisonment for civil disobedience, he could not avoid if he was to prevent violence on the part of a Calicut mob. In a weak moment he allowed himself to be released before his time. He tendered a handsome apology for a weakness which anybody in Mr. Yakub Hasan's position might have been guilty of. The Government of Madras has given him an opportunity of showing the stuff of which he is made. Dr. Varadarajulu is not so well known outside the Madras Presidency, but he is locally known for his ability and industry, and respected for his self-effacing love of the country. He has been organizing a band of earnest workers and has been doing most effective swadeshi work. He has been now arrested for some speech or other of his like Mr. Yakub Hasan for his Tanjore speech. The fear of an outbreak of violence has now almost gone. People have realized, that their progress lies in remaining perfectly non-violent. Every such arrest leads to greater diminution of Government prestige and exposes it to contempt or

ridicule. The ridicule and the contempt poured upon it by non-co-operators are not half as damaging as the ridicule and contempt invited by the Government itself by means of the arrests.

A REST CURE

And prisons have lost their terror for the people. Hardly a non-co-operator save in one or two cases has betrayed the slightest hesitation to go to gaol. On the contrary the majority have regarded it as a rest cure. Given an atmosphere of non-violence,—a prime necessity—disappearance of fear of jail and greater activity by reason of imprisonments, and we have an ideal state for the establishment of swaraj.

PROOF OF HEALTH

That imprisonments instead of producing demoralization act as an incentive to healthier national growth is evidenced by two letters received from accurate observers. A friend writes from Barisal:

East Bengal is indebted to Pir Badshah Mian's arrest for the Hindu-Muslim unity which is now quite firm and the boycott of foreign cloth which is now complete among the masses.

Equally emphatic is the testimony from Andhradesha. The Andhra letter says:

The real swadeshi spirit has not yet seized the hearts of the people though there is ample evidence of growing conviction in favour of the movement. In many places the required khadi is not available. The weavers are not yet quite willing to weave the swadeshi yarn, and for those that are willing there is not adequate supply of yarn.... One thing that seems to accelerate the progress is the policy of repression adopted by the Government. Many a sleepy hollow has been roused to activity by the arrest and imprisonment of someone or other of the Congress workers, and if these arrests and imprisonments are made on a large scale, there will undoubtedly be speedier progress in all directions. As we go on, we find apprehension of violence growing less and less.

Everyone who writes to me from Karachi testifies to the growing strength of the people side by side with their growing discipline and self-restraint and a growing adoption of swadeshi. And all this, because the distinguished prisoners are being tried in Karachi. This trial is an object-lesson to the Government and the people in non-violence coupled with courage bordering on defiance."We have no respect for your courts" was for the first time heard at Karachi in a

British-Indian court of law. What is more, the judge is powerless to deal with this open contempt of court. Why? Because the big bulky brusque Shaukat Ali who uttered the sentiment had no feeling against Kennedy the man. He showed real fellow-feeling for the man in the judge by letting him know that he loathed the system which he was blindly encouraging.

THE LOGICAL RESULT

The logical result of all this reasoning is that we must quickly organize ourselves for courting arrests wholesale, and that not rudely, roughly or blusteringly, certainly never violently, but peacefully, quietly, courteously, humbly, prayerfully and courageously. By the end of December every worker must find himself in jail unless he is specially required in the interest of the struggle not to make the attempt. Let it be remembered, that in civil disobedience we precipitate arrests and therefore may keep few outside the attempt.

REQUISITE CONDITIONS

Those only can take up civil disobedience, who believe in willing obedience even to irksome laws imposed by the state so long as they do not hurt their conscience or religion, and are prepared equally willingly to suffer the penalty of civil disobedience. Disobedience to be civil has to be absolutely non-violent, the underlying principle being the winning over of the opponent by suffering, i.e., love.

For the purpose of the Khilafat, the Punjab or swaraj, civil resisters must implicitly believe in the necessity of Hindu-Muslim unity based not upon expediency but upon real affection. Civil resisters must believe in swadeshi and therefore use only hand-spun. Humanly speaking, if not even one out of the two hundred and fifty districts of India is thus ready, I consider the attainment of swaraj during this year nearly impossible. If one district can be found where ninety per cent of the population have completely boycotted foreign cloth and are manufacturing all the cloth required by them by hand-spinning and hand-weaving, if the whole of the population of that district, whether Hindu, Mussulman, Parsi, Sikh, Christian or Jewish, is living in perfect amity, if the whole of its Hindu population is purged of the sin of untouchability and if at least one in every ten of its inhabitants is capable of suffering imprisonment or even mounting the gallows, and if while that district is civilly, peacefully and honourably resisting the

Government, the rest of India remains non-violent and united and prosecutes the programme of swadeshi, I hold it to be perfectly possible to establish swaraj during this year. I shall hope, that there are several such districts ready. In any case the method now to adopt is for workers to concentrate on and develop their own districts without reference to the rest. They must not invite imprisonment till they are ready, nor must they avoid it if it comes to them unsought. They should make no speeches but simply finish the swadeshi programme in a business-like manner. Where workers find no response from their districts, they must not get disheartened but should simply become expert carders, spinners and weavers. Their out-turn will be their best and whole work whilst their neighbours are thinking what to do.

DIVIDE AND RULE

A correspondent draws moral from the arrest of Mr. Yakub Hasan in Madras, and imprisonments of Mr. Ansari in Delhi, of Pir Mujadid in Sindh and Pir Badshah Mian in Bengal, that the Government are trying to divide us, that they are bribing the Hindus into submission by leaving them mostly alone, and that by the time the Congress meets no Mussulman non-co-operator of note will be left free to attend and guide the Congress regarding its policy on questions affecting the Mussulmans. I hope that the correspondent's prognostication is not true and that the Government will not commit any such fatal mistake. I think the Government has realized that it cannot divide Hindu and Mussulman non-co-operators. If it has arrested Pir Badshah Mian, it has arrested Dr. Banerji, Nripen Babu and Babu Sengupta. If it has arrested Mr. Yakub Hasan, it has also arrested Dr. Varadarajulu. But if the Government does imprison all the noted Mussulmans, it will still further solidify the two communities and give the Hindus a unique opportunity of fighting the battle of the Khilafat single-handed. And if the Hindus have any grit in them, they will be able to force the Government by peaceful and honourable means to imprison them also.

A WELCOME DONATION

The reader must have seen Chhotani Mian's letter to me donating one lakh of charkhas. Chhotani Mian deserves the warmest congratulations for his generous help. I have ventured to show to him how he can utilize the sum he might have set apart for the purpose. It is not a simple matter to distribute one lakh of charkhas in a useful

way. They can only be given to deserving persons. Arrangements must therefore be made to supply slivers and collect yarn.

TWO STUDENTS

Messrs Mahomed Hussain and Shafique Rahman Kidwai are students of the National Muslim University. They were posted in the Andhra District by Maulana Mahomed Ali. They were there doing great work in a most unassuming manner. They have already gone to jail whilst their chief is still on his trial. The circumstances in which they went to jail are graphically described in their letter written on their way to prison, which I give below in full:

After seeing you off at Guntakal we went to Adoni where we received a wire from Mr. Harisarvottam Rao calling us to Cuddapah because three Congress workers had been arrested there. We went there on the eleventh October and were working with some of our Guntur friends. We held several meetings and formed Congress and Khilafat Committees. On the 21st October in a monster meeting of over six thousand people, we distributed the *fatva* and the audience reiterated the Karachi Resolution standing. We also procured 1400 signatures on the spot and collected two thousand and five hundred rupees for Angora. On the evening of the 24th all the workers were served with an order under Sec. 144, gagging us for two months. Yesterday, early in the morning, we were served with summons to appear before the court and furnish securities for good behaviour. Accordingly we went to the court and had an informal talk with the Superintendent of Police (a European) for two hours, with the permission of the Collector. The case then began and we were charged under Sec. 108 for seditious speeches and under Sec. 124-A for seducing the soldiery by distributing the *fatva* and explaining it. After two prosecuting witnesses were examined, we gave our statement and the court adjourned till four in the afternoon. Everyone was amazed to see that we were allowed to go to our place in the city without any sort of police custody. We returned to the court at four and the Magistrate asked us to furnish securities which we refused to do. The Magistrate then sentenced us to six months' simple imprisonment and said, "Gentlemen, it is a painful duty to sentence men of your stamp." He then shook hands with us. The Superintendent then embraced us and said, "I wish to work hand in hand with you for the good of the country." Even then they did not take us in custody. We went to the mosque, said our prayers and walked to the station with the people of the town and there we found a sub-inspector and two constables waiting to take us to Central Jail, Vellore. This sort of behaviour was never expected from the police as they behaved with Mr. Ramamurti and others very roughly. We are glad that we

have followed in the footsteps of our loving and respected Principal Maulana Mahomed Ali and congratulate ourselves that we are the first to be imprisoned for the so. called seducing the military by distributing the *fatva* and reiterating the Karachi Resolution. We have done our duty and request you to bless us with your prayers. We are cheerful at heart and pray to God to endow us with courage and strength to undergo all rigours and hardships.

I do not know whom to congratulate most, the brave young men, the Magistrate and the police, or the Principal who has moulded the character of these young men. As for the Government which send such innocent men to prison, I can only say it is digging its own grave in a way no non-co-operator can.

TEN PRECIOUS REASONS

The Bihar Government Publicity Bureau has issued leaflets in Hindustani giving ten reasons why foreign cloth should not be boycotted. The reader should know how the reforms are working and the public is being misled at its own expense. Here are the reasons:

1. Cloth manufactured in India is not sufficient for our needs.

2. People being used to wearing fine cloth for a long time find it heavy to wear garments made from Indian yarn.

3. Even Indian mills use foreign yarn for the fine cloth they weave.

4. If we give up foreign cloth, we shall be in the same plight we were in 1905, when owing to swadeshi agitation Indian mills sent up prices and drained our wealth. Thus mill-owners mill fatten themselves on our ruin.

5. So long as foreign cloth is imported, there is competition between Indian cloth and foreign cloth, and thus the null-owners cannot raise prices very high.

6. There are not enough mills and handlooms in India for the cloth required.

7. Hand-spinning is not profitable because it yields no more than two annas per day.

8. Handlooms produce very little; therefore much cannot be produced from them.

9. By such boycott there will be great unrest and commotion, and India's progress will be greatly arrested.

10. By the rise in the price of cloth the poor will suffer much and discontent will spread all over.

I hope that Lord Sinha¹ knows nothing of these precious reasons, but he cannot escape responsibility. I admit that it is not humanly possible for any man to *control* the details of all the departments of a big province. But that is just the reason why no self-respecting person should serve this Government. The system is designed to drain India dry and perpetuate the foreign yoke in the interest of the foreign capitalist, chiefly the Lancashire manufacturer. But for this selfishness running through every department, the circular I have translated will be an impossibility. The most natural thing that a national government will do will be to multiply handlooms and spinning-wheels, and flood the market with plenty of hand-spun. A national government will prevent the mill-owners from unduly raising prices, a national government would take advantage of the glorious upheaval to stabilize a great cottage industry. It did not strike the author of the precious reasons, that the millions do not even now wear fine cloth, that spinning is intended for leisure hours, that millions will not need to pay anything for spinning, that they will do it themselves and that therefore hand-spun will always be comparatively cheap for them as home-cooked food is cheaper than hotel-cooked. The moral of the Government leaflet for us should be to redouble our efforts in behalf of swadeshi and lose no time in ending a system which is like a canker eating into the very vitals of the nation.

THE "KUKIS"

A friend has sent me a Government *communiqué* on my reference to the *Kukis* during my Assam tour. I am sorry, I did not see the note for many days after its publication. But even as it is, I am unable to withdraw anything I have written. My informants told me that true facts were hushed up. Who would have known anything of the diabolical acts of the Punjab Government during the martial law days but for the Congress inquiry? What did the public know of the cruelties practised by the military during the revolt of 1857 till Kaye and Malleson lifted the veil? Who knows the true facts of many an expedition undertaken to punish our neighbours from time to time? I am in a position to say, that even now the public do not know much, if

¹ Governor of Bihar and Orissa, 1920-21; first Indian member of Viceroy's Executive Council

anything at all, of the fiendish cruelties practised in the Punjab during The dark recruiting days. I have evidence in my possession which was submitted to the Punjab Government but which I have withheld from the public because I was not able for want of time to follow up the details that came to light. I have seen enough of denials that cannot possibly be denied in an authentic manner. I have therefore deliberately preferred the evidence of the most respectable men of Assam to the authoritative but interested statement on behalf of the Government. I am reluctantly obliged to adhere to the note on the *Kukis* contradicted by the local Government.

A *Statesman* correspondent paints the *Kukis* in the blackest colours. I do not know the tribesmen. I hold no brief for them. They may be worse than they are painted. But if I was an officer in command of a punitive expedition, I would not be guilty of the atrocities that were attributed to the expedition by my informants.

FOR EMPLOYEES

A correspondent inquires:

Would you advise the servants of railway companies, European firms and others who do not want their servants to subscribe to national funds or, wear khadi, to resign in obedience to the Congress call?

I should have thought that such a question could not require solution at this almost the last stage in the struggle. The surprise to me is that any person can still remain in an office where he cannot follow his religion or maintain self-respect. That hundreds of clerks find it impossible to leave their offices although they are prevented from wearing the life-giving khadi or subscribing openly to a national fund, shows the depth to which we have sunk. It did not require the stern lesson of non-co-operation to learn the elements of self-respect. And yet that is just what non-co-operation has been doing all these months. I commend to every employee the example of the brave Vizagapatam medical students who would not leave their khadi dress for the sake of being able to remain in their school.¹

CHIRALA-PERALA

The brave people of these little places are still continuing their

¹ Vide "Notes", 17-11-1921, under the sub-title "Brave Students"; also "Notes", 24-11-1921, under the sub-title "More about Medical Students".

fight.¹ Their leader Mr. Gopala Krishnayya is in jail. But they have not lost heart. They are still in their huts. A letter before me says:

The people have remained firm. The fact that some of the most prominent leaders in the village have been but recently prosecuted for omission to pay the municipal taxes and have cheerfully gone to jail, has made them firmer in their resolve not to go back to the village. At the present moment both the villages are strong in their determination to stick to the position they have taken up in spite of all the losses, hardships and privations which the evacuation has brought upon them. There are some poor people whose huts have fallen down and some more requiring new huts.

It is such stuff from which swaraj can be evolved. There should be no demoralization when the leaders are gone, and there should be no surrender in the face of fire.

Young India, 3-11-1921

20. ANOTHER GURKHA CHARGE

It almost seems as if Bengal is to be the first in suffering and therefore the first in winning swaraj. The Chandpur outrage is still fresh in the memory. Now comes the news of an equally terrible outrage in Chittagong. Let Babu Prasannakumar Sen, Secretary of the District Congress Committee, tell the tale in his own words:

I take this opportunity of giving you an account of the latest turn of events at Chittagong. Mr. Sengupta, President, and St. Mohim Chandra Das, Secretary, Chittagong District Congress Committee, and sixteen others were arrested on the 2nd July last for taking part in a procession without licence contrary to a notice previously issued by the local authorities under Sec. 30 of the Police Act. Their trial came up on the 19th October. They were charged under Sec. 151 I.P.C. and Sec. 32 of the Police Act. The accused did not offer any defence and were each sentenced to undergo rigorous imprisonment for three months on the 20th of October. It was known in the town that the noble prisoners would be taken to the Central Jail at Alipur the same evening. People began to collect before the jail gate from 4 o'clock. Band parties, concert parties and *sankirtan* parties were also brought in. In the evening the whole town was illuminated and there was bomb firing and rocket flying. This the people did without any instructions from the Congress organization. Shortly after 8 p.m. the prisoners were taken out of jail and placed in police

¹ Vide "Chirala-Perala", 25-8-1921.

carriages for being conveyed to the railway station. A procession with torch light, band parties, concert parties followed the carriages in an extremely orderly manner.

The procession having reached the approaches of the railway station, a *posse* of Gurkhas numbering about a hundred and armed with guns came out of ambush. Lights were put out by some person not yet known, and the Gurkhas suddenly and without any notice whatsoever sprang upon innocent and peaceful persons with all the savagery they could command with cries of *maro, maro, lagao, lagao*. . . . It is reported that nearly a hundred persons got bleeding wounds in different parts of their bodies, and about three hundred persons received aching blows. The District Magistrate, Mr. Strong, and Additional District Magistrate, Mr. Burrows, were present on the spot. One prominent Peace and Order Association man was seen taking part in the assault and crying at the top of his voice, *maro, maro*, and after the assault was over, he was seen in company with the District Magistrate. After the assault outside the station premises, a European military officer, presumably commanding the Gurkhas, entered the platform. He made a show of proceeding to the compartment reserved for prisoners, but made a sudden left wheel and began to push people who had been there with platform tickets. No warning was given, no request was made to move away from or clear the platform. . . Both outside and inside the platform, serious loss of life would have occurred, had not people remained calm and non-violent under great provocation. . . .

The local Congress Committee, the Chittagong Association and the local Khilafat Committee met at an extraordinary emergency meeting on the morning of the 21st instant and appointed an independent committee of enquiry. . . . Photographers have been engaged to take photographs of the wounded. We shall be thankful if you kindly advise us as to what steps should be taken to redress our grievances in this respect.

Swadeshi propaganda is being pushed on with greater vigour than heretofore. . . .

Up to now thirty persons have been convicted in connection with the Congress propaganda, and twenty-seven of them are still in jail. Prosecution is pending against six.

The facts are set forth with such precision, that it is hard to suspect any exaggeration. And yet it is equally hard to credit the authorities with such utter callousness as is to be inferred from the description given by Prasanna Babu. Manifestly the crowd was in a holiday mood. Thank God, prisons have ceased to frighten us. The people therefore illuminated their houses, and went in a procession to

see the prisoners off. There could be no violent intent in this. But it was too much for the Magistrate. He evidently thought that the deterrent effect of the punishment he had inflicted was being counteracted by these rejoicings and that in time he might have to turn the whole of Chittagong into a prison to accommodate the whole population. He therefore resorted to the Gurkha charge. It is difficult (assuming the truth of the report) in any other manner to account for the brutal action taken against totally innocent holiday-makers. It is clear, too, that the members of the so-called Peace and Order Associations are playing into the hands of the bureaucracy. These are no doubt trying circumstances. But we counted the cost when we entered upon the course. We must pay it. We must go through the fiery ordeal, and prove our purity before we are admitted to the promised land. The leaders and the people of Chittagong deserve to be warmly congratulated upon their exemplary self-restraint and calmness under circumstances the most provoking. I can tender no other advice than to say that they should pursue their even course in spite of greater dangers still. The only redress that is open to us is each time to show greater courage and greater self-control, till at last the tyrant falls exhausted under the weight of his own effort. The non-co-operators of Chittagong ought not to feel irritated against the members of Aman Sabhas or of the Government. They but act according to their natures. A non-co-operator's nature is neither to retaliate nor to bend. He must stand erect unmoved by the storm raging round him. If we may truthfully sing and pray, let us sing:

So long Thy power has blest me, sure it still
Will lead me on, o'er moor and fen,
O'er crag and torrent, till the night is gone.¹

Young India, 3-11-1921

21. CO-OPERATION

Probably very few workers have noticed that progress of hand-spinning means the greatest voluntary co-operation the world has ever seen. It means co-operation among millions of human beings scattered over a very wide area and working for their daily bread. No doubt agriculture has required much co-operative effort, but hand-spinning requires still greater and more honest co-operation. Wheat

¹ From Cardinal Newman's poem "Lead Kindly Light"

grows more by nature's honesty than by man's. Manufacture of yarn in our cottages is dependent solely on human honesty. Hand-spinning is impossible without the willing and intelligent co-operation of millions of human beings. We have to arrive at a stage when the spinner like the grain-seller is assured of a steady market for his yarn as well as the supply of cotton slivers if he or she does not know the process of carding. Is it any wonder if I claim that hand-spinning can drive away as if by magic the growing pauperism of the masses? An English friend sends me a newspaper cutting showing the progress of machinery in China. He has evidently imagined that in advocating hand-spinning I am propagating my ideas about machinery. I am doing nothing of the kind. I would favour the use of the most elaborate machinery if thereby India's pauperism and resulting idleness be avoided. I have suggested hand-spinning as the only ready means of driving away penury and making famine of work and wealth impossible. The spinning-wheel itself is a piece of valuable machinery, and in my own humble way I have tried to secure improvements in it in keeping with the special conditions of India. The only question therefore that a lover of India and humanity has to address himself to is how best to devise practical means of alleviating India's wretchedness and misery. No scheme of irrigation or other agricultural improvement that human ingenuity can conceive can deal with the vastly scattered population of India or provide work for masses of mankind who are constantly thrown out of employment. Imagine a nation working only five hours per day on an average, and this not by choice but by force of circumstances, and you have a realistic picture of India.

If the reader would visualize the picture, he must dismiss from his mind the busy fuss of the city life or the grinding fatigue of the factory life or the slavery of the plantations. These are but drops in the ocean of Indian humanity. If he would visualize the picture of the Indian skeleton, he must think of the eighty per cent of the population which is working its own fields and which has practically no occupation for at least four months in the year and which therefore lives on the borderland of starvation. This is the normal condition. The ever-recurring famines make a large addition to this enforced idleness. What is the work that these men and women can easily do in their own cottages so as to supplement their very slender resources? Does anyone still doubt that it is only hand-spinning and nothing else? And I repeat that this can be made universal in a few months'

time, if only the workers will. Indeed it is on a fair way to becoming universal. Experts only are needed to organize it. People are ready, and what is most in favour of hand-spinning is that it is not a new and untried method but people have up to recently been using it. Its successful reintroduction does need skilful endeavour, honesty and co-operation on the largest scale known to the world. And if India can achieve this co-operation, who shall deny that India has by that one act achieved swaraj?

Young India, 3-11-1921

22. TO CORRESPONDENTS

AVADHBEHARILAL: I am sorry I cannot publish your letter as it is impossible to open the columns of *Young India* to a discussion of Hinduism. My article must be my last word on Hinduism till I have more leisure. It is in no way intended to serve as authority for others. It was intended merely to give my own definition of *sanatana* Hinduism. I may be utterly wrong and be repudiated by every *sanatani*. I should hope even then to be able to stand by my faith. If the great mass of Hindus repudiate my claim, I shall be content to remain an outcaste.

G. S. RAMAMURTI: Untouchability cannot be given a secondary place on the programme. Without the removal of the taint, swaraj is a meaningless term. Workers should welcome social boycott and even public execration in the prosecution of their work. I consider the removal of untouchability as a most powerful factor in the process of attainment of swaraj and for that matter also the Khilafat. Impure Hinduism cannot help the process of Islamic purification.

LAL: Prayer is undoubtedly a great aid to national regeneration. The charkha assists prayer. It is never a hindrance. A mere mechanical prayer is worse than useless, for it deceives one into self-complacency. Non-co-operation is mass education. The masses do not need to be told to pray. Only life has to be breathed into their prayers.

J. BHATTACHARYA: I wish I could publish your letter if only for its brilliance. But I am afraid it will be misunderstood. There is altogether too much blind following in the country. The instances you quote are inapplicable to the present movement which essentially consists in making everyone think for himself. My conception of

swaraj is not that of many blindly following one man. The Poet¹ has rightly protested against that tendency and not against enlightened obedience to chosen leadership.

Young India, 3-11-1921

23. CANONS OF INTERPRETATION

Principal A. B. Dhruva of the Benares Hindu University has contributed to the Gujarati monthly called *Vasanta* a learned article on the true method of interpretation of the Shastras and its applicability to the place of untouchability in them. Copious correspondence, some of a technical nature and some based on what in my opinion is an ignorant conception of the Shastras, has been received by me. The writers, I am aware, are actuated by honest motives. It is not possible to devote the columns of a small weekly like *Young India* to all this correspondence. I am anxious nevertheless to satisfy these correspondents through some learned authority. Principal Dhruva in my opinion is such an authority. His learning is beyond question and so are his honesty and impartiality. His article cannot fail to be of interest to those who are anxious to secure a just and speedy solution of the question of untouchability. I have had it translated for *Young India*. Nothing has consoled me so much as to find Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviyaji and the learned Principal both claiming to be and accepted as orthodox Hindus ranging themselves wholeheartedly on the side of the removal of this blot upon Hinduism.

Young India, 3-11-1921

24. EDUCATION AND NON-CO-OPERATION

TO
THE EDITOR
YOUNG INDIA

SIR,

In the *Kartik* issue of the *Pravasi*, a Bengali monthly edited by the reputed journalist Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee, appears an article over the initials S.C. on the present educational activities of Russia. In this article

¹ Rabindranath Tagore in "The Call of Truth"

occurs a passage to which I wish to draw your attention. I am translating it below.

“But even under the stress of the present upheavals Russia has kept burning her torch of learning, faint though it is. None has advised her, like the wise patriots of our country (India), to let education wait. Russia knows that no vital antagonism (incompatibility) exists between war and education, as exists between water and oil.”

I apologize for the bad rendering but this is the idea contained in the few Bengali lines I refer to.

I do not exactly understand what the writer means by these lines and as Mr. Gandhi is one of the “wise patriots who have advised us to let education wait”, I would respectfully request him to express his views on the above passage, as such a view is held by a section of the community which declares itself to be “sane” and “rational”.

Yours, etc.,

PHANINDRANATH DASGUPTA

PURULIA,

I am not surprised at the view expressed in the *Pravasi*. In my humble opinion it betrays at once ignorance of the position of the “wise patriots” and a distorted view of education. The Russians are not non-co-operating with their existing institutions. And yet in a state of war there too “the torch of learning is burning faint” even as in non-co-operation schools. But what happened in England when it was at war with Germany? How many schools were then going on in England? I know, that the Inns of Court and many colleges were practically closed. I know that during the Boer War not a Boer child had literary education. The Boer children’s education consisted in suffering for the sake of their country. The fact is that the present peaceful movement is so silent and gentle on the whole, that it is possible for those who do not believe in the doctrine to continue the education of their children under a system against which the country is “waging war”. That the movement is the more effective for its gentleness will, I prophesy, be recorded by the future historian with grateful appreciation. Lastly we have little reason to be proud of our educational institutions which by their very nature are accessible to a mere fringe of our population. In our state of intoxication we do not perceive the disastrous effect of the present system of education on the country. I have taxed myself to find something to the credit of the system in the way of a solution of the vital problems affecting the

country. I have failed to find a single thing of that character. There are today 7,851,946 children receiving instruction in our schools. I claim that it is impossible under the present system even to double the number of learners during the next fifty years. If education is to be universal, the system will have to be revised out of all recognition. This is possible only by non-co-operation. Public conscience cannot be stung into quickness with a milder remedy.

Young India, 3-11-1921

25. HINDUS IN AFGHANISTAN

TO
THE EDITOR
YOUNG INDIA
SIR,

If an insignificant Indian, who does not believe in the attainment of swaraj by non-co-operation and who thinks that the Khilafat agitation is strengthening the hands of those who, in their heart of hearts, are preparing for the restoration of Muslim rule, far more despotic and iniquitous than the present "Satanic" Government, if such an Indian who yet loves his country in his own way, deserves any attention, then may I make the following enquiry?

I read in Bellow's *Journal of Political Mission to Afghanistan* that the Hindkis, i.e., Hindus of Afghanistan were subject to many indignities and iniquitous disabilities; for example they had to pay the *Jaziya*, they must wear a distinctive dress, they must not ride a horse upon a saddle, etc. These things were, of course, sanctioned by the Muslim Government of Afghanistan. I am not aware of any change for the better since. You have many friends, Khilafatwalas, who have openly declared in favour of an Afghan invasion of India. Will you inform the Hindus, if the legal disabilities of the Hindus of Afghanistan have been removed? If not, should you not plead for their removal as strongly as you are doing in the ease of the so-called "slave-like" treatment of Indians by the "Satanic" Government? The race to which this "Satanic" Government belongs never treated Indians so unfairly as the Muslim rulers of Afghanistan did the Hindus.

I believe that you are doing greater good by your strong attitude regarding untouchability than by your support of the Khilafat. If you can remove untouchability and the provincial differences among Hindus, you

will become one of the greatest benefactors of humanity. The Muslims are strong enough to take care of themselves.

I am, etc.,

R. C. BANERJEE

RATAN GANJ,

October 24, 1921

I do not know anything about the treatment of Hindus in Afghanistan, but I am prepared for the moment to assume the truth of the statement referred to by the correspondent. It would be relevant, if we were trying to introduce Afghan rule in India. I am only concerned with the present misrule in India, which, if it permits me to ride a horse, has reduced me to serfdom in my own country. Nor can I be deterred from overthrowing the present misrule for fear of Afghan or other Muslim rule creeping in. The correspondent will find that when we have attained swaraj, we shall have attained the ability to resist any other misrule. We shall have learnt, without the necessity of a training at Sandhurst, the art of dying for country and religion.

Young India, 3-11-1921

26. SPEECH ON CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE, A.I.C.C., DELHI

November 4, 1921

Mr. Gandhi in moving the resolution¹ . . . said that if asked as to the progress made by India during the last ten months he would unhesitatingly say that India had been able to make tremendous headway. If they were simply to gauge the quantity of progress there was every reason to feel proud of it, but if he were to judge that progress in terms of swaraj as a physician and was asked to say whether it was sufficient for the removal of the triple disease that they were suffering from, then he had to confess it fell far short of the requirements. Hence the necessity of repetition and emphasis, in the course of the civil disobedience resolution, of the complete fulfilment of all vital items of the programme of non-co-operation so far sanctioned, particularly those mentioned in the resolution. He read to the audience a telegram from Maulana Mahomed Ali's Private Secretary depicting the hardships they were undergoing by being treated as ordinary prisoners. He therefore warned all against light-heartedly launching on civil disobedience. He continued, certainly they should not expect gentleness from this Government nor had they any right to expect it. They

¹ Vide "The All-India Congress Committee", 10-11-1921.

were prepared to give no quarter to the Government and should expect none. The bigger the injustice and hardships they were put to and the greater the patience and unflinching determination they observed, the sooner would swaraj come.

Proceeding, Mr. Gandhi defined civil disobedience as civil revolution which, wherever practised, would mean an end of Government authority in that particular area and open defiance of Government and its laws. It was a gigantic step and, although provincial autonomy was being granted to provincial organizations in this matter, he advised all to wait before launching on it and see what he did, if it was at all possible in his own district of Gujarat, and after seeing the result they should follow his example which should open the eyes of the whole world to their wonderful achievement. He knew that at present mass civil disobedience was impossible and he would be quite satisfied if in such a big continent only one tahsil or district fully prepared should practise it rather than that the whole unprepared masses should partake in it. He advised caution and virtually asked them to wait till he gave the lead from Gujarat in the course of the next fortnight. He reiterated his warning that in view of the gigantic step which the resolution allowed nothing should be done without full recognition of the realities so that once a step was taken there should be no tracing back

When Mr. Gandhi concluded his opening speech, a volley of amendments rushed forth . . . to secure relaxations in the conditions. . . . Mr. Gandhi and the supporters of his view emphasized that, having pledged and believing that it was only through complete fulfilment of swadeshi programme that they could attain swaraj, it would be laying the axe at the very root of the edifice so far built if they were to omit strict compliance with the swadeshi programme. It was much better to have only one tahsil or one district in the whole of India which could practise civil disobedience rather than the entire country unprepared for it. . . .

After heated discussion . . . all amendments for deletion of strict swadeshi clauses were defeated . . . Mr. Gandhi urged that they should arrive at a conclusion which all of them should feel as the right one and should earnestly and sincerely try to put into practice. . . .¹

The Hindu, 7-11-1921

¹ The meeting agreed to authorize the Working committee to relax the conditions in exceptional cases.

27. SPEECH AT A.I.C.C., DELHI

November 5, 1921

On the resolution regarding renouncing Government service Mr. Gandhi said that while the motion declared it as an inherent right of every citizen to offer his advice on Government service, he emphasized that Congress Committee was not issuing a mandate that all must go to the barracks to advise the soldiers to come out. This mandate was not issued not for fear of imprisonment but due to their inability at present to provide all soldiers who would come out. There was however full freedom for individuals on their own responsibility to actually go to the barracks and ask the soldiers to leave the army. Personally he had advised hundreds of soldiers to give up the service.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 8-11-1921

28. SPEECH AT MATHURA¹

November 5, 1921

Mr. Gandhi . . . dealing with the question of attainment of swaraj by the end of October, said he had never said that he could personally bring about conditions which would bend [sic] them for it. It was for those who as delegates of the last Indian National Congress had pledged themselves to carrying out the programme of non-co-operation laid down by the Congress and the people of the country, to blame themselves for not having fulfilled their pledge. The country had not yet proved its capacity for it. The simple course of renunciation and discipline which alone could help them to win swaraj had not yet been completed. It was all the more incumbent on the country now to put forth all its energy to complete the remaining programme before the end of this year and if they succeeded in doing so he staked his life on the assurance that they would get swaraj by the end of the year.

Resolutions were adopted on civil disobedience, boycott of the Prince's visit and expressing that the Indian National Congress should at its forthcoming session definitely assert and declare to the world the Indian people's inalienable right and ultimate will to independent sovereignty, excluding all relations with foreign powers and nations including Great Britain.

The Hindu, 11-11-1921

¹ Pandit Motilal Nehru presiding

29. DUTY OF HINDUS

I draw the attention of all Hindus to the touching letter given below¹ which I have received from the Antyajashram at Godhra.

Every Hindu should hang his head in shame on reading this letter. We, and not the boy's parents, are responsible for the beating which he got. We have despised *Antyajas*, given them our leftovers and rotten food to eat, persuading ourselves that we were doing a virtuous deed. We paid them as little as possible and drove them to begging. Not only have we made them carry our filth, but we have also made them eat filth. We have been giving them our discarded garments to serve as finery. The result is that the *Antyajas* now like begging and feel proud when they get left-overs. When parents return home with rotten grain, the children dance with joy. The master whose slaves rejoice in their slavery has sinned beyond measure. This is the position of the Hindus.

The child who got a beating for his reformed habits and for refusing to eat left-overs was our child. After reading this article, let all parents look at their children and ask themselves how they would feel if the latter were in the same plight as the other child. And how pure was that boy! Though beaten he refused to eat meat! What must be the mental condition of those who regard such a child as untouchable? Will they be able to enjoy swaraj? Will they protect others?

At the moment, however, I do not wish to say anything about untouchability to the caste-Hindu parents. Will they not have even simple compassion on their "untouchable" brothers? Is it also in the Shastras to give them dirty, left-over food and pay them as little as possible? I request all parents:

1. Not to give *Antyajas* cooked food;
2. to give them only uncooked grain;
3. not to give them garments of foreign cloth or worn-out and dirty clothes;
4. to raise their wages, if they are low, and
5. whatever they give, to give it with love.

¹ Not translated here. The letter, written by a teacher in the Antyajashram described the unhappy condition of the pupils in their homes. The parents disliked their children's reformed habits and treated them very harshly.

I urge those *Antyajas* who may read this article to resolve that they will not accept or eat rotten grain or left-over food or meat and advise them to send their children to the national schools which may be started for them.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 6-11-1921

30. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

DELHI,
*Silence Day [November 7, 1921]*¹

CHI. MAHADEV,

Dil means the self, because it means the heart. *Tandurust* [healthy] is a hackneyed word. I wanted to write to you about [the health of] your body, but how could I be content with wishing you only physical health?

I always looked upon Parasram as a son though I saw his faults. I have regarded you as a friend. I feel no hesitation in welcoming Durga as a daughter at the very first meeting. Jamnalal has been persistently claiming to be a son, but somehow I cannot put myself in the position of a father to him.

About one *bhajan* of yours, I felt that I had read it. However, why should not a similar one suggest itself to you? But I have already replied to you yesterday in this regard before your letter reached me. Your thinking constantly about the *atman* during your illness covered *swaraj* as well. It was not at all necessary to think about *swaraj* separately.

We must perform the duties arising from the existence of the body. Eating, bathing, going from place to place for begging, all these we do, thinking them to be legitimate activities, and show aversion only to bread-labour; purification of the mind is achieved by mental *yajna*, that of the *atman* by *yajna* of the atman, and of the body by *yajna* of the body [i.e., physical labour]. Man cannot make a proper return for the food he gets for his body by doing mental work. One does *yajna* [of the body] if one labours without expecting food in return. At the present time and in this country, *yajna* of the body can

¹ From the references to *Dil*, *tandurust* and a *bhajan* of the addressee, it is evident that this letter was written on the Silence Day immediately following the one on October 31, 1921; vide "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 31-10-1921.

be performed only by working on the spinning-wheel, for its absence has enfeebled the body of the country. If the climate of India and our needs change, we can take up another kind of *yajna*. If it comes about that for getting water in our country we have always to dig wells, then digging of wells would become a sacrifice to some extent. But then, as long as such a state of things continues, bodily *yajna* is necessary just as *brahmacharya* and other things are necessary. And because it is only a duty attaching to the body, the latter can be free from the obligation of performing this *yajna* when it does not consume food. But unlike in the case of prayer which being an act of the mind or the heart, a man like me believes or persuades himself that he is performing it all the twenty-four hours and does not have a fixed time for it every day, one cannot persuade oneself that one is performing bodily *yajna* without actually doing so, since it is an act to be performed by the body. One may not perform it with one's whole heart behind it and so deceive people, that would be another matter; but perform it, one must. This answers both your questions on the subject.

I misunderstood Sri Das's telegram. I also misunderstood Chotani Mian's letter. There was no attempt deliberately to create a false impression. Chotani Mian did not correct my impression even when I had a personal talk with him. It is true we did not have a long talk. But one who fails to get the real meaning is not being wholly truthful. I know, of course, if I can completely follow non-violence, truth and *brahmacharya* in action, speech and thought, then we should certainly get swaraj this year; we may also get it if someone else from among us can do these things, or if the *tapas* of all of us taken together proves sufficient for the purpose. In the first instance, however, I have not given up this hope in regard to myself . . .¹ spare no effort. . .²

From a photostat S.N. 11424

¹ The original is damaged here.

² *ibid*

31. CONVOCATION ADDRESS AT NATIONAL COLLEGE, LAHORE¹

November 9, 1921

Gandhiji began by saying that he considered himself fortunate in being asked to confer degrees on students of the National College. He congratulated the candidates and also blessed them. He prayed to God to grant them strength to live up to the pledge they had taken that day. Let their hearts be steeled henceforth to serve their country. To him the acceptance of a degree only meant the undertaking of a determination to be ready to win the country's freedom by doing practical work. That was the way pointed out by the history of all nations. He had Witnessed three great wars and had observed how education approximated to the national ideals of the time. When he thought of September last he did not feel sorry. They had decided what sort of education to impart to India of the future. They had not been able so far to achieve the amount of success they desired. The result of bad treatment in a certain school had been that a student had written to him regarding his determination to commit suicide. Readers of *Young India* would remember it. If in future any student is badly treated he hoped he would not write to him thus. He had received a telegram from Vizagapatam that the students of the medical school-had determined not to go back because their Principal had expelled them for wearing khaddar. They had resolved to serve their country and free her from bondage. He had replied congratulating them on their resolve. The best surgeon was he who devised the best remedy for their country's salvation. Thousands died of the plague, cholera, malaria, etc. but he did not mind that; but he did mind if a single individual lived in slavery.

If people did not feel like that even after December next, he felt as if he would commit suicide. But he would not do so as he did not approve of putting an end to one's existence. He would think of only one occasion when it would be better to kill oneself. That was when a man cast an evil eye on another woman. Another occasion was for a woman when she found a man bent upon wickedness towards her. At such a time it was better for her to immolate herself. Indian ladies were chaste even as was Sita.

He has just listened to the beautiful strains of *Vandematram*. In 1915 he had heard the same in Madras.² It was then that he bethought himself what that song really meant to them. Had they the right to sing thus? They saluted Mother India and invoked her protection. But what was India's present plight? Millions of her children got one meal a day and that too consisted of but bread and salt. There were no

¹ Delivered in Hindi at Bradlaugh Hall; Lala Lajpat Rai presided.

² *Vide* "Why not in Golden Letters", 8-2-1908.

vegetables, etc., to partake. Could they; honestly say that their motherland gave them protection? They were the un-worthy children of the motherland.

A Hindu from Peshawar who stood six feet high had come to him and complained that frontier Mohammedans molested their women. Why had he not died defending his women? Only that morning someone had told him something which in effect amounted to this that he (Mahatma Gandhi) was mad if he sought the friendship of Muslims. His reply was that he desired Muslim friendship because he had courage. If one Mohammedan did something wicked, it was not right to ban the whole class. Similar was the case with Hindus who were guilty of Dyerism in regard to untouchables. If Mohammedans in the Punjab were more than fifty per cent, Hindus need not be afraid of them. Hindus did not want to play false towards Mussulmans; then why need they be afraid of the latter? All ancient teaching pointed out that virtue was the reward of virtue and treachery should be met with more treachery. All had taught the same lesson whether Dayanand¹ or Ramanuja or Madhva. If Hindus wanted to deal honestly they need fear none. The same applied to Mohammedans and Sikhs.

Lalaji had said towards the close of his speech that the time was coming before December next when probably he (Mahatmaji) and Lalaji himself and, others would be arrested. In that case they should not indulge in incendiarism and the cutting of rails, they should not cast an evil eye on an English lady, nor go on hartal. Such conduct on their part would mean that they were cowards. The true hero is he who remains peaceful and non-violent. They should restrain their anger, each one of them should be a leader unto himself. Then swaraj was attained. They should remember the example of Prahlad, the gallant youth who defied Hiranyakashipu the swordsman, because his God was with him.

If a certain leader of theirs became haughty or over-bearing he should be removed. They should cultivate within themselves the attributes of Wordsworth's "[Character of the] Happy Warrior". Swaraj was no difficult thing to achieve.

The next condition for swaraj was charkha. It was said in the Punjab that spinning was the work of women. But the inventor of the spinning-jenny in England was a man, Hargreaves by name. Similarly it was said that cooking was the special work of ladies. In a Paris hotel there was a cook who was an expert. He knew far better the art of cooking than any lady could lay claim to. He was drawing a pay equal to that of the Viceroy of India. He was not sure whether the Viceroy deserved the large salary he was in receipt of but he knew that the Paris cook deserved his pay. They should remember that it is their duty to spin. The moment they gave up the charkha, they also gave up their dharma. If they wanted to free India, they should use the charkha. They could not banish poverty from their land until they took to charkha. By

¹ Swami Dayanand Saraswati (1824-83); founder of the Arya Samaj

becoming swadeshi he meant using pure swadeshi and not mill-made yarn. In their national schools weaving and spinning was taught. When civil disobedience would be launched every student in the Punjab should regard it his duty to dress himself in khaddar.

Lalaji had asked him to speak a few words to the students. He wanted to remind the students of the Punjab that they had been forced to salute the the Union Jack. They were made to march 18 miles a day. All sorts of insults were heaped on them during martial law. They should consider it *haraam*¹ to use foreign yarn. They should take to charkha and *kargha*.

After Mahatma Gandhi had finished, Lala Lajpat Rai thanked Mahatmaji for the trouble he had taken in coming over to them and addressing them.

The Hindu, 19-11-1921

32. NOTES

A PLEA FOR SPINNING

A determined opposition was put up against the conditions regarding swadeshi that were laid down in the civil disobedience resolution passed by the All-India Congress Committee at Delhi. It was directed against two requirements, namely that the civil resister offering resistance in terms of that resolution was bound to know hand-spinning and use only hand-spun and hand-woven khadi; and that in the event of a district or tahsil offering civil disobedience *en masse* the district or the tahsil concerned must manufacture its own yarn and cloth by the hand. The opposition betrayed woeful ignorance of the importance of hand-spinning. Nothing but hand-spinning can banish pauperism from the land. Paupers cannot become willing sufferers. They have never known the pain of plenty to appreciate the happiness of voluntarily suffering hunger or other bodily discomfort. Swaraj for them can only mean ability to support themselves without begging. To awaken among them a feeling of discontent with their lot without providing them with the means of removing the cause thereof is to court certain destruction, anarchy, outrage and plunder in which they themselves will be the chief victims. Hand-spinning alone can possibly supply them with supplementary and additional earnings. Hand-weaving for many and carding for a limited number can provide complete livelihood. But hand-weaving is not a lost art. Several million men know hand-weaving. But very few know

¹ Sinful

hand-spinning in the true sense of the term. Tens of thousands are, it is true, turning the wheel today but only a few are spinning yarn. The cry all over is that hand-spun yarn is not good enough for warp. Just as half-baked bread is no bread, even so ill-spun weak thread is no yarn. Thousands of men must know hand-spinning to be able in their respective districts to improve the quality of the yarn that is now being spun in the country. Therefore those who offer civil disobedience for the sake of establishing swaraj must know hand-spinning. Mark, they are not required to turn out yarn every day. It would be well if they did. But they must know how to spin even properly twisted yarn. It was a happy omen to me that in spite of the opposition the amendment was rejected by a large majority. One argument advanced in favour of rejection was that the Sikh men considered it an undignified occupation to spin and looked down upon hand-weaving. I do hope that the sentiment is not representative of the brave community. Any community that despises occupations that bring an honest livelihood is a community going down an incline. If spinning has been the speciality of women, it is because they have more leisure and not because it is an inferior occupation. The underlying suggestion that a wielder of the sword will not wield the wheel is to take a distorted view of a soldier's calling. A man who lives by the sword does *not* serve his community even as the soldiers in the employ of the Government do not serve the country. The wielding of the sword is an unnatural occupation resorted to among civilized people only on extra-ordinary occasions and only for self-defence. To live by hand-spinning and hand-weaving is any day more *manly* than to live by killing. Aurangzeb was not the less a soldier for sewing caps. What we prize in the Sikhs is not their ability to kill. The late Sardar Lachhman Singh will go down to posterity as a hero because he knew how to die. The *mahant*¹ of Nankana Saheb will go down to posterity as a murderer. I hope therefore that no man will decline to learn the beautiful life-giving art of hand-spinning on the ground of its supposed inferiority,

MILL-SPUN v. HAND-SPUN

The attack against the requirement that a resistant district or tahsil should manufacture its own cloth had more reason than prejudice in it. And if the present intention was to require every tahsil

¹ Custodian of a temple

to join in offering mass civil disobedience, the requirement would be impossible of fulfillment. But nobody expects every tahsil or district to be ready for civil disobedience and thus to be self-contained during the few remaining months. It is enough if only a few tahsils are ready. Swaraj must be held an impossibility during the year if not even a few tahsils are self-contained and thus ready for swaraj. Any tahsil which grows its own food, spins its own yarn, weaves its own cloth and is ready to suffer for its freedom is certainly ready to establish swaraj during the year. And if even one tahsil can accomplish the task, it will be like a light lighting a whole house. I hold successful civil disobedience to be impossible without the pioneer effort being made under almost ideal conditions. There are no doubt parts of India where complete manufacture of woollens and calico by hand-spinning is not a present possibility. But when those parts where it is a present possibility are completely organized, there should be no difficulty about relaxing the requirement regarding such parts.

HINDUSTANI

Hindustani, i.e., the language of the common people, is fast becoming the medium of expression in the All-India Congress Committee. There are members in the Committee who do not understand a word of English, and there are members from the Madras Presidency who do not understand Hindustani. The Bengali members understand Hindustani with difficulty. The latter however appreciate the necessity of Hindustani speech and do not grumble at the proceedings being conducted in Hindustani. It was a real sacrifice for the Dravidians. At the last meeting only one member attended from Madras and not many could come from Malabar. But when all the Dravidians attend, the difficulty becomes serious. And yet there seems to be no way out of it save for the Dravidians to pick up enough Hindustani as early as possible. Those who do not know English cannot be expected to learn English and the popular assemblies must more and more tend to contain members who do not understand English. Apart therefore from the sentimental and national value of Hindustani, the necessity of all national workers learning Hindustani and the national proceedings being conducted in Hindustani is being increasingly felt. Whilst however this was recognized at the last meeting, the Dravidian and the Bengali members would not listen to a hard and fast rule being adopted by the Committee. They would gladly tolerate Hindustani voluntarily spoken

but will not have it imposed by a resolution of the Committee. The matter was finally referred to the Working Committee. In the face of the divided feeling the Working Committee will find it difficult to bring out a suggestion that will be unanimously accepted by the members.

MR. TYAGI'S LETTER

I had thought I had closed the controversy arising out of my writings¹ questioning Mr. Tyagi's bravery. But it gives me pleasure to be able to present the reader with a free translation of a letter received by me from him on his way as a prisoner to Meerut:

I was not able to see *Young India* containing your defence of your dear friend Maulana Shaukat Ali. I received it rather late as I was fortunately in jail at the time. I have the unhappy news of your reference to me as chicken-hearted and cowardly. I cannot describe to you the pain I felt when I saw myself described by those adjectives. I try to console myself with the belief, that what you have written was written in good faith but my soul refuses to be satisfied. Your opinion seems to be that on being slapped I should have attempted to leave the court and suffered the consequence of any such attempt. I admit I could have done so. But the spectators it is likely, on witnessing more violence, which, it is certain, the magistrate blind with power would have done to me, might have laid their hands on him. The result would have been firing. And by my loss of restraint, hundreds of my countrymen would have been shot. This was the only thought that deterred me. And yet I did not remain totally inactive. Have you not yet seen the letter I wrote to the magistrate immediately after the incident? When the magistrate, after the administering of violence, asked me whether I had any statement to make, I replied in a loud voice, "I decline to make any statement before a court so unjust and lawless as yours and in which accused are assaulted by it." Is not the above statement sufficient evidence that I was not cowed down? Whatever I did at the time I did for my country's good and I never thought that it would be displeased with my action. I alone know how difficult it was for me to remain calm on receiving the slap. If you still think I have erred, you will forgive me. My respects to my country.

Indeed Mr. Tyagi's countrymen who were present and witnessed his bearing did realize that he had acted in the country's

¹ *Vide* "Notes", 13-10 1921, under the sub-title "A Contrast"; also "Notes", 20-10-1921, under the sub-titles "A Magistrate's Apology", and "Accused's Statement".

interest, I, a distant critic, not knowing that he had let the magistrate understand by his subsequent conduct that his submission was that of the brave, simply analysed the facts as they were sent to me and did this brave countrymen an unintended injustice for which my thousand apologies to him. I know I am most careful in my selection of facts and acts which I criticize or admire from week to week. I know I am most anxious to avoid undeserved blame or praise. But I realize more and more the difficulty of a journalist who is desirous of conveying only the correct news and moulding public opinion in a correct manner.

NON-VIOLENT CONDUCT

The reader will naturally guess that I must have received more protests against the paragraph on Mr. Tyagi. Most of them were answered by my second reference containing my amends, but a Motihari correspondent tells me that my criticism has befogged him. He does not know what he should do in the same circumstances. I confess it is difficult to lay down an infallible rule. Cowardice, bravery, hate, love, untruth, truth are all qualities of the heart. It is easy enough to dissemble virtue as it is difficult always for an outsider to discover it in another. The safest rule is to take men's words at their face value till one has proof to the contrary. I judged Mr. Tyagi's conduct as it was presented to me in its incomplete form. What our own conduct should be might be deduced from the following illustrations. Prahlad was forbidden to take the name of God. Whilst before the prohibition he was going about his way in a silent manner, now he became aggressive and drew on his head the most terrible punishment which he bore cheerfully. Daniel used to worship in secret, but when the prohibition decree was issued against him he flung open his door, worshipped God in public and was led like a lamb to the lion's den. Hazarat Ali, who was more than a match for his adversary, kissed his hand when the latter spat upon him, and when the brave Ali felt that if he retorted it would be the retort of anger. But I know that we possess neither the unalloyed bravery nor the godliness and therefore the true perception of these sages of old. We are not free from anger or fear. We are trying to imbibe the lesson of non-violence and learn fearlessness. Our non-violence is mixed. It is most of the weak and somewhat of the strong. The safest rule for us is to run the risk of becoming and feeling strong. Therefore when a magistrate gives me a slap, I must so act as to invite another. I must

however never give any cause for the first slap. If I am rude I must apologize, if I am defiant I must be meek, if I swear I must humble myself. My conduct before the court must be punctiliously correct. Need I say that it cannot be put on and off at will? It must, in order to appear graceful, be natural. Lastly, whatever we do, we must err on the side of non-violence, if we would reach our goal in the quickest manner possible.

TEMPERANCE WORK A CRIME

A friend sends the following note showing how the officials conceive their duty to the people:

The visible symbols of our gathering national strength . . . are afforded by the series of prosecutions upon which the Government has launched.... Our progressive advance is marked by the thickening of repression.... So far ... no prosecution has been conducted ... expressly on the charge of doing temperance work. That privilege belongs to Bihar. There is no better illustration of the sinful character of the Government than the case against Kumar Kalika Prasad Sinha, nephew of the Maharaja Bahadur of Gidhaur, who has gone to jail for one year, having declined to furnish security. The charge sheet . . . reads:

“Whereas it appears to me from a report of the police dated the 3rd October 1921 that you, Kalika Prasad Singh alias Hiraji, son of Rao Maheshari Prasad Singh of Mahuligadh P. S. Jamui are a leader of the non-co-operation movement . . . one of your principal objects being the stopping of the sale and purchase of excisable articles, and whereas in your endeavour to attain that object you . . . are importing and engaging persons to picket excise shops . . . and whereas . . . your personal conduct is likely to lead to further breaches of the peace . . . I hereby order you under Sec. 107 Cr. P. C. to show cause before me on 19-10-21 why you should not be required to execute a bond for Rs. 1000/- and furnish two sureties each in Rs. 500/- to keep the peace for one year.”

Comment on this is superfluous. The Kumar submitted to the court a spirited statement denying the charge of intimidation and turning upon the Government by saying that the violence was all done by the so-called defenders of law and order.

IS BLOODSHED NECESSARY ?

A correspondent asks:

Do you not in the heart of your heart believe that swaraj in the end can never be attained without bloodshed? Is not non-violent agitation a mere

method suited to present times, to unite and discipline people ultimately for a stage of violence and bloody revolution?

This is a frank question. It shows that some people still do not believe in the truthfulness of the present struggle. There is no earthly reason why, if non-violence was a preparation for violence, I should not say so. When I have committed several offences against the state law, why-should I hesitate to say that the present struggle is a preparation for violence? As a matter of fact, not only do I believe a bloodless revolution to be perfectly possible, but many others implicitly believe in non-violence for the purpose of gaining India's freedom. The Ali Brothers absolutely say what they mean and mean what they say. They believe in the use of physical forces i.e., violence, under certain circumstances; but they believe that the circumstances of India do not warrant the use of violence. When "unity and discipline" are attained, we who are thirty crores will consider it unmanly and beneath our dignity to do violence to one lakh of Englishmen. It is want of cohesive thought, calmness and charity in the face of fraud and terrorism, which is responsible for the still lingering impotent rage in our midst. And it is because I believe implicitly in non-violence and believe that violence is ruinous for India, that I have said that when violence becomes the creed of India, I should seek the shelter of the Himalayas.

IS KHADI A PASSING PHASE?

The same writer further asks:

Is it possible that when you will concentrate your energy upon some other part of the programme and pay less attention to the agitation of swadeshi, khadi may lose its popularity and people may revert to old fineries? Is not this inferable from the illustration of students now pouring in large numbers in Government schools and colleges which suffered tremendous loss at an hour when withdrawing students was the topic of the day?

The illustration chosen is not happy. The schools and colleges have never recovered from the blow given by the agitation to their prestige. No doubt many who left under excitement have reverted to their old haunts. But witness Sir Ashutosh Mukherjee's wail over the loss suffered by the Bengal colleges. The correspondent is probably unaware of the fact that the leaven is still working. But in any case the school agitation was confined to an infinitesimal number and was in its nature of a temporary character, whereas swadeshi applies to every man, woman and child in India. It is of a permanent nature. Swadeshi

is not to be suspended on the attainment of swaraj which is impossible without swadeshi. Lastly, reversion to foreign fineries is an expensive thing. Therefore, whilst I am prepared to grant that there are people who simply put on swadeshi for show and they are likely to fall out in the end, the vast majority will remain staunch to swadeshi. Swadeshi is not merely a means. It is both a means and an end.

THE EFFECT OF MY ARREST

The correspondent's third question is:

Do you not believe that the Government hesitates to arrest you not because of our moral victory but because it fears violent mobs bursting out throughout the country? And is it not your conviction that the movement will either go down in speed or be spoiled when you are in a lock-up?

It is difficult to know the Government's mind. I do not know that it has a mind. My surmise is that Government feels the moral force of the movement. and fears an outbreak also. That there is still fear of an outbreak is no credit to us. If we could absolutely ensure non-violence under every variety of provocation, we have swaraj that very moment. We have certainly gone a long way in that direction, and it strengthens my faith in the possibility of swaraj being established during this year. I should be deeply disappointed and feel hurt, if my arrest should result in slackening the speed or the movement being spoiled. On the contrary it is my conviction that my arrest will result in removing all sloth and quickening the pace.

INTEREST OF MINORITIES

The final question of this searching examiner is:

What guarantee is there that when swaraj is obtained, the smaller communities such as the Parsis will not be ruled out by the larger? We often talk of our noble relations, but what crucial test is there that in the swaraj parliament racial prejudice will not assert itself?

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

Young India, 10-11-1921

33. THE ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE

The present All-India Congress Committee met for the last time at Delhi on the 4th November.¹ The arrangements were under the control of the renowned Hakimji Ajmal Khan. He is ailing and badly needs rest. But he will not have any. His spacious house and Dr. Ansari's have been turned into dharmshalas for the accommodation of guests, whether Hindu or Mohammedan. The Hindus have their prejudices scrupulously respected. Those who will not take even water at a Muslim house are provided separate quarters. Here in Delhi one certainly finds Hindu-Muslim unity in full working order. The Hindus implicitly and gratefully accept Hakimji's leadership and they do not hesitate to place their religious interests too in his keeping.

The All-India Congress Committee is the people's parliament elected annually. It has year by year grown in importance and representative character. And today it is undoubtedly the mouthpiece of all those adult men and women belonging to any religion or party who can afford to pay four annas, who accept the simple creed of the Congress and who have cared to have their names entered in the Congress register. As a matter of fact, the delegates include Hindus, Mussulmans, Sikhs, Christians almost perhaps in their numerical proportion. I do not know whether it has Parsis and Jews. It has a very fair proportion of women delegates. It has also *Panchama* delegates. If any interest is under-represented, the fault lies with that interest. The delegates are all unpaid and attend at their own expense and pay for their own board and lodging. If the healthy practice on the part of the inviting cities of entertaining the delegates as guests has sprung up, it is a sign of the liberality of the citizens, no part of their statutory obligation. The majority of these elected representatives travel third-class and are satisfied with mere elementary comforts. The house of this people's parliament consisted of a temporary canvas *pandal* with a few shrubs to decorate it. Chairs and tables were provided, I presume, because it would have been difficult to ensure sufficient cleanliness and freedom from dust in the compound where the *pandal* was erected. Yellow-coloured khadi cloth served as tablecloth for the President's table. The members, both men and women, were dressed mostly in coarse khadi, a few only had what is now known as the Bezwada fineness. The dresses were simple and of Indian style. I have

¹ Vide "Speech on Civil Disobedience, A.I.C.C., Delhi", 4-11-1921.

gone into these details, because All-India Congress Committee to many of us is a model for the future parliament under swaraj. It is in keeping with the real state of India. It is somewhat a rejection of the poverty of the country, its simplicity and of its climatic requirements.

Contrast this with the false show, the pomp and the extravagance at Simla and at the new Delhi!

As the outer, so the inner. The most important business of the nation was finished ill a most business-like manner inside of twelve hours. Nothing was done or allowed without the closest scrutiny. The resolution on the dispute between the President and the Working Committee was discussed in the calmest manner possible. Jealous of its own rights, the Committee ratified the decision of the Working Committee that the right of interpretation of substantive law belonged to it rather than the President. It would not however allow anything to appear in the resolution which could by any stretch of imagination be considered discourteous to the President.

The resolution of the session was, however, the one on civil disobedience which I give below:

Whereas there is not much over one month for the fulfilment of the national determination to establish swaraj before the end of the year, and whereas the nation has demonstrated its capacity for exemplary self-restraint by observing perfect non-violence over the arrest and imprisonment of the Ali Brothers and the other leaders, and whereas it is desirable for the nation to demonstrate its capacity for further suffering and discipline, discipline sufficient for the attainment of swaraj, the All-India Congress Committee authorizes every province on its own responsibility to undertake civil disobedience including non-payment of taxes, in the manner that may be considered the most suitable by the respective Provincial Congress Committees subject to the following conditions:

1. In the event of individual civil disobedience, the individual must know hand-spinning, and must have completely fulfilled that part of the programme which is applicable to him or her, e.g., he or she must have entirely discarded the use of foreign cloth and adopted only hand-spun and hand-woven garments, must be a believer in Hindu-Muslim unity and in the unity amongst all the communities professing different religions in India as an article of faith, must believe in non-violence as absolutely essential for the redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs and the attainment of swaraj, and if a Hindu, must by his personal conduct show that he regards untouchability as a blot upon nationalism.

2. In the event of mass civil disobedience, a district or tahsil should be treated as a unit, and therein a vast majority of the population-must have

adopted full swadeshi and must be clothed out of cloth hand-spun and hand-woven in that district or tahsil, and must believe in and practise all the other items of non-co-operation:

Provided that no civil resister should expect to be supported out of public funds, and members of the families of civil resisters undergoing sentence will be expected to support themselves by carding, hand-spinning and hand-weaving or any other means;

Provided further that upon application by any Provincial Congress Committee, it is open to the Working Committee to relax the conditions of civil disobedience, if it is satisfied that any conditions should be waived

Those who were eager to start civil disobedience immediately brought forward a series of amendments which they supported with considerable skill, and yet the speeches were models of brevity. Every one of the amendments was rejected after the fullest discussion. The chief debater was Maulana Hasrat Mohani who being impatient for civil disobedience could not understand the imposition of the tests laid down for would-be civil resisters. One and only one addition was accepted at the instance of the Sikh delegates. They are most sensitive about their special rights. If therefore, Hindu-Muslim unity was maintained, Hindu-Muslim Sikh unity in the Punjab must also be insisted upon. "Then why not mention the others ?" was the burden of other speeches. The result was that 'unity among all the communities professing other religions' was added. It is a wise addition, for it shows that Hindu-Muslim unity is not a menace but it is a symbol of unity among all.

Whilst, therefore, there is perfect unanimity in the Committee, it would be wrong to suppose that there is no obstruction or opposition in the Committee. The Maharashtra party is a capable and drilled body. It has adopted the programme more from loyalty to the Congress and the rule of majority than from deep conviction. It is giving a trial to a programme in which it has no implicit faith. It makes its presence felt by mild obstruction But it is too patriotic to carry obstruction to the point of destruction. Mr. Abhyankar¹ fortifies it by his sledge-hammer oratory. Mr. Aney² supports it by his calm logic. Mr. Jamnadas Mehta³ is the free lance of the party. He effectively uses the Committee for developing his debating skill and

¹ M. V. Abhyankar from Nagpur

² M. S. Aney (b. 1880) from Berar

³ 1884-1955; member, A.I.C.C., 1921-31

obstructive tactics. The Committee refuses to treat him seriously, and he lets you know that he does not expect to be treated seriously. The house laughs at his expense and he heartily joins in it. He enlivened the proceedings at the outset by proposing himself to the chair if no other member would allow himself to be proposed in the place of; member of the Working Committee. He considers the members of the Working Committee to be all honourable men, and the measure of the honour is that they are constantly in his opinion arrogating to themselves rights they do not possess.¹ The reader, however, must not think that all this is done with any poison in the performance. I have not known a better-behaved or more good-humored assembly. And I regard the Maharashtra party to be an acquisition of which any nation would feel proud. Indeed I refer to The party to emphasize my contention that the Committee is composed of men who know their minds and who are determined to give a good account of themselves in their effort to win India's freedom.

Young India, 10-11-1921

34. THE MOMENTOUS ISSUE

The next few weeks should see civil disobedience in full working order in some part of India. With illustrations of partial and individual civil disobedience the country has become familiar. Complete civil disobedience is rebellion without the element of violence in it. An out and out civil resister simply ignores the authority of the state. He becomes an outlaw claiming to disregard every unmoral state law. Thus, for instance, he may refuse to pay taxes, he may refuse to recognize the authority of the state in his daily intercourse. He may refuse to obey the law of trespass and claim to enter military barracks in order to speak to the soldiers, he may refuse to submit to Limitations upon the manner of picketing and may picket within the prescribed area. In doing all this he never uses force and never resists force when it is used against him. In fact, he invites imprisonment and other uses of force against himself. This he does because and when he finds the bodily freedom he seemingly enjoys to be an intolerable burden. He argues to himself, that a state allows personal freedom only in so far as the citizen submits to its regulations. Submission to the state law is the price a citizen pays for his

¹ For Mehta's protest against this, *vide* "A Protest", 1-12-1921.

personal liberty. Submission, therefore, to a state wholly or largely unjust is an immoral barter for liberty. A citizen who thus realizes the evil nature of a state is not satisfied to live on its sufferance, and therefore appears to the others who do not share his belief to be a nuisance to society whilst he is endeavouring to compel the state without committing a moral breach to arrest him. Thus considered, civil resistance is a most powerful expression of a soul's anguish and an eloquent protest against the continuance of an evil state. Is not this the history of all reform? Have not reformers, much to the disgust of their fellows, discarded even innocent symbols associated with an evil practice ?

When a body of men disown the state under which they have hitherto lived, they nearly establish their own government. I say nearly, for they do not go to the point of using force when they are resisted by the state. Their "business" as of the individual is to be locked up or shot by the state, unless it recognizes their separate existence, in other words bows to their will. Thus three thousand Indians in South Africa after due notice to the Government of the Transvaal crossed the Transvaal border in 1914¹ in defiance of the Transvaal immigration law and compelled the Government to arrest them. When it failed to provoke them to violence or to coerce them into submission, it yielded to their demand. A body of civil resisters is, therefore, like an army subject to all the discipline of a soldier, only harder because of want of excitement of an ordinary soldier's life. And as a civil resistance army is or ought to be free from passion because free from the spirit of retaliation, it requires the fewest number of soldiers. Indeed one PERFECT civil resister is enough to win the battle of Right against Wrong.

Though, therefore, the All-India Congress Committee has authorized civil disobedience by Provincial Congress Committees on their own responsibility, I hope they will put due emphasis on the word "responsibility" and not start civil disobedience with a light heart. Every condition must be given its full effect. The mention of Hindu-Muslim unity, non-violence, swadeshi and removal of untouchability means that they have not yet become an integral part of our national life. If an individual or a mass have still misgivings about Hindu-Muslim unity, if they have still any doubt about the necessity of non-violence for the attainment of our triple goal, if they

¹ On November 6, 1913; "Is India Aroused", 28-9-1907.

have not yet enforced swadeshi in its completeness if the Hindus among that mass have still the poison of untouchability in them that mass or that individual are not ready for civil disobedience. Indeed it would be best to watch and wait whilst the experiment is being carried on in one area. Reverting to the analogy of the army, those division that watch and wait are just as much co-operating actively as the division that is actually fighting. The only time, whilst the experiment is going on, that individual civil disobedience may be resorted to simultaneously, is when the Government obstruct even the silent prosecution of swadeshi. Thus if an order of prohibition is served upon an expert spinner going to teach or organize spinning, that order should be summarily disregarded and the teacher should court imprisonment. But in all other respects, in so far as I can judge at present, it will be best for every other part of India scrupulously to respect all orders and instructions whilst one part is deliberately taking the offensive and committing a deliberate breach of all the unmoral state laws it possibly can. Needless to add that any outbreak of violence in any other part of India must necessarily injure and may even stop the experiment. The other parts will be expected to remain immovable and unperturbed, even though the people within the area of experiment may be imprisoned, riddled with bullets or otherwise ill-treated by the authorities. We must expect them to give a good account of themselves in every conceivable circumstance.

Young India, 10-11-1921

35. HOW CELIBACY CAN BE OBSERVED

A volunteer has written to me a very pathetic letter saying that, despite his earnest efforts, he cannot observe *brahmacharya*. He suffers from discharges in sleep and often wished to commit suicide. I see panic in this mentality. As long as a man is not doing a wrong deliberately or a man and a woman do not look at each other with a lustful eye, there is no cause for concern. Having learnt to control our mind while we are awake, we should trust to God for what happens in sleep. If there is a discharge in sleep, we should understand that the mind is not yet totally free from lust. "Sense-cravings subside in a man who refrains from gratifying them, but pleasure in their objects remains; it vanishes only when he has had a vision of the supreme."¹

¹ *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 59

This is a statement of experience and is literally true. Sinning is possible only so long as the atman has not realized itself. Once it is illuminated, all possibility of sin vanishes. One who constantly strives to observe brahmacharya should follow these rules:

1. He should be moderate in eating.
2. He should eschew from his diet spices, excessive ghee, fried articles, sweets, meat, etc.
3. He should of course never take liquor, but even tea, coffee, and other similar drinks may be taken only for medicinal purposes.
4. He should wash his private parts with cold water twice or thrice [a day] and should pour cold water over them.
5. He should never take heavy meals.
6. He should give up late meals in the evening.
7. His last meal should always be light so that he goes to bed with an empty stomach.
8. He should not read erotic books, should not talk above or listen to such things.
9. He should look upon every woman as his sister and never look at anyone with greedy eyes. He should never allow any such thought in-his mind that this woman is good-looking and the other is not. If beauty consisted in shape or colour, we would have gratified our sight by looking at statues. Beauty lies in virtue and this is not a thing which can be perceived by the senses. He should control his passions by reflecting that a man who thinks of his mother or sister as beautiful or not beautiful commits a sin.
10. He should never be alone with a woman.
11. He should always keep his body and mind well occupied. I believe regular spinning to be a great help. This is only a guess. I am not yet in a position to speak from experience. It is my conjecture that the spinning-wheel helps more in acquiring self-control than any other type of physical work.
- 12 He should ever keep repeating God's name for self purification. A theist believes that God sees the inmost depths of our heart, that He watches our movements even when we sleep. Such a man, therefore, should remain vigilant for all the twenty-four hours. Whatever the work we may be doing, mental or physical, we should never forget to go on repeating God's name. His name delivers us from all our sins. After a little practice, everyone will discover that it is

possible to keep repeating God's name while One is doing anything or thinking about anything. Inward repetition of God's name is the only exception to the general rule that a person can think about only one thing at a time because it is spontaneous to the *atman*. Other thoughts are the product of ignorance. For one who knows that God does everything, who is wholly absorbed in thoughts of Him, what remains for such a one to do or to think about? Such a person stops thinking about his separate identity and regards himself only as an instrument in God's hands. I believe it is impossible to observe perfect *brahmacharya* in action, speech and thought without this constant remembering of God.

Anyone who observes these rules will certainly succeed in mastering his senses. Striving in this manner, he should stop worrying and not be troubled in the least by discharges in sleep. He should regard them as evidence of his not being watchful enough and should become more vigilant, but should not in the least feel nervous. Yes, if his thoughts become impure and he is tempted to infect another person with his impurity, he may by all means commit suicide. Committing suicide is a thousand times preferable to sleeping with another's wife.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-11-1921

36. MY NOTES

AN ADVISER

Says one adviser: "There was a comment once in *The Indian Social Reformer* to the effect that Gandhi blindly clings to his inner voice and then does not care to think over or even wish to know what other great men think about him." He then-politely adds that, if this criticism is justified, it is a matter of regret. He proceeds to quote from famous British writers who say that every public servant must take into account what his critics or opponents say against him and, therefore, he advises me that I ought to read and ponder over the criticism by the learned Mrs. Annie Besant¹ and others. He concludes the letter with an apology for quoting from British writers. I get many such

¹ 1847-1933; President of the Theosophical Society; founder of the Central Hindu College, Benares; President, Indian National Congress, 1917

letters, and I like to have them. The correspondent need not have apologized at all. I do not look down upon British writers. I have read the works of Many and profited from them. I literally adore some British writers. It is the duty of every humble and sensible man to read and reflect over adverse criticisms. A man learns more from his critics than from his followers. Hence I think first about how many people disapprove of my views rather than how many approve. And if I do not easily change my views once formulated, one good reason for it is that usually I have already examined with care what is said against them. There is not a single criticism by the learned Mrs. Annie Besant which has escaped my careful consideration. One thing, however, is true. I give prime importance to my inner voice. Opposed to it, even the works of great men have, they ought to have, no weight with me. No other course would be right for a swarajist. If a man does not give the first importance to his inner voice, he will forfeit his humanity and lose all his worth. We should know, to be sure, that everyone does not hear the inner voice. It is heard only by one who is ever devoted to study and is a man of discrimination, humility and faith. I do not neglect to study and am not devoid of discrimination and humility. Faith I certainly have. I strive my best to cultivate self-restraint. I believe, therefore, that I hear the inner voice. Everyone can be what I am and hear the inner voice. The man who hears it has gained the strongest support. He can then examine the words of the greatest of men. He may sometimes err in his judgment, but, when he does so, he admits the error in all humility and expiates for it.

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

The same correspondent asks me: "If you advise civil disobedience, why don't you, at the same time, advise refusal to submit to the penalty for disobedience?" Such refusal however, would only lead to anarchy, because there would be nothing "civil" about it. The word "civil" suggests that the order alone is to be disregarded, not the penalty. In any case, there can be no question of refusing to submit to the penalty. Civil disobedience has its source in soul-force. Glorifying in his physical might, the tyrant seeks to conquer the world. The man of soul-force hands over his body to the tyrant and keeps his soul free, for no tyrant can do anything to a man's soul. Prahlad offered civil disobedience, but was not scared when thrown from the top of a hill. He even embraced as if it were a friend a red-hot pillar. With a smile on his face, Sudhanva plunged into a cauldron of boiling

oil. Joseph, the prophet, preferred to go to jail to obeying wicked orders. A civil resister may not pay a fine, for that would be his voluntary act. Being imprisoned is not a voluntary act, since it is the oppressor who throws him into jail.

A QUESTION INSPIRED BY FEAR

The same correspondent asks: "Supposing as a result of non-co-operation, the British severed their connection with us; how can we be sure, in that case, that India will not be invaded by Afghanistan or some other power? If that happens, we should be where we were."

The question does indeed worry some persons. If it worries many we shall not get swaraj, for those who are afraid of Afghanistan, Japan, or some other country will necessarily prefer to remain under the British umbrella. Swaraj means no more and no less than being free from this fear. If we get the strength to drive out the British, will that same strength not help us to resist Afghanistan or Japan? So long as we have not fully adopted swadeshi we shall remain a prey to fear. The complete adoption of swadeshi is like the virtue of a perfectly faithful wife. Just as no ruffian can cast an evil eye on such a woman, so will none be able to look with a covetous eye at Mother India, attired in self-spun and self-woven clothes. Of what profit will a self-reliant India be to Japan? How can Afghanistan harm India if her sons, Hindus and Muslims, have become united? He alone has reason to be afraid of Japan who does not want to follow swadeshi. He may fear the Afghan who doubts the Muslims' sense of honour. The swarajist should shed all fear.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-11-1921

37. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, LAHORE

November 10, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi supported the resolution and in doing so made a speech in the course of which he said that while seconding the resolution of congratulations to the Ali Brothers and others, he wished to say that if they wanted to release the Ali Brothers and other non-co-operators from jail within the year, then they should follow the programme of non-violent non-co-operation. The Ali Brothers had sent a message to say that they wished to be released only by the orders of swaraj government. If they wanted to strive for the righting of the Khilafat and the Punjab

wrongs there was only one way to do so. He wished to congratulate the Punjab on its progress but the Province had not made progress sufficient for winning swaraj within the year.

In the first place, the Prince's visit should be totally boycotted. A resolution to that effect had been passed by their Municipal Committee but attempts were being made to secure a reversal of that resolution, but he firmly hoped that they would not allow themselves to be disgraced. He congratulated the Municipality on its decision. They were not the enemies of the Prince nor did they wish to insult him. He went further and said that if anybody would dare touch a single hair of the Prince, they should be ready to protect him (the Prince) with their lives. That was their duty. But there was also the duty to India. The Prince was coming as a Prince to strengthen the present Government. If they had any sense of humanity or love of country or any regard for the Khilafat or the Punjab wrongs, then no matter who came, Prince or no Prince, they should boycott his visit. As he had said once in Poona, even if Gokhale came to strengthen the present Government, they should not offer him welcome. He hoped that the Punjab would offer no welcome to the Prince.

Another matter which had been dealt with by the Municipality was in regard to the Lawrence Statue which had on it the inscription: "Will you be governed by the pen or the sword?" The day had come when none could threaten India. Indians did not want to be frightened by the sword nor influenced by the pen of anyone. He congratulated their Municipality. When their Municipality had resolved on a thing, all men and women should unite. They were no enemies of Lord Lawrence, but they did not like the inscription of the statue to remain. Things in India had changed. India feared none but God. They did not want that statue to remain. They should hold a meeting and say to the Government: "You shall have to remove the statue."¹

As stated in the resolution, they would follow the Ali Brothers. If the Government wanted to guard the statue with soldiers, British, Sikhs, Gurkhas or Pathans, then the people should say, "We shall die but have it removed." Every man whom the Municipal Committee orders, should be ready to go to remove the statue. It would be better if some women went and faced bayonets and showed readiness to go to jail. He did not believe the present Government was so uncivilized. It would yield. But if Government behaved madly, they should be ready to uphold their honour and suffer in doing so. If the time came, they should show that they did not care for soldiers. During their trial, the Ali Brothers did not leave their chairs when asked to do so but of their own free will they gave up chairs and spread their cloaks on the ground and sat on them. What they wanted was cool courage. No one, however, was to go at night to remove the statue. They should do everything in the open. They should give notice. Some 12 years ago, somebody had gone at night and put a string of shoes round the

¹ *Vide* "The Pen or the Sword", 17-11-1921.

statue. None should do such a thing.

If they continued non-violent, they would snatch Jazirat-ul-Arab, Smyrna and Thrace and Palestine but if a Hindu, Mohammedan or Sikh committed murder or even uttered abuse, such a man should be regarded as an enemy of the nation. They were to be non-violent. They should cultivate courage like Lachhman Singh and Dalip Singh who died as martyrs at Nankana Saheb. The *mahant* on the other hand, was regarded as a murderer. They should learn how to die.

He wished to congratulate the *Zamindar*. First, Maulana Zafar Ali Khan went to Jail, then his son followed him and then the third editor of the paper. Another had stepped in the editor's place and he (the speaker) wished him to go to jail also. He wished women to take the place and suffer. They should not mind what happened under Section 144, Criminal Procedure Code, or the Press Act. He hoped the *Zamindar* would continue till its press was confiscated by the Government.

In conclusions, he wished to remind them that there were three things necessary. First was non-violence; second, Hindu-Muslim unity and third, charkha.

The Tribune, 12-11-1921

38. TEST

The time of Gujarat's test is approaching. It is not a question of months now, but weeks. Soon we shall be counting the days and then only hours.

On the one hand, Gujarat has to make the Congress session a glorious success and see that it is not found wanting in hospitality, practical efficiency and generosity.

On the other hand, Gujarat has to show itself worthy of the honour it won by being the first to declare itself in favour of non-co-operation¹. It should organize at least one taluka which will be ready, and have the strength, to face death.

I have already given the conditions to be fulfilled for this. It may be said that the All-India Congress Committee has accepted them. These are conditions which can be stated in concrete terms, but we should also pay attention to something else about which no resolution can be passed and yet without which no taluka can fulfill the other conditions. Is it any wonder that a person who has learnt the theorems of geometry merely by rote without understanding them

¹ At the Gujarat Political Conference held at Ahmedabad on August 27, 28 and 29, 1920.

should occasionally commit a howler? What would be his plight if, having memorized a step with “therefore”, he says “because”? Just as this person would betray his unintelligent cramming, so will anyone claiming to have fulfilled the All-India Congress Committee’s conditions without understanding them be able to proceed no further than the gate. On reaching it, he will find that he does not know the secret of opening it.

This struggle, from its very nature, is one of dharma. Call it practical or idealistic, political or social,—no matter by what name it is known—it is rooted in dharma. We are fighting it for the sake of dharma and in the name of dharma. The Ali Brothers put all their cards on the table. “When it is a question of choice between the law of God and the law of the state, between the Koran and the Penal Code, we certainly prefer to obey our Khuda and our holy Koran.” This was their attitude. This fight is thus for enabling everyone to understand and follow his own religion, whether Hinduism or Islam, Zoroastrianism or Christianity. Everyone should be ready to lay down his life for his faith. He who gives his life will be saved. He who takes another’s life will lose his own. If one could truly follow one’s dharma by killing others, lakhs of men would have attained *moksha* by now.

The only course, therefore, in an hour of difficulty is to pray to God. He who lacks such faith in Him will abandon the struggle sooner or later. A counterfeit rupee may pass the hands of a hundred shop-keepers but it will not command better value for that. It is sure to be returned from the banker’s counter at last. And all those persons through whose hands it may have passed will have been polluted by its touch, more or less. In the same way, those of us who are counterfeit coins are sure to turn back at the last moment.

The game is for those who enjoy playing it, and the field of battle for those who are ready for the consequences. The invitation is to one and all, but only those who are really hungry may sit at the table. Others may sit, if they like, but they will suffer afterwards from an overfull stomach. One who is not hungry will not relish the sweetest dishes, and a hungry man will feast even on a plain *jowar*¹ *rotla*². Similarly, those alone will stand their ground who have understood the meaning of non-co-operation and the secret of dharma. Everything is

¹ Millet

² A thick, round cake of unleavened bread

plain to the man of understanding, but to one who lacks understanding everything is difficult. What will a mirror avail to a man who is blind?

These are no-easy times. Let us not take a hasty step and repent for it afterwards. If no taluka in Gujarat is ready, we may return the *hundi*¹. But, having once signed it, we must pay the amount in full. This is the time for Gujarat to make its choice. Once the choice is made, there can be no retreat. If, in a quixotic spirit of bravado, we accept the challenge now and can do nothing afterwards, we shall be shamed to death. At this stage, however, Gujarat need feel no fear or hesitation.

Let us now see in what our fitness consists:

1. Remaining peaceful
2. Hindu-Muslim unity
3. Swadeshi
4. Removal of untouchability

All this is easy enough.

Civil disobedience? We are not strangers even to that. “The jail”, of course, goes with it. Well, we will take it in our stride. So many of the best have been in prison, have had a taste of it. Why, then, cannot we do as much? So this, too, is not difficult.

But . . . ?

If martial law is proclaimed? If the Gurkhas descend upon us? If Tommy Atkins takes over? And then, suppose they spear us, shoot us down and force us to crawl on our bellies? Let them come, by all means. If they order us to crawl? We may die, but not move on our bellies. Supposing they spear us, what then? Instead of dying of the plague, we shall fall to the spear. If they shoot us, we will certainly not turn our backs. We have enough courage now to uncover Our chests and receive the bullets as fearlessly as we catch the flying *moi* in *moi-danda*². We should convert Gurkhas into our friends. If they do not respond, what greater joy than dying at our brothers’ hands? As we say this, we do feel proud of Ourselves.

But how shall we feel while acting?

I do trust that timid Gujarat will rise to the occasion this time. But the pen trembles even as I write this. When has Gujarat had any

¹ A bill of exchange or a draft

² An Indian game

occasion to hear the thundering of guns? When did it ever see rivers of blood flowing? Can Gujarat stand the sight of guns shooting away like so many crackers bursting and heads being smashed like earthen pots?

If it can see unaffected others' heads being smashed, it will cease to be "Gujarat the Glorious". If it can see its own heads being broken, it will win immortal fame, What is the training required for this?

Faith in oneself. That faith no resolution of the All-India-Congress Committee can inspire. God is the protector of the weak. He it is who gives courage. He who enjoys Rama's protection can be harmed by none. Since He is the giver of this physical frame, let Him claim it back. This body cannot be preserved by anything we do. Like the rupee, it should be readily expended in a good cause. And what more glorious occasion to sacrifice it than in the attempt to free ourselves from this tyranny? Anyone who sincerely feels thus will, with a smile on his face uncover his chest and receive the bullets fearlessly as if they were no more than rubber balls.

Only if it has this unshakable faith may any taluka of Gujarat plunge into the battle.

It is not necessary that all must have such faith. I have stated what measure of it will suffice. It does not matter if those who lack this faith do not have the strength to face a hail of bullets. But they must have the grit to refuse to surrender and bend their knees even if their houses are plundered. Let them plunder, if they will. We are bound to return to these very homes, if we survive; if we die in the attempt to recover them, well, that will be swaraj.

If even one taluka does not have this strength, how can we show our firmness for swaraj? But, on the day when one single taluka emerges successful from this test, that day we shall definitely have won swaraj, because on that same day India will have proved its skill in wielding a divine weapon.

And it is not as if we would have displayed any extraordinary strength in doing all this. To act thus is but part of man's nature. The Boer women showed this heroism. Hundreds of thousands of Britons showed it, and Turkish men and women are showing it today.

But there is a difference. These others may kill as well as die. We, however, know that immortality is won only by laying down one's life. Is it in any way difficult to give up the way of killing and learn

that of dying ? For dying, one requires dauntless courage. The man of faith will have it in the winking of an eye. For killing, one requires strength of body and skill in shooting. One needs to learn, besides, a thousand other evil things before one can become proficient in killing and the end-result is that one earns for oneself the title of a murderer.

But some Hindu will demur and say, “This is all about the Kshatriya spirit. Has not Gujarat been always a stranger to it? We know only trade and commerce.” Gujarat may be as described above, but this cannot be the meaning of Hinduism. Everyone, whatever his caste, should have the qualities of all the four castes. The distinctive quality of one’s own may predominate in one, but a person altogether devoid of the qualities associated with castes other than his own is no man. Be mother who knows how to die for the sake of her child is a Kshatriya woman, and the husband who gives up his life to save his wife is a Kshatriya. But we do not call such brave persons Kshatriyas, because it is not their profession to protect the world.

At this juncture, it is everyone’s dharma to protect India—that is, the world—because this has ceased to be anybody’s dharma in particular—so it seems at any rate.

So much about the Hindus. What are the Muslims, Parsis and others in Gujarat expected to do ? India is theirs too, and so also Gujarat. It is their Dharma as well to free India from her slavery and they can do this only by laying down their lives.

Everyone, therefore, who calls himself an Indian, be he a Hindu, Muslim, Parsi, Christian, Jew, or anyone else, has to learn and master this *mantra* of dying without killing. Only the man who has faith in God can learn it and act on it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-11-1921

39. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SABARMATI,

Tuesday [November 15, 1921]

CHI. MAHADEV,

Even a mother will not serve [food] without [the child] asking for it.¹ Unless you shout, you will have no customer for your berries.² How will a mother know what the child wants? And the condition of the berry-seller's basket the woman alone knows. If, therefore, you asked for the thing and had it, what is there to be ashamed of?

I got your *bhajans* and have read them. Maybe poetic talent grows during illness, but, in displaying it, do you not delay your recovery? If you refrain from exercising it and even then it shows itself after recovery, it would be worthier of admiration.

If we regard illness as an opportunity for listening to the promptings of the inner voice [for self-examination] and constantly look within ourselves, that enhances our strength.

I have received a telegram from Motilalji telling me that your health is quite all right.

May God grant you the strength to keep your vows.

May you both be happy and be active in service.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11414

40. LETTER TO A. S. FREEMANTLE

[After November 15, 1921]

DEAR SIR,

I thank you for your letter of the 15th instant. I am publishing the correspondence in full in *Young India*—not your letter authorizing publication.

Yours faithfully,

From a Photostat: S.N. 7663

¹ Gujarati sayings

² *ibid*

*41. SPEECH ON BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF RAJCHANDRA,
AHMEDABAD*

November 16, 1921

SISTERS AND BROTHERS,

I wish to refresh your memory. You may have forgotten the occasion, but I have not. After my return from England, we had met in the Premabhai Hall in Ahmedabad to celebrate the birth anniversary of this illustrious person. I had said then that, if we continued our disorderly noises, far from adoring the great man to respect whom we had gathered, we would be profaning his name. After this, with some difficulty people were made to keep quiet for a while. Much water has flowed down the Sabarmati river since then. We, too, have gone through many experiences, both sweet and bitter, and have learnt to some extent the lesson of keeping order at meetings. It is one of the simplest rules of civilized behaviour to arrive at a meeting in time and not to leave one's seat till it ends. If I may say the same thing with reference to our subject today, this rule is the first lesson in the path of compassion.

We must suffer inconvenience ourselves so that others may be comfortable. It is licence, not discipline, to act upon the impulse of the moment without pausing to consider how our action may affect others in the world. Such behaviour argues the Satanic temperament, not the godly. It is the Satanic way to embrace disorder as order. Where it is all noise and no consideration or respect for anyone, it is the Satanic way which the people follow. We cannot point to one specific mark through which we may recognize an action as being Satanic. Every action is prompted by mixed-motives. An action which springs from restlessness in the heart and creates the very image of restlessness, should be regarded as characteristic of the Satanic way.

I stand first, these days, in using the word "Satanic". Not that I am enamoured of it. The world may imagine that I am, but my conscience tells me that I am prompted by nothing but compassion in using it. There is no hatred and no anger behind it. I describe things as I see them. In this, I merely follow the way of compassion. Today's occasion is twice welcome as affording an opportunity for reflection over the meaning of compassion.

We revere the person for honouring whose memory we have gathered here. I, too, rank myself among his adorers. A critic can

never be this. This is, therefore, not the place for sceptics. Even such persons may attend in a spirit of humility to get their doubts resolved. If, however, the motive is to find food for one's scepticism, the rule of civilized behaviour requires that one should leave this place. Everyone in the world should have freedom. The sceptic should certainly have a place where he can be himself, but likewise the devotee or the worshipper, too, should have a place where he can go ahead with his work undisturbed by criticism. I assume, therefore, that only those who love the poet and hold him in reverence have come to this meeting. It is to these persons that I say that today's occasion is twice welcome.

The man in whose hallowed memory we have gathered here was the living embodiment of this religion of compassion. He understood it well and had perfected it in his life. This same compassion inspires our present activities in the country. It is not anger which prompts them. The situation as it has developed has given us sufficient reason to be angry and has hurt us deeply. But, even at this unhappy hour we pause and think how we may act so as not to hurt the opponents; how, on the contrary, we may do a good turn even to them. Non-co-operation springs from compassion and not from anger. Afraid that we may be in the wrong, we refuse to be angry with the opponent and, instead, ourselves flee from him.

This certainly leads to serious results. Those persons or institutions against which we employ non-co-operation are indeed hurt by our action, but the religion of compassion does not teach that we may never hurt anyone. That is not the meaning of compassion I have learnt from the Poet. True compassion lies in doing what is good or performing our duty even at the cost of inflicting pain on others through our action.

I have often declared that I have learnt, and learnt much, from the lives of many persons. But it is from the Poet's life that I have learnt most. It was from his life that I understood the way of compassion. There can be no act which will not hurt the feelings of someone or another, but the pain must have been inflicted out of compassion. Two conditions have to be satisfied for this purpose:

1. We can do something which hurts someone only if it hurts us more than it hurts him.
2. Our motive must be absolutely pure. We should have no other thought in our mind than the welfare of the other person.

Let us suppose that my son is a drink-addict and a smoker and is given to dissolute ways. He asked me for some money. Till now I used to give him whatever he asked for, because I was a blind father. From my association with Raychandbhai, however, I learnt that not only should I myself not drink and smoke and live an immoral life, but that I must save others too from these things. It is, therefore, my duty to refuse to give a penny to my son, even to snatch away a wine-glass from his hand if I see him holding one. If I come to know that he keeps his liquors in a particular chest, I must burn it. If I see a wine bottle, I must smash it. The son will certainly hurt, and he will look upon me as a heartless father. But a father who understands the meaning of compassion is not afraid of hurting his son or of being cursed by him. The way of compassion and benevolence dictates that, in such circumstances, one should snatch away the wine-bottle from the son's hand. I would not do this forcibly but, if I come to know that he keeps his liquor bottle at a particular place in the house, I would seize it from there and smash it.

Raychandbhai suggested an excellent rule of guidance in following this way, that we may not displease others in ordinary matters, may not start reproaching people over trifles in the name of the path of compassion. If we understand this simple rule, many things, which otherwise puzzle us, we would do out of deference to others. It may be I do not understand why we should wear khadi and am in love with fine muslin; but, then, it happens that in the society in which I live all wear khadi, and we commit no wrong in wearing it. I should, then, follow society. Raychandbhai taught me this simple rule.

Once, in Bombay, we were discussing the path of compassion. The point was whether one may use leather. In the end, we both agreed that we cannot do without leather. Professions like agriculture must go on. However, if we cannot do without it altogether, we should certainly refrain from wearing on the head anything containing leather. I have always been a man who would not miss a chance for a jest. I asked him to examine the cap on his head. He was a man ever wrapped in contemplation and never thought about what he wore and how he covered himself. The fact that there was a leather-strip in his cap had entirely escaped him. But as soon as I pointed it out, he tore the piece off. I don't suppose that my argument was so cogent that it convinced him instantly. He did not argue at all. He simply thought that my motive was good and that I held him in reverence. So why

should he enter into an argument with me ? All he did was quietly to pull out the leather-strip and I am sure he never again thereafter wore any head-dress containing leather. Even if, however, somebody tells me that he actually saw the Poet wearing such a cap after that, I would not be hurt. If I had occasion to mention the thing to him again, he would have immediately torn off the piece of leather. It might have remained through over sight.

In this lies the greatness of great souls. Such behaviour shows that they are free from egotism. They are ready to learn even from children. It is the characteristic of great men not to mind difference of views in small matters. To those who, in the name of the religion of compassion, always differ with others in every small matter and claim to be guided the voice of conscience, I would say that they hear no such voice, or that, as in animals, the *atman* in them is not yet awake. This is so with most of us. The difference between man and the brute is that in the former, the *atman* can wake up to the full. If we follow the world in ninety-nine things, in regard to the hundredth thing we may tell it that its way is not right. But how can a man who is at daggers drawn with the world from his birth can act with love for the world?

In most cases, we should behave as though we were inert things. The difference between wholly inert matter and living matter as practically nil. The entire world seems to be inert matter, the *atman* shines but rarely. Those who live on a higher plane act on this principle. I saw that Raychandbhai did this.

Had he been living today, he would have certainly blessed the present movement. It is based on dharma. No man who is imbued with compassion can but join it. The movement is sure to produce excellent effects in the political, economic and other spheres. But the happiest result will be that it will have saved many persons and made some fit for *moksha*. If we do not discover this by the end of the year, life will become unbearable to me.

Raychandbhai often used to say that he could bear being transfixed with spears, but could not bear being stabbed with the spear of the lies, the hypocrisies and the oppression which prevail in the world and of irreligion masquerading as religion. He was full of indignation over oppression and I often saw him boil over. The whole world was his kith and kin. The grief which we feel at the death of our own brother or sister, he used to experience at the existence of

suffering and death in the world. If somebody argued that the people suffered for their own sins, he would ask what drove them to sin. We call the time the Age of Kali when the path of virtue is not easy but lies through hills and valleys. During this Age, virtue is a rare sight in the world and vice flourishes, masquerading as virtue. If, in such a state of affairs, we wish to follow the path of compassion, our hearts must be filled with unendurable pain. Far better, we should feel, that the body should become feeble and perish than that we should go on living in these conditions.

This seems to me the real reason why Raychandbhai died at such an early age. It is true indeed that he suffered from a disease, but the pain he felt at the sight of suffering in the world was unbearable to him. If the physical disease had been the only cause, he could have won the battle against it. But he was troubled with the thought how in these-evil times one could realize the *atman*. Such a feeling is an indication of the spirit of compassion.

It is not the height of compassion to avoid killing a bug. True, a bug may not be destroyed, but, at the same time, one should see that one does not permit bugs to breed. Letting them breed is more cruel than destroying them.

All of us let them breed. Jains do that and so do I, a *Vaishnava*¹. We do not know cleanliness. When we go on adding to our possessions, we do not think of the consequences. What else but breeding [of bugs] can we expect from accumulation of unnecessary things ?

It is indeed a form of compassion not to kill insects such as bugs and mosquitoes. But the refusal to kill a human being is the higher form of it. What should we do when we are forced to choose between killing a human being and destroying a bug? Circumstances may possibly arise in which it may be our duty to save a bug at the cost of human life. But the other way about is also possible. I am suggesting a way which will save us from either of these contingencies. This is the true spirit of compassion.

The Poet used to say at times: "Had Jainism not fallen into the hands of those who are called Jains, it would have filled the world with marvel at its truths. The *Vanias*² bring discredit on the truths of Jainism. They scatter corn over ant-hills. If any preparation of potato

¹ A worshipper of Vishnu

² Community traditionally engaged in trade and commerce. Most Jains belong to this community.

chances to get into their mouth, they feel pangs of conscience. In such small matters, they are ever punctilious. They are welcome to be so, but those who imagine that this is the height of Jainism really stand on the lowest level of dharma. That level is for the fallen, not for the pure in heart." Many Jains, therefore, say that Rajchandra knew nothing about dharma, that he was a hypocrite and an egotist. I know, however, that he had not a trace of hypocrisy and egotism.

Though it is true that bugs and other insects should not be killed, that is not all that the spirit of compassion means. That is only the first step. During some past age, the belief must have come to prevail that there was no sin in destroying insects to save human life. A sage may have then arisen who must have laid stress on protection of insects and proclaimed: "O fool! Do not destroy insects for preserving the transient body. Pray fervently, rather, that it may perish today rather than tomorrow." From this sentiment arose ahimsa.

But the man who beats his wife or child, though he shrinks from killing a tiny bug, is not a Jain, nor a Hindu, nor a *Vaishnava*. He is a cipher. On this sacred day of the Poet's anniversary, let us give up the narrow meaning of compassion and interpret the word in the broadest sense. It is a sin to hurt the feelings of a single person or to regard him as an enemy. Anyone who wants to see General Dyer hanged, or Sir Michael O'Dwyer burnt alive, is neither a Jain, nor a *Vaishnava*, nor a Hindu. He is nobody and nothing. The very essence of ahimsa lies in burning our anger and in cleansing the soul. Who am I to judge General Dyer? I know that I am myself full of ill will. How many persons I may be murdering in my mind! What right have I to judge General Dyer? I have, therefore, resolved not to retaliate if anyone attacks me with a sword. This is the path of compassion and the underlying principle of the non-co-operation movement.

But in my speeches I do not mention the word "compassion". I am talking about it today because this is the anniversary celebration of Srimad Rajchandra. I know that the result of this movement will be to spread the spirit of compassion. When that result follows, people will recognize it by themselves.

There is greater sin in killing a serpent or a tiger in a human form than in killing a real serpent. We kill a tiger out of fear, not in anger. If there really is a Dharmaraja who judges our sins and good deeds, he will perhaps have pity on the person who may have killed a tiger and forgive him, because he will have only followed the natural

instinct of the beast in him. One beast will have killed another. But behind the murder of a human being, there is the spirit of revenge and anger, of pride and hypocrisy. Dharmaraja will say: "You fool! What endless scheming and swindling must have preceded the murder!"

I tell Jains, and others too, that compassion does not merely mean not killing bugs, ants and other insects, though certainly they should not be killed. It also means that no soul born as a human being must be cheated. And yet what else do the businessmen do? If any Jain would show his account books to me, I would immediately prove that he was no Jain. How is the cloth in which we trade produced? Dealers ought to consider whether the manufacture of cloth is not tainted, whether it is not true that animal fat is used in sizing cloth. It must be, besides, repugnant to businessmen to charge exorbitant rates of interest. This is not worthily done by a Jain. Dealers may reasonably add to the cost of an article one pice or two pice for their services. But why all this cunning higgling and lying? And the interest which is charged for money lent is so cruelly high that it kills the debtor. Wherever I go, I hear complaints against *Vanias*, both Jains and *Vaishnavas*. Many whites ask me to see first what excessive rates of interest our own people charge.

We must cease to be unscrupulous *Vanias* and become Kshatriyas. The Vaisya's dharma does not mean doing no manual work, no ploughing, no heroism and no consideration for right and wrong. The true Vaisya, rather, shows himself heroic in his generosity and discrimination in his business; he follows the Brahmin's dharma, too, by exercising his discrimination and deciding that he may not sell liquor or fish, that he may deal only in pure khadi. We shall fall into sin if others slave for us and we merely lend money and earn interest. At least by way of *yajna*, we should do some bodily labour every day.

Primarily, the *Vania's* sphere is business, but he must also possess the qualities of the other castes. If I should have to engage a Kabuli or a Pathan to protect my wife, it would be better, though I am a Hindu, that I should divorce her and set her free. But what do we find many *Vanias* doing? Most of them have engaged North Indians and Pathans as watchmen. You may do even that; I do not mind it. If, however, you lack the strength to protect your wife and children, you had better retire into a hermit's cottage and live there as befits your dharma. It will not, then, be your duty, as *Vanias*, to come forward to protect the world. The Kshatriyas will do that whenever and wherever

they find people suffering.

The biggest lesson I learnt from Rajchandrabhai's life is that a *Vania* should always live as befits a *Vania*. At present *Vanias* are not true *Vanias*. It is not necessary, for becoming true *Vanias*, to be a great pundit or read bulky volumes. Anyone who does not let himself be defiled, who observes the rules of *yama*¹ and *niyama*², who keeps away from untruth and takes care never to do anything contrary to dharma, who has not a trace of lust in his heart and is full of the spirit of compassion, such a person will be fit for the Absolute state; the realization of that state will not be beyond his reach. That is why I do not ask you to learn Sanskrit or to read the *Bhagavati-sutra*. Whether or not you read it, I am indifferent in the matter.

As early as when the anniversary was celebrated in Wadhwan, it was resolved that a library with the name of "Rajchandra Pustakalaya" should be started. There was a proposal for constructing a special building for it. I did not, at that time, show much enthusiasm for The idea. I told the people that, without a soul, the building would be a mere structure of brick and mortar. Today the three-year-old resolve has borne fruit. The circumstances are favourable. We have a worthy man like Jinavijayji to help us. The library of the Puratattya Mandir has also been amalgamated [with this]. Its benefit will be freely available to whosoever takes the trouble to go there.

Please carry home with you what you heard here today and translate it into practice in your life. You may leave here what seemed to you questionable, but forthwith start acting upon what ever you found acceptable, what pleased your ears and your heart.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 24-11-1921

¹ Rules of moral and ethical discipline and external religious observances

² *ibid*

42. MESSAGE FOR PUBLIC MEETING, BOMBAY

Before November 17, 1921

I am sorry that I cannot personally come to Bombay this time even for a day.¹ But I hope that you will excuse me when you know that the work which has detained me here is of greater importance than the worthy task before Bombay.

If you wish to bring glory to Bombay;

1. Not even a child should attend any celebration arranged in honour of the Prince of Wales;

2. No one, young or old, should attend any entertainment programme even if admission to it is free—there are many other days for such things.

3. No man or woman should stir out of the house at all on the 17th without some unavoidable work.

4. Even by mistake one should not go out of curiosity to see what is happening, in the direction of the place where a celebration in honour of the Prince has been arranged.

5. Everyone should stay at home and spin and, if one does not know spinning, concentrate on it for eight hours and learn it from someone.

6. Everyone should spend some time at any rate in singing devotional songs or in prayer. Let city-dwellers not think that God does not exist, or that, even if He exists, it is not necessary to remember Him or seek His help in national work.

7. At the very hour when the Prince will be landing, a bonfire of foreign cloth should be lighted on the open ground by the side of the Elphinstone Road. For this purpose, we should start collecting foreign cloth in such parts of the city from which we have not collected any so far.

8. If the trains, etc., are running, no passenger should be forcibly dragged out.

9. Workers must not stop work without obtaining prior leave.

10. We can be fit for swaraj only if everyone is free to do what

¹ He was, however, persuaded to come. *Vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Bombay, 17-11-1921.

he chooses in every matter.

Please remember:

Our reason for not joining functions in honour of the Prince is not that we have anything against him personally. He has done us no harm. The reason is that the bureaucracy is using him for its own purposes and that we do not wish to help it in this. It is as much our duty, therefore, to ensure the safety of his person, to refrain from so much as a suggestion of insult to him, as to boycott all functions in his honour.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 20-11-1921

43. LETTER TO HAJI SIDDIK KHATRI

[Before *November 17, 1921*]¹

BHAISHRI AHMED HAJI SIDDIK KATRI,

I send with this the draft of the Resolution. If you wish to make any changes, you may do so. Please read my suggestions given in *Young India*. It would be advisable to have the appeal signed by some eminent Maulana and get it distributed at all places. We shall succeed only if we maintain on the 17th perfect peace in the whole of India. If from today up to the 17th we work hard enough, I am sure that on the 17th all business will be suspended and peace maintained. We shall succeed in this matter only if we strictly adhere to the truth. It is necessary that leaders say the same thing in public as in private.

HAJI SIDDIK KHATRI

HILAL MANZIL

85, ABDUL REHMAN STREET

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 6162

¹ The letter was written in connection with the demonstrations on the occasion of the visit of the Prince of Wales who was to arrive in Bombay on November 17.

44. NOTES

MY INCONSISTENCY

A correspondent asks some pertinent questions in the following pungent fashion:

When the Zulus broke out for liberty against the British usurpers, you helped the British in suppressing the so-called rebellion. Is it a rebellion to try to shake off the foreign yoke? Was Joan of Arc a rebel? Was George Washington a rebel? Is De Valera one? You may say that the Zulus had recourse to violence. I then ask, was the end bad or the means? The latter may have been so but certainly not the former; so you will be kind enough to explain the riddle. In the last War, when the gallant Germans and Austrians were fighting so bravely against a world combination, you raised recruits for the British to fight against the nations that had done India no harm. Whenever there is a war between two races, one has to hear both parties before coming to a decision, either for or against any of them. In the last war we had a one-sided version only and that from a nation certainly not renowned for truthfulness or honesty. You have all along been an advocate of passive resistance and non-violence. Why then did you induce people to take part in a war the merits of which they knew not, and for the aggrandizement of a race so miserably wallowing in the mire of imperialism? You may say you had faith in the British bureaucracy. Is it possible for any person to have faith in an alien people all whose acts have run so glaringly counter to their promises? It cannot have been so with a person of such high attainments as yourself. So you will please answer the second riddle.

There is another point to which I should like to refer. You are an advocate of non-violence. Under the present circumstances we should be strictly non-violent. But when India will be free, should we strictly eschew arms even if a foreign nation invaded us? Would you also boycott railways and telegraphs and steamers even when they will have ceased to promote exports of the products of our soil?

I hear and read many charges of inconsistency about myself. But I do not answer them as they do not affect anyone but myself. The questions however raised by the correspondent are of general importance and deserve notice. They are by no means new to me. But I do not remember having answered them in the columns of *Young India*.

WHY DID I ASSIST IN WAR

Not only did I offer my services at the time of the Zulu revolt¹ but before that at the time of the Boer War² and not only did I raise recruits in India during the late War, but I raised an ambulance corps in 1914 in London³. If therefore I have sinned, the cup of my sins is full to the brim. I lost no occasion of serving the Government at all times. Two questions presented themselves to me during all those crises. What was my duty as a citizen of the empire as I then believed myself to be and what was my duty as an out and out believer in the religion of ahimsa—non-violence?

I know now, that I was wrong in thinking that I was a citizen of the empire. But on those four occasions I did honestly believe that in spite of the many disabilities that my country; was labouring under, it was making its way towards freedom, and that on the whole the Government from the popular standpoint was not wholly bad and that the British administrators were honest though insular and dense. Holding that view, I set about doing what an ordinary Englishman would do in the circumstances. I was not wise or important enough to take independent action. I had no business to judge or scrutinize ministerial decisions with the solemnity of a tribunal. It did not impute malice to the ministers either at the time of the Boer War, the Zulu revolt or the late War. I did not consider Englishmen nor do I now consider them as particularly bad or worse than other human beings. I considered and still consider them to be as capable of high motives and actions as any other body of men and equally capable of making mistakes. I therefore felt, that I sufficiently discharged my duty as a man and a citizen by offering my humble services to the empire in the hour of its need whether local or general. That is how I would expect every Indian to act by his country under swaraj. I would be deeply distressed, if on every conceivable occasion every one of us were to be a law unto oneself and to scrutinize in golden scales every action of our future national assembly. I would surrender my judgment in most

¹ *Vide* "Speech at Congress Meeting", 24-4-1906; "Indian Volunteers", 23-6-1906; "Indian Stretcher-Bearer Corps", '19-7-1906.

² *Vide* "Indian Ambulance Corps", 13-12-1899; "Indian Ambulance Corps in Natal", 14-3-1900; "The Natal Volunteer Indian Ambulance Corps", 12-11-1904.

³ *Vide* "Letter to Secretary for Interior", 21-1-1914; "Speech at Mass Meeting", 25-1-1914.

matters to national representatives, taking particular care in making my choice of such representatives. I know that in no other manner would a democratic government be possible for one single day.

The whole situation is now changed for me. My eyes, I fancy, are opened. Experience has made me wiser. I consider the existing system of Government to be wholly bad and requiring special national effort to end or mend it. It does not possess within itself any capacity for self-improvement. That I still believe many English administrators to be honest does not assist me, because I consider them to be as blind and deluded as I was myself. Therefore I can take no pride in calling the empire mine or describing myself as a citizen. On the contrary, I fully realize that I am a pariah untouchable of the empire. I must therefore constantly pray for its radical reconstruction or total destruction, even as a Hindu pariah would be fully justified in so praying about Hinduism or Hindu society.

The next point, that of ahimsa, is more abstruse. My conception of ahimsa impels me always to dissociate myself from almost everyone of the activities I am engaged in. My soul refuses to be satisfied so long as it is a helpless witness of a single wrong or a single misery. But it is not possible for me, a weak, frail, miserable being, to mend every wrong or to hold myself free of blame for all the wrong I see. The spirit in me pulls one way, the flesh in me pulls in the opposite direction. There is freedom from the action of these two forces, but that freedom is attainable only by slow and painful stages. I cannot attain freedom by a mechanical refusal to act, but only by intelligent action in a detached manner. This struggle resolves itself into an incessant crucifixion of the flesh so that the spirit may become entirely free.

MORE CASES IN POINT

I was again an ordinary citizen no wiser than my fellows, myself believing in ahimsa and the rest not believing in it at all but refusing to do their duty of assisting the Government because they were actuated by anger and malice. They were refusing out of their ignorance and weakness. As a fellow-worker, it became my duty to guide them aright. I therefore placed before them their clear duty, explained the doctrine of ahimsa to them and let them make their choice which they did. I do not repent of my action in terms of ahimsa. For under swaraj too I would not hesitate to advise those who would bear arms to do so and fight for the country.

WHAT OF THE FUTURE ?

That brings me to the second question. Under swaraj of my dream there is no necessity for arms at all. But I do not expect that dream to materialize in its fullness as a result of the present effort, first because the effort is not directed to that end as an immediate goal and secondly because I do not consider myself advanced enough to be able to prescribe a detailed course of conduct to the nation for such preparation. I am still myself too full of passion and other frailties of human nature to feel the call or the capacity. All I claim for myself is, that I am incessantly trying to overcome every one of my weaknesses. I have attained great capacity, I believe, for suppressing and curbing my senses, but I have not become incapable of sin, i.e., of being acted upon by my senses. I believe it to be possible for every human being to attain that blessed and indescribable sinless state in which he feels within himself the presence of God to the exclusion of everything else. It is, I must confess, as yet a distant scene. And therefore, it is not possible for me to show the nation a present way to complete non-violence in practice.

RAILWAYS AND TELEGRAPHS

The question about railways and telegraphs is really too insignificant in relation to the great doctrine I have just discussed. I am not myself banishing the personal use of these conveniences myself. I certainly do not expect the nation to discard their use nor do I expect their disuse under swaraj. But I do expect the nation under swaraj not to believe that these agencies necessarily advance our moral growth or are indispensable for our material progress. I would advise the nation to make a limited use of these agencies and not to be feverishly anxious to connect seven hundred fifty thousand villages of India by telegraph and railways. The nation, when it feels the glow of freedom, will realize that they were needed by our rulers more for our enslavement than for enlightenment. Progress is a lame woman. It can only come hopping. You cannot send it by wire or rail.

FALLEN SISTERS

The reader will be glad to learn that the work of reclaiming the fallen sisters of Barisal has been taken up in right earnest. Dr. Roy writes, saying that many of them have been visited, and spinning is being introduced among them. Jagadish Babu who has been in charge of Babu Ashvini Kumar Dutt's school for years has promised to guide

the young Workers who have undertaken this responsible service. I hope that those who have taken up this much-needed service will not leave it half-finished. They must be prepared for disappointments, they must expect slow progress. It is only in such work that is free from excitement or immediate promise of renown that one's love of service for its own sake is tested. I commend the example of Barisal to the other cities also. This purifying work has to be done even after swaraj. Not everyone is qualified for it. Those therefore who feel the call and have the requisite purity should turn their attention to the eradication of this growing vice. The movement naturally has two branches, the reclamation of fallen sisters and the weaning of men from the degrading vice which makes man look upon his sister with lust and tempts him to make her a prey to it. The qualities required for both the branches of work are the same, and the work should be simultaneously done in both the branches if it is to bear fruit.

INFLUENCE OF AN IMPRISONMENT

In the same letter in which he describes the work among the fallen sisters of Barisal, Dr. Roy writes as follows:

East Bengal is indebted to Pir Badshah Mian's arrest for the Hindu-Muslim unity which is now quite firm and boycott of foreign cloth which is now almost complete among the masses.

Evidence of this character is pouring in from every direction. We must not however rest on our oars. There is still much work to be done. Both the unity and the boycott are tender plants requiring protection and careful watering. The Hindu-Muslim unity must be sustained by each seeking every occasion to serve the other in a silent unostentatious manner. Boycott of foreign cloth can be perpetuated only by the universal adoption of hand-spinning, and every cottage spinning the health-giving music of the wheel. Every group of villages must have an expert who will insist upon the yarn improving in strength, evenness and then fineness. There are enough weavers in India if we can supply them with handspun yarn that can be woven just as well as mill-spun yarn. This one act will bring down prices of Indian mill-woven cloth as nothing else will.

A MYSTIC'S PRAISE OF SPINNING

A friend sends me the following from George Macdonald's *The Prince and Curdie* on hand-spinning:

As he hesitated, he heard the noise of a spinning-wheel. He knew it at

once, because his mother's spinning-wheel had been his governess long ago, and still taught him things. It was the spinning-wheel that first taught him to make verses, and to sing, and to think whether all was, right inside him; or at least it had helped him in all these things. Hence it was no wonder he should know a spinning wheel when he heard it sing.

THE CHITTAGONG OUTRAGE¹

In reply to my wire² Prasanna Babu has sent the further details which I give below

Though the people were strictly non-violent and the Gurkhas fell upon them and assaulted them, the bureaucracy have devised noble means of saving their necks by issuing notices under Sec. 144 upon leaders, volunteers, and outsiders indiscriminately, prohibiting them from forming and joining in processions in public streets on the ground that the people who formed the procession on the 20th instant pelted the police and did other violent acts. Such notices were issued on the 27th instant, wherein it is alleged that the Magistrate came to know of the procession and injuries done to the police by the people only on the 25th from the report of the Police Superintendent.

They have also managed to institute a false case under Sec. 144 and 147 I.P. Code against Maulvi Mahomed Kajimali, President, Khilafat Committee, Kalishankar Chakravarti, Editor *Jyoti* (the local vernacular daily), Premananda Datta, Suhkhendubikas Sen, and Mahomed Sirajulhaque, volunteers, yesterday. All the five accused were arrested and except the second and the fifth accused who have come out on bail, the rest have preferred *hajat*. Premananda Datta was at Dacca on the 20th, still he has been brought on the record as an accused.

The people are calmly working out the Congress programme. Hardly anyone is seen in the street with foreign cloth on. We may assure you that the boycott movement is a success here.

This studied attempt to throttle the movement is bound to fail. The non-official commission referred to in the previous notice of the outrage has acted with the greatest promptness and already issued its report, which bears out the facts as stated by the local Congress secretary. The report shows that at least 104 persons were "hit and wounded". Among these was a nine-year-old boy and at least one lady whose protestation that she belonged to the female sex availed nothing. Some of the wounds were of a serious nature.

¹ Vide "Another Gurkha Charge", 3-11-1921

² Not available

BRAVE STUDENTS

Whilst the All-India Congress Committee was in session, the following interesting telegram was received from the brave medical students of Vizagapatam who, it will be remembered, have been dismissed from their college for their effrontery to wear khadi:

Thirty nine medical students, Vizagapatam recently dismissed for wearing khadi caps offer their respectful *pranams*¹ on eve this eventful Congress Committee session which must decide question of swaraj by December. Response Mother's call resolved suspend education during period struggle join national service. Therefore organised ourselves into Sevasamiti Ramadandu carrying swadeshi propaganda to very doors. Been so far self-reliant for funds. Assure you Congress Committee our loyalty our humble services in swaraj cause. Prepared share hardships future struggle. Awaiting your instructions and help through our President Sundarrao or Barrister Prakasham.

I commend this wire to the attention of every student. These young men have shown themselves self-respecting by wearing khadi caps and bravely suffering for the sake of self-respect, and patriotic by devoting their time to national service.² This country is suffering from the chronic disease of slavery. Those who spend themselves in finding and applying the true remedy for that disease become true surgeons and physicians, and when that universal disease is cured, most of the other diseases will disappear without further application, and the country will be better prepared to train medical men and women in order to treat the rest.

FEUDATORY STATES

The All-India Congress Committee having defined the Congress policy regarding foreign states, the demand was naturally made to define its policy towards our own states. The broad outlines of Congress policy were formulated by the Congress at the Nagpur session, namely of non-intervention in the internal affairs of these states. The states themselves could not wish for anything better or more unequivocal. And the All-India Congress Committee can only define the policy within the four corners of that resolution. Strictly in accord with that resolution, Congress workers have refrained from taking the message of non-co-operation to the states, except its

¹ Salutations

² *Vide* also "Notes", 24-11-1921, under sub-title "More About Medical Students".

permanent, purifying or economic parts which would hold good even without non-co-operation. These are the drink evil, swadeshi, Hindu-Muslim unity, non-violence and untouchability. The Congress can have nothing but goodwill towards these states, so long as their subjects are well treated. And even when they are ill-treated, the Congress cannot and will not exercise any pressure or force save that of public opinion. And therefore nationalist organs do not hesitate to discuss, when necessary, in strong language the grievances of the subjects in some of these states. The thoughtless and wanton ill-treatment, for instance, of Sheth Jamnalaji and his party in the confines of Bikaner State whilst they were prosecuting merely their campaign of swadeshi has justly evoked hostile criticism. The liberal States may therefore look for every encouragement from the Congress, and the reactionary ones at the most fierce criticism of their methods and measures. Moreover the Congress cannot but sympathize with the States in their humiliating plight. The imperial power has used them as pawns in its game of exploitation. They are least able to resist the illegitimate and insidious pressure that is brought to bear upon them from time to time. They must therefore realize that the increase of people's power means decrease of the humiliating influence described by me.

FROM ACROSS THE OCEAN

How the Karachi prosecutions have been appreciated even beyond the seas will appear from the following cable just received from Mr. Aswat, Chairman of the Transvaal British Indian Association:

Convey community's heartiest congratulations families Ali Brothers Dr. Kitchlew and others for the cause of the Motherland. We pray to God to crown the movement with success.

I have only printed one out of many such telegrams or letters received from our countrymen living outside India.

Our countrymen in America too are actively helping the country's cause. Two cablegrams have been received of late from New York. I reproduce the latest:

Greetings from one thousand Americans open air meeting. We wish civil disobedience programme a success.

To all the young students and others living in the far West I would like to say one word. They would best serve the country by

interpreting the movement as it is and in terms of the East instead of seeking to find Western parallels and giving it a Western colour. It is my conviction that in its present form it has no parallel. It is Eastern, better still Indian in conception and peculiarly suited to the Indian soil. It is too early to say how the West with its modern rush will receive it when it has taken deep root enough to spread its branches to the West. As yet it is still in its infancy and often appears in a Western setting. It has unfortunately to be confessed that it still appears and commends itself to many only in its destructive form. Whilst the latter is absolutely essential, it is the constructive which is the permanent and the best part of it. I am painfully conscious of the fact that to many it appears only to be a preparation for violence, whereas non-violence is not only an integral but the only sustaining part of non-co-operation. It is by itself the largest part of construction. Non-violence at once makes it a religious movement and throws man on God as his only Rock and Refuge. By non-violence the non-co-operator burns his boats and makes steady headway in all weathers. By non-violence the non-co-operator appears before his Maker in his nakedness and commands divine help. He may not appear before Him with his Bible or the Koran or Gita in the one hand and his gun in the other. He appears on the contrary with hands folded, a humble suppliant before the great white Throne. Let the young men abroad understand the essential part of the movement and then attempt to interpret it to the West. Help thus intelligently given will, they will find, bear far richer results than what they have achieved already.

NEW FEATURES OF THE CONGRESS

The ensuing Congress is expected to present several new features. Addresses by distinguished men irrespective of political profession on their special subjects is one. The second is a musical concert in which musicians of all India are invited to take part. It is being arranged by Mr. N. M. Khare of the Gandharva Mahavidyalaya. I trust that there will be a general response from the country. Secretaries of provincial and district Congress committees can assist the enterprise. Some artists may not even see the Congress notices. Indian music of the best type is a decaying art for want of encouragement. We little know the wonderful results that the simple musical instruments of India yield. Somehow or other we have come to labour under the delusion that nothing that does not cost much money or does not come from the West has any real art or value in it. The

coming concert is intended from the Congress platform to disabuse the popular mind of the fallacy. There will be in connection with the concert an exhibition of Indian musical instruments. I hope that lovers of Indian music will assist Mr. Khare by corresponding with him at the earliest possible time. Needless to say only those who are at the top of the profession should be invited by the Congress officials to send in their names.

THE BAR SINISTER

I believe in God working through us and for or against individuals and nations as surely as I believe in the sun rising regularly at the appointed hour from day to day. When therefore I hear that a particular school debars untouchables from attendance, a shudder runs through me and I know that we are not yet fit for swaraj. A letter from the Madras Presidency lies before me, complaining that the head master of a school even instigated his boys against the pending admission of a *Panchama* boy. I am hoping that such unthinkable prejudice is fast becoming a thing of rare occurrence. I have no manner of doubt, that if we seem yet to be far from swaraj, it is because of our weaknesses and our not having carried out the self-imposed conditions, one of the greatest of which is the removal of the bar sinister against one sixth of our countrymen. The Congress workers should realize the necessity of conducting a vigorous campaign against it. It need not in any way interfere with their swadeshi work, for the simple reason that intensive swadeshi work itself is one of the most potent influences in favour of our suppressed countrymen. India cannot be self-contained if the message of the spinning-wheel does not enter the homes of these, the most helpless of our fellow-countrymen. And the message cannot be delivered to them unless we think of them as our blood-brothers and sisters requiring all the gentleness and love we can give them.

DERA ISMAILKHAN

The secretary of the District Congress Committee of Dera Ismailkhan writes, saying that Messrs Pairakhan, Devidas, Nirmaldas, Kishanchand Bhatia, Haji Ahmed Din, Allah Baksh and Mahomed Ramzan were required to file security because they had repeated the Karachi Resolution. They having refused to give security were convicted to two years simple imprisonment. The secretary adds that the trial was farcical and lasted only two hours. Lala Pairakhan is a

member of the All-India Congress Committee. He was for fifteen years in Government service in Baluchistan, but left it after the Jallianwala Bagh massacre and joined the Congress of which he was local secretary when he was arrested. The correspondent says that these convictions took place before judgment in the Karachi case. What however is more puzzling is, that while those who repeated the Resolution at Bombay and led the way are left untouched, those who followed the signatories to the Bombay Manifesto have been imprisoned. I congratulate the more fortunate men of Dera Ismailkhan.

THE KORAN TAKEN AWAY

The secretary of the District Khilafat Committee, Mirpurkhas writes to say that Maulvi Abdul Karim Saheb who was recently convicted and is serving imprisonment in the Hyderabad jail has been deprived of the Koran. Is it because the Maulvi is comparatively unknown that the Koran has been taken away from him and not from the distinguished prisoners of Karachi? It is this kind of thoughtless and unnecessary persecution that breeds ill will which it is difficult to check. No one minds a fair fight, but the deprivation of his religious book from a prisoner is the extreme of meanness.

PREJUDICE AND INSOLENCEN

A correspondent from the Tanjore District writes, saying that he and his brother though Brahmins felt that rather than lead a lazy life, they should do some work and they "turned their hands to the plough." So they began agriculture. Thereupon their fellow-villagers became disgusted and excommunicated them. They however remained firm in their resolve. When the Shankaracharya of Kumbakonam visited their part of the District, they went with their offering which was rejected because they had committed the sin of labouring for their livelihood. My correspondent tells me he is not at all put out by the Shankaracharya's action. I congratulate the brothers on their public spirit. Excommunication from a tyrannical society is indeed a reward of merit and should be welcomed. To say that a Brahmin should not touch the plough is a parody of *varnashrama* and a prostitution of the meaning of the *Bhagavad Gita*. Surely the qualities predominantly ascribed to the different divisions are not denied to the others. Is bravery to be the prerogative only of the Kshatriya and restraint only of the Brahmin? Are Brahmins,

Kshatriyas and Sudras not to protect the cow? Can anyone remain a Hindu without readiness to die for the cow? Yet strangely enough, I have a letter from the Madras Presidency seriously telling me, that cow-protection has nothing to do with any but the Vaisyas. When there is so much ignorance combined with insolence the best thing to do is to incur all risks and pursue the path of reform expecting time to prove the truth of one's position. If we combine love with firmness, we shall disarm all opposition in the end. Reformers may neither relent nor become angry.

KHADI IN THEATRES

A correspondent suggests, that if all the theatres at Bombay and elsewhere only adopted khadi for their costumes, the use of khadi would become still more fashionable than it is already. The idea is certainly good. But its enforcement largely depends upon the audience. If the spectators were to insist upon khadi dresses, the proprietors will be compelled to adopt them. They have as a rule no taste save what the public imposes upon them. The best way to enforce the adoption of khadi dresses in theatres is for the regular theatre-goers to ask for khadi costumes. They will have to see to it, that no sham khadi creeps in by stealth. For in theatres more than elsewhere truth is likely to be sacrificed to so-called art or taste. The audience, I suppose, will insist on colours and gaudiness. And whilst it is perfectly possible to have a subdued and beautiful blending of colours on khadi and to have a certain amount of ornamentation about it, the thick variety—and that is the only thing that requires to be made popular—does not lend itself to fantastic combinations without giving rise to positive ugliness. The adoption of khadi on a large scale in theatres therefore means a revolution in public taste and return to simplicity and natural beauty. Our theatres of today are no test of national morals or national taste as in other countries. They are an answer to morbid tastes and an unnatural, unassimilable growth in the nation. Any enterprising manager who recognising the progressive improvement in public taste will make radical changes in his scenery and costumes will certainly deserve the thanks of the theatre-going public.

AN INGENIOUS SUGGESTION

The interest that is being taken in the khadi movement all over India is really remarkable. The suggestion about popularizing khadi through the theatres comes from a Poona graduate. A Punjab correspondent bases this upon his experience of the Punjab. The winter in the Punjab is probably the severest in India, and one of the

adopted to keep up the warmth of the body is by wearing cotton-padded garments and by using cotton-padded blankets. They really give greater warmth to the body even than woollen vests and woollen rugs. But the cotton clothing gets indescribably dirty after a time. What the correspondent suggests is that these garments or the cotton inside them should be renewed every winter. The blankets lend themselves to renewal in the easiest manner. So what he says is that the cotton used for padding should be recarded and spun for manufacturing khadi. The first covers if they are foreign must naturally be destroyed, and one need not go into the merits of destruction for justifying the burning of these things which have gathered dirt in many cases for years. But after the covers are made of khadi, they can be used for summer wear after removing the padding. And for the winter following, according to the correspondent's suggestion, new cotton should be purchased. For an industrious home the suggestion is really fine, and for the poor most economical. For there is no waste and cleanliness is ensured. If the poor people will but learn the necessary simple tailoring, they can have warm or cool health-giving clothing from year to year to suit the different seasons without much cost. If the whole thing is managed judiciously, the reader will observe that a family can be clothed and covered by purchasing a certain quantity of cotton from year to year and at the most paying the family weaver for weaving. The cost of carding and spinning and tailoring is saved. These things can be attended to without difficulty during leisure hours and without encroaching upon the hours required for recreation, or, as the late Lord Kelvin used to say of himself, recreation might be had from change of occupation. But I know the Punjabi as well as I know the Gujarati. And I know that he has ample time at his disposal for attending to his sartorial requirements. But to carry out the correspondent's wise suggestion necessitates a transformation in national habits. Who can deny that it is needed if the nation is no longer to live in a penurious state? As Mr. Andrews has very properly pointed out in his two articles¹, the economics of the Torrid Zone cannot be the same as of the Temperate. To make India industrial by concentrating labour in one place is to kill the nation. To make India industrious by providing healthy and necessary supplementary occupation in the cottage is to make India healthy, wealthy and therefore happy and contented.

Young India, 17-11-1921

¹ Entitled "Hand-spinning and Hand-weaving" in *Young India*, 3-11-1921 and 10-11-1921

45. THE PEN OR THE SWORD

In Lahore on the Mall there is a statue of John Lawrence with a defiant look in the face with the pen in the right hand and the sword in the left. The writing underneath is, "Will you have the pen or the sword ?" As a work of art it is said to be very good. But it has always been a matter of offence to the citizens of Lahore. They neither want the pen nor the sword imposed upon them.

The statue is municipal property. It was put up in the early eighties when the sense of self-respect was not so keen as now, though I understand that even when it was put up, some of the citizens keenly felt the indignity. Recently the Lahore Municipality passed a resolution by a majority vote ordering removal of the statue to the Town Hall building pending final disposal. The resolution was sent in due course to the Government as all resolutions are. Three Or four days after, an engineer was sent by the Municipality to see how the statue could be removed. Without any notice to the Municipality, the Deputy Commissioner sent a party of police to turn away the engineer and his men. And when the Municipality wanted to know why and how this undue interference took place, the Commissioner issued the following orders¹. . .

It is clear that the Deputy Commissioner was guilty of assault in having sent the police to turn out the engineer who was doing his legal duty. The Commissioner's order is an illustration of the meaning of the pen. The Commissioner's pen is just as much an outrage as the Deputy Commissioner's sword. The commissioner, because he has the sword, has arrogated to himself judicial powers which do not belong to him. Whether the Municipality has or has not the power to dispose of its own property is purely for a court of law to decide. And what right has the Commissioner to impute malice to the Municipality? The fact is that the Commissioner cannot tolerate the disappearance from a fashionable quarter of Lahore of the spirit that the statue represents. So he has not hesitated to dictate the law to the Municipality.

¹ Not reproduced here; it suspended the execution of the Municipality's resolution.

Thus what was but an ordinary incident in the affairs of a Municipality which has responded to the new awakening has become a matter of the highest public importance. The citizens, the rate payers of Lahore must by public meetings support the councillors who have been instrumental in passing the resolution. The councillors must take prompt action and give notice, if they have not already done so, that unless Government show good reason to the contrary, the Municipality must do its duty and remove the statue.

The Commissioner has unintentionally given a golden opportunity to the civil resisters of Lahore to try civil resistance in the cleanest and the most intensive manner. If the Government defy the Municipality and use its brute force to prevent removal of the statue, the civil resisters can, after due notice to the Government, proceed to the site with the intention of removing the statue and themselves for arrest or being shot if the Government so wishes.

But this last step can only be taken by disciplined people. It can only be taken when Lahorians are ready to act as one man. There should be no crowds gathering. Only a few individuals can go at a time, say five, of whom one will become the spokesman. They must not bluster, must not argue but simply court arrest. For the immediate object would be not the removal of the statue but inviting arrest. Removal must be the result, if enough men and women offer themselves as sacrifice. There must be a perfect spirit of non-violence prevailing among the people in order to ensure the success of such civil disobedience. Whilst I point out the drastic remedy of civil disobedience, I must warn the citizens of Lahore against adopting the advice without the greatest deliberation. My own experience of a Lahore crowd is that it does not think. It knows no discipline. The volunteers must work methodically amongst the people to create an atmosphere of peace and discipline. I was grieved to notice, that at the Convocation meeting organized on the 9th instant by the National Board of Education several people had entered Bradlaugh Hall without tickets and without permission. This is not merely uncivil but criminal disobedience. For they entered by force where they knew their force would not be resisted by force. Such men are unfit for civil disobedience which presupposes a scrupulous and willing observance of all laws which do not hurt the moral sense. Obedience to laws of voluntary associations as the rule of the managers of the Convocation is only the first step to voluntary and ungrudging obedience to the

laws imposed by the state. Thoughtless disobedience means disruption of society. The first thing therefore for those who aspire after civil disobedience is to learn the art of willingly obeying laws of voluntary associations such as congresses, conferences and other bodies and similarly obeying the state laws whether they like them or not. Civil disobedience is not a state of lawlessness and licence, but presupposes a law-abiding spirit combined with self-restraint.

Young India, 17-11-1921

46. WHAT IS ABUSE?

A correspondent from the United Provinces writes:

Now-a-days the atmosphere is surcharged with clamorous denunciations against the Government. . . . Practically every speech is a mere list of invectives and imprecations. . . .

I for my part heartily abhor this evil. . . .

Violence, to me, does not mean actually assaulting and killing others, but covers also bad language. If so, I cannot see how to justify your own use of the epithets, "Satanic", "devilish" and "barbarous" for the Government. There is not the least shadow of doubt that these words come under violence, but that you being the apostle of non-violence utter violence is even in dream unimaginable.

So much for abusive language. Now I take up another question. You always say that you and your followers have arrayed yourselves against the English Government, and not against Englishmen. While you hate the system and want either to mend it or end it, you have absolutely no ill- feeling towards Englishmen themselves. Clearly therefore, though you want to do away with the system, you do not desire to expel the English. If so, even those who claim to be your true followers have not fully imbibed this high principle. I may substantiate this with a typical instance. In the U.P. Political Conference recently held at Agra, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, while advocating the boycott of foreign cloth, said that if there were any who earnestly desired to expel the English from India, he was one of them, and the means he had found for achieving this was only swadeshi. This has appeared in the Press, and I think you might have read it. Now can Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru be said to have understood your doctrine which makes us differentiate between a man and his action so as to make it quite possible for us to condemn the man's action without bearing any ill will towards him? Here at least I can emphatically say that Nehruji's words can be justified in no case, but still I want to know whether you approve or disapprove of them.¹

¹ For Jawaharlal Nehru's reply, *vide* "Notes"; 8-12-1921, under the sub title "Men and Measures".

In so far as non-co-operators indulge in abuse, it is undoubtedly violence, and a breach of the pledge of non-violence. But I must dissent from the opinion that "practically every speech is a mere list of invectives and imprecations." I assure the write that the speeches are as full of invectives against ourselves as against the Government, and they are more full of argument in favour of non-violence, Hindu-Muslim unity and swadeshi than of invectives. The best proof of my statement perhaps is that the people have made such wonderful response in all these three matters. Surely the people have not made the progress without having been effectively appealed to.

But after all what is abuse? I find that the dictionary meaning is "misuse, perversion, bad use". When therefore we call a thief or a rogue a rogue, we do not abuse him. A leper takes no offence being described as such. Only the man using a particular adjective must mean it and be prepared to prove it. I am therefore unable to condemn the use of adjectives in every case and on every occasion, nor is the use of condemnatory adjectives always a sign of violence. I am fully aware, that the use of even deserved adjectives may be a sign of violence as it would be when it is used to excite violence against the person condemned. Condemnation is legitimately used when it is employed to wean the person from his bad habit or the audience from association with him. The Hindu Shastras are full of condemnation of evil-doers. They have pronounced curses upon them. Tulsidas who was the quality of mercy personified has filled the *Ramayana* with adjectives against the enemies of Rama which it would be difficult to excel. Indeed the names themselves chosen for the evil-doers are significant of their qualities. Jesus did not hesitate to draw down divine wrath upon those whom he called "a generation of vipers, hypocrites, whited sepulchres". Buddha did not spare those who killed the innocent goats in the name of religion. Nor are the Koran or the Zend-Avesta free from such use. Only all these seers and prophets had no evil intention in them. They had to describe persons and things as they were and resort to language so as to enable us to make our choice between good and evil. Having said this much, I am at one with the writer that the more sparing we are in describing the Government or the Governors, the better it is for us. There is too much passion and too much evil in ourselves to warrant the constant use of offensive language. The best use we can make of this Government is to ignore its existence and to isolate it as much as possible from our life, believing that contact with it is corrupting and degrading.

I have said repeatedly, that this movement is not intended to drive out the English, it is intended to end or mend the system they have forced upon us. I have not read Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's speech referred to by the correspondent, but I know him too well to believe that he could have said what is imputed to him. I know that he does not desire their withdrawal from wanton delight and that he will be the first man to harbour as a bosom friend every Englishman who is a lover of India and who wishes to remain as her servant indeed. Nor even in an independent India, do we contemplate prohibition against the residence of Englishmen in our midst on terms settled by the future state of our hope.

Young India, 17-11-1921

47. TO CORRESPONDENTS

C. N. VENKATASHASTRI: For the reasons already given in these columns, your letter, I am sorry, cannot be published. I would, however, recommend a reperusal of my article on Hinduism¹, and you will find more points of contact than of differences between us. You have scratched the surface, I have gone to the root. Our efforts have therefore yielded necessarily different results.

A. H. JAYASINHANI: 1. As a non-co-operator, I neither own nor disown George as my king. I have dissociated myself from the system administered under the King's name. I keep myself free to give my allegiance to him, if I can attain my full growth in his kingdom and can secure full redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs.

2. As non-co-operators we *must* work in the jails for we do not non-co-operate with jails as such. We submit to the courts' discipline when we are dragged to the courts. Civil disobedience by its very nature requires us to yield complete obedience to jail regulations, for as civil resisters we *invite* imprisonment and therefore are bound to suffer the rigours of its discipline. But we can civilly resist such regulations as are not only irksome or hard to bear but are humiliating or specially designed to degrade non-co-operators. Our self-respect demands willing obedience to jail discipline. The same self-respect may require resistance to misbehaviour euphemistically

¹ *Vide* "Hinduism", 6-10-1921.

called discipline. For instance we would refuse to draw lines with our noses whether within or without jails.

Young India, 17-11-1921

48. CIVIL v. CRIMINAL

When a man wilfully breaks his own laws, the disobedience becomes criminal. For he commits the breach not against himself but against someone else, and not only escapes punishment for the breach for there is none provided against himself by the maker of laws, but he avoids also the inconvenience caused by their observance. What is true of the individual is true of the corporation. At the present moment one observes this criminal breach by the Government of its own laws throughout India. Sections of the Penal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code are being freely abused. And because non-co-operators refrain from questioning orders issued by officials, bare-faced illegalities are being committed by them with impunity. We have seen this in Bulandshahr, in Chittagong, all over Sind, and nowhere so systematically and so deliberately as in the Madras Presidency. Mr. Yakub Hassan has pointed out with great justification that his arrest and conviction are contrary to the spirit of the Viceregal pledge. Indeed it is against not only the spirit of Lord Reading's pledge but it is against the letter even of his predecessor's *communiqué* in which it was declared in solemn tones that so long as non-co-operation remained non-violent there would be no repression. No one dare accuse Mr. Yakub Hassan of having incited to violence in his Tanjore address before an audience of picked representatives. Nor was any violence done in the Tanjore district as a result of his speech. The Magistrate in the case of Mr. Iyer of the *Deshabhaktan* actually admitted that there was not a trace of violence in the writing that was impeached and that it actually contained exhortations to non-violence. Mr. Ramaswami Iyenger, leading pleader of Coimbatore, has been arrested for a spirited letter to *The Hindu* though there was no violence in it. And so have Dr. Varadarajulu and Mr. Gopalkrishnayya been arrested for their speeches and writings, although it is known that they not only do not incite to violence but that theirs is actually a restraining influence in the face of provocation. Is it any wonder if one infers from this campaign of repression an intention on the part of the Government to invite

violence? In not one of these cases I have mentioned has there been any outbreak of violence as a result of the speeches and writings concerned. And so we see that the Government is guilty of criminal breach of its own laws. And what legal remedy has the afflicted individual against the Government? There is certainly no sanction provided against the Government in law when it prostitutes the law itself to its own base ends. When therefore a Government thus becomes lawless in an organized manner, civil disobedience becomes a sacred duty and is the only remedy open specially to those who had no hand in the making of the Government or its laws. Another remedy there certainly is, and that is armed revolt. Civil disobedience is a complete, effective and bloodless substitute. And it is as well that by exemplary restraint and discipline in the way of submission to unjust and even illegal orders we have created the necessary atmosphere for civil disobedience. For thereby on the one hand the tyrannical nature of the Government has been made more manifest, and on the other by willing obedience we have fitted ourselves for civil disobedience.

It is equally as well that civil disobedience is being confined even now to the smallest area possible. It must be admitted that it is an abnormal state, even as a corrupt and unpopular Government should be in civilized society like disease an abnormal state. Therefore, only when a citizen has disciplined himself in the art of voluntary obedience to the state laws is he justified on rare occasions deliberately but non-violently to disobey them, and expose himself to the penalty of the breach. If then we are to achieve the maximum result in the minimum of time, whilst fiercest disobedience is going on in a limited area, perfect submission to the laws must be yielded in all the other parts so as to test the nation's capacity for voluntary obedience and for understanding the virtue of civil disobedience. Any unauthorized outbreak of disobedience, therefore, in any part of India will most certainly damage the cause and will betray an unpardonable ignorance of the principles of civil disobedience.

We must expect the Government to take the strictest measures to suppress this impending defiance of authority, for on it depends its very existence. Its instinct of self-preservation alone will actuate measures of repression adequate for suppression. And if it fails, the Government of necessity disappears. That is, it either bends to the national will or it is dissolved. The greatest danger lies in violence

breaking out anywhere by reason of provocation. But it would be wrong and unmanly to invite the sternest measures and then to be incensed against them, apart from the fact that it will be a breach of our solemn pledge of non-violence. I may be arrested, thousands who take part in the peaceful revolt may also be arrested, imprisoned, even tortured. The rest of India must not lose its head. When the proper time comes, the rest of India may respond by undertaking civil disobedience and inviting arrests, imprisonments and tortures. It is the sacrifice of the innocent we want to make. That alone will appear pleasing to God. And therefore, on the eve of the great battle to nation is embarking upon, my earnest exhortation to every non-co-operator is to fit himself for civil disobedience by fulfilling to the letter and in the spirit the conditions of civil disobedience laid down at Delhi,¹ and to ensure non-violence everywhere. Let us not be satisfied that we remain non-violent individually. We boast that non-co-operation has become universal in India. We boast that we have acquired sufficient influence even over the unruly masses to restrain them from violence. Let us prove true to our claim.

Young India, 17-11-1921

49. INTROSPECTION

Correspondents have written to me in pathetic language asking me not to commit suicide in January, should swaraj be not attained by then and should I find myself outside the prison walls. I find that language but inadequately expresses one's thought especially when the thought itself is confused or incomplete. My writing in the *Navajivan*² was, I fancied, clear enough. But I observe that its translation has been misunderstood by many. The original too has not escaped the tragedy that has overtaken the translation.

One great reason for the misunderstanding lies in my being considered almost a perfect man. Friends who know my partiality for the *Bhagavad Gita* have thrown relevant verses at me and shown how my threat to commit suicide contradicts the teachings which I am attempting to live. All these mentors of mine seem to forget that I am but a seeker after Truth. I claim to have found the way to it. I claim to be making a ceaseless effort to find it. But I admit that I have not yet

¹ *Vide* "The All-India Congress Committee", 10-11-1921.

² *Vide* "Optimism", 23-10-1921.

found it. To find Truth completely is to realize oneself and one's destiny, i.e., to become perfect. I am painfully conscious of my imperfections, and therein lies all the strength I possess, because it is a rare thing for a man to know his own limitations.

If I was a perfect man, I own I should not feel the miseries of my neighbours as I do. As a perfect man I should take note of them, prescribe a remedy and compel adoption by the force of unchallengeable Truth in me. But as yet I only see as through a glass darkly and therefore have to carry conviction by slow and laborious processes, and then too not always with success. That being so, I would be less than human if with all my knowledge of avoidable misery pervading the land and of the sight of mere skeletons under the very shadow of the Lord of the Universe, I did not feel with and for all the suffering but dumb millions of India. The hope of a steady decline in that misery sustains me; but suppose that with all my sensitiveness to sufferings, to pleasure and pain, cold and heat and with all my endeavour to carry the healing message of the spinning-wheel to the heart, I have reached only the ear and never pierced the heart, suppose further that at the end of the year I find that the people are as sceptical as they are today about the present possibility of attainment of swaraj by means of the peaceful revolution of the wheel; suppose further, that I find that all the excitement during the past twelve months and more has been only an excitement and a stimulation but no settled belief in the programme, and lastly suppose that the message of peace has not penetrated the hearts of Englishmen, should I not doubt my *tapasya* and feel my unworthiness for leading the struggle? As a true man, what should I do? Should I not kneel down in all humility before my Maker and ask Him to take away this useless body and make me a fitter instrument of service?

Swaraj does consist in the change of government and its real control by the people, but that would be merely the form. The substance that I am hankering after is a definite acceptance of the means and therefore a real change of heart on the part of the people. I am certain that it does not require ages for Hindus to discard the error of untouchability, for Hindus and Mussulmans to shed enmity and accept heart-friendship as an eternal factor of national life, for all to adopt the charkha as the only universal means of attaining India's economic salvation and finally for all to believe that India's freedom lies only through non-violence and no other method. Definite,

intelligent and free adoption by the nation of this programme I hold as the attainment of the substance. The symbol, the transfer of power, is sure to follow, even as the seed truly laid must develop into a tree.

The reader will thus perceive that what I accidentally stated to friends for the first time in Poona and then repeated to others was but a confession of my imperfections and an expression of my feeling of unworthiness for the great cause which for the time being I seem to be leading. I have enunciated no doctrine of despair. On the contrary I have felt never so sanguine as I do at the time of writing that we will gain the substance during this year I have stated at the same time as a practical idealist, that I should no more feel worthy to lead a cause which I might feel myself diffident of handling. The doctrine of labouring without attachment means as much a relentless pursuit of truth as a retracing after discovery of error and a renunciation of leadership without a pang after discovery of unworthiness. I have but shadowed forth my intense longing to lose myself in the Eternal and become merely a lump of clay in the Potter's divine hands so that my service may become more certain because uninterrupted by the baser self in me.

Young India, 17-11-1921

50. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BOMBAY¹

November 17, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi in the course of his speech said he had come to Bombay almost against his wish as he had got some urgent work in hand, which had been entrusted to him by the All-India Congress Committee and he was unable to spare a single moment for any other purpose. But at the urgent request of Mr. H. S. Khatri and Mrs. S. G. Banker, who had sent him repeated telegrams, he had come down to Bombay to be present at the meeting. He congratulated the people on the perfect calm they had so far preserved in spite of the provocation which they had been offered by arresting some of their volunteers and their captain for sticking posters on the walls asking the people to boycott the festivities in connection with the Prince's visit. He did not see anything objectionable in the posters; on the other hand, they were doing honour to the Prince, because they were telling him the truth. There could be no offence at all in telling the Prince the truth. In fact it was their duty to tell him the truth that the welcome which was being extended to him was given by the officials

¹ At 10.30 a.m., behind Elphinstone Mills

and that the people—the large majority of people—had no share in it. The Mahatma advised the people to keep the peace and be non-violent even if all the posters were taken away from them, for Indians had to get redress for their Khilafat and Punjab wrongs. Non-violence was their creed and they had to keep to that principle whatever it might cost them. Therefore, he congratulated the people of Bombay on their non-violence. When civil disobedience was once begun either in Bardoli, Anand or Nadiad talukas he wanted the people of Bombay to keep perfectly quiet, whatever might happen there. Formerly people were afraid of going to jail, but now everyone was anxious to get into it; men and even women had come to him and asked him anxiously whether they could not go to jail. To soldiers it was the same whether they died in their duty, whether they went to jail, or whether they remained quiet doing their duty. In every case they had to obey the orders which were given to them. They were the army of swaraj and every one of them had to obey the orders given to him. In Bardoli when civil disobedience was begun there might be firing but every one of them in Bombay should sit quiet—there should be no hartal, or trouble of any kind. Then only could they have swaraj. He felt sure that without the necessary sacrifices on their part they would never get swaraj. He also felt that without complete Hindu-Muslim unity there could be no swaraj. He felt that there was no complete unity between the two communities now. The Hindus were afraid of the Muslims and the Muslims were afraid of the Hindus. All these feelings of doubt and suspicion should disappear for ever. Those suspicions of each other were there because we had become cowards and had given up our religion. Those who were ready to die in the name of their religion were real patriots and religious men. Therefore, he was telling his Hindu brothers that so long as they were true Hindus there was nothing to fear from any other religion, even if a six-foot Pathan came to them brandishing a knife they had nothing to fear. The same advice he had also given to his Muslim friends. Even now there were lurking in the minds of each community some doubts about the other. The next thing was swadeshi. Some of the women and men who had come to the meeting had still some foreign clothes on their bodies. In this instance, he said, Maulana Azad Sobhani had made it a business of his to beg for any foreign clothing which he might see his friends wearing and then destroy it. People should not mind wearing even thick khaddar. Mrs. Naidu had complained to him that it was a difficult thing to wear thick khaddar. But since she was the first or the second person to sign the satyagraha vow she was bound to wear thick khaddar. If they were unable to wear thick khaddar it was because they had grown weak and were not strong enough to do so. In the Punjab a sister had asked him what she should do about her clothes and his advice to her was that she should content herself with a petticoat and a skirt. They should have as little clothing as possible.

The people were in duty bound to do their work in a non-violent manner; so long as they believed in non-violence, swadeshi and Hindu-Muslim unity. They had

no business to resort to violence. Then they would not have any occasion to die. There was not much difference between life and death; in fact, they were one and the same. Until they were ready to die they would not get swaraj and redress the Khilafat and Punjab wrongs. Then only would they be able to set at liberty the Ali Brothers and Gangadharrao Deshpande. He had written¹ to Gangadharrao Deshpande—he did not know what impelled him to do so—that he should take as much rest as he could before the 31st December, for after that he would come out of the jail and would have to work for the country. For setting their friends free Indians must either have swaraj, or they must go to jail; or die in the service of their country. He had come to the meeting to tell them of this. The people of Bombay were fond of fine clothes and luxuries, but as soon as they were ready to work and die for swaraj, swaraj was theirs. He had still great hopes in the people of Bombay. The time was short and they must be up and doing their duty. He was not sure what would happen before the 31st of December. He constantly prayed to God that either he should be put into jail, or shot dead, or that India be made free. His idea of swaraj in this country was not anarchy. He wanted the people to become godfearing and virtuous, truthful and religious and brave men. He did not know what would happen to him and possibly these might be his last words. Therefore, he would appeal to their to do than duty by their country fearlessly. They were not ready to kill, but they were ready to die. They must convince the Government by their attitude that to kill them or repress them was a sin and a thing which could not be done. Unless they trusted others they would not be trusted by others. He asked them to trust other men, and by so doing they would become friends with their rulers. But whether they were friends or not, Indians should not harbour in their hearts any feelings of hatred for their rulers. They should fight for swaraj without any hatred towards the other party. If he could make Indians understand this then swaraj would be theirs. He wanted them to be convinced that to die was a greater and braver thing than to kill. He also asked them that as long as the Prince was amongst them they should not harm even a hair of his head, and they should not harm the Government officers. If Government wanted to kill them, then let them kill Indians, for they were ready to die. He thanked God that he had given him an opportunity of speaking to them that morning.

The Bombay Chronicle, 18-11-1921

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Gangadharrao Deshpande", Before 8-10-1921.

51. LETTER TO DAYALJI AND KALYANJI

Thursday [November 17, 1921]

BHAISHRI DAYALJI AND KALYANJI,

It grieves me to tell you that a violent riot has broken out in Bombay. Wine shops have been burnt down. One of them is still burning as I write this. Innocent people have been harassed and their clothes forcibly removed. A tram has been smashed and lamps have been broken. Personally, I feel that the people have crossed all bounds. Six policemen have lost their lives. A few of our people have also died. We have had a foretaste of swaraj. I have been put to shame. It is difficult to say what will happen tonight. In this condition, how can I go there? I am, therefore, sending someone else, who will tell you everything and explain the position. It is now likely that there will be some change in our programme too. If the riot turns more violent, our plans will remain plans and events will wait on God's will. On your side, I take it, there is complete peace.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2669

52. A DEEP STAIN

[November 13, 1921]¹

Under the above heading Mr. Gandhi published the following note after having witnessed the unfortunate disturbances in Bombay:

The reputation of Bombay, the hope of my dreams, was being stained yesterday² even whilst in my simplicity I was congratulating the citizens³ upon their non-violence in the face of grave provocation. For the volunteers with their captain were arrested during the previous night for pasting posters under authority on private property. The posters advised the people to boycott the welcome to the Prince. They

¹ Issued as a leaflet on this date; *vide Navajivan*, 24-11-1921.

² November 17, when the Prince of Wales arrived in Bombay and demonstrations against his visit including bonfires of foreign cloth resulted in riot on a large scale

³ *Vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Bombay", 17-11-1921.

were destroyed. The Swaraj Sabha's office was mysteriously entered and the unused posters, so far as I am aware not declared unlawful, were also removed. The Prince's visit itself and the circumstances attending the ceremonials arranged and public money wasted for the manufacture of a welcome to His Royal Highness constituted an unbearable provocation. And yet Bombay had remained self-restrained. This, I thought, was a matter for congratulation. The burning of the pile of foreign cloth was an eloquent counter demonstration to the interested official demonstration.

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

I heard of the outbreak at about 1 o'clock. I motored with some friends to the area of disturbance and heard the most painful and the most humiliating story of molestation of Parsi sisters. Some few were assaulted, and even had their saris torn from them. No one from among a crowd of over fifteen hundred who had surrounded my car denied the charge as a Parsi with hot rage and quivering lips was with the greatest deliberation relating the story. An elderly Parsi gentleman said, "Please save us from this mob rule." This news of the rough handling of Parsi sisters pierced me like a dart. I felt that my sisters or daughters had been hurt by a violent mob! Yes, some Parsis had joined the welcome. They had a right to hold their own view free of molestation. There can be no coercion in swaraj. The Moplah fanatic who forcibly converts a Hindu believes that he is acquiring religious merit. A non-co-operator or his associate who uses coercion has no apology whatsoever for his criminality.

As I reached the Two Tanks I found a liquor shop smashed, two policemen badly wounded and lying unconscious on cots without anybody caring for them. I alighted. Immediately the crowd surrounded me and yelled *Mahatma Gandhi ki jai*. That sound

usually grates on my ears, but it has grated never so much as it did yesterday when the crowd unmindful of the two sick brethren choked me with the shout at the top of their voices. I rebuked them and they were silent. Water was brought for the two wounded men. I requested two of my companions and some from the crowd to take the dying policemen to the hospital. I proceeded then to the scene a little further up where I saw a fire rising. They were two tram-cars which were burnt by the crowd. On returning I witnessed a burning motor car. I appealed to the crowd to disperse, told them that they had damaged the cause of the Khilafat, the Punjab and swaraj. I returned sick at heart and in a chastened mood.

At about five a few brave Sindhi young men came to report that in Bhindi Bazar the crowd was molesting every passer-by who had a foreign cap on and even seriously beating him, if he refused to give up his cap. A brave old Parsi who defied the crowd and would not give up his *puggree* was badly handled. Maulana Azad Sobhani and I went to Bhindi Bazar and reasoned with the crowd, told them that they were denying their religion by hurting innocent men. The crowd made a show of dispersing. The police were there but they were exceedingly restrained. We went further and on retracing our steps found to our horror a liquor shop on fire. Even the fire brigade was obstructed in its work. Thanks to the efforts of Pandit Nekiram Sharma and others, the inmates of the shop were able to come out.

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

I heard that there was firing resulting in deaths and that in the Anglo-Indian quarters everyone who passed with khadi on came in for hard beating, if he did not put off his khadi cap or shirt. I heard that many were seriously injured. I am writing this in the midst of six Hindu and Mussulman workers who have just come in with broken heads and bleeding and one with a broken nasal bone and other lacerated wounds and in danger of losing his life. They went to Parel led by Maulanas Azad Sobhani and Mouzam Ali to pacify the mill-hands who, it was reported, were holding up tram-cars there. The

workers, however, were unable to proceed to their destination. They returned with their bleeding wounds to speak for themselves.

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

Non-co-operators cannot escape liability. It is true that non-co-operators were ceaselessly demonstrating everywhere with the people at considerable risk to themselves, to arrest or stop the mischief and that they are responsible for saving many precious lives. But that is not enough for launching out on civil disobedience or to discharge us from liability for the violence that has taken place. We claim to have established a peaceful atmosphere, i.e., to have attained by our non-violence sufficient control over the people to keep their violence under check. We have failed when we ought to have succeeded. For yesterday was a day of our trial. We were under our pledge bound to protect the person of the Prince from any harm or insult. And we broke that pledge in as much as any one of us insulted or injured a single European or any other who took part in the welcome to the Prince. They were as much entitled to take part in the welcome as we were to refrain. Nor can I shirk my own personal responsibility. I am more instrumental than any other in bringing into being the spirit of revolt. I find myself not fully capable of controlling and disciplining that spirit. I must do penance for it. For me the struggle is essentially religious. I believe in fasting and prayer, and I propose henceforth to observe every Monday a twenty-four hour's fast till swaraj is a[ttained]¹

The Working Committee will have to devote its attention to the situation and consider in the light thereof whether mass civil disobedience can be at all encouraged until we have obtained complete control over the masses. I have personally come deliberately to the conclusion that mass civil disobedience cannot be started for the present. I confess my inability to conduct a campaign of civil

¹ The source is blank here.

disobedience to a successful issue unless a completely non-violent spirit is generated among the people. I am sorry for the conclusion. It is a humiliating confession of my incapacity, but I know that I shall appear more pleasing to my Maker by being what I am instead of appearing to be what I am not. If I can have nothing to do with the organized violence of the Government, I can have less to do with the unorganized violence of the people. I would prefer to be crushed between the two.

Young India, 24-11-1921

53. APPEAL TO BOMBAY CITIZENS

*November 19, 1921*¹

MEN AND WOMEN OF BOMBAY,

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

I must refuse to eat or drink anything but water till the Hindus and Mussulmans of Bombay have made peace with the Parsis, the Christians and the Jews, and till the non-co-operators have made peace with the co-operators.

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

¹ This was issued as a leaflet under the caption "Mr. Gandhi's Appeal to Bombay Citizens"; *vide Navajivan*, 24-11-1921.

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

You can see quite clearly that I must do the utmost reparation to this handful of men and women who have been the victims of forces that have come into being largely through my instrumentality. I invite every Hindu and Mussulman to do likewise. But I do not want anyone to fast. Fasting is only good when it comes in answer to prayer and as a felt yearning of the soul. I invite every Hindu and Mussulman to retire to his home, ask God for forgiveness and to befriend the injured communities from the bottom of his heart.

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

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

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

I am,
Your servant,
M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 24-11-1921

54. LETTER TO GIRDHARILAL DAYAL

SABARMATI,
*Kartak Vad 4 [November 19, 1921]*¹

SHA. GIRDHARILAL,

Received your letter. I am sorry that your brother-in-law has been injured. What other remedy than patience can I offer?

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SHA. GIRDHARILAL DAYAL
2ND FLOOR
THAKKAR KANJI KESHAVJINO MALO
SATRISHI GALI
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 7680

55. AN APPEAL TO THE MAVALIS

*[November 20, 1921]*²

TO THE MAVALIS OF BOMBAY,

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

¹ Bears the Dead Letter Office postmark of December 10, 1921. *Kartak Vad 4* was 19-11-1921.

² Issued as a leaflet on this date; *vide Navajivan*, 24-11-1921.

able because I had succeeded in approaching them through co-workers where I had no personal contact with them. In your case I see now that we have failed to reach you. I do not believe you to be incapable of responding to the noble call of religion and country.

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

I write this not to blame but to warn you and to confess that we have grievously neglected you. I am doing the penance in one way. The other workers are doing it in another way. Messrs Azad Sobhani, Jayakar¹, Jamnadas Mehta, Sathe, Mozam Ali and many others have been risking their lives in bringing under control this unfortunate ebullition. Shrimati Sarojini Naidu has fearlessly gone in your midst to reason with you and appeal to you. Our work in your midst has only just begun. Will you not give us a chance by stopping the mad process of retaliation? The Hindus and the Mussulmans should be ashamed to take reprisals against the Parsis or the Christians. The latter must know it to be suicidal to battle against Hindu and Mussulman ferocity by brute strength. The result is they must seek the assistance of an alien Government, i.e., sell their freedom. Surely the best course for them is to realize their nationality and believe that the reasoning Hindus and Mussulmans must and will protect the interests of minorities before their own. Any way the problem before Bombay isto ensure the absolute protection of the minorities and the acquisition of control over the rowdy element. And I shall trust that you, the Mavalis of Bombay, will now restrain your hand and give a

¹ M. R. Jayakar (1873-1959); lawyer and Liberal leader; Judge, Federal Court of India, 1937

chance to the workers who are desirous of serving you. May God help you.

I am,

Your friend,

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 24-11-1921

56. EATING STEEL PELLETS

To take the lead in starting civil disobedience is a more difficult task for Gujarat than eating steel pellets. Even if, however, one single taluka passes the test, then I have no doubt that swaraj will be in our hands in no time. Such success will mean that an army of satyagrahis has been organized in that taluka. I have already stated that everyone is eligible for enlistment in this army, men and women, the young and the old, the cripple and the disabled, the weak and the strong, Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Christians, Jews, Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas, *Dheds* and *Bhangis*. Even a child of the stamp of Prahlad is welcome, if there is any such coming forward. Parents, too, can send their children to enlist themselves. Notwithstanding that the army will be such a mixed crew, it can give a better account of itself than the opponent's army. How can this army, besides, require any expense? The only qualification needed for a soldier of this army is fearlessness. He ought to have the strength to lay down his life and that means he ought to have faith in God.

The other qualifications which I have asked for¹ are not needed at all times. They are essential only under the present circumstances.

But though this appears easy on paper, the task will be difficult in practice so long as it is not properly understood. The taluka which offers to start civil disobedience must have undergone a complete change. The soldiers in its army will not be wasting a moment in idleness. When, therefore, the fight actually begins, every satyagrahi man and every woman will either be offering civil disobedience for courting imprisonment or will be spinning or weaving, carding or ginning cotton. No one, without exception, can sit idle even for a moment, whether he be rich or poor. Among the soldiers of an army,

¹ *Vide* "Test", 13-11-1921.

no distinction of rich and poor can be made. When King George V was a naval cadet, like any other member of the crew he slept on the floor and ate hard bran bread and stewed tea or coffee without milk. And that is as it should be.

The taluka, therefore, which has organized itself or is organizing for civil disobedience should prepare a separate register for every village in its area and fill in the following details:

1. Name of the village
2. Distance from the head-quarters
3. Total population—giving separately the numbers of adult men and women, of boys and girls under 16, of Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Christians, *Dheds* and *Bhangis*
4. The number of spinning-wheels
5. The number of hand-looms
6. The number of hand-carding tools
7. Stock of cotton
8. Whether it has a school and, if it has, the number of pupils attending it
9. Number of policemen
10. Other marks of British authority
11. Number of persons ready for imprisonment
12. Number of liquor shops
13. Number of persons, if any, who favour co-operation with Government.

If we have organized ourselves into an army, there must be a representative leader and a people's *panch* in every village. There should be batches of 20 persons each, one of whom should be the leader. There should be further batches of 20 such leaders each with one of the 20 appointed as leader. As far as possible, the batches should not be formed on the basis of Hindus and Muslims or distinctions of any other kind. The best way is for neighbours to form a batch. Where public opinion has been educated, this task should present no difficulty at all. Such organization is in truth an indication of public opinion having been educated.

If every village has good workers, this work can be easily completed in two days. Our villages do not have a large population and the work can be practically finished in one meeting held in the

morning. I shall expect full information on all these details in the taluka to which I may be invited to go.

Why do I name this small task as "eating steel pellets"? Because we have lost the fighter's spirit and forsaken service of others we have become oblivious of loyalty to community or creed or kinship. It is not for ourselves that we shall be laying down our lives; we shall be doing so for the people. Before, however, we do that, the people should be awakened or we should die in the attempt to rouse them.

The fact is that we have either actually forgotten the habits of industry or, in the work in which we spend our time, we take no account of people's happiness or welfare. We are so short-sighted as never to look beyond the interests of our family. All our religions, however, teach us that the individual must be ready to die for the family, the family for the village, the village for the taluka, the taluka for the district, the district for the province, the province for Bharatvarsha and, finally, the latter for the world. This is the ideal of patriotism for which I live; and death in the attempt to demonstrate it will be as dear to me as life itself. To live without this ideal is as good as death to me. If there is any real happiness in this transient world, it lies in suffering at the suffering of others, in dying while protecting others. He who lives in this way ever lives in bliss. It is no difficult task to do all this. All that is necessary is change of heart and some thinking. This need not take a long time, for sacrificing the body for the sake of one's neighbour comes spontaneous to the *atman*.

If the taluka which comes forward has realized this truth, what seems to be as hard as eating steel pellets will look as easy as eating gram specially boiled soft for an old man like me.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-11-1921

57. WHAT IS TRUTH?

There is a story in the gospel, in which a judge inquired, "What is truth?", but got no answer. The holy books of Hindus tell of Harishchandra who sacrificed his all at the altar of Truth and let himself, his wife, and his son be sold to a *Chandala*. (What, by the way, must be the position about untouchability in those early days?) Imam Hussein and Hussein lost their lives for the sake of truth.

The fact remains, however, that the question posed by that judge has not been answered. Harishchandra renounced his all for the sake of the truth as he knew it and so won immortal fame. Imam Hussein gave up his dear life for truth as he understood it. But Harishchandra's truth and Imam Hussein's truth may or may not be our truth.

Beyond these limited truths, however, there is one absolute Truth which is total and all embracing. But it is indescribable, because it is God. Or say, rather, God is Truth. All else is unreal and false. Other things, therefore, can be true only in a relative sense.

He, therefore, who understands truth, follows nothing but truth in thought, speech and action, comes to know God and gains the seer's vision of the past, the present and the future. He attains *moksha* though still encased in the physical frame.

If we get one single person, before the 31st of December, who would practise truth to such perfection, swaraj should be ours this very day.

Some of us are no more than *satya-agrahis*, those, in other words, who aspire to follow truth scrupulously, but they hardly succeed in doing so even in the limited sphere of speech. We thus see that observance of the vow of truth is no easy matter.

A friend remarked: "You have taken the vow of truth; and yet you misread the telegram from Mr. Das¹ so as to interpret it in your favour and announced Bengal's contribution to be 25 lakhs instead of what it was, 15 lakhs. Were you not, in this case, guilty of a subtle form of untruth?" I did not deliberately interpret the telegram in my favour. I am not in the habit of reading meanings which suit me. But I was certainly hasty in interpreting the telegram. It was received late at night after 12. I state this fact not by way of extenuation but to show that truth must shine as brightly as ever even when one has mounted the gallows. He who yearns to follow the truth at all times and under all conditions must not be guilty of such haste. One who always follows truth is never guilty of untruth in word or deed even unknowingly. In fact such a person becomes incapable of acting in this manner. According to this definition, I certainly lapsed from truth.

My only consolation is that I never claim anything beyond a sincere endeavour to keep the vow of truth. It never happens that I tell

¹ C.R. Das

a lie deliberately. I do not remember having deliberately told a lie any time in my life, except on one occasion when I cheated my revered father. It has become part of my nature to speak the truth and act in accordance with truth. But it is impossible for me to claim that truth, which I perceive but dimly, has become part of my life. I am not beyond indulgence in unconscious exaggeration or self-praise or taking interest in describing my achievements. There is a shade of untruth in all these and they will not stand the test of truth. A life wholly filled with the spirit of truth should be clear and pure as crystal. Untruth cannot survive even for a moment in the presence of such a person. No one can deceive a man who always follows truth, for it ought to be impossible that untruth will not be exposed in his presence. The most difficult vow to keep is the vow of truth. Out of lakhs who may strive to follow truth, only a rare person will succeed completely in the course of his present life.

When somebody utters a lie before me, I get more angry with myself than with him because I then realize that untruth still exists somewhere deep in me.

The word *satya* comes from *sat*, which means "to be", "to exist". Only God is ever the same through all time. A thousand times honour to him who has succeeded, through love and devotion for this *satya*, in opening out his heart permanently to its presence. I have been but striving to serve that truth. I have, I believe, the courage to jump from the top of the Himalayas for its sake. At the same time, I know that I am still very far from that truth. As I advance towards it, I perceive my weakness ever more clearly and the knowledge makes me humble. It is possible to be puffed up with pride so long as one does not know one's own insignificance. But once a man sees it, his pride melts away. Mine melted away long ago. I can very well understand why Tulsidas called himself a villain. This path is for the brave alone; the timid had better not tread it. He who strives for all the twenty-four hours of the day ever meditating on truth, whether eating, drinking, sitting, sleeping, spinning or easing himself, doing anything whatever, will certainly have his whole being filled with truth. And when the sun of truth blazes in all its glory in a person's heart, he will not remain hidden. He will not, then, need to use speech and to explain. Or, rather, every word uttered by him will be charged with such power, such life, that it will produce an immediate effect on the people. I do not have this truth in me. But, as I happen to be treading this path, I am in the

unhappy condition of the castor-oil plant which, as they say, is king on a tree-less heath.

Truth cannot exist without love. Truth includes non-violence, *brahmacharya*, non-stealing and other rules. It is only for convenience that the five *yamas* have been mentioned separately. The man who commits violence after knowing truth falls from truth. That a man who has known truth can be lecherous is as inconceivable as that darkness may exist despite the sun shining. If, we have, before 31st of December, even one person who will follow truth to this perfect degree, *swaraj* is a certainty, for everyone will have to obey his word as law. The sun's light does not need to be pointed out. Truth shines with its own light and is its own proof. In these evil times, it is difficult to follow truth in such perfection but I know it is not impossible. If a large number from among us strive to follow it even in some measure, we can win *swaraj*. We can also win it if a few of us pursue it with utmost consciousness. Only, we must be sincere. It will not do merely to make a show of following truth. It does not matter if we follow truth only to the extent of one anna in a rupees, but it must be truth and not something else. The little measure of it which we follow must not in any circumstances, be mixed with deliberate falsehood. It is my earnest desire that, in this holy *yajna*, all of us will learn to follow truth as a matter of principle.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-11-1921

58. NOTE TO REV. J. KILLOCK¹

Silence Day, November 21, 1921

I thank the English friends for going.² I do not rise because rising is a strain. I am anxious for us all to be friends although we may differ as poles as under.

From a photostat C.W. 4502

¹ Professor, Wilson College, Bombay

² To disturbed areas as members of an inter-communal team to restore and peace

59. NOTE TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Monday (morning), November 21, 1921

Have it copied and translated into Gujarati and show it to me. I do not have the energy to translate it. I have a good deal of other writing to do.

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

60. STATEMENT BEFORE BREAKING FAST

[November 21, 1921]

Mr. Gandhi broke his fast in the midst of a gathering of co-operators, non-co-operators, Hindus, Mussulmans, Christians and Parsis. There were speeches of goodwill by a representative of each community. The members of the Working Committee were also present. Mr. Gandhi made a statement in Gujarati before breaking his fast. The following is its translation:

FRIENDS,

It delights my heart to see Hindus, Mussulmans, Parsis and Christians met together in this little assembly. I hope that our frugal fruit-repast of this morning will be a sign of our permanent friendship. Though a born optimist, I am not in the habit of building castles in the air. This meeting therefore cannot deceive me. We shall be able to realize the hope of permanent friendship between all communities, only if we who have assembled together will incessantly strive to build it up. I am breaking my fast upon the strength of your assurances.¹ I have not been unmindful of the affection with which innumerable friends have surrounded me during these four days. I shall ever remain grateful to them. Being drawn by them I am plunging into this stormy ocean out of the haven of peace in which I have been during these few days. I assure you that in spite of the tales of misery that have been poured into my ears, I have enjoyed peace because of a hungry stomach. I know that I cannot enjoy it after breaking the fast. I am too human not to be touched by the sorrows of others, and when I find no remedy for alleviating them, my human nature so agitates me that I pine to embrace death like a long-lost dear

¹ *Vide* "Citizens Appeal", 24-11-1921.

friend. Therefore I warn all the friends here that if real peace is not established in Bombay and if disturbances break out again and if as a result they find me driven to a still severer ordeal, they must not be surprised or troubled. If they have any doubt about peace having been established, if each community has still bitterness of feeling and suspicion and if we are all not prepared to forget and forgive past wrongs, I would much rather that they did not press me to break the fast. Such a restraint I would regard as a test of true friendship.

I venture to saddle special responsibility upon Hindus and Mussulmans. The majority of them are non-co-operators. Non violence is the creed they have accepted for the time being. They have the strength of numbers. They can stand in spite of the opposition of the smaller communities without Government aid. If therefore they will remain friendly and charitable towards the smaller communities, all will be well. I will beseech the Parsis, the Christians and the Jews to bear in mind the new awakening in India. They will see many-coloured waters in the ocean of Hindu and Mussulman humanity. They will see dirty waters on the shore. I would ask them to bear with their Hindu or Mussulman neighbours who may misbehave with them and immediately report to the Hindu and Mussulman leaders through their own leaders with a view to getting justice. Indeed I am hoping that as a result of the unfortunate discord a *Mahajan* will come into being for the disposal of all inter-racial disputes.

The value of this assembly in my opinion consists in the fact that worshippers of the same one God we are enabled to partake of this harmless repast together in spite of our differences of opinion. We have not assembled with the object today of reducing such differences, certainly not of surrendering a single principle we may hold dear, but we have met in order to demonstrate that we can remain true to our principles and yet also remain free from ill will towards one another.

May God bless our effort.

Young India, 24-11-1921

61. TO CO-WORKERS

November 22, 1921

COMRADES,

Past few days have been a fiery ordeal for us, and God is to be

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

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

Some people imagine, that after all we could not have better advertised our indignation against the welcome to the Prince than by letting loose the mob frenzy on the fateful seventeenth. This

reasoning betrays at once ignorance and weakness, ignorance of the fact that our goal was not injury to the welcome, and weakness because we still hanker after advertising our strength to others instead of being satisfied with the consciousness of its possession. I wish I could convince everyone, that we materially retarded our progress to our triple goal.

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

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

And what is true of the smaller communities is also true of the co-operators. We must not be impatient with or intolerant to them. We are bound to recognize their freedom to co-operate with the Government if we claim the freedom to non-co-operate. What would we have felt if we were in a minority and the co-operators being in a

majority had used violence against us? Non-co-operation *cum* non-violence is the most expeditious method known to the world of winning over opponents. And our struggle consists in winning opponents including Englishmen over to our side. We can only do so by being free from ill will against the weakest or the strongest of them. And this we can only do by being prepared to die for the faith within us and not by killing those who do not see the truth we enunciate.

I am,

Your faithful comrade,

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 24-11-1921

62. NOTES

O ! FOR SHAUKAT ALI

During these days of great trial for me, I have felt the gravest need of Maulana Shaukat Ali by my side. I can wield no influence over the Mussulmans except through a Mussulman. There are many stalwart and good Mussulmans I know. But no Mussulman knows me through and through as Shaukat Ali does. Now I feel that I have to represent him and to speak to the Mussulmans things I used always to reserve for him. I observe that one of my appeals has already been misinterpreted. If Maulana Shaukat Ali was by me, I would not perhaps have needed to write the paragraph relating specially to Mussulmans. Probably if he was in Bombay on the 17th, the disturbance would not have occurred at all. Many things could have been prevented. Indeed on the 17th if Mian Chhotani had been in Bombay, if Mr. Ahmed Haji Khatri had not been laid up in bed, things would have taken a different turn. But I do not wish to cry over spilt milk. I have introduced Maulana Shaukat Ali in the matter to tell my Mussulman friends that I shall shoulder the additional burden and that I expect them not to misunderstand me. I consider their interest a special trust which I shall not be consciously guilty of betraying. I expect too friends unhesitatingly to tell me wherein I err, and I assure them that I shall make the fullest confession if I am satisfied of my error. Only I warn them betimes, that as I do nothing hastily and without good grounds, they must not be surprised if I do

not easily admit errors. That it is necessary for me to pen this paragraph shows that each has to write about or to the other with the greatest delicacy. It is a torturing performance like walking on thin ice. But we must take facts and things as they are and turn them to the best account.

GOOD AND BAD

The reader will appreciate the statement that during these four days I have been receiving accounts both good and bad. Non-co-operators injured! Hindus and Mussulmans assaulting Parsis! Parsis shooting them! Christians assaulting those wearing khadi caps or dress! Hindus and Mussulmans assaulting Christians! These bits of information are interspersed with the news that Parsis are saving Hindus and Mussulmans from the other Parsis, some Christians saving Hindus and Mussulmans, the latter sheltering both, non-co-operators at great peril to their lives seeking to bring about peace. It has never been my misfortune to be torn between two powerful and conflicting emotions. And then to guide friends in such a difficult situation, to send them to enter the jaws of Death and yet for me to avoid death ! It is the fast that has been my outward staff and it is heart prayer that has been my inward strength. On the 17th I felt as if all my strength had vanished. Why was I unable permanently to influence the crowd? Where was the power of ahimsa in me? What was I to do? I could not, I would not, ask the aggrieved parties to seek Government aid. We had no panchayats to deal out justice. There was no one I could approach who could bring about peace. I could not and would not organize a trained physical force party. What relief could I give to the sufferers from mob violence? If I allowed myself to be torn to pieces by justly incensed Parsis or Christians, I would only give rise to greater bloodshed. Whilst as a soldier I must avoid no unavoidable risk, I must not recklessly run the risk of being killed. Then what was I to do? At last came the fast to my rescue to soothe my soul. If I may not give my self to be killed through human agency, I must give myself to God to be taken away by refusing to eat till He heard my prayer. For me, a bankrupt, that was the only thing left. I could not draw upon the people from their innocence. They dishonoured the cheque I presented personally on the 17th.¹ I must now somehow or other recoup lost credit or die in the attempt. I must draw upon God for

¹ *Vide* "Speech at Public Meeting. Bombay", 17-11-1921.

further credit to enable me to transact His business. I could only do so by humbling myself, crawling in the dust before Him, denying myself the food He has given. I must in thousand ways show Him that I am in earnest, and if I am not found worthy to conduct His business, ask Him to recall me and refashion me according to my worth and His will. And so I have tacked up the fast. The news of the hurt received by co-workers or the hurt received by the combatants no longer perturbs me. For me there is only my own non-violence as my help. If it does not answer, I must not worry. Thousands die in other parts of India and their deaths trouble me but do not worry me. Even so in this case if I could but do all I know, I need not *then* fret and fume. This fast then has been to me a penance, purification and reparation. It is also a warning to workers that they may not play with me in the movement. Only those who believe in non-violence need remain in the struggle. It could be conducted without difficulty and complications by a few staunch and true workers. It can only be harmed by insincere workers though many. Lastly it is a remedy for hastening peace. But the last is the derivative ends. It comes as a result of penance, purification and reparation. It is the credit sent by God.

WORKERS BEWARE

I am receiving remonstrances against the fast. Some have taken up sympathetic fast. I assure all these that they are wrong. For me fast was a necessity. I was the guilty party, I was the bankrupt. The business of the others is to understand the situation, to rid themselves of violence if any, to spread non-violence among others and believe that the slightest violence must injure the cause. They must take up the charkha, they must promote not merely Hindu-Muslim unity but they must now promote unity among all communities. Hindu-Muslim unity is not worth a day's purchase if it does not prefer the interests of smaller communities to its own. Christians and Jews in India are not foreigners, nor are Parsis. We must go out of our way to be friendly to them and to serve and help them, above all to protect them from harm from ourselves. The workers must similarly make friends with co-operators. They must not speak ill of them whether they are English or Indian. We must believe in the truth of our cause and in our capacity for self-suffering. We have at any rate for the time being announced to the world in the name of God, that we do not propose to harm any Englishman no matter what he does to us. We shall be guilty before God and man if under the cover of our pledge we injure a

single English or Indian co-operator.

THE MEANING OF PEACE

Friends have misunderstood the meaning of the peace that I have referred to in my second appeal. The peace I want has to be made by non-co-operators. It does not mean surrender of principle or policy so as to find a common platform for work. That in my opinion is an impossible task, for the methods of the various groups are so radically different. When one party finds it for the good of the country to enter the councils and another to abstain, there is no meeting ground. But because we differ from one another, we need not behave indecently towards one another, nor need we break one another's heads. The creed of non-violence, while it persists, requires us not to retaliate. I am convinced, that if we can produce an atmosphere of toleration, we can extend our scope limitlessly. Today we are caged by our own doubts and suspicions. We are not sure that the thousands who flock to our meetings will observe non-violence. If we were not so popular, we should make much greater progress than we have made hitherto. And for this goodwill on our part towards our opponents is an absolute necessity. Let us not talk of the errors and omissions of the Government or its supporters. Let us dispassionately devote our energy, our speeches, writings and action to the working out of our own programme. Let us attain control over the rowdiest element, and we can establish swaraj immediately.

MORE ABOUT MEDICAL STUDENTS

I am able this week to publish the correspondence referring to the Vizagapatam medical students. It is long but both interesting and instructive. It shows the mentality of the medical authorities and also of the Government. The final orders dismissing the students were passed under advice or with the cognizance of the Government of Madras. The reader will note that the dress regulations were not strictly carried out at all and that after the caps were coloured black there was no excuse whatsoever for banning them. But the fact that the students had the audacity to wear khadi was enough to rouse the ire of the college authorities.¹ The reader will also note the humiliating character of the dress regulations. The tuft of hair or a bald head, a mark both of religion and respectability must be hidden because it offended the Western taste of the Western professors. They could not

¹ *Vide* "Notes", 17-11-1921, under the sub-title "Brave Students".

enter the college with Indian shoes on. They must wear English shoes or remain bare foot. Thus the students are taught at an impressionable period of their lives to discard national dress. As a matter of fact Indian shoes for the Indian climate are infinitely superior to the English shoes as being airy and therefore more hygienic. The introduction of socks is inelegant and totally useless for the hot climate of India. Socks wearers know the stench that their socks emit in this climate. But for our slavery, we would sweep away without a moment's thought all these injurious and unbecoming innovations,

Young India, 24-11-1921

63. THE MORAL ISSUE

As soon as we lose the moral basis, we cease to be religious. There is no such thing as religion overriding morality. Man for instance cannot be untruthful, cruel or incontinent and claim to have God on his side. In Bombay the sympathizers of non-co-operation lost the moral balance. They were enraged against the Parsis and the Christians who took part in the welcome to the prince and sought to "teach them a lesson". They invited reprisals and got them. It became after the 17th a game of seesaw in which no one really gained and everybody lost.

Swaraj does not lie that way. India does not want Bolshevism. The people are too peaceful to stand anarchy. They will bow the knee to anyone who restores so-called order. Let us recognize the Indian psychology. We need not stop to inquire whether such hankering after peace is a virtue or a vice. The average Mussulman of India is quite different from the average Mussulman of the other parts of the world. His Indian associations have made him more docile than his co-religionists outside India. He will not stand tangible insecurity of life and property for any length of time. The Hindu is proverbially, almost contemptibly mild. The Parsi and the Christian love peace more than strife. Indeed we have almost made religion subservient to peace. This Mentality is at once our weakness and our strength.

Let us nurse the better, the religious part of the mentality of ours."Let there be no compulsion in religion." Is it not religion with us to observe swadeshi and therefore wear khadi? But if the religion of others does not require them to adopt swadeshi, we may not compel them. We broke the universal law restated in the Koran. And the law

does not mean that there may be compulsion in other matters. The verse means that if it is bad to use compulsion in religion about which we have definite convictions, it is worse to resort to it in matters of less moment.

We can only therefore argue and reason with our opponents. The extreme to which we may go is non-violent non-co-operation with them even as with the Government. But we may not non-co-operate with them in private life, for we do not non-co-operate with the men composing the Government, we are non-co-operating with the system they administer. We decline to render official service to Sir George Lloyd the Governor, we dare not withhold social service from Sir George Lloyd the Englishman.

The mischief, I am sorry to say, began among the Hindus and the Mussulmans themselves. There was social persecution, there was coercion. I must confess that I did not always condemn it as strongly as I might have. I might have dissociated myself from the movement when it became at all general. We soon mended our ways, we became more tolerant but the subtle coercion was there. I passed it by as I thought it would die a natural death. I saw in Bombay that it had not. It assumed a virulent form on the 17th.

We damaged the Khilafat cause and with it that of the Punjab and swaraj. We must retrace our steps and scrupulously insure minorities against the least molestation. If the Christian wishes to wear the European hat and unmentionables he must be free to do so. If a Parsi wishes to stick to his *fenta*¹ he has every right to do so. If they both see their safety in associating themselves with the Government, we may only wean them from their error by appealing to their reason, not by breaking their heads. The greater the coercion we use, the greater the security we give to the Government, if only because the latter has more effective weapons of coercion than we have. For us to resort to greater coercion than the Government will be to make India more slave than she is now.

Swaraj is freedom for everyone, the smallest among us, to do as he likes without any physical interference with his liberty. Non-violent non-co-operation is the method whereby we cultivate the freest public opinion and get it enforced. When there is complete freedom of opinion, that of the majority must prevail. If we are in a minority, we can prove worthy of our religion by remaining true to it in the face of

¹ Traditional Parsis cap

coercion. The Prophet submitted to the coercion of the majority and remained true to his faith. And when he found himself in a majority he declared to his followers that there should be no compulsion in religion. Let us not again either by verbal or physical violence depart from the injunction, and by our own folly further put back the hands of the clock of progress.

Young India, 24-11-1921

64. TO THE CITIZENS OF BOMBAY¹

BOMBAY,

November 26, 1921

By God's grace we are once more at peace. We are no longer engaged in the occupation of breaking one another's heads, throwing stones or burning buildings. Nevertheless some of us have still anger, bitterness and fear in us. This is evident from the language of numerous visitors and correspondents. We can call it a real peace only when our minds are free from these impurities. The first step towards such a consummation is that Hindus and Mussulmans make a clean confession of their guilt. Those who cast the first stone must be held guilty. If I begin by using an abusive word I must take the consequences of all that may follow. If Hindus and Mussulmans made the beginning by forcibly removing foreign caps or by throwing stones, they were the guilty party. Moreover, they are in an overwhelming majority. And it is largely Hindus and Mussulmans who have taken the pledge of non-violence. Therefore it is they who should realize their responsibility in the first instance.

I am not here considering the responsibility in law. I am simply thinking of it as between man and man. If Parsis and Christians do not feel their share of the guilt, it is difficult to establish a lasting peace. If Parsis and Christians had not retaliated when Hindus and Mussulmans began violence, they would have been considered angels, and they would have given to the world an astonishing proof of their soul-force. But they not only defended themselves, which was quite right, but they also were angered and went beyond the limits of self-defence. Some of them used greater violence than was necessary.

¹ This appeared under the caption "Way to Peace" and with the introduction: "The following is the translation of a Gujarati appeal issued by Mr. Gandhi."

And if they do not admit as much, it would be difficult to attain immediate heart-peace, because Hindus and Mussulmans will not acknowledge their complete innocence even after provocation. If only one party were to continue its guilt and the other consistently remained patient and suffering, the guilty party would be exhausted in the effort, if there was no reaction following action, the world would attain salvation. And generally we answer abuse with a slap. A slap is returned with a double slap. The latter is followed by a kick, the kick by a bullet, and so the circle of sin ever widens. But generally those who believe in taking a tooth for a tooth after a time forgive one another and become friends. Is it impossible for us to follow this common rule? I do not therefore hesitate to ask Parsi and Christian friends to recognize this rule of mutual forgiveness and forget one another's wrongs.

But I do lay stress upon the special responsibility that rests upon Hindus and Mussulmans. Whether the Parsis and the Christians forgive or not, Hindus and Mussulmans are bound to purify themselves by Confessing their guilt, asking God for forgiveness and by remaining peaceful. Those who have suffered losses or are deprived of their dear ones are bound to feel the effect of the injury received. Some of them are too poor to bear the losses. We must appreciate their position. And I trust that there will be an impartial non-official committee appointed to investigate the losses suffered by those who cannot bear them and to collect the funds necessary for assisting them. At the same time I hope no one will seek the assistance of law or Government. This advice I tender not merely as a non-co-operator, but also from my wide experience that such matters are more truly and more expeditiously adjudicated by private arbitration. That is also the way to avoid acerbities. The easiest method of achieving peace is to give up the idea of complaining against one another in a court of law and to concentrate our attention upon taking preventive measures, so that there is no recurrence of such madness. And I hope that Bombay will retrieve her lost reputation by adopting such measures.

I remain,

Your servant,

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 1-12-1921

65. MESSAGE TO MILL-HANDS OF BOMBAY¹

[Before November 27, 1921]

MILL-HAND FRIENDS,

I do not know you personally but, having myself become a labourer for the sake of the labourers in the country, I am intimately connected with you. I desire that you should all report for work as soon as the mills open and never suspend work again unless permitted by the employers, nor take part in rioting any time in future.

Your well-wisher,

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 27-11-1921

66. TO THE LIBERALS²

[November 27, 1921]³

FRIENDS,

We are all so preoccupied with other affairs that the events in Malabar hardly attract the attention they deserve. The ending of the trouble has become a matter of great urgency. It is one of simple humanity. Be the Moplahs ever so bad, they deserve to be treated as human beings. Their wives and children demand our sympathy. Nor are they all bad. And yet there can be no doubt that many innocent men must have been adjudged guilty. Forcible conversions are horrible things. But Moplah bravery must command admiration. These Malabaris are not fighting for the love of it. They are fighting for what they consider is their Religion and in the manner they consider is religious. The vast majority of them have nothing personal to gain by continuing their resistance. Their sin is not of deliberation, but ignorance.

If we permit the extermination of Such a brave people, it will be remembered against us and will be accounted as Indian cowardice.

¹ A leaflet carrying this message was distributed in the labour areas of Bombay.

² This appeared under the caption "About Moplahs".

³ Released on this date

I make bold to say that had Mr. Yakub Hasan been allowed to go to Malabar, had I not been warned against entering Malabar, had Mussulmans of real influence been invited to go, this long drawn out agony could have been avoided.

But it is not yet too late.

The sword has been tried for three months, and it has failed to answer the purpose. It has not bent the proud Moplah. Nor has it saved Hindus from his depredations and lust. The sword has merely prevented the Moplah from overrunning the whole of the Madras Presidency. It has exhibited no power of protection

I am sure you will not plead incapacity. It is true that the police and the military are not transferred subjects. But you cannot escape moral responsibility. You are supporting the policy of the Government regarding Malabar.

Nor, I hope, will you retort by blaming the non-co-operators. They cannot admit any responsibility for the trouble at all, unless all agitation is to be held blame-worthy I admit however that non-co-operators were not able to take their message to the Moplah homes. That would be a reason for more, not less, agitation.

But I have not taken up the pen to argue away non-cooperators, blame. I ask you to consider the broad humanities of the question, compel the Government to suspend hostilities, issue promise of free pardon for past depredations upon an undertaking to surrender, and to permit non-co-operators to enter Malabar to persuade the Moplahs to surrender. I know that the last suggestion means the giving of importance to non-co-operators. Surely you do not doubt their numbers or influence. If you do, you should find other means of dealing with the trouble than that of extermination. I am merely concerned with the termination of the shameful inhumanity proceeding in Malabar with both Liberals and non-co-operators as helpless witnesses. I have chosen to address this letter not to the Government but to you, because the Government could not have taken the inhuman course of destruction without your moral support. I beseech you to give heed to my prayer as of a dear friend.

I am,

Your friend,

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 1-12-1921

67. TO BARDOLI—ANAND

SISTERS AND BROTHERS OF BARDOLI AND ANAND,

You have been shocked beyond words. You were nursing high hopes. You had taken up the challenge to win swaraj, heal wounds of your Muslim brothers and of the Punjab and secure the release of the Ali Brothers from jail—all in this year and through your sacrifices.

But God had willed otherwise. "If man had his way, none would suffer." This is the truth Narasinh¹ sang. We cannot command the result. All we can do is to aspire and strive. Even a man like Ramachandra was ordered, at the very hour when he was to be installed on the throne, to go and live in a forest. What are we, then?

I am thinking of the grief of my dear friend², my co-worker in the Punjab inquiry, whom I have seen shedding tears over the suffering of the Punjab, who, in old age, has started working like a young man, who having lived in comfort all his life, has renounced that life for your sake and mine and revelled in doing so. He is deeply pained at the thought that now he cannot send his Kaira District and specially his own Anand Talukas immediately to jail. Let me assure him and you all that the fruits of patience will be sweet.

No irreparable harm has been done. We have not lost the game. On the Contrary, we have succeeded in turning pain into happiness. There was disturbance of peace for a while, but we seem to have recovered our peace. God has saved us from a great tribulation through a small infliction.

I have received one letter from Bardoli, another about Bardoli, and I have seen a third letter about Kaira. These three letters state that you are not ready in the right sense—either with regard to non-violence or about swadeshi. In one letter, the Correspondent gives details of incidents and says that, in Bardoli, force has been used. Foreign caps have been snatched away, owners of liquor shops have also been persecuted and foul language has been freely used. In both the talukas, people wear khadi only for show. Many persons wear it when they go out but, in their houses, garments of foreign cloth fill the trunks and are seen hanging from the pegs. Women have adopted swadeshi even less than men. The letter about Kaira warns me that all that shines white is not milk, that there is much which does not meet

¹ 1414-1479; saint-poet of Gujarat

² Abbas Tyabji

the eye, is deliberately concealed. If anyone protests, poor soul, he is silenced.

I do not say that all this is true. There may be some exaggeration in it. But we learn a good deal from our critics. We would soon be free from our shortcomings if we learn to see us through their eyes. It is only others who can see our backs.

From you I expect the purest sacrifice. Only such offering is acceptable to God. During the waiting period we have got unsought, overcome all your shortcomings. Take up earnestly the holy work of spinning. See that in every home they daily spin good, strong yarn free from particles of cotton pods, that no one goes without food and that no home remains defiled with the filth of foreign cloth. Collect the figures I have suggested.

If you have forcibly taken away anybody's clothes, go and apologize to him. Harbour no resentment against those who may co-operate with the Government. Serve them when they are in distress. Do not flatter officials nor be afraid of them. Do not fear the police. Regard them as your brothers and love them. Withdraw your children from Government schools, if any are still attending them. Never use force for propagating non-co-operation. If there is even one person in your village who co-operates with the Government, bear him no ill will. Remember, instead, that he has as much right to hold his view as you yours.

If there are any disputes among the residents of your village, settle them. There can be no room for quarrelling in satyagrahi villages.

If contempt for *Dheds* and *Bhangis* is still lurking in your minds, shed it. Invite their children to attend your schools and treat them with love. Visit their quarters. Provide them facilities for water and other necessities, if these are absent. Do not give them your left-overs to eat. Raise their wages, instead, or give them uncooked grains.

If there are drink-addicts in your village, entreat them, beseech them to desist and thus save them from the evil. If they do not listen, let them drink. If there is a liquor booth in your village, plead with the owner gently. Do not get angry with him. Have compassion on him, instead.

If there are any bullies or habitual thieves in your village, do not be afraid of them either, nor intimidate them. Look upon them, too, as your brothers and show regard for them. In order to reform them, first understand their condition sympathetically and then try to bring

about a change of heart in them. At the same time, acquire the strength to protect yourselves, your families and your property from their depredations. For this purpose, appoint watchmen from among yourselves. They will never have to fight with the thieves. If there is a vigilant watch, thieves will not visit your locality. The saying that the vigilant need have no fear is quite true. Even then, it may happen that a ruffian will attack you. In that case, do not give way to fear. You ought to know all the bad characters of your taluka.

Anand, especially, is graced with the shrine of Dakorji. I described once¹ the state of things in this place. Anand Taluka could be said to be really fit only when you have reformed both the outer and the inner condition of the place. Has the dispute Over the temple property been settled? Is the pond clean? Have the pilgrims ceased to be pilgrims in name only and become honest devotees? Have the evils ceased? Has the town become entirely clean? Has foreign cloth been banished from the temple? Do the people in your taluka still have to take their disputes to the law courts?

Have no doubt that, if non-co-operators are true to their salt, if their hearts are filled with love, everyone will be won over by that love. I declare on oath that we can still win swaraj before the end of this year if your two talukas can fully implement all the items of the non-co-operation programme. And that is not a tall order either, if you but think about the matter. If you are all sincerely concerned, it is easy to fulfil the programme. It is, of course, a difficult matter if you have been working without proper understanding or with hatred in your heart, not love.

I have repeatedly said that non-co-operation springs from love, not hatred. Soul-force is love-force and the world is ruled by this force. If you want to free India through your strength, shower love on others. If you like being called the helper of the distressed, you must become the very images of tolerance, heroism, truth and other virtues. Mere show will never win us swaraj.

If you want to win swaraj this year, despite Bombay's error, You will have to bring about a far higher degree of self-purification than you have done so far. That means you will have to become true Hindus or Muslims or Parsis or Christians, as the case may be.

And never forget to show brotherly love for the Parsis and

¹ *Vide* "Notes", 2-11-1919, under Sub-title "Centre of Pilgrimage".

Christians living in your midst. You must remove their fears through your pure love for them.

Do not give up the hope you have placed in me, and see that I do not have to give up my hope in you. I will come to see you as early as possible. Meanwhile, press on with your preparations.

Your servant,

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-11-1921

68. MY NOTES

AFTER THE FAST

I have started writing these Notes after ending my fast, while most of the material for *young India* was written during the fast. I find no difference, however, between my thoughts then and now. The views I held before I commenced the fast remain unchanged.

ONE CHANGE

Only in one respect have I changed my view. That, again, is not due to the fast, but to what I myself saw in Bombay on Thursday the 17th instant and to the incidents on Friday and Saturday which were reported to me. I can now see that we are not yet ready for civil disobedience. To start it in Bardoli at present will only mean losing the game. The primary aim of civil disobedience is to win swaraj, secure justice on the Khilafat issue and make the Government of India apologise to the people for the Punjab incidents. It is certain that not a single one of the three aims can be gained through civil disobedience under the present circumstances. Bombay and Bardoli-Anand have such close links that each side wants to and can help the other. If we start civil disobedience in Bardoli and Anand and consequently Bombay turns violent, a little reflection is enough to show that not only will Bombay not help us, but that actually it will harm the cause. Undisciplined disobedience is nothing but the fullest co-operation with the Government. Have we still to learn that this Government is kept in power by our weakness, our habit of breaking laws at will and our violence? Even the non-co-operation of some lawyers has not weakened the Government as much as our remaining peaceful. Similarly, it is strengthened more by our violence than by the

co-operation of the other pleaders, because our rioting gives it an opportunity for repression, for starting a reign of terror and thereby consolidating its power. Thus, unruly behaviour at one place with civil disobedience at another is as futile as grinding corn in a quern and then collecting in a dish the flour as it comes out of it or soiling a piece of cloth immediately it has been washed. One may go on pouring water in a leaky jar, but not a drop will remain. In the same way, no amount of discipline exhibited in an atmosphere of violence will avail us. We must first create an atmosphere of discipline and peace throughout the country. Happily or unhappily for us, we make the claim that the whole of India is with us, with the non-co-operation movement. It is our Claim that not only are the many lakhs enrolled on the Congress register with us, but that we have such influence over the crores outside that they too are with us. We must claim this. If the people are not with us, for whom are we to struggle and win swaraj? If they are with the Government, can we compel them to be free? Our present movement for swaraj and for the redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs rests on our claim that we voice the people's grievances and that we are employing means which they have accepted, that is, that people want to win swaraj through peaceful methods.

If this belief of mine is not right, I, we, have committed a grave error. If those of us who have faith in non-violent means are only a handful, it means not that we can do nothing but that our plan should be different. In that case, non-co-operators being led to prison need not be followed by crowds. If, like those who co-operate with the Government, we too enjoyed no regard from the people, we could have offered civil disobedience to our heart's content, because then nobody would have violated peace in our name.

DIFFERENCE

The civil disobedience, which we soon expected to start in Gujarat was to be offered on behalf of the whole country. We had hoped that, through it, we would win swaraj and strengthen the movement for Khilafat. Hence, it was necessary that the whole country should preserve peace and thus show its moral support. Apart from this, anyone may offer civil disobedience for a local grievance, as people are doing just now in Chirala-Perala and Mulshi Peta. We have even sympathy for the people in these places and we may help them if we can. In any case, we can remain neutral. But the effect of violence

is so harmful that, if we impulsively start it in Bombay to show our sympathy with Chirala-Perala, the people there would have to suffer all the more.

GREATEST NEED

So the first and the greatest need of the hour is to see that an atmosphere of peace prevails everywhere. If we still have any doubt about the need for peace, we should shed it. We must get control over the *goondas*. They, too, are our brothers. We cannot disown them nor can we afford to submit to them. If we allow ourselves to be ruled by them, the country will not have swaraj *but goonda raj*. To let them rule is to destroy both themselves and us. We must know, however, that the public will not tolerate *goonda raj* even for a moment. Rather than incur the risk of immediate danger to life and property held by *goonda raj*, the public will instantly welcome the protection offered by the Government. We must, therefore, find out the *goondas*, discuss things with them in a friendly spirit, explain to them what is best for our dharma and our country and entreat them not to obstruct national work by their rioting. Let nobody suppose that all this will take a long time. It can be done in Bombay in a fortnight. I look upon the *goondas* as plain and simple folk misguided into wrong ways through their karma. We, in our blind selfishness, have led them into evil ways or kept them there. Hence, it should be easy for us to ensure that they do not interfere in this holy fight of ours. They can be persuaded to desist from their usual looting and fighting for the duration of the non-co-operation movement. If we cannot exercise even that much influence over them we shall prove ourselves unfit for swaraj. Suppose the British power left India; who then will protect us against the evil ways of the *goondas*? This is not to be decided after we have won swaraj. It is rather a pre-condition of our winning it that we answer the question now. If we cannot win them over through love, we certainly do not have the strength of arms to control them. Besides, a person like me would at any rate prefer to die at their hands rather than try to save his life by killing them.

DIFFICULTIES IN THIS

This change is easy to bring about, but there are difficulties in the way. At present, six different views prevail in the country.

1. People who believe that swaraj is impossible except through violence and bloodshed. They are, therefore, utilizing the prevailing

atmosphere of peace to prepare for violence.

2. Those who think that our interests will be served through both the methods, of violence and of non-violence, used simultaneously, and so welcome incidents of violence. The aim of these people is not self-purification but only harassment of the Government.

3. Those who do not like a non-violent experiment anywhere to be abandoned because of continuing outbreaks of violence despite all efforts to check them.

4. Those who believe that we may attempt only what can be achieved with the Government's co-operation.

5. Those who accept the method of peace as an experiment, advocate it as a policy, and are unhappy inwardly while the experiment is in progress.

6. Those who work with the conviction that the method of non-violence is the only way for winning the country's freedom and bringing about Hindu-Muslim unity, and disapprove of rioting by people, whether planned or unplanned.

A little reflection ought to show us that persons belonging only to the fifth and sixth categories help us and they alone will advance our cause. Persons of all other categories harm us. We have to win them over through gentleness, persuasion and service. The fourth category, of those who believe in co-operation, is not really so dangerous as to do us much harm. Moreover, we know who belong to this category; they have their own organization and carry on their activities in public. People in the first three categories have no organization, no institution or association to which they belong. They are scattered all over the country and influence the people whenever they can. As they are isolated individuals, it is difficult to reach them. But whenever there is trouble, they come out in the open and spread lawlessness among the people. When some of these, with an honest but a mistaken motive, infiltrate into non-co-operators' bodies, and propagate their own views through them, their activities become more harmful and dangerous. People of all these three categories were active in Bombay from Thursday to Sunday. That is why we used to hear all kinds of rumours and the very crowd which had come round and had started dispersing was persuaded by some other persons to collect again.

C.I.D.

Some people argue that all this was the work of the C.I.D. I completely refuse to believe this. It is true that the C.I.D. had a hand in the disturbances. Some members of the C.I.D. would not be happy unless there was trouble. But, besides the C.I.D., there were some persons with their own views and they also were inciting people; and the *goondas*, especially, whose very profession it is to loot and riot, were spreading wild rumours and doing their work.

ONLY ONE WAY

We have only one remedy. Our way is straight and clear. We must acquire influence over all these elements. If, when everyone is trying to make pawns of the people in their own game, the masses clearly see the wisdom of listening to non-co-operators only, they would never be eager to join a riot. Peace will spread and settle in the country when we have acquired such control. And the fact that peace has been established again indicates that we do have the power to restore it and preserve it. What is necessary is that we should be honest and energetic. We should have complete faith in the means we have adopted. We must be ever vigilant. The workers of Bombay forgot their responsibility and were caught napping. They assumed that the people of Bombay had now fully understood that there should be no violence. They, therefore, made strenuous preparations to organize the boycott of the functions to welcome the Prince of Wales, but did not simultaneously take the precautions to preserve peace which they should have done. With what result, we have seen. Be that as it may, one thing is certain. We can claim to have proved ourselves superior to the Government only when we remain peaceful despite C.I.D.'s tricks; only then can we rightly claim to be fit for swaraj. If we continue to deceive ourselves by shifting the blame to the police, we are sure to lose the battle. We cease to be soldiers, if, when the enemy batters us, takes us unawares, we complain that he will not let us win, gives us no breathing time even! We can hope to win only when we can prove that we have the strength to carry on the fight, let the enemy do what he will. As long as we cannot create an atmosphere in which we shall succeed in preserving peace despite anything the Government may do, we must give up all hope of winning the fight.

SELF-EXAMINATION

Our duty, therefore, is to see our own fault instead of blaming

the police. Why did we turn out to be such simpletons that we believed all kinds of rumours? Did we not commit atrocities? Did we not snatch away foreign caps, set fire to tram-cars and liquor shops, join in rioting when we saw others rioting? Did we not entertain ugly thoughts in our minds, bear hatred for people who wanted to co-operate with the Government? If we did all this—and I myself saw that we did—then, with folded hands, we should pray to God for forgiveness, atone for our sin and take a solemn vow never to act in this way again. The saying, "Be good and the world will be good to you," contains a great truth. Because we ourselves are impure and cowardly, we look upon officers and every policeman as our enemy. If we cast off fear, we would cease to fear policemen, whether in plain clothes or in uniform and would not be misled by anyone. We want to fight relying wholly on soul-force. This strength no one can give us. God alone can grant it. Let us overcome our weaknesses and we shall have won swaraj.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-11-1921

69. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

*Monday, [November 28, 1921]*¹

DEAR SHANKERLAL,

I have received your detailed letter. I shall definitely look forward to know such details at least for the time being.

We need two committees to serve our purpose :²

(1) To find and assess the damage done to private persons or private property during the recent disturbance and to collect funds necessary for the proposed relief.³

(2) To inquire into the part played by the police and the military during the recent disturbance with special reference to the charge that they took sides.

¹ From the contents; *vide* "Notes", 18-11-1919, under Sub-title "Centre of Pilgrimage". "Notes", 18-11-1921, under Sub-title "Reverse of Truth". Gandhiji left for Surat on December 1, a Thursday.

² What follows in this paragraph is in English.

³ On November 17, when the Prince of Wales arrived in Bombay, there were demonstrations against his visit, including bonfires of foreign cloth, resulting in riots on a large scale.

Our purpose will be served by having two such committees. There is no reference in this to the origin of the disturbance because it is not necessary and it will lead to more dissensions. Both the committees should meet *in camera* and only the required evidence to be published by the committee(s) should be made public.

There should also be co-opted members in both the committees. I have already given the names. Let Prof. Giddes give his speech. It would be good to invite both the sides. If (the members of) these two committees go and the co-opted members join them and if the Parsees and the Christians do not lodge any complaint with the Government, then we can make considerable headway.

Do keep in contact with Chhotani Mian. We can certainly not engage lawyers for the people. Those who want to may do so. But as a committee we cannot be a party to it. Even as individuals for whom non-co-operation is a matter of duty, we cannot do it. Therefore, those who are arrested, would not be able to have from us legal help, etc.

I saw that steps had already been taken in the case of Anasuya-behn before I reached. Bhai Mohanlal has vacated the premises and elections are to be held soon.

Settle the matter about sending money to Gujarat for the swadeshi movement immediately.

Take proper care of your health. I think I shall leave for Surat on Thursday morning.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati : S. N. 32700

70. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

SABARMATI,

*Tuesday, [November 29, 1921]*¹

DEAR SHANKERLAL,

You would have received my reply sent yesterday. It is good that you met Sir Prabhashankar² and others. The important thing is that we should love our colleagues while adhering to our own programme. If our faith is in peace there is no other way.

¹ From the contents; *vide* "Letter to Abbas Tyabji", 1-12-1921.

² Prabhashankar Pattani

It will be good if I too have a talk with Umar. This great task can be accomplished only when all his doubts are dispelled and he is absorbed in work.

I hope to reach Bardoli on Thursday evening. From there I expect to reach Bombay on Sunday. I shall stay there till Wednesday if I think it is necessary, but I do wish to leave earlier if I can. Will it be all right if I decide only when I am there whether I should take the chair on Wednesday?

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati : S. N. 32570

71. NOTES

REVERSE OF TRUTH

The Government of Bombay has contradicted my statement¹ to the effect that the police and the military took sides during the recent trouble and that not they but the citizens restored peace. I am sorry for the contradiction. I was unprepared for it. I must add to my charges a third now to complete the picture. The police or the military were powerless to protect the life and property of the citizens. On the seventeenth I observed that they could not prevent tram-cars and motors from being burnt. They could not prevent the liquor shop in Bhindi Bazar from being reduced to ashes. Nor did they do better on eighteenth or nineteenth. Incendiarism and looting went on unchecked. When anybody applied for protection, he was flatly told that they could not spare any more men, all hands being occupied in connection with the welcome to the Prince.

Could the police and the military possibly restore peace when they were able to protect none and nothing in the disturbed area? The credit for restoration of peace is not claimed for non-co-operators alone. I claim it for both co-operators and non-co operators, for Hindus, Mussulmans, Parsis and Christians including Englishmen. If all the peace-loving citizens had not joined, order could not have been restored. I claim the credit for Mian Chhotani. On the 20th instant but for Sir Pheroze Shethna who succeeded in inducing the military to stay their hands, a crowd would have been fired upon whereas it was

¹ Vide "A Deep Stain", 18-11-1921.

dispersed within five minutes by the efforts of Dr. Pavri and Mr. Banker. I can multiply instances of such dispersal on behalf of the citizens irrespective of creed or party. Mrs. Naidu was often asked by the military to help disperse crowds. Indeed if co-operating and non-co-operating Parsis had not helped, it would have been impossible to restore peace. At the peace breakfast it was Mr. H. P. Modi who claimed the credit for the citizens. Though Mr. Purushottamdas administered a polite rebuke to the non-co-operators for the previous excitement, he did not disclaim the credit for the establishment of peace on behalf of the citizens. Mr. Natarajan too gave unstinted praise to those who had brought about the much desired peace. Mr. K. T. Paul and Mr. Douglas did no less. Mr. Vimadlal in proposing thanks specially mentioned Mian Chhotani.

As to taking sides, whilst the police failed to protect the Parsis, many of the latter admitted to me that they looked on whilst Parsis hooligans were dealing destruction. But I do not wish to labour this point. I have no desire to blame individual members of the police or military. I hope one day to bring them over to the side of truth and innocence. Most are Indians, and I certainly do not despair of Englishmen responding in the end if only non-co-operators will be true to their creed of non-violence. Credit may however be given for the forbearance of the police and the military in that they did not want only take life, they did not attempt terrorism. Let me close this chapter by instancing Malabar and Madras. Because the people are not permitted to work, the Malabar trouble is still going on; because people did not or could not work, murder in the strike area in Madras was rampant for close on two months. The Government of Bombay may, if they choose, claim the credit for refraining from interference with the people who were trying to restore peace.

WHO WAS AT THE BOTTOM?

People were not wanting who persisted in saying that the whole trouble was engineered and kept up by the secret police. Throughout the six years I have been in India, I have been hearing such charges against the C.I.D. I have myself received the attentions of that body. But I am unable to subscribe to the wild rumours that are set afloat about it. I admit that it is corrupt, that many charges can be borne out, but there is much exaggeration in them. It would be terrible if they were all true. And it would be proof of our rank cowardice. Many things imputed to the department are possible only among the people

bereft of personal bravery and self-respect. During the Bombay disturbances, responsible men credited the secret police with having set afloat all the rumours about assault on Mrs. Naidu, myself and others, about damage to mosques and churches, etc. The C.I.D. was reputed to have brought about the fires and the wrecking of tram cars. I am unable to believe all these statements; and if they are true, the people of Bombay must be easily gullible and too foolish to exercise the rights of citizenship. Among the qualities required to enable us to attain swaraj is certainly ability to checkmate the C.I.D. If we can be easily incited to things that hurt us or introduced to believe things we ought not to we can never gain our end. If we are openly and truly non-violent, we cannot possibly go wrong. Either the C.I.D. or we work upon the inflammable material in our midst. If we cannot keep it under control, we must bid good-bye to all idea of freedom in the near future.

BEWARE OF RUMOURS

One of the many lessons to be learnt from the events is that we must never believe rumours and that we must have Congress and Khilafat offices in every ward or large street where people can verify rumours. If we are acting as one man with one minds—and we must if we are to succeed—we must learn never to act without thinking and on mere rumours. Three-fourths of the panic was caused by mischievous rumours. What does it matter if the people hear of temples destroyed or some big leader killed or injured? They may not act without advice. Does an individual soldier act on his own behalf on hearing of a general's death or of a desecration of his mosque or temple? If he were to act so, he would harm the cause and be liable even to be shot. It is much more necessary for us to act in concert when we are willing soldiers of peace and more capable of restraint than armed soldiers and when we have to win not a single battle but the freedom of our country and religions.

OBLIGATORY EXAGGERATION

Exaggeration is always worthy of condemnation but there is one exception to the rule. It is obligatory in connection with our own faults. We are short-sighted regarding them, and they appear in their true bearing only when they are magnified a thousand-fold. We are long-sighted regarding other people's faults. Understatement in their case is therefore a necessity. And if we perform the two processes

simultaneously and conscientiously, we are likely to arrive at the happy mean. Mussulman friends have quarrelled with my saying that theirs was the leading part in the riots. And both they and the Hindus have taken exception to my statement that they were the aggressors and therefore the guilty party. I have given the greatest consideration to both the objections and have come to the conclusion that I must adhere to my original statement. We shall never cleanse ourselves, unless we know the whole truth against ourselves. I would be untrue to the Mussulmans if I did not say what I knew or felt, and I would be no Hindu, if for fear of losing Hindu esteem or otherwise I did not tell the truth. Needless to say it is no part of my business to consider the legal consequences of such statements. The Government may do what it chooses. If the Parsis and Christians are wise, they will not play into its hands. But as a non-co-operator I am unconcerned with legal consequences. Those who did damage were non-co-operators, sympathisers or mere mischief-makers. The first two must feel delighted, if innocent, to be imprisoned, for we court imprisonment of the innocent. If they have done wrong, they need not be sorry for punishment. The mischief-makers need not expect protection from me. Therefore the best protection I am capable of giving, the best service I am capable of rendering is to tell the truth in utter disregard of consequence. It is not possible on any other terms to carry on this great struggle affecting crores of people in which you are always dealing with novel situations and uncertain elements. Our only infallible weapons in the midst of such uncertainties are truth and non-violence.

FEAR OF IMPRISONMENT

Much though we have advanced in shedding fear of imprisonment, there is still a disinclination to seek it and an anxiety to avoid it. We must remain scrupulously honest and non-violent, and at the same time be anxious almost to find ourselves in the jails of the Government. It must be positively irksome if not painful for us to enjoy so-called freedom under a Government we seek to end or mend. We must feel that we are paying some unlawful or heavy price for retaining our liberty. If therefore when being innocent we are imprisoned, we must rejoice because we must feel that freedom is near. Is not freedom nearer for the imprisonment of hundreds who are now cheerfully undergoing it for the sake of the country? What can be

better for non-co-operators of Bombay than that though innocent, they should be imprisoned for the sake of the guilty?

A PURE HEART

But my remarks will be appreciated only by those who have changed hearts,—not by those Hindus and Mussulmans who still believe that the Parsis or the Christians were more in the wrong than the Hindus and the Mussulmans. The many letters of protest I have received show that many Hindus and Mussulmans believe the Parsis and the Christians gave the first offence. Although I know the contrary, I am prepared to assume that they did. Are not Hindus and Mussulmans still bound by virtue of their pledge, of their numbers and of their religion not to retaliate but to be friend and protect them even if they have to go out of their way to do it?

MAULANA BARI'S "FATVA"

Let Maulana Abdul Bari speak. I offer no apology for reproducing the *fatva* he issued on learning the particulars about the Bombay disturbances:

We do not at all desire to inflict any insult or bodily harm on the Prince of Wales. We only wish to save him from being deceived by official prestige and to show him the real feelings of India and its people. The means we have adopted is to declare a hartal from which all violence should be excluded. . . .

We consider the Bombay riots to be opposed not only to our political creed but also to our *shariat*. . . if such disturbances are not prevented in future, the minorities will no longer have faith in Indian democracy. . . .

RIGHTS OF MINORITIES

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

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

AN ECHO FROM BENGAL

Here is an apposite letter from Bengal written by a friend who knows what he is talking about. He says:

I desire to tell you, that if civil disobedience is begun in Eastern Bengal, the consequences will be much more serious. The Mussulmans there number more than 70 per cent of the total population. The majority of them are turbulent. As soon as the passions of these men are roused, they will fall upon the Hindus, commit horrible outrages and terrorize the Hindu landlords and creditors. The saner and the more respectable section among them will fail to control the turbulent. Hindu-Muslim unity will vanish at the first touch. In Calcutta too the state of things will be extremely bad. I earnestly request you to take a much less optimistic view of men and things in India. Excuse me for saying that you know more of men and things of South Africa than of men and things in the parent country. You seem now to be against starting civil disobedience. But if you change your mind, I cannot look upon the results except with a feeling of horror or dismay. Your noblest ideals will be shattered to pieces and the country will be a prey to greater oppression and trouble. What you have done during these years will be undone.

This is not the only warning of the kind received by me. Bombay is one of the greatest nerve centres. It has naturally therefore stirred people. The protection of the rights of minorities means the protection of the weak. And protection of the weak means protection of old men, children and women and all those who may be helpless. And if today the united strength of Hindus and Mussulmans is used against Parsis and Christians, tomorrow the unity will break under the strain of cupidity or false religiousity,—not a delectable picture of

swaraj by any means. For India, there is no alternative to non-violence, complete and true, if she is to be free. Non-violence then must not be used as a preparation for violence. To realize this is to realize swaraj and religion. Let the Hindus and the Mussulmans beware of misreading their *Gita* or Koran. And by way of trial let them use their joint strength to protect the minorities and they will learn to protect one another.

NOT POLICY BUT CREED

And this cannot be done unless the year's experience teaches us to regard non-violence as our *final creed for the attainment and retention of India's freedom and of the unity of all the sects and denominations of India*. This still leaves each community free to fight for the preservation of its religion, and all together to fight for India's defence. But non-violence must not be a policy or expedient to be tried for gaining India's freedom or consolidating unity. Hindus and Mussulmans must therefore begin by loving and serving Parsis, Jews and Christians including Englishmen, whether they are co-operators or other. And if we are to do this, our speeches must be free from bitterness and in the process of conversion, we must not touch even a child in order to remove its foreign cap, nor use force against drunkards to wean them from drink. We must rest our cause solely upon appeal to reason, to the head and the heart, never to brute force whether verbal or physical. When we have millions of the people of India freely and intelligently on our side, we have swaraj. The greatest fear of co-operators is that non-violence is a cloak for violence and that in spite of the effort of the well-meaning, the movement is bound ultimately to pass into the hands of the unruly and the turbulent. We cannot dispel this fear by argument. We can only do so by an unbroken chain of facts which need no proof. Whilst we have made much headway, we cannot claim that we have neither speech nor action to our debit. Love, charity, humility, gentleness do not need any articulate proof. We must therefore put greater stress on non-violence and less on non-co-operation. Non-violence is non-co-operation. The Government's haven of refuge is violence. Is ours non-violence? Have we finally withdrawn ourselves from their school of violence? It is their greatest educational institution. The day we demolish the prestige of violence in its entirety, that day we establish swaraj. And to be able to do this, we must learn to love the Englishman whilst we hate his system under which he pretends to

govern India. In the words of Maulana Abdul Bari we have no quarrel with the Englishman, we quarrel with his rule of force.

PRACTICAL HINTS

If then we love our opponents, our love must show itself in our actions. We must invite them to our platforms and give them a patient and courteous hearing, we must not revile them in speaking of them, we must not cry "shame" when we hear their names, we must render them social service as readily as we would render to those who agree with us. All we may not do is to render them political service or give them political association. We must avoid all exciting speeches and avoid all noises: *Mahatma Gandhi ki jai* and other sounds should be strictly forbidden. We must be able to conduct our meetings without such noises. And if we do not attract vast crowds without such noises we shall fare all the better without them. I would regard a district or tahsil that cannot be brought under such restraint to be unfit for civil disobedience. Picketing should be regarded with the gravest suspicion. There is no doubt that it has not everywhere been of a strictly non-violent nature. There has been verbal violence or a show of violence. It is better therefore to suspend picketing at least for the time being or till we have attained much greater self-control and gained greater experience. We may confine our attention just now to working among the drinking class.

HARTALS

The hartals wherever the Prince is taken may be proclaimed if absolute peace can be guaranteed and compulsion of any kind whatever avoided. If the tram-cars run, we must not interfere with them. If the people use them, we know that they do not want to join us. If a single man wishes to keep his shop open, we must protect him in his freedom. It has a great value only if it is strictly voluntary.

PARSIS AND CHRISTIANS

Parsis and Christians of Bombay have before them a time of great trial and temptation. It is just possible that they will be tempted to file complaints against Hindus and Mussulmans. It will be a fatal blunder to succumb to the temptation. They ought to rise to the occasion and refrain from seeking relief or reparation through courts of law. Quarrels are sometimes inevitable in spite of the best of precautions. They know that the sanest element among Hindus and

Mussulmans deeply regret the unfortunate quarrel and are ashamed of the Hindu and Mussulman aggression. Parsis and Christians should now seek only such relief as a non-official committee can secure for them. Whilst it is true that Hindus and Mussulmans must keep their heads cool even if the latter seek reparation through the Government, they will put a severe strain upon human nature if they prefer official action to non-official.

OF THE GOVERNMENT

Correspondents, whilst congratulating me for apologizing to the Parsis, Christians and Jews, have rebuked me for not doing likewise by the Government. In making the suggestion, they have missed the central point of apology. I cannot apologize to a system of its *administrators* when that system is responsible for the troubles at least equally with, if not more than, non-co-operators. I start with the assumption that the administrators of the system relish these troubles and invite them by providing for them first in the way of giving provocation by unpopular measures and secondly by making *frightful* preparations to crush any outburst of popular resentment. Apology has been tendered to administrators as men in as much as it has been tendered to Christians, Englishmen and co-operators. I have said that in as much as non-co-operators insulted a single person who took part in the welcome to the Prince, they insulted the Prince and broke the pledge of non-violence. I am not aware of non-co-operators having in any shape or form injured the Government during the three disgraceful days. On the contrary I feel and know that the misguided mischief-makers strengthened the Government. The reader will see that apology to a Government which has been served or has benefited would be an inappropriate act. One of my minor objects is to injure the Government as a system and therefore the status of its administrators. But this I do by remaining strictly non-violent and dissociating myself from it in every possible and non-violent manner and by inducing others to do likewise. Indeed, if non-violence became the common creed of both the Government and the people, there would be little room for any quarrel ending in non-co-operation.

MORE NOTABLE IMPRISONMENTS

Maulana Sherar was an effective speaker in the Madras Presidency and a staunch Khilafat worker. He was also a good writer. The Madras Government have silenced this worker for one year. The

Punjab Government have arrested Pandit Nekiram Sharma who is not unknown to Bombay audiences and who was instrumental in saving precious lives when on the 17th instant a liquor shop was reduced to ashes in Bhindi Bazar. Mr. Gangadharrao Deshpande has got six months simple imprisonment. I had hoped that he and others would not be permitted to rest beyond the end of the year. The Bombay occurrences seem to have dashed my hopes to pieces. Before then I was certain either of our ability to unlock the prison gates or at least of joining the comrades in their rest-houses. Now—? God alone can tell.

ARREST OF BRAVE SIKHS

A telegram in *The Bombay Chronicle* shows that the Punjab Government have goaded the Sikhs to civil disobedience. The Government had prohibited a Sikh divan that was to be held at Amritsar. This proved too much for the Sikhs. They held the divan with the result that eleven noted Sikhs have been arrested. Among these are the veteran Sardar Khadag Singh, President Gurudwara Committee, Sardar Bahadur Mehtab Singh who recently resigned on the Gurudwara question the Deputy Presidentship of the Punjab Council and Government leadership, also Sardar Dan Singh, President Amritsar City Congress Committee. If the Sikhs continue to remain calm and yet firm, then the incarceration of the Sikh leaders must bring about the desired solution of the Gurudwara question.

STRIKES

When hartal takes place what should mill-hands and other employees do, who cannot get leave from their unsympathetic or alien employers? In terms of non-violence there can be but one answer. An employee who gives himself leave uses violence, for he commits a criminal breach of the contract of his service. He cannot absent himself without the permission of his employer. All he can do is to resign if he is not satisfied with his employer. But this too a body of employees may not do all of a sudden. For they may not in order to enforce their political opinion threaten to leave without due notice. In short mill-hands and such other employees should not be encouraged to coerce their employers into giving leave. Non-violent action is not quite so simple as one may imagine. I have heard men describing as non-violent the holding tight of the legs of persons proceeding to drink-shops. Similarly youngsters have classed foul abuse of liquor dealers among non-violent acts. This is merely playing with language

and bore bitter fruit in Bombay We must be true to ourselves if we wish to give non-violence a fair trial. Even if we cannot make our thought non-violent, we must so regulate our speech and action as to make them completely innocuous. If we find it impossible or too difficult to practise we must give up the attempt but we must not blame one of the greatest doctrines of life for our incapacity. If failure has to be written against us, it won't be failure of non-violence but of the violent to respond to it.

AN ANDHRA DEFINITION

Swaraj has been variously defined. Mr. Gopal Krishnayya who has been tried a second time and sentenced to undergo further imprisonment to run concurrently with the first made a long statement before the Magistrate. It is more a theological discussion of his belief than a statement of his political creed. It certainly shows that there was neither violence nor incitement to it in the speech that was the subject matter of prosecution. But I am concerned only with his interesting definition of swaraj. Here it is:

It is not the common political suffering that is to weld together the Hindu and the Muslim like the Greeks of old during the Persian invasions, but the mutual respect, regard and love for each other's dharma. . . . and the necessity for its individuated preservation that can and shall achieve it. Swaraj, therefore, means the preservation of Hindu dharma, Muslim dharma, Christian dharma, Parsi dharma, Sikh dharma, in short *swadharma* of all and a co-ordinated federation of all, which are now being threatened with destruction by positivist godless philosophy, industrial anarchy and spiritual famine that beset the world at the present moment.

Surely we are nearing our goal when men of character are being imprisoned for their religious beliefs.

SARDAR GURDUT SINGH

It is no small matter for one to remain in hiding for seven years and escape the police and then openly to surrender oneself to them, yet Sardar Gurdut Singh has succeeded in performing the wonder. I have before me his open letter and other papers. In the midst of other diversions these papers do not attract me. But I cannot withhold my congratulations from the Sikhs for their having kept their peace when Sardar Gurdut Singh surrendered himself and the Magistrate took charge of him. We must be certain of non-violence to such an extent that we may undertake the boldest steps with perfect confidence.

There is nothing to beat swadeshi to make us non-violent. I entirely agree with a correspondent who sends me a long letter saying that I should insist upon due fulfilment of swadeshi before a single tahsil embarks upon civil disobedience. I know that violence would be an impossibility if the whole of India became swadeshi, i.e., carried out complete boycott of foreign cloth by manufacturing the whole of the khadi supply in her millions of cottages. Would that the Sikhs and other Indians simply concentrate upon manufacture of hand-spun yarn and hand-woven cloth.

TEN DAYS FOR THE KHADI CAP

The khadi cap came in for much attention during the late disturbance in Bombay. Dr. Sathe was severely assaulted because he would not surrender his khadi cap. Now I hear that sailors in the Fort forcibly dispossessed many innocent wearers of their khadi caps. I can only hope that this senseless persecution will stiffen the resolve of the nation and that thousands will be prepared to die for the khadi cap which is fast becoming a visible mark of swadeshi and swaraj. The most glaring instance however comes from Bengal. Mr. T. H. Ellis, S.D.O. of Brahmanbaria District, Comilla, Bengal, issued on the 16th instant the following notice:

The Government has decided that the wearing of what are called Gandhi caps constitutes an offence under section 228 I.P.C. Gentlemen are warned that this order will be enforced.

Consequently a volunteer who wore a khadi cap in spite of the order was fined Rs. 10/- which he refused to pay. He preferred to go to jail for ten days. I reproduce below the Section 228:

Whoever intentionally offers any insult or causes any interruption to a public servant while such public servant is sitting in any stage of a judicial proceeding, shall be punished with simple imprisonment for a term which may extend to six months or with fine which may extend to one thousand rupees or both.

Thus the wearing of a khadi cap is henceforth to constitute an insult to a public servant in Bengal! I hope that the S.D.O. has arrogated to himself powers that have never been given to him or any other magistrate by the Bengal Government. In any event if the order is at all general, bare-headed Bengal will soon begin to patronize khadi caps if only out of sheer sense of self respect. I congratulate the volunteer who has been the first to receive the honour of

imprisonment for the offence of wearing a khadi cap.

PUSSYFOOT'S CERTIFICATE

I was agreeably surprised to receive the following from Pussyfoot. I had hoped to have the privilege of meeting Dr. Johnson but our programme always clashed. It is therefore special satisfaction for me to be able to receive a letter from him acknowledging our temperance work:

MY DEAR MR. GANDHI

While sailing away from your country, my mind keeps going back to the wonderful work that you are doing for the temperance cause in India and, consequently, for the whole world. . . .

Please present my kind recollections to your good wife and your brother with whom I did have the privilege of a little visit.

AT SEA,

November 19, 1921

Cordially yours,

W. E. JOHNSON

I can share the letter with the reader without blushing for the simple reason that I can claim no credit for the work which Dr. Johnson truly calls wonderful. It has not even taken two years to accomplish what has been done. But the credit belongs to a multitude of unknown workers who fired by the religious nature of the movement spontaneously took up temperance work. I wish that such glorious work had not been marred by the wanton and violent burning of liquor shops in Bombay. Let me hope that all trace of compulsion will be removed from the reform and that we shall soon see an India become voluntarily dry.

IMPLICATIONS OF REMOVAL OF UNTOUCHABILITY

I take the following from the letter of a Bengali friend:

You have placed the removal of untouchability in the fore-front of the programme of national work. But you have not, so far as I am aware, given any clear explanation as to what exactly you intend it to mean. The question of intermarriage apart, it may be taken to mean any one of three possible courses. It may mean either not considering the touch of a man ceremonially unclean or agreeing to take water at his hands or not refusing to partake of food, more particularly rice, prepared by him.

I can generally answer the question by saying that removal of untouchability means disappearance of a fifth caste. It therefore does mean at least that mere touch of a man shall not be regarded as a pollution. The so-called untouchable should enjoy the same freedom that the touchables do. Generally speaking therefore water handled by

the erstwhile untouchable will not be regarded as polluted. Removal of untouchability does not include partaking of rice or other food cooked by the untouchable or any other. That is a matter of reform in the institution of caste and not covered by the programme about untouchability. Restrictions about marriage and inter-dining may be undesirable and may require modification. But I do not regard them as a blot upon Hinduism, as I do untouchability. The latter puts a class of human beings beyond the pale of social service and therefore is an inhuman institution.

Young India, 1-12-1921

72. A PROTEST

The Editor

YOUNG INDIA

SIR

I accept in the right spirit the stern rebuke which you have been pleased to administer to me in *Young India* of the 10th instant¹ as coming from a wise and sagacious general to an erring soldier; but you will, I pray, permit me a few words of mild remonstrance. It was not very pleasant to read your strong remarks, but it was positively painful to find that in writing about me in the way you had done you had been less than just to your own great self. That calm dignity, that scrupulous fairness to the worst opponent, that flowing charity and that sweet reasonableness which are such conspicuous features of your method of controversy were unfortunately very nearly absent in this particular instance.

I was convinced that our meeting at Delhi in spite of the President having adjourned it was a defiance of constitutional proprieties. . . that the Bengal and Madras members had no right to be there in view of the President's ruling that their election was void. . . I felt that the Working Committee was . . . fast constituting itself into a power behind the throne. I saw with dismay that the All-India Congress Committee in its admiration for the great personalities who adorn the Working Committee was not only gifting away to that body one after another of its own powers, but what was worse, those also of the President's without the latter's permission and against his will reducing him thereby to the position of a mere puppet. . . My whole soul rebelled against this topsy-turveydom. I do not think that the Congress Constitution

¹ *Vide* "The All-India Congress Committee", 10-11-1921.

contemplates the President as a mere figure-head whom the Working Committee can order about as it likes. He owes his office to the choice of the nation. He derives his authority directly from the Congress and he embodies, in the theory of the Constitution, the collective wisdom and authority of the entire body of delegates. His is the sole right of interpreting and construing the Congress Constitution and his rulings in these matters as also on questions of procedure are final and conclusive; this is not to say that his rulings are always correct, but the way to set them right is not by dealing a death blow to the dignity of the President's office as was done at Delhi. . . . Your severe castigation far from shaking my conviction has made it stronger. . . . to characterise my attitude as obstruction is to utter the language of prejudice; to pour ridicule over honest differences of opinion . . . and to suggest that anybody came all the way from Bombay to Delhi at considerable inconvenience and no little expense simply to amuse and to be amused is perhaps the most unkindest cut of all, and, if I may say so, not in the true Gandhian vein.

I dare say your reference to the Maharashtra party is intended to be complimentary, but I am certain that it will not be read as such even outside Maharashtra. Speaking for myself . . . I venture to state—not in the spirit of idle boasting but of meek gratefulness—that the whole district where my humble lot had been cast will entirely repudiate your estimate of my mentality, and you yourself will some day realize with pain that you had dealt unjustly with a humble follower and co-worker. . . .

HARVEY ROAD,

Yours, etc.,

BOMBAY,

JAMNADAS M. MEHTA

November 17, 1921

I gladly find room for Mr. Mehta's protest. I can assure him that I meant no offence but that my remarks were made with perfect goodwill. If Mr. Mehta was absolutely serious about his objection, I must be pardoned for saying that I could see no argument in his speech. But I entirely accept Mr. Mehta's assurance about his seriousness.

Young India, 1-12-1921

73. TO CORRESPONDENTS

A. MAHOMED YASIN: The Ulemas' Conference Lahore has passed a resolution condemning forcible conversions. I agree with you that

Moplahs and Hindus of Malabar have hitherto lived as friends and that the trouble would not have arisen but for the rashness and negligence of the Collector.

C. V. Naidu asks:

1. Are the taxes to the municipalities and local boards also not to be paid when such institutions are thrust on the people as in the case of Chirala?

If civil disobedience for local relief is resorted to, it would be legitimate to withhold payment of such taxes and it would be equally legitimate to withhold them if ratepayers in a particular area adopt that form of civil disobedience for swaraj. Obviously the second mode would be wholly inapplicable where a municipality is popularly elected and where there is no non-co-operation with regard thereto. In every case retention of non-violent atmosphere is presumed.

2. Can a non-co-operator seek to enter the municipalities and local boards as an elected member?

Non-co-operators are as a matter of fact entering the municipalities all over India, particularly where there is a prospect of non-co-operation majority.

3. Do you think that Southern India with its untouchability is fit for adopting any form of civil disobedience? (Andhra is excluded; only Tamil is intended.)

If no part of Tamil India gives up the sin of untouchability it cannot be qualified for the exercise of the privilege of civil disobedience.

A PARSİ: Much as I dislike vaccination, I must resist the temptation of opening the columns of *Young India* for the advertisement of what friends call my numerous fads. Vaccination and such other evils have to await solution till we begin to breathe the breath of freedom.

Young India, 1-12-1921

74. IN THE NAME OF HUMANITY

My letter to the Liberals¹ speaks for itself. In it I have not touched upon unproved or one-sided accounts of the happenings in Malabar. But I have before me correspondence which mentions inhumanities before which the Punjab ones dwindle into insignifi-

¹ *Vide* "To the Liberals", 27-11-1921.

cance. The asphyxiation of prisoners is the most startling though by no means the most callous among the inhumanities that are said to be enacted in impenetrable Malabar. The Hindu mind is blinded by prejudice fed by interested accounts. I do not deny forcible conversions or other atrocities by the Moplahs. But my soul refuses to revenge itself upon innocent Moplahs or upon the women and children of the guilty ones, nor can I delight in torturing those who have done wrong. Such reprisals are not human.

Let me not go into further narration of facts or allegations. I only plead for calmness. What is the Government doing? Why has it proved so powerless for protection? Or is its function confined only to reprisals and isolating the Moplahs and their prey, the Hindus?

Grant that the non-co-operators started the mischief by exciting the Moplahs against the Government, are non-co-operators keeping up the flame of Moplah passion? Are they preventing the Government from stamping out the rebellion? Why will the Government not grant permits to non-co-operators to go and plead with the Moplahs? Let them be shot if they turn traitors to their pledge. Let the Government take hostages for good conduct. It is utterly inhuman to persist in wanton destruction and desolation when a possible way is open to them and when non-co-operators have offered under certain conditions to go and attempt to bring about peace.

Though the task of conciliation has been certainly rendered most difficult, I do not despair of success, if full facilities are offered to non-co-operators to enter the disturbed area and reason with the Moplahs. Their valour, however misguided it is, is worthy of better treatment.

I do beseech the Hindus of the Madras Presidency to become calm and find room for the misguided Moplahs in their hearts. Their religion does not teach them to condemn whole classes of people for the faults of a few. Let them too bear their share of burden. They knew the Moplah and sinfully neglected to make him a better neighbour. We are reaping the reward of our past neglect. Let us not now indiscriminately condemn the Moplah as a friend unworthy of human sympathy. Islam has undoubtedly suffered for the brutalities practised by the Moplahs, but Hinduism is suffering equally with Islam for thirsting for Moplah blood. It is bad enough for one to commit rape or murder, but it is equally bad if not worse to seek to flay the rake or murderer and to rape his womenfolk and murder the

rest of his family. I do not know that the rake or the murderer cannot plead sudden passion as all extenuating circumstance. Can the seeker after unbridled revenge plead anything in palliation? Let not the Hindus by their thirst for Moplah blood justify Dyerism and O'Dwyerism. If we may resort to frightfulness and humiliations in respect of the Moplahs, do we not justify the action of Sir Michael O'Dwyer and General Dyer who under a sense of fancied wrong and fear resorted to terrorism in the Punjab? The Hindu passions are, I fear, being exploited by the Government to keep up the Malabar Trouble. Let Hindus of Malabar and Madras beware!

Young India, 1-12-1921

75. *DISBANDMENT OF VOLUNTEERS*

Bombay has given a handle to the Provincial Government for undertaking systematic repression and attempting to snuff out non-co-operation. The notifications of the Bengal, the U.P., the Punjab and the Delhi Governments disbanding volunteer organizations are an answer to Bombay. I for one welcome these notifications. They obviate the necessity for forcing civil disobedience. If we are ready for the Government challenge, we can have an immediate trial of strength. It is one of the beauties of civil disobedience that a civil resister can choose his own time of battle. For he need not disobey till he thinks it is right for him to do so. No amount of provocation by the Government can goad him into disobedience.

If therefore the provinces where the notifications have been issued are ready, they have merely to refuse to disband and every one of the volunteers must surely find himself in jail. But we must be sure of our ground. The allegation against the corps is that they are assemblies to use force and not to keep peace. Our first duty is to examine the charge and purge ourselves of guilt if there is any in us. Every volunteer who has been guilty of using force or even threat of force by word or act must be relieved of his charge.

The resolution of the Working Committee¹ regarding volunteers has come in time though quite by accident. I hope that it will be taken up in every province by the respective Congress and Khilafat Organizations and that all volunteer organisations will be combined into one and no volunteer will be retained who does not believe in

¹ Passed at Bombay on November 23, 1921

non-violence. Then we may give battle if there is interference with these organizations. The condition, however, of giving battle is that when imprisonments commence, the rest remain quiet and peaceful. It is high time that we went to jail without noise or fuss. If we believe in the virtue of silent suffering we must make it easy for the Government to arrest us. It becomes difficult when each time we want to make a show and have a precession. Imprisonments must become an every-day occurrence. We make no fuss when we go out for a walk or a picnic. I do ask for the same indifference about going to jails. I accept Mr. Jayakar's formula of statement before the court. If there is a choice between making or not making statements, I have no hesitation in giving my vote against making them. Imprisonments must cease to cause sensation, for the latter creates excitement and excitement may lead to violence. Violence interferes with a ceaseless flow of innocent imprisonments.

Retention of non-violent atmosphere is more important than imprisonments. Therefore no province will be justified in taking the risk of an outbreak of violence and precipitating imprisonments by disregarding the orders of disbandment. We shall lose nothing in the long run by waiting to stabilize non-violence. Our capacity for swaraj consists in our anticipating and thwarting every plan to lead us unto violence whether it be through the C.I.D. or any other channel.

Young India, 1-12-1921

76. TO CORRESPONDENTS

D. V. Rao asks:

1. Do you believe Krishna was wrong in not having preached the doctrine of non-violence to Arjuna? Or was he right in advocating war and violence?

In my opinion the *Bhagavad Gita* is a purely religious, not historical, treatise. It has taken a historical and secular incident to build up a grand religious doctrine. It deals with the war that is eternally waging between the forces of evil and good, Ormuzd and Ahriman, Hyde and Jekyll in the human breast. We cannot do enough violence to all the evil passions that well up on that little Kurukshetra. Historically considered the *Bhagavad Gita* tends to show that Arjuna having made the choice could not, yielding to false sentiment, withdraw from the battle. The author of the *Gita* never advocated war or violence. It is a sermon on non-violence. Fight without anger and

passion can only be spiritual.

2. Did Rama err and sin in resorting to violence against Ravana to recover Sita? Or is violence justifiable only under special circumstances? If so what are those conditions?

I look upon the *Ramayana* in the same light as the *Bhagavad Gita*. The weapons that Rama used were purely spiritual. The victory of Rama over Ravana is a celebration of the victory of good over evil, of humility over arrogance, of a weak and virtuous woman with the help of God over man turned beast.

X. Y. Z. asks :

1. How long are we to be non-violent, supposing the Government tried to molest us in wicked ways?

Certainly till we have disarmed the Government. When we took the pledge we did not expect the Government to let us down gently.

2. If we get swaraj how are we to be protected against invasions of foreign nations?

You must see the old files of *Young India*. But generally it may be stated that we need not apprehend any trouble from foreign powers, but if they invade us without any offence on our part, we must trust to our capacity for suffering to be able to defend ourselves against all aggressors.

3. Will the feudatory States retain their rule?

Certainly. We have no design upon them. They will have more real power than they have now. They will naturally be amenable then to the pressure of public opinion whether within or without their borders.

4. Are you going to proclaim a republic if you are successful in civil disobedience? Maulana Shaukat Ali expressed such opinion.

Civil disobedience of the fierce type contemplated at Delhi by me has been knocked on the head by Bombay for some time to come. In any case I do not think that non-co-operators have so far consolidated their power or done so much constructive work as to warrant the declaration of an effective republic at the end of the year. In no case does it rest with one man to proclaim or not to proclaim a republic.

5. Will you give compensation to the Parsis who have been principally the mischief-mongers?

You evidently beg the question by calling Parsis "the mischief-

mongers". I am firmly convinced that Hindus and Mussulmans started the mischief. I shall certainly hope that Parsis and Christians will be patriotic enough not to seek compensation through the Government and that there will be a non-official committee consisting of impartial co-operators and non-co-operator to receive and inquire into the claims for compensation by all private persons who might have suffered during the unfortunate disturbance.

Young India, 1-12-1991

77. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

Thursday [December 1, 1921]

DEAR FRIEND,

I had your letter yesterday in Ahmedabad. Now I hear you are laid up in bed. Soldiers are not permitted to get ill! You must therefore be up and doing quickly. Your health and strength are today of paramount importance and you cannot be spared for a single day. This is to make you quickly better but not make you leave your bed prematurely. Please give yourself all the rest you need so that there is no relapse. Haste in such matters is waste.

According to your instructions I have written down an appeal to the *Dharalas*¹ which I have handed to Mr. Fulchand.

I hope to be in Bardoli up to Saturday evening and then go to Bombay hoping to return by Thursday at the latest. And then if you are better and wish it, I shall give you two or three days for Kheda. Our preparation must be solid and substantial. Swadeshi must take deep root, untouchability must go in reality and Hindu-Muslim unity must be true. All this is impossible without a truly non-violent spirit.

My love to the whole family and prayers for your health.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 9597

¹ A community in Gujarat

78. SPEECH AT BARDOLI

[December 3, 1921]¹

He said he had nothing but the heartiest congratulations to offer to the people of the taluk from what he had been able to see within the two days of his stay. It was a great tribute to the people that they had gone such a long way in removing the bar of untouchability from their minds and the general standard of peace they had maintained did them the greatest credit. But it was not without the deepest regret that he learned that much had been left to be desired in the matter of swadeshi which was the very essence. They were still dependent on outside generosity for their khaddar, which showed that weaving had not yet accompanied spinning in the villages. This was necessarily a serious disqualification. It was no difficult task to set up a few handlooms in every village. The reason the women spun coarse and weak yarn was that the yarn had never been put to the test of weaving in their own villages. It was not enough that the vast majority of his audience had worn khaddar. He could not ignore the fact that most of the women had not worn due to want of a sufficient supply of khaddar. The remedy was in their own hands. He was sure they would not agree to having their flour kneaded from outside to save trouble in the kitchen. The arrangement would be absurd and equally so was the spinning without weaving. If they took it into their minds he knew they could accomplish it soon. Swaraj in their case was a matter of months, certainly not of years. He wished that now that they had accomplished such a great deal, they worked harder still for perfection. If they had hitherto welcomed the untouchables in their midst in public meetings and also allowed them the use of their wells, they might legitimately be expected now to go a step further and visit their homes for example, and persuade suspicious parents to send their children to national schools.

Boycott of Government educational and other institutions too might be secured in the future by the methods different from and better than those that had been adopted in certain cases in their taluk. After all, fasting too as had been reported to have been undertaken by some of the volunteers with a view to compel parents by appealing to their sense of pity to withdraw their children, was a form of moral violence. Such a course generally resulted in unwilling submission which was hardly to be desired by the non-co-operators who advocated the utmost freedom for all. But he was anxious that his reference to any defects in the splendid achievement of Bardoli should not be misunderstood as an expression of disappointment. Whilst he was unable to give full marks to Bardoli tahsil declaring it fit for the immediate adoption of civil disobedience it gave him the greatest pleasure to be able to assure

¹ This is a summary of Gandhiji's speech reported to have been made "just before he left Bardoli taluka" on Saturday, i.e., December 3; *vide* the preceding item.

them for their consolation that he had not known any other taluk so well on the road to preparedness for civil disobedience, that is, swaraj. Their simplicity and earnestness were unmatched. Hindu-Muslim unity was nowhere so secure as there. He only hoped that Bardoli would continue its great career in the same enthusiastic fashion and accomplish in due course of time what little yet remained to be done by way of preparation. Then and only then could they summon him once again and say, "Fight us our battle", and give him the pleasure of leading the peaceful revolution, if such be still necessary.

The Bombay Chronicle, 10-12-1921

79. MASTER KEY

The three-fold suffering, water of love alone can cool.

—TULSIDAS

In big institutions, they have a special key which fits the locks on all doors. The key for each room opens that room and no other; but one officer has a key which fits all locks. In English, they call this latter, "the master key". I have used its equivalent in Gujarati, *vadi chavi*, as the title of this article.

Through the boycott programmes, people are expected to keep away from legislatures, students from schools and colleges and litigants from law-courts. If these three classes of people are not sufficiently influenced by our appeals, doubts about the success of these programmes arise.

But love is the master key in these cases—and the sovereign remedy.

Non-co-operation without love is Satanic; non-co-operation with love is godly. It was out of love that the Prophet carried on non-co-operation with the Arabs of Mecca for full 13 years. He opened their eyes with his love. It was certainly not hatred which impelled Mira to non-co-operate with Kumbha Rana. She lovingly submitted to the punishment which the Rana inflicted on her. Our non-co-operation also springs from love. Without it, everything is hollow. Love is not merely the master key, it is the only key. If those who have left Government schools hate the others who have not, then sacrifice is lifeless and dry. Our boycott of councils will have no meaning if we cherish ill-feeling for those who get elected to them. To try to win over with love those who differ from us is the way of

dharma, to get angry with them is the Satanic way—the atheist's way.

Be it admitted to our shame and disgrace that our sacrifice has been vitiated, in some measure, by anger, ill will and similar feelings and this is why it has not shone to the best effect, nor yielded results. If all those who joined the boycott had borne no ill will to those who did not join, our position today would have been extremely good; we would have been about to win swaraj.

So our foremost duty is to shower love on people. Doing this does not mean becoming one of them. That would be unthinking love. It would mean our being a party to what they do. That is real love through which we love even our opponents, decline to look upon them as fools and serve them. It is nothing to wonder at if one Hindu loves another Hindu; a Hindu's goodness lies in loving a Muslim equally well and respecting his manners and customs. Is there anything extraordinary in a person who co-operates with the Government being on good terms with another such person? Real strength and humility in a non-co-operator lie in loving an advocate of co-operation and being patient with him despite acute differences with him. We show no dignity in running down such a person, pouring contempt on him and hooting at him. Dignity lies in going barefoot to his house and being of service to him.

We have not properly attended to this part of our duty. Though I have been writing about it, I am sorry that I have not stressed the point as well as I should. The experience in Bombay has opened my eyes. It has brought home to me the shallowness of my tolerance. If every time I had strongly condemned verbal attacks on those co-operating with the Government, we would have advanced much further by now. If, every time a cap was snatched away, I had expressed my strongest disapproval of the action, things would have been much better today than they are. I know that, for a man who has the privilege of being the leader of such a great fight, it is a heinous sin not to exercise the utmost vigilance. If the general in this battle is much too weak or mild or feels himself helpless, he had better give up his leadership.

Now that we have realized our error, let us not be guilty of it again.

We should now banish from our minds all resentment against those who co-operate, against Parsis, Christians and Englishmen. Let us regard them too as our brothers and stop ostracizing them. We should not interrupt their water-supply or prevent barbers from serving them. We should see that their needs have been provided before we think of ours and should take pleasure in serving them. If,

and only if, we understand this law which all religions teach, we shall get swaraj easily enough and soon. At every place, therefore, where preparations are afoot for starting civil disobedience, the first thing we should do is to meet every person who co-operates with the Government and demonstrate our friendly regard for him in spite of our differences with him.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-12-1921

80. HINDU-MUSLIM-PARSI

I continue to be flooded with letters from Hindus and Parsis, both men and women. The correspondents blame each other's community. This is not the way to forge real unity. Hindus and Muslims should remember that Parsis are a small community and are mostly concentrated in one place. That is why their faults are immediately noticed and their virtues are easily forgotten. If we always see only faults in other members of our family, we shall end by imagining that we are the only perfect ones in the world. All others will seem to us so full of defects that we shall feel defiled even by their touch. But the truth is that a person who always points at others' evils is himself generally the greatest sinner of all.

He who picks holes in others only betrays his own weakness. Those Hindus and Muslims who always speak against Parsis are themselves weak, there is no doubt about it. If we see only our own faults, we shall ourselves rise and raise others too. Our great error has been that we forgot tolerance. Having accepted a new religion, we forgot its restraints and became fanatics. We discovered non-co-operation and came to understand its efficacy, and so we believed that all those who did not understand it lacked intelligence and wisdom, that they were traitors and sinners. By doing this, we only disgraced our non-co-operation. We forgot that only yesterday we ourselves graced meetings of people who favoured co-operation. We lost patience. We forced people to take off their foreign caps, but conveniently overlooked the foreign dhoti on our waist!

We started criticizing Parsis severely, taking it for granted that they would never come round. We forgot that they had contributed to the Angora Fund and to the Tilak Swaraj Fund. We lost sight of the fact that many of them wore khadi and that even Parsi women had

started wearing it. We forgot all this and became enraged with our Parsi brothers and sisters. We did not remember the sacrifices made by some of them.

But some people ask me: "What about the fact that it was the Parsis who started all the trouble?" Would we not do better to think what we would have done, had we been only a lakh? If we but imagine ourselves reduced from the twenty-two crores or the seven crores that we are to the number of one lakh and think how we would behave then, we would understand what it is to be in such a plight. Every reader must have had the experience of living as a member of a minority at some place or other. Let him recall his feelings at that time. When Hindus and Muslims have still not shed fear of each other, why should they expect all at once that the Parsis should give up their fear? If Hindus and Muslims, having created bad blood between them and the Parsis, imagine that they will rule the country, they will be cherishing a wicked desire. It is their primary duty to befriend the minority communities and convince them that they are safe in independent India. If they only try to win over the minorities, they will discover invaluable jewels among them.

Let us never forget that God is the Help of the helpless. If we protect the weak, we shall qualify ourselves for His protection. When Maulana Abdul Bari Saheb wrote to the effect that success or failure in winning the friendship of the minorities will provide our test, he was stating the simple truth. So long as we do not allay their fears, we shall never ourselves be free from fear.

Hindus and Muslims should not desire, or act as if they desired, that members of the minority communities should come seeking their favour. It is our duty to take the initiative, and cultivate friendship with Parsis, Christians and members of other minority communities.

I do not suggest that, in doing this, we should flatter them. It is essential that we share their sufferings, take care not to quarrel with them, bear with them even if they co-operate with the Government, abstain from criticizing their dresses of foreign material, never get angry with them on this score and sincerely look upon them as our brothers. If two Parsis and a Christian happen to be our neighbours, we should not act as if they were utter strangers to us; our duty is to serve and cultivate their acquaintance.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-12-1921

81. FORTHCOMING SESSION OF CONGRESS

When this issue is out, there will be 20 days to go before the Congress session. This session will be completely different from the previous ones. Though it may not celebrate the winning of swaraj, it will have to do something very like it, i.e., will have to prove its fitness for swaraj in everything it does. Efficiency in management, perfection of manners, and a spirit of fearlessness and independence which will leave nothing to be desired—we shall have to display all this.

Our management should be so perfect that we must not appear to have lost sight of the smallest detail. The arrangements for board, lodging, bathing and sanitation should be satisfying in every way. There should be a place for throwing refuse, and a place for storing water. Perfect cleanliness must meet the eye everywhere despite accumulation of waste water, refuse and night-soil. No puddles should be seen anywhere. Though latrines will be used by all, everything must present a clean appearance. Answering the call of nature is an elementary function of the body and, as all of us who will be assembling for the Congress will have their physical needs, cleanliness should receive our first attention. Khadinagar ought to provide an object-lesson in cleanliness.

People should be educated beforehand through leaflets and speeches so that they do not make noises, do not collect in crowds anywhere in Khadinagar, and obey the directions given by the volunteers. They should not enter grounds to which entry is forbidden and should not insist on going towards a place when stopped. They should see that, in any part which they enter, they do not inconvenience others. All these are proofs of our capacity to live as members of a community and should be in evidence on this occasion.

Volunteers must not speak with disrespect even to the poorest. They must not order anybody about as if they were policemen, but say politely what they wish to say. A volunteer's manners should be the exact opposite of a policeman's.

Shopkeepers should be honest in the price they charge for every article and should not think of robbing the guests. This will be evidence of our being a cultured people.

There will be a whole crowd of non-co-operators, both genuine and otherwise. Let them not imagine that they have been sent to rule

over the earth. They should rather think that they are born only to serve others. Let us hope that everyone will attend the session in khadi. All members [of the Reception Committee] and delegates should be clad in khadi, but nobody should insult guests or tourists or visitors, whatever their dress. Those who are known to be in favour of co-operation should also be listened to with respect. Not even a child should be touched physically. No person should be held by his garment. Though the poet's line, "Look, none dares to catch the poor goat by the ear as she moves leisurely by" turned out wrong about the British rule, we should see that it does not about swaraj.

If we are thinking of thrusting the whole burden of management on the Chairman of the Reception Committee, we had better write off the Congress session as a failure. The Chairman is only our agent. He can succeed and win credit only if thousands come forward to help him. Volunteers should be his hands and feet. Things can be managed only if they move round all parts of Ahmedabad and let people feel the charm of their presence. No new-comer should be at a loss to find a place for want of proper guidance, and delegates, whether known to us or not, should get all facilities.

These things are no more than a test of our fitness. I pray to God that the citizens of Ahmedabad and the people of Gujarat will emerge successful from it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-12-1921

82. MY NOTES

MY IGNORANCE

There is no limit to my ignorance of the geography of Gujarat. A resident of Anand and Shri Abbas Saheb, Kheda's captain, triumphantly point out an error¹ made by me and tell me that Dakor is not included in the Anand taluka so that I burden the latter with the responsibility of reforming it. Though I know that Dakor is included in the Thasra taluk, somehow an impression remained with me, when writing the article, that it was in the Anand taluk. I apologize to the reader for my ignorance, but wish all the same to cling to the statement I made in error. Though, for administrative convenience,

¹ *Vide* "To Bardoli-Anand", 27-11-1921.

Dakor is included in the Thasra taluk, Anand cannot disown its responsibility. It is not possible that all the residents of the Anand taluk should become religious-minded, that is, brave, courteous and truthful, and yet should produce no effect on the neighbouring Dakor. I do not put the burden of reforming Dakor on the Anand taluk, but I shall treat the former as a barometer registering the improvement which takes place in the Anand taluk.

CHANGE THE HEART

The reforms I need, the reforms which can win success for Anand and Bardoli, will be useless if they are superficial. They should go deep. People's hearts should be changed. There should be no pretence of fearlessness; but fear should be truly destroyed. Peace should not be put on but should be intelligently practised. Khadi should not be merely worn but passionately loved. The spinning-wheel should not be formally worshipped but plied in every home as a religious duty. This alone will lead us to victory. If we remain slaves at heart, we would never attain freedom.

A NOVEL STRUGGLE

This is a test of satyagraha, of our firmness in clinging to truth. To this day, there has been no nation in the world which claimed to adhere to truth and won its freedom. By adopting the means of their choice, nations did not win independence but acquired power over others. England is not free, but only powerful. It has enslaved us. To a slave, his master seems free and he strives to be like the latter and so finds pleasure in enslaving others. Such a slave never becomes really free, but is always subservient to anyone stronger than he is.

TRUTH MEANS TRUTH

But, at the moment, I do not wish to take the reader so deep into the matter. Let our freedom be of what kind it will, we have resolved to win it through satyagraha. We shall not, therefore, get it through hypocrisy. Those who have joined satyagraha without understanding its meaning or, if they understand it, have joined it with ulterior motives, will be able to satisfy neither themselves nor the people and, in the end, they will feel that they have gained nothing, and that will

indeed be so. Shall we really be free from the sin of untouchability if we look down upon *Dheds* and *Bhangis* and mix with them merely for show? So long as we do not purify our minds and look upon them as our brothers and sisters and share their sufferings, we shall not win freedom, for until then we shall simply not be fit for it. It is on their account that our progress will be retarded. How far can a person walk by pretending that he has no fever and persuading himself that he is strong enough? If, merely through fear, we have been making a show of Hindu-Muslim friendship, we cannot possibly remain together till the last and our insincerity will be betrayed at the critical time. How can we win swaraj without being tested to the utmost? Even if British officials are deceived, Hindus and Muslims will, in such circumstances, start fighting amongst themselves. We shall never be able to make a beginning with swaraj. Right from the start the two communities will hate and fear each other. We shall, therefore, go forward only if our friendship is genuine.

OUR CONDITION

Though I am impatient to get swaraj, I can be equally patient and wait for it. It is my advice to all to be like me. It will be easy to win swaraj if we really adopt the means we have decided to adopt. Without them, I think it impossible to get swaraj not only this year but in this generation.

We should bear in mind that we are altogether in a different position than others. Our numbers are our strength, and they are also our weakness. In no other country except India are there followers of two different religions who, right to this day, regard each other as enemies; in no other country do the majority of the people have a cowardly fear of using arms and in no other country are human beings the victims of so much hatred as *Dheds* and *Bhangis* are in India. Hence, the remedies for the ills of our country should also be new.

LEST WE FORGET

I hope Gujarat will not remain complacent. Our task will not be accomplished with wooden swords. The sword of satyagraha is stronger and sharper than a sword of steel. Fighting with it is no child's play but a serious affair. There is no room in it at all for falsehood. If we learn to be truthful, we can win swaraj this year.

We will not, however, act in a different way after we have won swaraj, and our difficulties will not have decreased. At present most of us are engaged in fighting, that is, in receiving blows. But afterwards we shall have to build, find solutions to delicate problems and to run the government. Will we reintroduce untouchability at that time? Will we wear less khadi, or more rather? Will we set fire to the spinning-wheels, or have more of them working? Will the Hindus and the Muslims then forget each other and both forget the Christians and the Parsis and behave as utter strangers to one another? Shall we have then no schools to run? On the contrary, shall we not have to run even the schools which are at present known as Government schools? Shall we then be crowding the courts, or will the very system of pleading be altered and important changes introduced in the constitution of the courts? Let no one be too sure, either, that all at once we shall have a profusion of efficient people. If there is scarcity of such persons today, there will be more of it afterwards. We shall have to run the administration. For this, we have sown the seed at Nagpur. As we have sown, so shall we reap.

AFTER A YEAR

If, therefore, any people believe that we shall have a holiday after December, they will be making the greatest error. Whether we get swaraj now or after some time, we shall not be acting in a different way after it is won. We shall have to continue to work for self-purification even then. What remains undone now will have to be finished later. If Anand, Bardoli and other talukas wish to fight, they should realize that, having taken the field once, they cannot retreat even if it takes a year or several years. If it is certain that victory will be theirs provided they take the lead, they should also resolve to put up with hardships for the time being. No one will comment if they do not take the first step. If they do, however, they will have no option but to stand firm and die or win. Such courage and fortitude are absolutely necessary.

NO NEED TO BE DISHEARTENED

I do not write this to dishearten Gujaratis, but to point out to them their duties and responsibilities. I write this so that Gujaratis do not enter the field under the misapprehension that there is nothing very difficult about the thing and then, by retreating, invite ridicule upon themselves. Those who have understood our struggle and have learnt to follow truth and non-violence will not at all be dismayed by

what I have said here. I have given this warning in clear words so that if any Gujarati has yet not understood the meaning of our fight, he may now clearly understand it.

SACRED WITHIN LIMITS

I have often shown that the sanctity of khadi lies in the fact of its being swadeshi. Wheat is sacred grain, but it is eaten by a sannyasi and also by a thief. Likewise, the wicked and the virtuous both may wear the sacred khadi. Anyone who forsakes what is the dharma of an Indian in so far as his body is concerned commits an error and harms the country. It is true that, in this period of transition, other virtues are attributed to khadi and hypocrites prosper in their hypocrisy by dressing themselves in khadi. This cannot go on for long. When khadi comes to be regarded as our national dharma, it will be esteemed for its real value. Those who have understood the duty of wearing and producing khadi will never stop wearing it even though they may observe its misuse at some places.

There will be no difficulty now in seeing the answers to some questions raised by a friend, questions which appear like moral dilemmas. It is our good fortune that in some places in the country people now consider it necessary to use khadi at marriages and deaths. At some marriages which took place in Ahmedabad recently, khadi was used—though not solely—to a large extent. It is reported that one bridegroom refused to marry the bride if she was not dressed in a khadi sari. The question raised is, whether, in order to encourage the use of khadi, we should attend weddings which are otherwise objectionable. Supposing our not attending hurts the couple and they go to the length of even giving up khadi! It is cowardice to ask such a question. We should not allow ourselves to be bribed by khadi. We should value each thing on its merits. If an old man of sixty dressed in ochre-coloured khadi, wearing a string of rosary beads and his body smeared with sacred ash, sets forth to marry a girl of twelve, we should certainly not attend the marriage merely to encourage the use of khadi or commend his simplicity. Similarly, we should not attend the marriage if a young man of twenty-five, on the death of his wife, gets himself engaged to another girl on the cremation ground itself and goes the very next day to marry her. There are different standards for khadi and for marriage. Just as we would hesitate to attend an otherwise unexceptionable marriage if khadi is not used on the occasion, so also we should not go to celebrate the marriage of an

ill-matched pair though either may be loaded with khadi.

There is a letter from another friend on this same subject, and he writes with a sad heart:

We do recognize the importance of khadi but, at a wedding where the bride, the bridegroom and their close relatives are dressed in khadi and all the women also are in khadi, what should we do when they start singing immodest marriage songs which shock the ears? Should we, for the sake of khadi, force ourselves to hear the songs, or disregarding khadi, save our ears from being polluted by them?

I have not reproduced the question with the intention of giving an answer. The correspondent has riot stated it to get one. He has only drawn my attention to this custom in the hope that I shall criticize it. He wonders how we can hope for the rule of dharma to be established when even small girls receive such education in immodesty. The question makes me feel unhappy. When women sing such immodest songs, they must hardly be conscious of their being so. If such ugly customs live on, the responsibility lies with the men. It has simply not occurred to them to share their new knowledge or awakening with the women. Men can easily employ uncompromising satyagraha in such matters. This is the age of the young. If they are virtuous and humble, they can end such evils in no time. Educated girls can also resort to satyagraha against such customs and end them. Every girl or woman who reads this can take up such matters and oppose the customs. They would soon disappear if intelligent women refuse to follow them.

ILL-MATCHED PAIRS

The problem of ill-matched pairs and men marrying for the second or third time is a difficult one. Perhaps, this disease is to be found in Kathiawar more than anywhere else. It is almost impossible to eradicate it so long as there are poor parents who are ready to sell their daughters and sensual rich men are ready to pay so that they may be able to gratify their lust. Only if, through the spiritual awakening which is taking place in consequence of the movement for swaraj, men learn to keep their passions under control will no old man of sixty who may have lost his wife set out the next day to marry again. This reform cannot be brought about by society taking upon itself to keep a watch on its members misdeeds. Denunciation will not stop suffering of this kind. It can be stopped only through gentle

persuasion and compassion. The father who sells his daughter and the man who purchases an innocent girl, both suffer from a disease and deserve pity. If all of us go on merely denouncing such persons, they will harden their hearts and lose all sense of shame. However, if we treat their disease and appeal to their sense of decency, they will certainly come to have good sense. Each caste can bring about immediate reform in this matter. For a person who has a sense of right and wrong, not to attend such a marriage is not, according to me, merely a means of ending this evil, it is his dharma. In following this dharma, however, one should be prompted by compassion, not by contempt and pride.

TO "DHARALAS", "GARASIAS" AND OTHERS

You claim to be Kshatriyas. In this holy *yajana* we need the co-operation of all communities and castes. Swaraj will be difficult to win so long as we do not learn to look upon one another as our brothers and to protect one another.

The Kshatriyas' function is to protect. Instead of doing this, many of our *Dharala* brothers have taken to a wrong path. The Government often extends to them the law pertaining to criminal tribes.

I appeal to you to use your courage and capacity for suffering in the service of the country. The courage required in laying down one's life is superior to that required for killing, and the whole world admires it. I hope that you will show the courage to die, without killing anyone, for the sake of the country.

I beg of you to forget past enmities and remove your neighbours' fears by adopting peaceful ways.

If you start carding, spinning and weaving in your homes, even during lean years you will never suffer from want of food or clothing. All these three processes are easy to learn and the work is an honourable occupation for respectable people. Any family can maintain itself with this work. I hope you will take it up.

Your well-wisher,

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-12-1921

83. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI¹

Tuesday, December 6, 1921

After hearing about what is going on there, I think you should now be brave. This means that, whenever necessary, you should speak out, calmly but firmly, and put up opposition. If there is no bitterness, and no anger under any circumstances, even when you oppose, you will be listened to by one and all. On the other side, you should keep your electors well-informed and see that your constituency becomes strong. If in this way the truth comes out, the trouble which broke out for a while will calm down. Those of you who insist that everything should be done in a clean way should meet together and decide what ought to be done. You should have no anger in your heart, but only love and compassion towards those who appear to be committing a mistake. That is bound to influence them. This is the path of *Rajayoga* which I have shown to you. You are fit for that path. I want you not to give way to despair.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 41

84. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

ASHRAM,

December 7, 1921

DEAR SHANKERLAL,

I have received both your letters. The steps you have taken, seem to be appropriate. I have written to you a letter yesterday. It is good to take all measures without feeling upset and remaining neutral. It will also be proper to clarify the issue fully with Mrs. Naidu.

Your second letter indicates that you have not understood me. A lot of money has been lying with the Navajivan. I felt that instead of allowing that money to remain idle it would be better that you withdrew the amount put in by you and used it for some other purpose. I Hence, had instructed Anandanand long ago to send that

¹ This is in reply to several communications from the addressee to Gandhiji regarding activities in Bombay.

money to you. But the matter remained in abeyance because of audit objection. In the end I had written that the money may be sent without waiting for audit clearance and that is how he has sent you the money. How can there be any question of removing your name? Do not have any misunderstanding. I myself decided on this measure purely in the interest of procedure. It is as good as your withdrawing the capital invested by you in your own factory when it is released. Even now if there is anything unexplained write to me so that I may explain. Ultimately, you must follow your own wishes.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32699

85. TELEGRAM TO C. R. DAS

[On or after *December 7, 1921*]¹

HEARTIEST CONGRATULATION. FIFTY WOMEN OF BENGAL LED BY YOUR WIFE AND SISTER. SWARAJ IS CERTAIN AND NEAR. I ENVY YOU, HOPE PERFECT PEACE.

Amrit Bazaar Patrika, 13-12-1921

86. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

SABARMATI,

*Friday, [Before December 8, 1921]*¹

DEAR SHANKERLAL,

I enclose an application addressed to the trustees. We intend to incur a sizeable expenditure to help the untouchables here. Some money has already been spent. Hence this application. Some money has to be spent on the Vidyapith too. All the Gujarat money has been either spent or is blocked. It is not possible to withdraw the money tied up with swadeshi. So you must place this application before the trustees immediately. After they pass the application, we shall obtain the sanction of the Working Committee.

¹ Mrs. Das and others were arrested on December 7. They were, however, released immediately.

¹ From the contents; *vide e* "Letter to K.P. Keshava Menon", 27-10-1921; 19-10-1921 ;" Letter to Shankerlal Banker", 8-12-1921

You would also have received Mathuradas's application for carrying on swadeshi work in Malabar. The work can be started if the application is disposed of early.

You must have provision of at least Rs. 10,00,000 for swadeshi work in Gujarat. Without that it will not be possible to organize Kathiawar to the extent desired.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati : S. N. 32695

87. NOTES

NO DESPAIR

What will happen in the Punjab where Lalaji is to be imprisoned and in Assam where Messrs Phookan and Bardolai have been already convicted and similarly in Ajmer where Maulana Mohiuddin, Chairman of both the Khilafat and the Congress Committees, has been imprisoned?—such was the question asked by anxious inquirers. My answer was that the cause would progress for the incarceration of these chiefs. As a result of these imprisonments I should expect greater restraint, a greater sense of responsibility in these provinces. I should expect a greater output of khadi, a greater awakening among the students and the lawyers. Bravery of the leaders must prove infectious, if we are fit to govern ourselves. We must rise higher *with* repression not *after*. It will pay a government based on force to resort to repression each time people are cowed down by it even though they may revive in the end. Governments by force live for the day and thrive only upon repression. They die a natural death when their forcible measures do not answer the purpose for which they are intended. We never deserved our leaders, if after their withdrawal we could not make their spirit exhibit itself in and through us.

SIKH IMMOLATION

The Sikh countrymen are solving their own and India's problem. All their best men are offering themselves as sacrifice for the sake of their faith. In soldierly fashion one after another they are seeking imprisonment without fuss and flutter and without the slightest violence. If the same calm courage continues, they will without a shadow of doubt solve their own and with it also

solving India's problem. All India is watching with eager expectation this religious manifestation among the Sikhs.

REWARD OF ADOPTION

It is surprising that, so far as I know, no wire has been received by the Bombay Press regarding Mr. Stokes arrest in Lahore. I see a paragraph in *The Tribune* referring to the event. I cannot imagine that no wire has been despatched about such a sensational arrest. My inference is that the wires notifying the arrest have been suppressed or delayed as were the wires about the arrest of the Ali Brothers. Mr. Stokes was arrested on the 3rd instant at Lahore cantonment in connection with articles contributed by him to *The Tribune* as calculated to "spread sedition and promote hatred between different classes of His Majesty's subjects." The District Magistrate offered to release Mr. Stokes on bail but he refused to be so released. This is a unique move on the part of the Government. Mr. Stokes is an American who has naturalized himself as a British subject and who has made India his home in a manner in which perhaps no other American or Englishman has. He rendered eminent services during the War and is known in the highest quarters as a well-wisher of the Government. No one can suspect him of ill will. But that he should feel with and like an Indian and share his sorrows and throw himself into the struggle has proved too much for the Government. To leave him free to criticize the Government was intolerable and so his white skin has proved no protection for him. The Government is determined to quash the movement at any cost. But it is beyond its ability to do so. Mr. Stokes' arrest perhaps demonstrates the weakness of the Government's case as not even Lalaji's does. Lalaji has no reward of war service to his credit. Lalaji is known to be "an agitator". He is not a white man. When therefore Mr. Stokes is put away the strongest suspicion arises in respect of the *bona fides* of the Government case even in the estimation of an outsider.

BARDOLI

I have paid in the company of Maulana Azad Sobhani the much expected visit to Bardoli taluka. It has a population of nearly one hundred thousand. It has about 140 villages. It had about sixty-five Government schools. Of these fifty-one have been nationalized. The Government schools are continued in some cases but have an attendance of less than 10 boys. The national schools have charge of

over six thousand children including a few hundred girls. Hand-spinning is compulsory in all these schools, though it is not yet being regularly taught or practised. Most of the schools have been nationalized only during the past three months. In all the villages I found the women taking keen interest in the national movement. We met thousands of people and visited six villages during the two days of our stay. The majority of men were dressed from top to toe in hand-spun khadi and a large number of women too were so dressed. Those who were not complained that they could not obtain khadi. This does not however mean that the people, either men or women, have given up the use of their old foreign stock. Many, I am sorry to say, still use it for domestic wear. Much is still left to be done in the shape of manufacture of khadi. There is a good number of wheels but very few looms in the taluka. The reader will be pained to hear that its staple crop is cotton which has hitherto been all exported. There is complete harmony between Hindus and Mussulmans. The relations with the co-operators have not been bitter. The untouchables freely attend meetings. I have however suggested that it can hardly be considered satisfactory so long as the managers of national schools do not go out of their way to bring untouchable children to their schools and villagers do not take a personal interest in the welfare of these suppressed countrymen. Many liquor shops are deserted. From all the accounts received by me there has been little or no intimidation resorted to in order to achieve this very wonderful result. In two or three cases volunteers visited villages, and on the parents hesitating to withdraw their children from Government school; sat *dharna*¹ and fasted until the poor bewildered parents had complied with their request. I told the workers, that even this kind of pressure bordered on violence, for we had no right to make people conform to our opinion by fasting. One may conceivably fast for enforcing one's right but not for imposing one's opinion on another.

There was, too, a social boycott of a liquor dealer who had not kept his promise. I have advised even against such a boycott among a people so helpless as ours. Strong public opinion must for the time being be our only remedy for correcting internal abuses. Social boycott such as stopping barbers, washermen, etc., is undoubtedly a punishment which may be good in a free society but it becomes oppressive in a country which has for years been governed by force.

¹ Sitting at one spot for the purpose of exerting moral pressure

But I was remarkably struck by the almost completely peaceful manner in which the taluka of Bardoli has made a radical change for the better in many departments of life. It was an agreeable surprise, too, to find the movement being handled by elderly men who have never taken part in politics. The reader will be pleasingly astonished to find that all the wonderful work in Bardoli has been done by unpaid volunteers. Bardoli happens to be a taluka in which there are few paupers and most people have easy means of livelihood. This manifestation of public life is all the more remarkable on that account and is mainly if not entirely due to the utterly selfless services of a band of able and enthusiastic workers who only know to do or die. But in spite of all this great work I was reluctantly obliged to give my verdict in which Maulana Azad Sobhani fully concurred and which was accepted by the noble band of workers, that Bardoli, before it challenged the might of a great empire, must complete its swadeshi programme to the extent of manufacturing sufficient hand-spun to clothe itself, must freely admit untouchables into the national schools and must be so far non-violent that solitary unarmed co-operators and English and other officials might feel absolutely secure in their midst. And these conditions, God willing, the good people of Bardoli have undertaken to fulfil in a few months' time. An elderly co-operator put down six months at the outside. An enthusiastic young man who knew what he was talking about put down the period at one month. I close this happy recollection of our visit to Bardoli by informing the reader, that several co-operators whom I met testified to the peaceful and zealous manner in which the volunteers had worked in this taluka which, let us hope, will still have the privilege, if necessary, of giving battle to the Government.

PRESIDENT ELECT

Lord Ronaldshay has addressed a homily to the President-elect and warned him in effect that if he does not behave himself at Ahmedabad, His Excellency will teach him a lesson. I know that it will not be the President's fault if he misses the lesson. He has sacrificed his all for his country. He is taking up the high office of President at the most critical period in the history of the country. He is tirelessly infusing new life into Bengal. He is preaching and practising the gospel of non-violence in season and out of season. He will need all the loyal co-operation that we can give him in his arduous task. It will be rendered light if all the delegates come prepared with full and

fixed determination to prosecute the struggle to a victorious end in the face of every danger.

DELEGATES

I am hoping that in every case delegates will have been elected in accordance with the constitution. The delegates should thus be the real representatives of the electors who have had their names registered in Congress books. Where a delegate has been imprisoned, a by election should take place to fill the vacancy. There should be a full house to pass the necessary resolutions. My ideal of a delegate is that he bears a spotless private and public character, that he knows the condition of his district in terms of the Congress programme, that he knows hand-spinning so as to be able to teach it, that he habitually wears hand-spun khadi, that he believes in non-violence as his creed for the attainment of the national goal and for the perpetuation of Hindu-Muslim-Sikh-Parsi-Christian-Jew unity, that he practises in his own person all that part of the programme of non-co-operation which is applicable to him, that he has prepared himself for imprisonment and placed at the disposal of the nation the bulk if not the whole of his time. In addition if he is a Hindu, he must have discarded untouchability and done some service during the year to the untouchables of his district. It is surely not much to expect six thousand staunch, true and fearless whole-time workers for the service of thirty crores of people. I would expect too the full proportion of Mussulman and Sikh delegates. I hope too that every province will send a fair number of women and untouchables as delegates.

MEN AND MEASURES

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has sent the following frank and full reply in answer to my inquiry regarding the charge¹ brought against him by a correspondent of transferring his condemnation of the existing system of Government to its English authors and administrators:

I spoke on three occasions at the Provincial Conference at Agra. I cannot repeat the language I used but I am very clear as to what I meant. On the first occasion I protested against some veiled references to violence. Hasrat Mohani was our President and in his presidential address he expressed his dissatisfaction with the creed of non-violence. Several other speakers used

¹ *Vide* "What Is Abuse?", 17-11-1921

violent language and apparently looked forward to a time when violence would have full play. All this took place on the Karachi Resolution. I laid stress on the non violent character of the struggle and said that swadeshi was our only hope.

On the second day, I proposed the swadeshi resolution. Notice of an amendment involving a boycott of British goods had been given. It was on this occasion that I probably used the phrases and words which have been misunderstood by Mr. Gandhi's questioner. My whole argument was that so far no way but that of swadeshi had been shown to us to achieve our freedom. I dealt with violence and disposed of it. I then dealt with various other objections. I stated that I desired most earnestly to rid India of English domination and the charkha and swadeshi were apparently the only means to bring this about.

I spoke a third time in answer to the amendment about boycott of British goods. I had opposed this amendment, and a very heated debate had taken place, about a score of speakers having spoken on either side. The amendment was put to the vote and lost.

It is evident that I have been misreported by some papers. I have not so far seen any report of my speeches and do not know which paper can have done so. My references to "English domination" or the "English Government" have been made to apply to the English people. I may have used the words *vaxstksa dks fganksLrku ls vyx djuk*¹ or some such language, and the reporter may have seized hold of this without reference to the context. As a matter of fact, the very circumstance that I proposed to expel "the English" by swadeshi ought to have convinced the listener that I referred to the system and not to individuals. It would be absurd to try to expel a single Englishman by the charkha.

I cannot of course say that my feeling towards Englishmen as such is entirely impersonal. I hate the system but sometimes, in spite of myself, I cannot help feeling ill will towards a certain individual for some time at least, and sometimes the ill will is transferred to the English people as a whole. But the feeling is always momentary. I am really surprised at the general absence of ill will against the English.

It is somewhat curious that the sentences to which exception has been taken occurred in a speech opposing a boycott of British goods. I opposed this on the ground, *inter-alia*, that it was opposed to the basic principle of non-co-operation, that it was based on hate and not love and so

¹ "To expel the English from India"

on. No one who heard me and who understood Urdu could have gone away with the impression that I was taking part in a crusade against individual Englishmen.

It is always difficult to differentiate between a man and his action. I can well believe that if an Englishman insulted me, I would flare up and hit him. But I think this would be weakness on my part. I have not enough control over myself. I am apt to lose temper at the slightest provocation. I am occasionally *very* angry with Englishmen. But I have never experienced the desire to "expel" Englishmen as such. In spite of everything I am a great admirer of the English, and in many things I feel even now that an Englishman can understand me better than the average Indian.

The letter illustrates the danger of relying on newspaper reports. The late Sir Pherozeshah Mehta so dreaded the reports that he never made an important pronouncement except in writing. The late Mr. Gokhale used often to insist upon revising reports of his own speeches. If these masters of oratory were in danger of being misreported, what is to be said of those who make their speeches in Hindustani and have the misfortune to be reported in English? In spite of all the goodwill in the world, reporters have rarely succeeded in reporting my speeches correctly. Indeed the best thing would be not to report speeches at all, except when they have undergone revision by the speakers themselves. If this simple rule were followed much misunderstanding could be avoided.

Young India, 8-12-1921

88. *IN EARNEST*

The arrest of Lala Lajpat Rai and Messrs Lalkhan, Santanam and Gopichand in the Punjab, of Messrs Phookan and Bardolai in Assam, Babu Jitendralal Bannerjee in Bengal, Maulana Mohiuddin and others in Ajmer and Mr. Harkarannath Mishra and others in Lucknow means business. It shows not merely that the Government is in earnest but that it is not going to tolerate non-co-operation any longer; no longer is it a question of putting down violence, it is one of compelling co-operation. And this is as it should be. The Government had to appear in its true colours some day or other. No Prince had such welcome as is being offered to the Prince of Wales. The chosen leaders of the people are being put away so that the latter may accept the lead of the Government and so that there may be no hartal on the

day of the Prince's entry into the various provinces.

All this the Government of India, constituted as it is, has a right to do, and we non-co-operate because it claims and exercises such right on due occasion. The right consists in its imposing its will upon the people, not recognizing that of the people to have their own way except on pain of being imprisoned. The issue is clear, and neatly summed up in the Lawrence statue whose removal the Government will not allow although it is the property in law of the people. It must govern by the pen or the sword. Once more the choice has been offered to the people. Will they accept the honourable imposition of the sword and reject the degrading dictation of the pen?

The people cannot complain if after fifteen months' training they do not know what to do. Indeed the best thing they can do is to do nothing, i.e., to remain as they were and continue as if nothing extraordinary had happened. England did not stop the War because Lord Kitchner died."Business as usual" was her motto. She was well organized for violence—well enough to do without a general or to find an endless succession of generals. Are we so well organized for non-violence as to do without leaders, i.e., have an endless succession of them?

In the person of Lala Lajpat Rai the Government have arrested one of the greatest of us. His name is known all over India. His self-sacrifice has enshrined him in the hearts of his countrymen. He has laboured as very few have for non-violence side by side with the freest expression and organization of public opinion. His arrest typifies as nothing else can the attitude of the Government.

The Punjab has lost no time in choosing a successor. The Punjabis could not have made a better choice than by electing Agha Sufdar. He is one of the truest of Mussulmans and one of the bravest of Indians. His services are all rendered in a most unassuming manner. I have no doubt that he will command the same loyal co-operation that Lalaji has. The best honour that the Punjabis can do to Lalaji is to continue his work as if he was in their midst. It is blind, foolish and selfish love which dissolves with the disappearance permanent or temporary of the earthy tabernacle which holds the deathless spirit. The Punjabis may not always get an Agha Sufdar to guide them in the place of Lalaji. He may be removed from their midst sooner than we may expect. In well-ordered organizations leaders are elected for convenience of work, not for extraordinary merit. A leader is only first among equals. Some one must be put first,

but he is and should be no stronger than the weakest link in the chain. Having therefore made our selection we must follow him, or the chain is broken and all is lost.

I wish I could impart my faith to the people that nothing much remains to be done in order to take us to the heaven. The way is clear before us. The President-elect has stated it in unequivocal terms:

My first word and my last word to you is never to forsake the ideal of non-violent non-co-operation. I know it is a difficult creed to follow. I know that sometimes the provocation is so great that it is extremely difficult to remain non-violent in thought, word and deed. The success of the movement however depends upon this great principle.

In order to enable us to enforce this great principle in our own lives we must avoid all occasions for provocation. We therefore need no demonstrations now nor big meetings, we must discipline those who have become awakened to withstand provocation and to do constructive national work which is organisation of carding, hand-spinning and hand-weaving so as to enable the nation to supplement her slender resources and to find work for the idle hours of the millions. Hindu-Muslim unity is an article of faith with us. It is not to be cultivated or demonstrated except by all working together for national uplift and therefore devoting their time exclusively to manufacture of khadi.

As soon as we have attained a complete boycott of foreign cloth and begun to manufacture our own khadi in our respective provinces and villages, we can become free probably without having to resort to mass civil disobedience. Therefore aggressive civil disobedience should be avoided, at least till after finishing the boycott of foreign cloth and qualifying for the manufacture of hand-spun khadi. Defensive civil disobedience which is forced on us in the prosecution of our campaign we ought to welcome whenever it comes.

It will be a distinct sign of weakness and unfitness for swaraj, if these imprisonments dishearten or demoralize us. He is no soldier who is afraid or unwilling to pay the toll demanded of him. The more he is called upon to pay, the more glad he is to find himself the first to have to pay. Let us believe and know that we must provide the Government jails with all the work they can take. I am convinced that it is not argument but suffering of the innocent that appeals both to the persecutor and the persecuted. The nation will shed her slothful indifference and the Governors their callousness by the sight of such

suffering. But it must be the willing suffering of the strong and not the unwilling suffering of the helpless weak. Those who have gone or are about to go to jail can say, "It is finished." We who remain outside have to prove worthy of their finished work by continuing their work till we have set them free. or have joined them. He serves best who suffers most.

Young India, 8-12-1921

89. WHAT TO DO?

Mr. Jayakar's address has been followed by a conference of all Maharashtra at Akola. Mr. Jayakar is a thinker, he loves his country. He commands and deserves respectful attention. Those who gathered together at Akola are earnest, patriotic, seasoned soldiers. They are amongst the boldest and the most disciplined workers in the land. And one has to pause and think when they dissent from a programme.

Mr. Jayakar's address and the proceedings of the Akola conference have made me think furiously. There is no difficulty about understanding and appreciating the suggested modifications. It is a programme, if I may venture to say so, of unbelief. It is based upon the assumption that swaraj is not attainable within a short time and that we must make such use as we can of the existing machinery with a view to improving it. The programme now being worked is based upon the belief that the existing machinery is worthless and its use only retards our progress and distracts attention .

The corner-stone of the national movement is non-cooperation with violence whether of the pen or the sword. Education and legislation are the instruments today in the hands of the violent. To make use of their law-courts or their legislatures or their schools is to take part in their violence. There is a fundamental distinction between the two processes. The one is aseptic and the other antiseptic They are diametrically opposite. In the one you rely upon the inherent purity of the system to destroy all poisonous germs that have entered the body, and in the other you resort to outside applications, stronger poisons to destroy the intruding germs. Both may be effective but they cannot be used at the same time. We definitely rejected the antiseptic treatment last year. The majority at Maharashtra frankly suggest a return.

We are no longer in the dark. We have the results of fifteen

months' working of the new methods. Rejection of courts, schools and councils is an integral part of the programme. We may not give up parts because we have not achieved full success, if we are convinced that in themselves they are desirable. Although we have not succeeded in emptying the three institutions we have demolished their prestige. They neither worry nor dazzle us. That many parents, many lawyers and many law-givers have not responded, shows that we must make a greater attempt to wean them, not now by arguing but by the exemplary conduct of abstainers. For me they are the Government. Just as I may not apply for a paid post because no Government servant resigns, I may not join the ranks of voluntary servants because the latter do not come away. I am convinced that the country has risen because of the abstention even of the few from association with these emblems of the existing Government.

Inadequate response is an eloquent plea if you will for establishing better schools and panchayats, not for confession of incapacity by returning to the fleshpots of Egypt.

But we have passed the stage of argument. When the sun is shining, you do not need to demonstrate its heat giving power by argument. And if anybody shivers in spite of being in the sun, no amount of argument can convince him of the sun's warmth, nor may you quarrel with the shivering one. He must seek other means, if there be any, of warming himself. My plea is for everyone to act according to his belief. The Congress provides the widest platform. Its creed is incredibly simple. A full-fledged co-operator as well as a nationalist who wants a change in the programme can work in it. Let us not push the mandate theory to ridiculous extremes and become slaves to resolutions of majorities. That would be a revival of brute force in a more virulent form. If rights of minorities are to be respected, the majority must tolerate and respect their opinion and action. There is no reason whatsoever why nationalists may not practise as lawyers or send their children to Government schools or seek election to the councils and still belong to the Congress. Only they may not act in the name of the Congress so long as they have not brought round to their view the majority of Congressmen. It will be the duty of the majority to see to it that minorities receive a proper hearing and are not otherwise exposed to insults. Swaraj will be an absurdity if individuals have to surrender their judgment to the majority.

I wish to make a personal appeal to all Congressmen. I would

ask them to believe me when I say that as leader and originator of the movement inaugurated at Calcutta, I would feel hampered if I have not the hearty co-operation of those who vote for the Programme. I would gladly find myself in a minority and confidently expect to march to victory. This Government cannot stand for one day the determined religious opposition of one district, if only the others will not interfere in the manner Bombay did.

There is room enough in our great country for as many parties as there are honest men. I would welcome an efficient able organization containing men, who believe in using Government institution, and finding what warmth they can give them, even as I would have all organization to extend toleration to those whole-hoggers who wish to cut off all possible connection with the Government. There is no reason why a province which can carry the people with it should not organize itself even on either basis.

I plead, that is to say, for a truthful programme and truthful parties. Let people only work programmes in which they believe implicitly. Loyalty to human institutions has its well defined limits. To be loyal to an organisation must not mean subordination of one's settled convictions. Parties may fall and parties may rise, but it we are to attain freedom, our deep convictions must remain unaffected by such passing changes.

We are on the eve of a new life. We may not see the image of swaraj risen before us at the end of the month but we must feel the warm glow of the coming event in no unmistakable fashion. And we shall feel it only if everyone of us will try to be true to himself. To believe in the infallibility of our means is to attain swaraj. The vote of the Congress this year must not be any more in the nature of an experiment. It should be an emphatic endorsement or rejection of the existing programme.

Young India, 8-12-1921

90. MOPLAH TRAGEDY

Here is an extract from a pathetic letter received by me regarding tragedy :

You could not have missed the Moplah death wagon even amidst the Bombay city tragedy. However I send you two cuttings which tell the tale. It is not a tragedy. It is but a symptom of the mentality that is in charge of affairs

in Malabar. The spirit at the top sets the standards of humanity and duty for those below. The second Press *communiqué* shows us the mentality of the Government of Madras. It admits that Moplah prisoners regularly "travelled" in luggage sealed wagons—"with no evil effects whatsoever"! Only the daily increasing callousness to suffering and brutalization of all concerned made them put in more and more into the given space till the point was reached when 127 full sized men were pushed into an iron van 18 ft. by nine ft. and seven and a half feet high and sealed up without door or windows open, covered goods fashion. The dimensions yield an area of 162 sq. feet for 127 men. They could not possibly sit down. All standing, they could just fill the space tight. Naturally this crucifixion lasted not much over six hours. Will this climax of inhumanity bring it all to an end? If military operations are suspended and the causes for desperation among the whole Moplah community removed, and you and friends are permitted to go into the disturbed area, we can guarantee peace within a week.

The same time I received the foregoing letter I received the following unexpected cutting from *The Servant of India*:

Fortified by an inexhaustible faith in the power of non-co-operators to restore order in Malabar without the use of force, Mr. Gandhi thinks that the present hostilities—for the continuance of which strangely enough he holds Government solely responsible—mean a wanton destruction of the Moplahs. It is unthinkable that the hostilities will terminate only after the whole Moplah race is exterminated, but to those who have the misfortune not to share the simple faith of Mr. Gandhi in the magical powers with which the non-co-operators are gifted, the problem presents complications to which happily Mr. Gandhi's mind is a stranger. However the casuistry of his appeal to the Liberals is hard to beat. He is precluded by his principle of non-co-operation from directly approaching Government in regard to anything; and therefore he wishes to approach them *via* Liberals in the matter of Malabar. For his appeal to the Liberals is for the purpose of getting Government to agree, among other things, to let non-co-operators go to the disturbed area. Is this not co-operation, we ask. In the second place, there is no general prohibition; the non-co-operators as a body are at liberty to travel about in Malabar just as well as anybody else, and they have not yet brought peace to that harried district. But if Mr. Gandhi alone is able to restore order, we would humbly suggest that when the time comes for commencing civil disobedience, he had better select this prohibition order for non-compliance. In that case he would be able at once to break the Government and to prevent the cruelties which are now in progress. In the meantime, he might try and

convert at least the non-co-operators in Malabar that the best way to stop the trouble is for Government to withdraw their troops. The complaint that we have heard is that instead of Government emptying excessive force, they are not employing enough, and are thus deliberately protracting the agony just to teach non-co-operators a lesson.

I was totally unprepared for such a terrible misunderstanding my position by The *Servants of India*. I have employed no casuistry in addressing my appeal to the Liberals. The question of operation does not arise at all. Nor am I ashamed to approach the Government directly a thousand times for permission for a party of peace to proceed to Malabar. In my appeal I have fought the intervention of the Liberals for the sake of compelling the Government to grant the permission. I had assumed knowledge on the part of the Liberals that I was threatened to be turned back when it was known I was about to proceed to Calicut, that Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, when as secretary he tried to proceed to Malabar for relief work, was refused permission that Mr. Yakub Hasan asked for permission, as soon as the outbreak took place, to go to Malabar to be able to pacify the Moplahs. I am quite willing to admit the helplessness of non-co-operators in many matters. The very creed of non-violence brings it about. Non-co-operators do not hesitate to seek permission where it has to be obtained for doing things that promote peace. Their creed prevents them from giving *voluntary* co-operation wherever abstention is possible. Neither do they seek Government assistance where it is possible to avoid it.

The writer of the paragraph cruelly suggests civil disobedience. It is not a weapon to be used for the sake of bravado. If civil disobedience could have ended the trouble, it would have been undertaken long ago. Mass civil disobedience will be undertaken even on this simple issue, when there is a certainty almost of non-violence being observed.

Why is it "strange" that I consider the Government solely responsible for the trouble? They could have avoided the trouble by settling the Khilafat question, they could have avoided it by allowing non-co-operators to take the message of non-violence to the Moplahs. The outbreak would not have taken place if the Collector had consulted the religious sentiment of the Moplahs.

I do indeed accuse the Government of punishing the Moplahs after they have done the mischief instead of protecting the Hindus

from Moplah outrage. Would the Government have acted in the same leisurely fashion if English families had been in danger instead of Hindus, and would it have inhumanly treated so-called rebels had they been Europeans instead of being Moplahs? I am sorry to be forced to the conclusion that the Government are betraying criminal negligence alike in their duty of protecting Hindus and of treating Moplah rebels as human beings.

Young India, 8-12-1921

91. INDIAN ECONOMICS

A friend has placed in my hands a bulletin on Indian Piece-Goods Trade prepared by Mr. A. C. Coubrough C.B.E. by order of the Government of India. It contains the following prefatory note:

The Government of India desire it to be understood that the statement made and the views expressed in this bulletin are those of the author himself.

If so, why has the Government of India burdened the taxpayer with the expense of such bulletins? The one before me is 16th in the series. Do they publish both the sides of the question?

The bulletin under review is intended to be an answer to the swadeshi movement. It is an elaborate note containing a number of charts showing the condition of imports and home manufacture of piece-goods including hand-woven. But it does not assist the reader in studying the movement. The painstaking author has bestowed no pains upon a study of the present movement or its scope. That the Government of India treats the greatest constructive and co-operative movement in the country with supreme contempt and devotes people's money to a vain refutation instead of a sympathetic study and treatment is perhaps the best condemnation that can be pronounced upon the system under which it is carried.

The author's argument is:

1. The movement if successful will act not as a protective but a prohibitive tariff.

2. This must result in merely enriching the Indian capitalist and punishing the consumer.

3. The imports are non-competitive in that the bulk of the kind of piece-goods imported are not manufactured in India.

4. The result of boycotting such piece-goods must be high

prices without corresponding benefit.

5. The boycott therefore being against the law of supply and demand and against the consumer must fail in the end.

6. The destruction of hand-spinning which I have deplored is due to natural causes, viz., the invention of time-saving appliances and was therefore inevitable.

7. The Indian farmer is responsible for his own ruin in that he has indolently neglected cotton culture which was once so good.

8. The best service I can render is therefore to induce the agriculturist to improve the quality of cotton.

9. The author concludes:

If instead of filling homes with useless charkhas he were to start a propaganda for the more intensive cultivation of cotton and particularly for the production of longer-staple cotton, his influence would be felt not only at the present day but for many generations to come.

The reader will thus see, that what I regard as the supreme necessity for the economical salvation of India, the author considers to be rank folly. There is therefore no meeting ground here. And in spite of the prefatory note of the Government of India reproduced by me, the author does represent the Government attitude. I have invited them and the co-operators definitely to make common cause with the people in this movement at any rate. They may not mind its political implications because they do not believe in them. And surely they need not feel sorry if contrary to their expectation, the rise of the charkha results in an increase in the political power of the people. Instead of waging war against khadi, they might have popularized its use and disarmed the terrible suspicion they labour under of wishing to benefit the foreign manufacturer at the expense of the Indian cultivator. My invitation is open for all time. I prophesy that whatever happens to the other parts of the national programme, swadeshi in its present shape will bide for ever and must if India's pauperism is to be banished.

Even though I am a layman, I make bold to say that the so-called laws laid down in books on economics are not immutable like the laws of Medes and Persians, nor are they universal. The economics of England are different from those of Germany. Germany enriched herself by bounty-fed beet sugar. England enriched herself by exploiting foreign markets. What was possible for

a compact area is not possible for an area 1900 miles long and 1500 broad. The economics of a nation are determined by its climatic, geological and temperamental conditions. The Indian conditions are different from the English in all these essentials. What is meat for England is in many cases poison for India. Beef tea in the English climate may be good, it is poison for the hot climate of religious India. Fiery whisky in the north of the British Isles may be a necessity, it renders an Indian unfit for work or society. Furcoats in Scotland are indispensable, they will be an intolerable burden in India. Free trade for a country which has become industrial, whose population can and does live in cities, whose people do not mind preying upon other nations and therefore sustain the biggest navy to protect their unnatural commerce, may be economically sound (though as the reader perceives, I question its morality). Free trade for India has proved her curse and held her in bondage.

And now for Mr. Coubrough's propositions:

1. The movement is intended to serve the purpose of a voluntary prohibitive tariff.

2. But it is so conceived as neither unduly to benefit the capitalist nor to injure the consumer. During the very brief transition stage the prices of home manufactures may be, as they are, inflated. But the rise can only be temporary as the vast majority of consumers must become their own manufacturers. This cottage manufacture of yarn and cloth cannot be expensive even as domestic cookery is not expensive and cannot be replaced by hotel cookery. Over twenty-five crores of the population will be doing their own hand-spinning and having yarn thus manufactured woven in neighbouring localities. This population is rooted to the soil and has at least four months in the year to remain idle.

If they spin during those hours and have the yarn woven and wear it, no mill-made cloth can compete with their khadi. The cloth thus manufactured will be the cheapest possible for them. If the rest of the population did not take part in the process, it could easily be supplied out of the surplus manufactured by the twenty-five crores.

3. It is true that non-competitive imports are larger than those that compete with the manufactures of Indian mills. In the scheme proposed by me the question does not arise, because the central idea is not so much to carry on a commercial war against foreign countries as to utilize the idle hours of the nation and thus by natural processes to

help it to get rid of her growing pauperism.

4. I have already shown that the result of boycott cannot in the end be a rise in the price of cloth.

5. The proposed boycott is not against the law of supply and demand, because it does away with the law by manufacturing enough for the supply. The movement does require a change of taste on the part of those who have adopted finer variety and who patronize fantastic combinations of colours and designs.

6. I have shown in these pages, that the destruction of hand-spinning was designed and carried out in a most inhuman manner by the agents of the East India Company. No amount of appliances would ever have displaced this national art and industry but for this artificial and systematically cruel manner of carrying out the destruction.

7. I am unable to hold the Indian farmer responsible for the deterioration in cotton culture. The whole incentive was taken away when hand-spinning was destroyed. The state never cared for the cultivator.

8. My activity, I am proud to think, has already turned the cultivator's attention to the improvement of cotton. The artistic sense of the nation will insist on fine counts for which long staple is a necessity. Cotton culture by itself cannot solve the problem of India's poverty. For it will still leave the question of enforced idleness untouched.

9. I therefore claim for the charkha the honour of being able to solve the problem of economic distress in a most natural, simple, unexpensive and businesslike manner. The charkha therefore is not only not useless as the writer ignorantly suggests, but it is a useful and indispensable article for every home. It is the symbol of the nation's prosperity and therefore freedom. It is a symbol not of commercial war out of commercial peace. It bears not a message of ill will towards the nations of the earth but of goodwill and self-help. It will not need the protection of a navy threatening a world's peace and exploiting its resources, but it needs the religious determination of millions to spin their yarn in their own homes as today they cook their food in their own homes. I may deserve the curses of posterity for many mistakes of omission and commission but I am confident of earning its blessings for suggesting a revival of the charkha. I stake my all on it. For every revolution of the wheel spins peace, goodwill and love. And with all that, inasmuch as the loss of it brought India's slavery, its voluntary revival with all its implications must mean India's freedom

Young India, 8-12-1921

92. TO CORRESPONDENTS

R. V. BAHULEKAR: 1. Please read answer to correspondents in the last issue. Pity and hatred may be the same to a man who has become perfect. Only he will then have little cause for killing. For me an imperfect being love and hate are two distinct and opposite sensations, and reading the *Bhagavad Gita* in its applicability to imperfect men, I find it hard to believe that we can kill without being angered. In my humble opinion it is a prostitution of the Vedanta to apply to imperfect beings conduct possible only for perfect beings.

2. I advised the cultured untouchables of Travancore that they might singly demand entrance to temples if they could exercise restraint and stand insults from the keepers without seeking the assistance of courts of law. My advise to untouchables generally is not to test the right of entry into temples whilst the evil of untouchability is otherwise still in existence. In no case have I advised entry into sanctuaries. In theory I do claim that custodians of Hindu temples should throw open to untouchables those parts which are open to other classes.

S. GOVINDSWAMI IYER: If you believe in non-co-operation, you cannot join the students' military Corps.

Young India, 8-12-1921

93. SWADESHI IN THE UNITED PROVINCES

The progress of swadeshi in the U. P., a report¹ of which has been prepared by the U.P. Provincial Congress Committee, is full of lessons for the other provinces of India, both as regards the success achieved in the several lines of organizing work as well as the difficulties that had to be encountered. The work was considered under the following heads (1) Distribution of charkhas; (2) organizing a khadi depot; (3) supplying hand-spun yarn to weavers and inducing them to weave only such yarn; and (4) organizing the boycott

The U. P. Provincial Congress Committee deserves congratulations upon its progress in swadeshi. I hope however that it will not be satisfied till its khadi is all made of hand-spun yarn. Development of hand-spinning is the key to the solution of India's poverty. Experts are required to improve and regularize the quality of hand-spun yarn.

Young Indian, 8-12-1921

¹ Only the opening paragraph of the condensed report published in *Young India*, 1-12-1921 is reproduced here.

94. LOVE NOT HATE

SABARMATI,

December 8, 1921

A telegram from Allahabad says Pandit Motilal Nehru, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Pandit Shamlal Nehru and Mr. George Joseph, Editor of the *Independent* have been arrested. It was received at 11 o'clock last night. It positively filled me with joy. I thanked God for it.

I had not expected Panditji's arrest. In our discussions I used to tell Panditji that he would be about the last to be arrested. Sir Harcourt Butler would not have the courage to lay hands upon him. His friend Rajasaheb of Mahmudabad would decline to remain in office if he was to be arrested. I marvel at Sir Harcourt Butler's philosophic courage. Panditji has been working against tremendous odds. He has been battling against his old enemy asthma. I know that he has never worked for his rich clients, nor even for the afflicted Punjab as he has slaved for pauper India. I have pleaded with him to take rest. He has refused to do so. It rejoices to think that he will now have respite from the toil that was wearing him out.

But my joy was greater for the thought, that what I had feared would not happen before the end of the year because of the sin of Bombay was now happening by reason of the innocent suffering of the greatest and the best in the land. These arrests of the totally innocent is real swaraj. Now there is no shame in the Ali Brothers and their companions remaining in jail. India has not been found undeserving of their immolation.

But my joy, which I hope thousands share with me, is conditional upon perfect peace being observed whilst our leaders are one after another taken away from us. *Victory is complete if non-violence reigns supreme in spite of the arrests. Disastrous defeat is a certainty if we cannot control all the elements so as to ensure peace.* We are out to be killed without killing. We have stipulated to go to prison without feeling angry or injured. We must not quarrel with the condition of our own creating.

On the contrary our non-violence teaches us to love our enemies. By non-violent non-co-operation we seek to conquer the wrath of the English administrators and their supporters. We must love them and pray to God that they might have wisdom to

see what appears us to be their errors. It must be the prayer of the strong and not of the weak. In our strength must we humble ourselves before our Maker.

In the moment of our trial and our triumph let me declare my faith, I believe in loving my enemies. I believe in non-violence as the only remedy open to the Hindus, Mussulmans, Sikhs, Parsis, Christians and Jews of India. I believe in the power of suffering to melt the stoniest heart. The brunt of the battle must fall on the first three. The last named three are afraid of the combination of the first three. We must by our honest conduct demonstrate to them that they are our kinsmen. We must by our conduct demonstrate to every Englishman that he is as safe in the remotest corner of India as he professes to feel behind the machine gun.

Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Christianity, Zoroastrianism and Judaism—in fact religion is on its trial. Either we believe in God and His righteousness or we do not. My association with the noblest of Mussulmans has taught me to see that Islam has spread not by the power of the sword but by the prayerful love of an unbroken line of its saints and fakirs. Warrant there is in Islam for drawing the sword; but the conditions laid down are so strict that they are not capable of being fulfilled by everybody. Where is the unerring general to order jihad? Where is the suffering, the love and the purification that must precede the very idea of drawing the sword? Hindus are at least as much bound by similar restrictions as the Mussulmans of India. The Sikhs have their recent proud history to warn them against the use of force. We are too imperfect, too impure and too selfish as yet to resort to an armed conflict in the cause of God as Shaukat Ali would say. Will a purified India ever need to draw the sword? And it was the definite process of purification we commenced last year at Calcutta.

What must we then do? Surely remain non-violent and yet strong enough to offer as many willing victims as the Government may require for imprisonment. Our work must continue with clock-work regularity. Each province must elect its own succession of leaders. Lalaji has set a brilliant example by making all the necessary arrangements. The chairman and the secretary must be given in each province emergency powers. The executive committees must be the smallest possible. Every Congressman must be a volunteer.

Whilst we must not avoid arrest we must not provoke it by giving unnecessary offence.

We must vigorously prosecute the swadeshi campaign till we are fully organized for the manufacture of all the hand-spun khadi we require and have brought about a complete boycott of foreign cloth.

We must hold the Congress at any cost in spite of the arrest of everyone of the leaders unless the Government dissolve it by force. And if we are neither cowed down nor provoked to violence but are able to continue national work, we have certainly attained swaraj. For no power on earth can stop the onward march of a peaceful, determined and godly people.

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 8-12-1921

95. COMPLAINT OF THE UNTOUCHABLES

Two *Antyaja* Friends write as follows:¹

There is, in this complaint, a measure of ignorance and of anger arising from ignorance, but, that apart, the letter deserves consideration. By passing resolutions and talking about their problem we have raised hopes in them. It was absolutely necessary to do this. It was necessary also that hopes should be raised in them and to tell those *Antyaja* friends that what has happened should be sufficient answer to them. Another answer can be that they lay the entire burden on me. I can understand the sting in their words. They accuse me of being satisfied with the more or less that I do myself and of being gullible enough to be taken in by others who only befool me. However, if I do something, there are others who may be doing less but still they do it.

Untouchability is an attitude of the mind, not a concrete object. To eradicate it, therefore, is not as easy as to persuade pupils to leave schools. No agitation, therefore, like the one with regard to schools can be suggested in respect of untouchability. A change of heart is necessary for this reform, as it is for accepting the principle of non-violence. The movement, therefore, can only be carried on along the same line as that for non-violence. Just as the extent to which the latter has been accepted by the people can be measured from the occasional incidents of violence which occur, so can progress in the removal of untouchability be measured from occasional evidence of

¹ Not reproduced here

its survival. No rule of arithmetic can be applied to judge this. You cannot work out as an arithmetical exercise,"If so many Hindus have mixed with so many unit touchables within such a period of time, what time will it take for all the crores of Hindus to mix with all the millions of untouchables?"—and ascertain the progress from the answer. But we get a measure of the progress from incidents which occur from time to time. The issue was first discussed as a principle in the Gujarat Vidyapith. As a result, the principle of admitting *Antyaja* pupils in its schools was accepted even at the risk of putting its very existence in danger, and some members who had tendered their resignations on this issue were allowed to leave the Vidyapith. If, again, the existence of an institution like the Dakshinamurti Bhavan is in serious danger today, the reason is the same. The teachers who are the very soul of the Bhavan are fighting a life-and-death struggle there to get the principle accepted. I cannot claim credit for either of these two results. I would have been defeated if the majority of the members of the Vidyapith had opposed me. But, on the contrary, they themselves believed in the principle independently of my view. In the holy fight which is being waged in the Dakshinamurti Bhavan, I cannot claim to have a hand even as an individual member. It was because of this issue that several proffered donations to the Tilak Swaraj Fund were withheld, but the managers of the Fund did not care for the loss. *Antyajias* have freely attended hundreds of public meetings in Gujarat and elsewhere. The All-India Congress Committee has sanctioned an expenditure of more than Rs. 50,000 for *Antyaja*-welfare activities at various places. This amount excludes the money already spent by the Provincial Committees. Non-co-operators have thus been working all over India and independently of party considerations. In every province, enthusiastic young men of character have been, with the utmost sincerity of purpose, sacrificing their all in the service of *Antyajias*. This is the first time that, in every constituency, *Antyaja* brothers have been elected delegates though they had expressed no such desire.

This for the satisfaction of the authors of the letter and other *Antyaja* friends like them who feel disappointed. But, while we may draw their attention to such a movement having spread, we must admit at the same time that there is some truth in their complaint. Many persons simply make a show of mixing [with *Antyajias*] in order to hoodwink others, and are not sincere about the matter. Mixing with them in this spirit will yield bitter fruit. The

practice of untouchability is an offence against dharma and its disappearance will bear fruit only if the prejudice is shed from the heart. The campaign against it is not a political move so that we may do just enough to throw dust in people's eyes. Nor is the movement undertaken in order to please or bribe *Antyajias*. Our only object is to satisfy our own conscience; our very conception of this evil is that, as long as Hindu society does not rid itself of it, it will continue to block our path invisibly, if not visibly, and will prevent our success in winning swaraj. The consequences of karma are hard to comprehend; its law admits of no exception. We always reap, visibly or invisibly, the fruits of our good and bad deeds, of our sins and virtuous acts.

There is not a shred of doubt in my mind that so long as we have not cleansed our hearts of this evil and have not accepted the path of non-violence, so long as Hindus and Muslims have not become sincerely united, we shall not be free. Our progress in all these three fields is impossible to measure by any visible yardstick. Till we succeed in regard to all three, we shall not get swaraj and when we get it, we shall have succeeded in them. So long as Hindu society turns a deaf ear to the six crores of *Antyajias* crying for justice at our doors, we shall not get swaraj, never.

But even if caste-Hindus wash off their sins, will *Antyajias* ascend to heaven in consequence? For that, they themselves should strive. They should give up drinking, refuse to eat leftovers, stop eating meat and, though for the sake of service, engaged in the most uncleanly work, remain clean and worship God. All this is for them to attend to. Others cannot do it for them. To banish hunger from among them, they have the spinning wheel and the handloom at their service. Thousands of *Antyajias* have taken them up and prospered. The swadeshi movement is such that it feeds and strengthens all the limbs and I, for one, am certain that it is swadeshi which will, in time, end our abject poverty.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-12-1921

96. TELEGRAM TO MRS. MOTILAL NEHRU¹

AHMEDABAD,
December 8, 1921

MRS. NEHRU
ALLAHABAD

CONGRATULATE YOU KAMLA. MAY GOD GIVE YOU
COURAGE HOPE.

GANDHI

From the original. Courtesy: Municipal Museum, Allahabad

97. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[SABARMATI,
December 8, 1921]²

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have your telegram as also your letter. I hope Mrs. Nehru is calm and unruffled. Carry on your work without worrying.

Devdas is going there; you will have all the help that he can give. Ask for more help if you need it. Improve the standard of the *Independent*. Keep a good control over [correspondents'] reports. It does not matter if you get fewer [reports] but see that they are good. Take Satisbabu's³ help if you can get it. I have not written to Andrews, but you can write to him. I have not written because it may imply some kind of pressure.

I should be glad to have a letter from Mrs. Nehru.

There is always a danger in taking vows prescribed by others. Take those that you can and which you think worth taking from among the ones suggested to you and then stick to them tenaciously. You need not take them if you do not have the strength to take them just now. There is no harm in not taking them, but there certainly is in not keeping them.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 11428

¹ On the arrest of Motilal Nehru and Jawaharlal Nehru on December 6

² The addressee's telegram was received late at night on the 7th and Devdas left for Delhi on the 8th morning.

³ Satis Chandra Mukerji

98. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

SABARMATI,
December 8, 1921

DEAR SHANKERLAL,

The Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee has not secured even Rs. 1 lakh so far. Let me know if there is any hitch. They are in great difficulty here—and every time I tend to be proved wrong.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32688

99. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

[On or before *December 9, 1921*]¹

DEAR MOTILALJI,

This time the unexpected has happened.² It is all for the good. I envy you and Jawaharlal. If we go at this rate swaraj may burst upon us even without warning.

I think that Godbole³ should continue the routine work. I would like you to send your instructions, views and wishes as to the present and the future. I wrote today [to] Sarup⁴ and Ranjit saying, unless they had been advised by you otherwise and if they could, they should go to Allahabad.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: Motilal Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

¹ From the reference to Sarup and Ranjit who were going to Allahabad to become proprietors of the *Independent*; *vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 9-12-1921; "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 9-12-1921.

² The reference is to the arrest of Motilal Nehru and Jawaharlal Nehru on December 6, 1921.

³ M. S. Godbole who was at this time helping in the work of the *Independent*

⁴ Vijayalakshmi Pandit

100. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Friday [December 9, 1921]¹

CHI. MAHADEV

Received your telegram. I am not happy that you have had to pay security for publishing the *Independent*. But it is our duty to do whatever Panditji wishes. I would certainly be pleased if you are arrested. Do tell Panditji, however, that it would be better not to pay any security if it is again demanded and to issue a hand-written paper instead. It is the easiest thing to do. They will certainly arrest you, but that does not matter. Sarup and Ranjit are going there, they also can become proprietors. I shall certainly try to send someone from here.

Pyarelal can certainly come.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the original: S.N. 106028

101. TELEGRAM TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

AHMEDABAD,

December 9, 1921

ACHARYA

SALEM

CONSIDER NEWS MOST CHEERING NOT GLOOMY. AGREE
RAJARAM SHOULD REMAIN AHMEDABAD TILL CONGRESS
AHMEDABAD.² WE CAN BUT WATCH AND PRAY.

GANDHI

From a copy: C. Vijayaraghavachariar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

¹ The addressee paid security and took charge of the *Independent* on the 7th.

² The Congress session was scheduled to be held in Ahmedabad on December 27 and 28, 1921.

102. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SABARMATI,

Saturday [December 10, 1921]¹

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. I can understand your difficulty. Give Shankerlal such help as you can. It is enough if we behave properly even in difficult times. I see nothing wrong in your keeping aloof where you find it difficult to meet people or mix with them.

Your letter to the Central Board is entirely proper. Wherever you find it being slack in practice, you must criticize it. And wherever you feel that you are required even indirectly to associate With anything immoral, you must withdraw yourself.

I shall try to draft the resolution also.² I do not think I shall be arrested before the Congress session. But if I am, nothing like it.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

¹ The addressee received the letter on December 11, 1921. The Saturday preceding it fell on December 10.

² For the resolution passed at the Ahmedabad Congress session, *vide* "Speech at Congress Section, Ahmedabad-1", 28-12-1921.

103. TELEGRAM TO MRS. BASANTI DEVI DAS¹

[On or after *December 10, 1921*]

CONGRATULATE YOU AND YOUR HUSBAND. EXPECT YOU AHMEDABAD.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 13-12-1921

104. EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO SHYAM SUNDER
CHAKRAVARTY²

[AHMEDABAD,

After *December 10, 1921*]

It is a delightful thing to hear of these arrests; two things are needed to ensure early establishment of swaraj—a ceaseless stream of civil resisters, and a non-violent atmosphere. I hope that Bengal will lead in both these matters.

Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi, p. 170

105. ONE YEAR'S TIME-LIMIT

I am being implored, on the one hand, not to carry out my threat to retire to the Himalayas if we do not get swaraj by the end of this year. On the other hand, I am asked what face I shall show to the people if we fail to get swaraj. How great will be the people's disappointment? Having made a promise, I shall now realize what an error I have made.

I expect that readers of *Navajivan* will not think in this manner. But I know that some of them do. My promise was conditional. Laying down conditions which could be easily fulfilled, I told the people: "Fulfill these conditions and win swaraj."

But friends can argue that, when laying down conditions, a man of practical wisdom would consider the other party's capacity to fulfil them. This is true. It is also true that I claim to be such a man. If I think I cannot make this claim, I should not remain in public life.

¹ On the arrest of C. R. Das on December 10

² This was written when the addressee, editor, *Servant* of Calcutta became the President of the Bengal Congress Committee after the arrest of C. R. Das on December 10, 1921

If, therefore, people are obliged to ask, at the end of the year, When they would get the promised swaraj, my claim of practical wisdom would have been disproved and I must betake myself to the Himalayas.

However, if the people clearly realize that the only way to get swaraj is the one I have pointed out and feel that they have covered a long distance on the road, have almost reached its end, they will have no ground for reproaching me nor I any reason for running away to the Himalayas. We shall then almost have won swaraj. One who has discovered the path to liberation always obeys the *yama* and *niyama* disciplines, who observes his chains loosening day by day, has as good as attained liberation. He does not swerve from his path. As the days pass, he goes from strength to strength. He needs no guide. The man who doubts has his moorings nowhere and is doomed to perish. Though moving on the road, he does not advance because he does not know where he is.

Similarly, if all the delegates who will be assembling [for the Congress] in this month agree without much argument that the path we have taken is the only one which can lead to swaraj, that we already see swaraj in the distance, that we have achieved more during this year than during any previous year and that they, the delegates, are determined to adhere to this path—then, I would say, we have as good as got swaraj. It is due to lack of effort on our part that something will still remain to be secured. A little more effort and our swaraj will be complete.

Those who believe, and those who have spread the belief, that Gandhi will somehow get them swaraj before December, both these classes of persons are, whether or not they know it, their own and the country's enemies; they have not understood the meaning of swaraj at all. Swaraj means self-reliance. To hope that I shall get swaraj for them is the opposite of self-reliance. I can only point out the means; it is then for the people to work and secure swaraj. I am a *vaidya*; I prescribe the medicine, explain the manner of taking it, mention the other things to be taken with it and specify the quantity to be taken every time. It is ultimately for the patient to act and do the best he can.

If, at the end of the year, the people have not realized through their own experience that swaraj will be won through non-violence, through unity of Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Parsis, Christians and Jews,

through swadeshi and the removal of untouchability, then I shall have been proved totally deficient in practical wisdom and I must retire to the Himalayas.

It is true that I had expected much more than this. I had expected that we would not only discover the path during this year, but would also see the image of swaraj before our eyes, would have arrived at a settlement with the rulers and, non-co-operation having been withdrawn, would have commenced genuine co-operation. I am afraid we shall not see ourselves placed in this happy position during the days which remain. On the contrary, our non-co-operation will have become more intense and co-operation will appear to be out of the question altogether. But this phase itself will bring co-operation nearer. It is the darkest before dawn. The pain before delivery being almost unbearable, the woman doubts whether the delivery will ever take place. In the same way, the hour of birth of our freedom will be the most difficult period for us.

Bombay put an obstacle in our path. We ourselves had planned to start a fight and invite suffering upon ourselves; Bombay made this impossible. But, fortunately for us, the Government itself has given us an opportunity of doing so, having intensified repression. If we fearlessly avail ourselves of the opportunity it has offered, we shall see before long freedom become a reality.

Why do I not, however, say categorically that this will not happen during the present year? I do not say this because I do not know for certain. I am not omniscient. I am not God. I believe God to be omnipotent. No one knows when He will bring about profound changes in our hearts. Did I know that, on the 17th November, even while I was voicing great optimism, heartbreaking things were being done? How can I be sure that, while I am myself uncertain whether we shall see freedom become a reality during the days which remain, God is not actually preparing this result? If I am the doctor, I am the patient too. I have not won the freedom for which I have been striving. I have discovered the path and I will never abandon it. But the freedom which I want is still far away. I would not be surprised, however, if I got it in this month. I can assure the readers that I have spared no efforts. I am in truth seeking my own *moksha* through my efforts to win swaraj for India. When I feel that instead of progressing towards *moksha*, I am forging chains for myself, that instead of rising I am falling, no one will be able to hold me back. At present, though, I

do not feel that my bonds have become stronger. I state most emphatically that I do not know what the state of my mind will be on the 1st of January. The reader will thus see that the struggle for swaraj is a spiritual effort for me, a means of attaining *moksha*. My effort is purely selfish and will remain so.

In one sense, I do not wish to see freedom become a reality this year. I wish to see all fanciful notions about me dispelled. I want people to know that I am but a small creature. I see nothing but harm to the people and to me in my being looked upon as a giant. I shall not mind if people believe that my calculations have been wrong, that I am a fool or that I am an impractical man. Instead of their believing that they got anything through my strength, it is much better that they should believe every achievement to be the result of their own *tapascharya* and self-purification—much better indeed that it should be so in fact. I only want the people to have this faith in me.” He fearlessly placed before us that he thought to be the truth at the time.” I desire no better certificate than this. I do not deserve anything more.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-12-1921

106. BARDOLI

I shall never forget Maulana Azad Sobhani’s and my visit to the Bardoli taluka. Both of us marvelled at the simplicity, goodness, sincerity and determination of the people in that taluka. There is no doubt that the work there has been done very well. We have both felt that, on the whole, that taluka can organize itself for civil disobedience in the shortest time.

There are about sixty-five Government schools there. Fifty-one of these have already become national schools. And there is no doubt that enthusiasm mounts wherever schools become national. It is only a few weeks since schools came under the control of the people and, therefore, the progress is rather slow. Children are required to work on the spinning-wheel. The use of khadi has increased very much among men. All were seen wearing a shirt, dhoti, or half pants, and a cap. There was a fairly good number of women in khadi saris at the meeting. There is excellent unity among Hindus and Muslims. People do not object to contact with the *Dheds* and the *Bhangis* who attend

meetings and they are allowed to sit with others. The people of the taluka have behaved very peacefully while doing all this. They have also maintained good relations with the officials, nor is there any hostility towards those who co-operate with the Government.

We cannot but congratulate the people on this progress.

The picture, however, is not complete. The people should have such measure of control over the schools that no person would even think of Government schools or of the education given in them. Schools should be so organized that children do not roam about but under teachers of upright character, learn to build their own character. Hindu boys and girls should learn Sanskrit and study the *Gita*, and Muslim children should learn Arabic and study the Koran. All children should spin beautiful, strong, well-twisted yarn of even texture; some of them should card and weave as well. Khadi should become more popular among women and all men and women should exclusively wear khadi. Not only this but the khadi required by the taluka should be spun and woven locally and mill-made yarn should not be used at all. Progress in this is very slow. The looms are few in number. In comparison, the number of spinning-wheels is quite good, but there should be many more of them and they should be in regular operation. It should be impossible, or very difficult, to get foreign or millmade cloth in Bardoli.

It is not enough that *Dheds* and *Bhangis* can attend meetings freely. The meaning of ending the practice of untouchability should be fully grasped. People should come to love *Dheds* and *Bhangis*. Their children should freely attend national schools; if they do not, we should go and fetch them, persuading the parents to send them. We should visit their localities and inquire about their hardships. We should plead with them and persuade them to give up their bad habits. It is good indeed that there are no quarrels at all between Hindus and Muslims, but the ill-feeling that they harbour against each other must disappear. Our conduct towards Parsis, Christians and those who co-operate with the Government should be so courteous that they do not entertain the slightest fear of non-co-operators. We may get liquor-booths closed only if we can do so by reasoning with the owners. The latter must not be ostracized and kept out of common gatherings. We may bring them and the drink-addicts to listen to us, as well as we can, with love. There should not be even the slightest appearance of coercion on them. They should feel absolutely secure.

A whole army of volunteers need not go to bring the pupils out of schools, need not go into a village and start a fast. Only if the people are awakened in the right manner and they voluntarily withdraw their children from Government schools will the results be genuine.

I have certainly formed the impression that the people have done very good work. But they betray some ignorance in their work. People seem to think that it will be necessary to wear khadi only till December end, that afterwards they will not have to run schools and will not need to mix with the *Dheds* and *Bhangis*. Work done in such a spirit will be insincere and will have a bad rather than a good effect. I do not now think it possible that we shall have power in our hands in December. But, even after we have got it, we shall be wearing cloth spun and woven in our talukas or villages, our schools will not be run by any outsiders and their management will be entirely in our hands. Instead of two authorities, as at present, there will be only one when we have swaraj. If the Government is ours, of course the control will be ours. We shall have to be as hard-working then as we are now and shoulder as much responsibility then as we do now. We shall, even then, mix with the *Dheds* and *Bhangis* and love them. In what we are doing today, we are training ourselves for swaraj and making ourselves fit for it. In effecting any changes, therefore, we should understand their meaning and know that they will stay afterwards. Only then shall we be fit [for swaraj].

I believe that the Bardoli taluka is fully capable of doing all this. The deficiency I have pointed out is partly due to lack of time and, partly, to ignorance. I am, therefore, not at all disappointed; I believe that the people will be able to overcome these shortcomings within a very short time and be completely fit for offering civil disobedience.

The supporters of the Government whom I met also testified to everything having been done peacefully and told me that Bardoli would be ready in six months' time. Shri Kunvarji, who is the soul of the taluka, believes that they will succeed in a month's time in spreading spinning and weaving and other activities. The reports of either are likely to contain an element of unconscious exaggeration. However, the good on my mind that they will not take long to deserve a certificate of fitness.

What impressed me especially was that the workers were not only young men, but included grown-ups as well. The women, too, take interest. The volunteers do honorary work. Whatever expenses

are incurred are met by Bardoli itself. Hence, the entire taluka, and not merely a certain section of it, can be said to have awakened.

Bardoli's responsibility has now increased. Bardoli inspired me, when I was in Delhi, to give concrete shape to the plan of civil disobedience and this increased the enthusiasm in other provinces too. In consequence, some great fighters are in jail. Having thus been instrumental in rousing enthusiasm, Bardoli cannot rest now. It must complete the process of self-purification and, for this purpose, it must put in a Herculean Effort. The required effort will be easy to make if people work wisely and unceasingly and if their change of heart is genuine.

The reader will see that I have not discussed the question whether or not the people have the capacity to suffer, to go to jail or to face bullets. I have not even inquired of anyone. It is my experience and my faith that, when a person does his duty faithfully, he soon gets the strength to suffer. Bardoli, moreover, is making all this effort in order to be fit to go to jail; how can I, then, insult it by asking the question of whether it has the necessary strength? At this time, going to jail is a difficult thing. It is, of course, easy to keep out. If a person does not spin, does not wear khadi, is not honest or polite, has ill will towards all and refuses to mix with the *Dheds* and *Bhangis* will anyone ask such a person to go to jail? A taluka which clings to the practice of untouchability will never be invited to court imprisonment. I, therefore, do not at all doubt Bardoli's courage or its readiness to go to jail.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-12-1921

107. MY NOTES!

WELCOME COLONEL PRATAPSINGHI

I have been hearing for a week now that, at the time of the Congress session, the Government will hand over control of Ahmedabad to Colonel Pratapsinghi and his men and that the Colonel has undertaken to deal with the delegates attending the Congress. I am absolutely sure that the rumour is unfounded. The Government is not so timid or wicked or foolish as this rumour suggests. It is sufficiently equipped to put down the Congress

delegates. I do not believe that the Government would like to survive with Colonel Pratapsingh's help. I am told, however, that the simple-minded mill-workers have been frightened and feel agitated. No one should hear such rumours or, having heard them, spread them further. If there is danger of any kind, the Congress will let the people know. It is a sign of cowardice to get frightened by any and every kind of rumour, and cowards cannot win swaraj or preserve it after winning it. Such fear, moreover, is also a sign of lack of faith in God. Why can we not tell ourselves, "God's will be done", and remain calm?

Let us suppose, however, that Colonel Pratapsinghji arrives with his men. Is that any reason to get frightened? He, too, is one of us. His men also are our own people. We should offer him our services, welcome him and cheerfully face his men's bullets as well. Why should we at all give them a chance to shoot? Will they molest people going about their way peacefully? If they do, we may let them and continue on our way. Will they snatch away our khadi caps? If they try to, we should hold fast to our caps and submit to the blows. If, despite that, they succeed in snatching away the cap, we should put on another, come out again and submit to more blows. In the end, they will get weary of the business. Those who cannot submit to blows may not pass along the road on which they are stationed, but should not in any case put away the white cap. A vegetarian, for instance, will not go to any country, like the Arctic region, in which he cannot live without meat. If by chance he finds himself in such a place, he will meet death but not eat meat. That alone is dharma which is followed at the cost of one's life; anything else is mere convenience or amusement.

If we have resolved to give up fear of white soldiers, why should we fear Colonel Pratapsingh's brown men?

Fear is a sign of our harbouring violence and hostility. Anyone whom we regard as an enemy is sure to become so. If we treat even an enemy as a friend, he will certainly become one in the course of time. Man is made by his thoughts. We reap as we sow. It cannot happen that one sows friendship and reaps enmity. Our non-co-operation is a means of winning over even an enemy with love.

This is not only the Hindus' dharma. Islam teaches the same thing. It gives the first place to patience. It has room for war, but only as a last resort and when one's side is less numerous than the tyrant's, when refusing to fight may be a sign of cowardice and when the person who leads the host into the battle is an illustrious soul trusted

by all and without any selfish aim. This is not, cannot be, the position in India. We are more numerous than the opponent. There is no one to be our leader in fighting. For us to fight will be no sign of manliness. We have not exhausted all other means. We have not yet fully learnt the lesson of peace and not completely adopted swadeshi. We have not learnt to be truthful; we, Hindus and Muslims, have not yet rid ourselves of mutual ill will and a large number of us love co-operation with the Government. I have heard many *aalims* say that, in these circumstances, fighting will be not *jihad* but *fasad*.

From the point of view of whichever religion we consider the matters we can arrive at only one conclusion. We wish to conquer the enemy with love and therefore, whether it is a white army or a black one which is sent, our attitude towards it should be the same. Accordingly, we should be ready to say "Welcome, Colonel", if Colonel Pratapsinghji, or some other Colonel, does indeed come with his men, though I believe that no Colonel Pratapsinghji is coming to teach us a lesson.

HAS DAS BEEN ARRESTED?

A similar rumour is afloat about Das having been arrested. I certainly not believe that he has been arrested. But it is more likely that he has been arrested than that Colonel Pratapsingh will be coming. With increasing repression and the clouds in the Indian sky constantly changing their colour, how can anyone know who will be arrested and when? And why should we at all care to know who else has been arrested? Even if all the leaders be arrested, we will not resort to violence. If we have been lazy so far, we should start working; if, with the leaders in our midst, we are inclined to be a little irresponsible, in their absence we should take the responsibility upon ourselves and assume leadership. In our struggle, everyone is entitled to be a leader, since the leader is one who does greater service. If leadership is for service, how can it incite envy?

We should, therefore, rejoice if Deshbandhu Das has been arrested, feel enthused rather than despondent and have hope that the hour of our victory is drawing near. We shall get nothing at all without being tested and, if we do get anything, we shall not be able to retain it. As food taken when one is not hungry is not assimilated, likewise the happiness which comes to us without our suffering for it can be of no profit to us. We become stronger as our bonds break one after one through our internal strength. If, however, a person who has been

bound for some time is unexpectedly set free by somebody else, he seems to behave, actually does behave, like one who has been crippled. The same thing happens to us. The imprisonment of our leaders, therefore, heralds the dawn of our freedom.

Let us not mind if Lalaji is absent from the Congress, or Das, or Mohiuddin, or Phookan from Assam, or Shanti Swarup of Farukhabad, or Harkarannath of Lucknow, or Gupta from Andhra, or Yukub Hassan of Madras or Kitchlew or Stokes or Pandit Nekiram, or Pandit Sunderlal, or Bhagwandinji, or Pir Badshah Mian, or Jitendralal Bannerjee, or Sengupta; what does it matter if they or other fighters like them are not present? Let us not mind if the Ali Brothers are absent and so is the contingent of brave Sikh Sardars. Though they may not be physically present, their souls will be with us, will watch the strength we display and judge us. They will see whether or not we were worthy of their sacrifices. Soldiers are not afraid of being wounded. They know that to be wounded is to prove one's courage, and to prove one's courage is to win. We should cling to our faith that anyone who serves when outside the prison serves better still if, though innocent, he is imprisoned.

TO PARSI BROTHERS AND SISTERS

I know that in many places our Parsi brothers and sisters feel uncomfortable and are afraid of Hindus and Muslims. I feel ashamed even to write this. It should be a matter of shame to Swarajists if, when we are chanting the *mantra* of swaraj, any community or innocent person has reason to feel apprehensive. At any rate I assure our Parsi brothers and sisters that hundreds of Hindus and Muslims are ready to lay down their lives for them and for other small communities like the Christians. Perhaps some British officials are frightening them, deliberately or otherwise. But it becomes Parsi friends not to let others frighten them; they should, instead, regard Hindus and Muslims as their brothers and trust them. Let us resolve that we shall die at one another's hands or be saved by one another. Trust begets trust, while distrust produces greater distrust.

While giving this assurance, I advise Parsi friends, wherever they feel the slightest concern, to inform the Congress or the Khilafat office in the area; those in charge of the offices will not fail to make arrangements to protect them. Many Parsi brothers told me in Bombay that several Memons had given full protection to Parsi men and women. Parsi families were given shelter in some Marwari homes.

I am sure there are no Parsis who believe that the entire Hindu or the entire Muslim community has turned against them and the Christians.

Some Parsi friends write to me about the losses they have suffered. The only consolation I can give them is that I am consulting Parsi leaders to see if we can set up a committee to look into such cases. If such a committee is formed, arrangements will be made to compensate all those who have incurred losses and who cannot overlook them. Personally, I do not wish that any Parsi should approach the Government for compensation.

KAPADVANJ AND THASRA

Some cultivators inform me that this year the crop in some places in the Kapadvanj and Thasra talukas has been less than four annas and in others between four and six annas, and they ask me what they should do in these circumstances. As a non-co-operator, the only advice I can give is that they should not approach the Government for relief; however, if they have courage they can notify the Government that they are unable to pay the assessed revenue as the crop has been less than four annas. If the Government does not accept the cultivator's assessment, let it nominate a *panch*¹ on which it and the cultivators will be represented equally. Both parties should abide by the *pancha's* award. Should the Government refuse to accept the proposal for a *panch*, cultivators can decline to pay the revenue and let the Government collect it by auctioning their belongings. Before taking such a step, however, cultivators should consider the matter from every point of view.

1. Will they remain united?

2. Can they suffer their cattle, utensils and other household goods being auctioned?

3. Can they remain peaceful?

If all these three questions can be answered in the affirmative, they can, as explained above, ask for the appointment of a *panch* and, if this is not agreed to refuse to pay the revenue. The cultivators should also bear in mind that the Congress will be able to give them no assistance in this struggle which concerns them alone. They will have to rely on their own strength. They should have competent leaders among them. There should be no room for the slightest

¹ A board of arbitrators

dishonesty.

This for relief of the cultivators' local distress. If they wish to join the struggle for swaraj and Khilafat, they should be ready to suffer more. No questions about crop-assessment can be raised in this connection. Before joining the struggle, they should fully adopt swadeshi, persuade the women to do the same and do away with the evil of untouchability. Only then will they be held fit to offer civil disobedience.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-12-1921

108. LETTER TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

SABARMATI,

December 11, 1921

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. If you are reterring to the amendmets suggested by Mr. Jayakar¹, they are in my opinion destructive of the vital parts of our programme. To return to Government schools and law-courts is to rob non-violence of half its charm. But your letter leads one to hope that you are coming. In that event you will press your views. I would gladly agree to any amendment which may not destroy or mutilate the programme.

I wrote to you yesterday.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C. Vijayaraghavachariar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru

109. TELEGRAM TO HARILAL GANDHI²

[On or after *December 11, 1921*]

WELL DONE GOD BLESS YOU. RAMDAS³, DEVDAS AND OTHERS

¹ M. R. Jayakar

² After his arrest on December 11; he was Gandhiji's eldest son.

³ Gandhiji's third son

110. TELEGRAM TO DEVDAS GANDHI¹

[SABARMATI,

On or after *December 11, 1921*]

YOU MAY COURT ARREST AT ANY TIME.

BAPU

Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi, p. 171

111. LETTER TO C. M. DOKE

SABARMATI,

*December 13 [1921]*²

MY DEAR CLEMENT³,

What a perfect delight to have had your letter! It has revived all the sweetest memories of pleasant companionship. Pray send my best love to mother, Olive⁴, Willie⁵ and Mrs. Evans.

I assure you I am doing nothing without prayer.

Mrs. Gandhi and Ramdas are with me. Devdas is in Allahabad. Harilal has just gone to prison in Calcutta as a civil resister. Manilal⁶ is attending to *Indian Opinion* in South Africa.

Do please write occasionally.

With our regards to you and Mrs. Clement.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 744

¹ This was sent after the arrest of Harilal Gandhi.

² Judging from the references to Devdas and Harilal, this letter was evidently written in 1921.

³ Son of Rev. J. J. Doke who was a close associate of Gandhiji in South Africa

⁴ Daughter of Rev. Doke

⁵ Eldest son of Rev. Doke

⁶ Gandhiji's second son

112. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Tuesday, December 13, 1921

I have your letter. Hope you have recovered from the injuries you had received. At present, we must keep fit and be ready to receive Goddess Fortune's favour.¹

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 41

113. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

Tuesday, [December 13, 1921]¹

DEAR SHANKERLAL,

I have your letter. Your volunteers should be of the very best. I would welcome Mr. Alam² being appointed captain. He is a competent person. But the most important thing is that we should have a man who can maintain peace. You should have a detailed talk with him. Speak to Dr. Mahmood too. He is a simple and straightforward person. We should secure the maximum help from him in everything we do.

The matter about the Parsees is now in their own hands.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

Malaviyaji³ wants to see me again. He will be reaching there on the 17th. Ask him to come here. You should be here by the 22nd.

¹ Literally, wait for Goddess Lakshmi to put the auspicious *tilak* on the forehead.

² From the contents; *vide* also Vol. XXI, p. 569.

³ Dr. Mohamed Alam

³ Madan Mohan Malaviya (1861-1946); founder of the Benaras Hindu University, twice President of the Indian National Congress.

114. TELEGRAM TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA'

[On or after *December 14, 1921*]

PANDIT MALAVIYAJI

BENARES CITY

IMPOSSIBLE LEAVE AHMEDABAD. WORKING COMMITTEE
MEETING HERE TWENTY-THIRD WILLS GLADLY ATTEND
YOUR CONFERENCE IF YOU HOLD AHMEDABAD OR
AFTER CONGRESS WHICH PLEASE ATTEND.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7715

115. NOTES

DESHBANDHU DAS²

Lord Reading³ has been as good as his word. The highest in the land has not been immune from arrest.⁴ Lord Ronaldshay⁵ had perhaps given the public to understand that he would not be arrested till after the Congress and then too if he did not behave himself. But Lord Reading's threat was later than and therefore cancelled, the implied opinion of Lord Ronaldshay. Why should the President elect be left free if he enlisted volunteers and issued manifestos? There was no cessation in the activity for bringing about hartal on the day of the Prince's⁶ arrival in Calcutta. It was some such reasoning, I suppose, that was applied in effecting the arrest of the President elect. His arrest was accompanied by that of other prominent workers. Maulana Abul

¹ This was in reply to Madan Mohan Malaviya's telegram of December 14, 1921 which read: "Thanks for telegram. Arriving Ashram eighteenth. Convening conference of representatives of all parties at Bombay on 22nd 23rd to consider what united action should be taken in present situation. Trust you attend. Wire".

² C. R. Das (1870-1925); lawyer, orator and author; President, Indian National Congress, 1922; founded the Swarajya Party in 1923

³ Viceroy of India, 1921-26

⁴ The reference is to the arrest of C. R. Das, the President elect of the Congress, on December 10, 1921

⁵ Then Governor of Bengal

⁶ The Prince of Wales, who was then on a tour of India

Kalam Azad¹, one of the most learned among Mussulman divines, Maulvi Akram Khan, Secretary of the Khilafat Committee, Mr. Sasmal, Secretary of the Provincial Congress Committee and Mr. Padmaraj Jain, who exercised influence over the Marwaris, were arrested with the President elect. This must be obviously to prevent hartal. These arrests mean that the authorities do not want to tolerate even quiet persuasion and canvassing. They want in fact a forcible opening of shops. They will not adopt the way of Colonel Johnson² and threaten to open the shops and put soldiers in charge, but they wish to influence the timid shopkeepers by arresting their leaders. The merchants of Calcutta have now a chance of showing their determination and independence by observing complete hartal in spite of the withdrawal of leaders. It is more necessary than ever for the people now to observe hartal on the 24th. The idea of making a demonstration has now become a subsidiary object. The honour of their leaders requires the people of Calcutta to observe a complete hartal. It will be a proof of their confidence in their leaders and proof also of the exercise of their own free will. I am hoping that the people of Calcutta will not fail to do their obvious duty on the 24th instant. And now that their leaders are withdrawn from them, every non-co-operator will constitute himself a leader for keeping the peace. They cannot do better than simply keep themselves at home on the 24th except volunteers whose duty it will be to protect from harm those who may choose to open their shops. I assume that both the Congress and the Khilafat Committees have elected fresh office-bearers. Our true test is certainly now. The assumption of leadership today is like the assumption of Lord Mayorship by the late MacSwiney³. It carries with it the liability for immediate imprisonment. If the nation is truly awakened, there should be a ceaseless flow of leaders and men and women to be led. Our supply must always be equal to the demand made upon us by the Government. We win when we have established

¹ 1889-1958; Nationalist Muslim Congress leader; twice elected President of the Indian National Congress; Education Minister; Government of India

² Military officer in command of the Lahore area during the Martial Law in April and May, 1919

³ Irish patriot and Lord Mayor of Cork. He died in 1920 after a 65-day fast unto death for the emancipation of Ireland.

sufficient credit for ourselves for being able to cope with the demand.

THE USE OF IT ALL

Let there be no doubt about the propriety of us all going to jail. If we are unable to meet the demand, let us be men enough to own that we are in a minority, and if we have faith in our programme, we must turn that minority into a majority not by preaching but by living up to our preaching. Let us realize the full force of the truth that an ounce of practice is worth tons of preaching. It is true economy to use all the resources we have instead of wasting time in acquiring fresh resources. The latter will come as we use what we have. Supposing, however, that we get no further response, let us rest assured that those who refuse to go to jail will find out their own way of work. It will be at least sincere. That part of India which believes in non-co-operation by suffering will do its full share. If we go to jail fifty times and get no addition to our numbers, I hope still to be able to say, "We must repeat the performance till we have impressed the whole of India with the truth of our way." That is the way of religion and no other. We want swaraj for men who love and would suffer for freedom. We want to support the Khilafat¹ through such men, for they only are true Hindus, true Mussulmans and true Sikhs.

THE SIMPLE BEAUTY OF IT

To understand the simplicity of our programme is to realize its true beauty. There is nothing more to be done but to spin and court imprisonment, and spin even in the prisons if they will let us. Whilst we are spinning or going to jail we must retain the correct attitude of mind, i.e., of non-violence and friendliness between the various faiths. If we cease to hate Englishmen, co-operators and those who do not see eye to eye with us, if we cease to distrust or fear one another and if we are determined to suffer and work for the bread of the whole nation, i.e., spin, do we not see that no power upon earth can withstand us? And if we believe in ourselves what matters it whether we are few or many, or whether we are arrested or shot? And surely in all I have said I have presented a programme not for perfect men but for practical men who are good, true and brave. If we cannot even become good, true and brave, have we any right to talk of swaraj or religion? Can we

¹ The Caliphate of Turkey. The object of the Khilafat movement was to ensure that the Sultan of Turkey was restored to the status which he enjoyed before World War I.

call ourselves Hindus, Mussulmans, Christians, Jews, Sikhs, Parsis? Have we any business, if we are not that, to be talking of Khilafat and the Punjab?

GOVERNMENT NON-CO-OPERATION

Therefore, if we believe in our programme, we must not mind if the Government non-co-operate with us in every particular. I hear from Mr. Rajagopalachari¹ and Agha Safdar² that they are not permitted to send full telegrams. It is a surprise to me that they permit the transmission of any telegrams at all or let us travel or meet each other. Having made up my mind to expect the worst, nothing that the Government does in the shape of curbing our activity surprises or irritates me. It is struggling for its very existence and I feel that I would have done much the same that this Government is doing if I was in its place. Probably I should do much worse. Why should we expect it to refrain from using the powers it has? Only we must find the means of living and carrying on our non-co-operation without its aid. We must keep our heads even if inter-provincial communication is denied to us. Having got our programme, each province must be able to carry on its own activity. Indeed, it may even be an advantage, for, in the event of communication being cut off, we should be unaffected by reverses in other provinces. Thus, for instance, the Punjab need not be affected by Gujarat weakening and surrendering body and soul to the Government or, say, Assam. going stark mad or becoming unexpectedly violent. Let not the reader fear any such possibility, for, Assam is keeping exceptionally sane in spite of grave provocation and Gujarat will give, I hope, a good account of itself in the near future. The Government of Bombay probably knows its business better than others. It has certainly greater forbearance and tact. It is giving the non-co-operators as long a rope as they want. And as the latter do want to be hanged if they do not get what they want, they are taking the longest rope. But that is by the way. Clouds no bigger than a man's hand have a knack of appearing in the Indian horizon and all of a sudden assuming dangerous dimensions. The point I wish to drive home is that we must prepare ourselves against and for all complications and never be baffled by them, certainly

¹ Chakravarti Rajagopalachari (b. 1879); statesman and first Indian Governor-General

² President, Punjab Provincial Congress Committee, after Lala Lajpat Rai's arrest on December 3, 1921

never be taken aback when the expected happens.

SLOW BUT SURE

If the luxury of wires be denied to us, we must manage with the post. If the postal communication be also stopped we must use messengers. Friends travelling to and from will oblige us. When the use of the railways is denied, we must use other methods of conveyance. No amount of slowness imposed from without can checkmate us, if we are sure within."Rock of ages, cleft for me, Let me hide myself in Thee" is a prayer common to all religions. If we can but throw ourselves into His lap as our only Help, we shall come out scatheless through every ordeal that the Government may subject us to. If nothing happens without His permitting, where is the difficulty in believing that He is trying us even through this Government? I would take our complaints to Him and be angry with Him for so cruelly trying us. And He will soothe us and forgive us, if we will but trust Him. The way to stand erect before the tyrant is not to hate him, not to strike him but to humble ourselves before God and cry out to Him in the hour of our agony.

FROM AGHA SAFDAR

Here are two beautiful letters¹ from Agha Safdar showing how the brave Punjabis are being hampered and tried and proving themselves true, how the gallant Sikhs are defying the whole strength of the Government stupidly directed against its erstwhile noblest friends and supporters, and how all the Punjab leaders are working with one mind and how they are all keeping an unruffled temper in the midst of exceptional difficulty. But let the great and good Agha Saheb speak for himself and his proud though much afflicted Punjab:

I

. . . You must have learnt through the Associated Press the circumstances under which the arrests were made. Lalaji² wished very much to abide by your wishes and not court arrest, but it could not be helped, and he, being the President of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee, could not stay away from the meeting. The meeting was called immediately after the orders were passed stopping public meetings and disbanding Volunteer Corps, . . .³ The

¹ Only excerpts reproduced here

² Lala Lajpat Rai (1865-1928); Nationalist leader of the Punjab

³ Following the disturbances in Bombay on November 17, 1921,"Local Governments were . . . informed that for the purpose of checking the increasing

District Magistrate stopped the meeting labelling it as seditious, but as the order was illegal it was decided not to obey it.

Lalaji, Santanam¹, Gopichand² and Lal Khan are now in the Central Jail. They are happy and contented. Beddings and books were supplied to them but they declined to take food from outside and are having the jail food.

The case is coming up for hearing on 7th December and it is said the trial is to take place under Sec. 145 I.P.C. . . .

The whole of the province is quiet and peaceful. We are laying stress upon khadi and boycott of *videshi*³ cloth. . . .

Our *Khalsa*⁴ friends are still busy holding public meetings at Amritsar but no further arrests are being made. Total arrests have been 21 out of whom 11 have already been convicted. Similar divans have commenced meeting in Lahore and so far one arrest has been made.

We are all trying our best to keep a non-violent atmosphere and have every hope to succeed, as people are gradually imbibing the spirit and are keeping under control even under provocative circumstances. . . .

II

I hope you have got my letter I wrote to you this morning. A public meeting was advertised at 4 p.m. in the Bradlaugh Hall which was to be presided over by S. Prem Singh Sodhbans. Strong police force with lathis and rifles surrounded the hall and all the approaches thereto by two noon and kept the guard till after 4 p.m. None was permitted to enter the premises. . . . S. Prem Singh arrived by 3.30 p.m. but was stopped by the police force and ordered to clear off by a European police officer. He turned round along with the crowd and held a meeting at some distance passing a resolution congratulating Lalaji and his comrades, and then dispersed the meeting. The whole affair ended quietly. . . . I have, however, just heard that a student was badly

volume of inflammatory speeches the application of Seditious Meetings Act . . . would be sanctioned . . . also . . . Part II of the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1908 should be vigorously employed for combating the illegal activities of volunteer associations, whose drilling picketing and intimidation were threatening peace of the country. . . . The Government of India . . . instructed the provincial administrations to deal promptly with incitements to violence to sedition, to the inception of civil disobedience." *India in 1921-22*

¹ K. Santanam; politician and lawyer; Secretary of the Sub-Committee appointed by the Congress to report on the Punjab disorders of 1919

² Dr. Gopichand Bhargava (b. 1890); entered politics under Lala Lajpat Rai; imprisoned during 1942-3; Chief Minister, Punjab

³ Foreign

⁴ Literally, pure. A name given to the Sikhs

beaten by a police constable and is lying in the hospital in a precarious state. Pandit Rambhaji Dutt has just gone out to see him.

Lalaji and others were interviewed in the jail yesterday. They are all keeping good spirits. Treatment accorded to them has not been exceptional. They are all kept in separate cells and are living on jail food. . . .

At Amritsar, I hear from Girdharilal, there has happened something untoward. Sikhs were peacefully holding their public meeting when all of a sudden a few sadhus appeared on the spot and began beating promiscuously with their iron sticks. The Sikhs remained non-violent and got a few persons injured. Simultaneously, with the advent of the sadhus there appeared the Deputy Commissioner along with police and military force on the spot. The Deputy Commissioner was permitted entrance. But the Sikh leader, Gyani Sher Singh, refused official intervention and declined any help from the Deputy Commissioner. The position is said to be well in hand and no further violence is reported.

. . . It is just reported that the student maltreated by the police is feeling well. Nothing that I can add can enhance the beauty of the simple narrative given by the Agha Saheb. I have not altered a single word in the two letters. I bow in reverence to Lalaji and his comrades who refused even whilst under trial anything but jail food, and I tender my congratulations to Sardar Prem Singh Sodhbans who conducted the meeting with such calm dignity in defiance of the magisterial order and in the face of the provoking presence of the police. I congratulate the young volunteer with his broken head. The serious affray at Amritsar must await separate treatment when full details are available. There seems little doubt that the Sikhs have behaved with wonderful courage and restraint. When born fighters become non-violent, they exhibit courage of the highest order. The Sikhs have historical evidence of such exhibition in their midst. They are now repeating their own history. Let me hope and pray that they will carry out the instructions of Sardar Khadag Singh¹ to remain nonviolent to the end, to become simple in their tastes and wear only khadi.

IN THE ABSENCE OF PRESIDENT

The arrest of our President elect need not perturb us. His spirit will preside over our deliberations. We know what message he has for the country. He has become the living embodiment of it. We must elect some one to act for him out of the remnant that is permitted to

¹ A Congress leader of the Punjab

meet at the Congress. Certainly no Congress has ever met under happier auspices than this will. What seemed impossible has been rendered almost possible by the welcome repression of the Government. That many of the best of us are in jail is swaraj. I would call it the fullest swaraj if the Government simply invited every non-co-operator to offer himself on or before the 26th instant at the nearest police-station for arrest and imprisonment to be under custody till he has apologized for his non-cooperation or till the Government feels the necessity for repentance. I would forego the Congress in spite of Vallabhbhai Patel¹ and his devoted band working night and day to make the reception of the delegates and visitors worthy of the capital of Gujarat. For me any such order of the Government will be complete swaraj. It will be good for the Government to rid itself of non-co-operators and it will give the latter their heart's desire. Their formula is swaraj or jail. But in the absence of any such new year's gift from the Government, we may be certainly thankful for the small mercies they have favoured us with. I give below the list of the biggest prisoners I could think of as having won their spurs during the past few days:

LAHORE

Lala Lajpat Rai	Dr. Satyapal
K. Santanam	Dr. Gurbakshrai
Dr. Gopichand	S. E. Stokes
Malik Lal Khan	

AJMER

Maulana Mainuddin	Maulvi Abdulla
Mirza Abdul Kadir Beg	Sayed Abbas Ali
Hafiz Sultan Hasan	Maulvi Nuruddin
Maulvi Abdul Kadir Bodhari	

ALLAHABAD

Pandit Motilal Nehru	Maulana Sherar
Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru	N. Sherwani
Pandit Shyamlal Nehru	Kamaluddin Jafferi
Pandit Mohanlal Nehru	Ranendranath Basu

¹ 1875-1950; Congress leader from Gujarat; first Deputy Prime Minister of free India

Purushottamdas Tandon
Gaurishanker Mishra
Pandit Kapildev Malaviya

George Joseph
K. B. Mathur

LUCKNOW

Harkaran Nath Mishra
Chaudhary Khaliquzzaman
Sheikh Mahomed Shaukatali
Dr. Shiv Narain Saksena
Pandit Balmukund Vajpai

Maulana Salamatullah
Mohanlal Saksena
Dr. Lakshmisahai
Hakim Abdul Wali
Lal Bahadur Shripati

BENGAL

C. R. Das
Master C. R. Das
Akram Khan
Sasmal

Jitendralal Banerji
Maulana Abul Kalam Azad
Padmaraj Jain
Maulana Abdul Muswir-Sylhe

DELHI

Shankarlal

Asaf Ali

ASSAM

T. R. Phookan
N. C. Bardolai
Bishnu Ram Mehdi

Kaladhar Chaliha
R. K. Chaudhary
Mahibuddin

MADRAS

Venkatasubbayya

Lakshminarasinham

I have given the names from memory. The list is not exhaustive, I know, but it may not be even fully representative. It is, however, sufficiently illustrative of the temper of the country. It is to me an eloquent demonstration of the fitness of the country for swaraj if my standard be accepted, viz., those who are prepared to suffer are the fittest for self-government.

BENGAL'S DUTY

Bengal's duty is clear. It has to return a fitting answer to the arrest of the President elect and other chosen leaders. The arrest of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad is an event of importance equal with the arrest of the President elect. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad has an all-India reputation, especially among the Mussulmans. He is a seasoned soldier having been interned for years in Ranchi. He stands

high in the ranks of the learned men of Islam. His arrest must sink deep in the hearts of the Mussulmans of India. What answer will the Hindus and Mussulmans of Bengal return? Action can only be answered by counter-action. We know what the answer should be. Will the thousands of Bengali Hindus and Bengali Mussulmans enrol themselves as volunteers and be arrested? Will Bengal wear only khadi or nothing? Will Bengali students give the answer that the President of the Congress expected from them in his moving appeal?

TRIUMPH OF NON-VIOLENCE

I take it for granted that the Hindus and Mussulmans of Calcutta in particular and Bengal in general will keep absolutely quiet. If the present calm is an index for the future, the evil done by Bombay has been almost entirely undone.¹ The lesson of Bombay has gone home. It must abide for all time. Let the young men of Calcutta rally round the leaders who are left. Let them not be impatient. Let them keep their heads cool and their hands on the spinning-wheel. Every non-co-operator must find himself and herself on the register of volunteers, and the list should be day after day published in the Press so as to make it easy for the Government to arrest whomsoever they choose. The splendid emotion of Bengal should be translated at this supreme juncture in our national history into cool energy of the highest order. No bluster, no fuss, no bravado. Only religious devotion to the cause and a fixed determination to do or die.

TO ALL CONGRESS OFFICIALS

I invite all Congress secretaries to send me a list of imprisonments to date and the appointment of new secretaries and chairmen in the place of those arrested, and send me, if need be, daily a diary of events in the same admirable manner that Agha Safdar has done. I would like them to be brief and to the point and write only on one side of the paper in a clear hand so as to enable me to print with ease what may be considered necessary.

ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE

The eventful meeting of this Committee takes place on the 24th instant. On its decision will rest the future programme. Every member Who can will, I hope, attend the meeting. Every member will be

¹ The reference evidently is to the riots in Bombay on November 17, 1921 the day the Prince of Wales arrived there.

expected to give his own Independent opinion, To give one's opinion is to act according to it. No mechanical majority is of value at this moment of national history. If we vote for a particular programme we must have faith in it and we must be prepared to enforce it at the risk of our lives. 'We must widen the gates of prisons and we must enter them as a bridegroom enters the bride's chamber. Freedom is to be wooed only inside prison walls and sometimes on the gallows, never in the council chambers, courts or the schoolroom. Freedom is the most capricious jilt ever known to the world. She is the greatest temptress most difficult to please. No wonder she builds her temples in jails or on inaccessible heights and laughs at us as we attempt to scale the prison wall or (in the hope of reaching her temple on some Himalayan height) wade through hills and dales strewn with thorns. The members of the Committee must, therefore, come with a fixed purpose whatever it may be. It is well with us if not believing in courting imprisonment we own the fact: and suggest other remedies I would decline, if I was the only one, to give my vote for prisons, if I did not believe in them at this stage or any other. And I would vote, without faltering, for them if I believed in them and even though I had no supporter. No leisurely programme can meet the situation. We who are outside the prison walls have constituted ourselves trustees for those who are inside those life-giving walls and we best discharge our trust by imitating our principles and getting inside those walls, throwing the burden of the trust on our successors.

THE WORKING COMMITTEE

This outgoing Committee will meet for the last time under most trying circumstances. Of the fifteen members Deshbandhu Das, Lala Lajpat Rai, Pandit Motilal Nehru¹ and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad who was just appointed at Delhi in the place of Maulana Mahomed Ali² will be absent being His Majesty's guests in some of those hotels called prisons. I, therefore, suggest that the provinces from which these patriots come should send one representative each a day earlier so that they may at least give the benefit of their advice to the Committee although they may not vote thereat. I would suggest to the other provinces also which are not directly represented on the Committee to

¹ 1861-1931; lawyer and politician; twice President of the Indian National Congress

² 1878-1931; brother of Shaikat Ali and a prominent leader of the Khilafat movement

send one representative each to guide the deliberations of the Committee.

WINTER IN AHMEDABAD

Friends have asked me to draw the attention of delegates and visitors to the fact that the climate is not quite so mild as in Bombay nor so severe as in Delhi or Amritsar. It is necessary for them to bring a moderate supply of winter clothing. As chairs have been dispensed with in the Congress *pandal*¹, delegates will be supplied with khadi bags at a nominal price to keep their shoes in, but it is open to them to bring their own bags. It will be most inadvisable to leave shoes outside the *pandal* and after much deliberation the Reception Committee has decided not to make any arrangements for taking custody of the shoes of those who wish to leave them outside. At the Khilafat Conferences it is usual for people to carry their shoes in pieces of paper or otherwise. The bags are a most convenient and useful contrivance to meet the difficulty. The Reception Committee is making elaborate preparations for electric lighting, water-pipes and latrines so that the health and comforts of delegates may be as fully conserved as is possible in the circumstances. But I must not anticipate the comforts or discomforts that are being provided by the Reception Committee.

RESIGNATIONS

One reads in the papers lists of resignations by Government servants in all Departments. A copy of one such resignation has been sent to me from Belgaum. The Head Clerk to the Assistant Director of Public Health has tendered his resignation as a protest against the conviction of Gangadharrao Deshpande², the leader of Karnatak. In his resignation he described his own personal grievance but that was not sufficient inducement for him to leave Government service. In Assam quite a number of pleaders have suspended practice as a protest against the repressive policy of the local Government. I trust that these instances of resignations and suspensions will multiply.

A CROP OF DIFFICULTIES

A Bihar correspondent, who gives his name, writes as follows:³

¹ covered enclosure erected for special occasions

² Prominent politician, known as the "Lion of Karnatak"

³ Only excerpts reproduced here

. . . I had sided with non-co-operation with the full belief that it was religiously compulsory upon every Muslim. I never deceived myself with any hope of India's regeneration through non-co-operation. . . . I do not mean that I consider non-co-operation to be less effective but I do most strongly say that our countrymen are not capable of adhering to it with perfect non-violence. . . . I think the morale of the country has so far deteriorated that it is beyond possibility that our present generation can effectively practise non-co-operation with non-violence. Is it not strange that a responsible leader like yourself could shut his eyes to this apparent and abject condition of things?

. . . after so much evidence of failures, why do you still stick to dating the advent of swaraj by months? If it was only to rouse the teeming masses, I am afraid the idea was not well conceived as is clear from recent happenings. To give out absurd hopes is nothing but playing with people's passion.

. . . Let us first train the countrymen and then march them to do battle. We have begun the fight with bad soldiers. . . .

I should like to hear through *Young India* your views.

He is a well-known Bihari. There is no doubt about his honesty. I, therefore, gladly respond to his suggestion to give a public reply to his letter. Though non-co-operation was, in the first instance, conceived in connection with the Khilafat, neither I nor my first associates ever thought that non-co-operation with the British Government involved any sacrifice whatsoever of the country's interests. On the contrary, we believed that if we could compel surrender to the just demands of the Mussulmans of India regarding the Khilafat, we could also compel surrender in the matter of the Punjab and, consequently, in the matter of swaraj. Non-violence was believed from the very commencement to be an integral part of non-co-operation, and if the former failed the latter failed *ipso facto*. Indeed the recent happenings have furnished abundant proof of the progress of non-violence. They show, I hope conclusively, that Bombay's aberration was an isolated instance in no way symptomatic of the general condition of the country. A year ago, it would have been impossible for the Government to arrest so many leaders of the front rank in so many parts of the country leaving the people absolutely self-controlled. It would be a mistake to suppose that it is the machine gun which has kept all the people under restraint. No doubt it has its share, but he who runs may see that there are hundreds, if not thousands, of people in India today to whom machine-guns have ceased to be a terror. Nor can I subscribe to the doctrine that the

country has suffered deterioration. On the contrary, every province can demonstrate the marvellous revolution brought about by this movement of purification in the lives of people. A distinguished Mussulman friend was telling me only the other day how the younger generation of Mussulmans was reclaimed from a life of indolent and atheistical luxury to one of religious simplicity and industry.

We are certainly in a hurry to get swaraj. Who can help it? Were the Moplahs in the death wagon in a hurry when in their asphyxiated state they were crying out for a breath of fresh air and a drink of water?¹ The death wagon of foreign domination in which we are suffering from moral asphyxiation is infinitely worse than the Moplah death wagon. And the wonder is that all these long years we have not felt the want of the oxygen of liberty. But having known our state, is it not most natural for us to cry out for the fresh air of swaraj? I am unable to accept any blame for having set the time-limit. I would have been wrong not to do so, knowing as I did that if the people fulfilled the conditions which were capable of easy fulfilment, swaraj was a certainty inside of twelve months. If the atmosphere of non-violence is truly established, I make bold to say that we shall achieve the substance even during the remaining days of this year, though we might have to wait for the form yet a while. The time-limit was not fixed in order to rouse the teeming millions, but it was fixed in order to rivet the attention of Congressmen and Congresswomen on their sense of immediate duty and on the grand consequence of its fulfilment. Without the time-limit we would not have collected the crore nor would we have introduced so many spinning-wheels, no manufactured thousands of rupees worth of hand-spun khadi and distributed lakhs amongst the poorest workers in the country. It is not a sign of bad soldiery to find Bengal, the United Provinces, and the Punjab supplying prisoners as fast as Government can take them. And, when the word is passed round the other provinces for repression of a violent type, I doubt not that they will shine just as brilliantly as the three fortunate ones I have mentioned.

SOME PROOFS

The following letter² from the surviving Secretary of the U.P.

¹ The Moplahs, Muslims settled in Malabar, rose in revolt in August 1921 and looted Hindus and committed arson and murder. On November 19, about 70 Moplahs died of asphyxiation while being conveyed by train to Bellary for imprisonment.

² Only excerpts reproduced here

Provincial Congress Committee, Mr. Jiam Saksena, speaks for itself:

Of all the local office-bearers of the U.P. Provincial Congress Committee, I am the only unfortunate Secretary who is yet out of jail. It has, therefore, fallen to my lot to inform you of what has recently happened here.

The Provincial Congress Committee office was searched at about midnight and the registers of the U.P. Congress Committee, Executive Council and other subordinate bodies were taken away by the Deputy Superintendent of Police who conducted the search. Besides, the Khilafat Committee office and the houses of the gentlemen arrested were searched.

We have now started civil disobedience in Allahabad in an organized and systematic form. National Volunteers are being briskly recruited. . . . Yesterday a batch of a dozen volunteers was sent out for a round in the city with national badges on their arms, singing patriotic songs. . . . none was taken in custody. . . . Today the same batch with another of a dozen volunteers paraded the town. . . . No arrests took place today. . . .

Of equal value is the following from a Lahore correspondent:²

The general atmosphere is very good. People are fearless and non-violent. The City Congress Committees are sending out volunteers to hold meetings in different parts of the town at the same hour, to read out the same written speech, and to sing the same song and disperse within ten or fifteen minutes. Yesterday (the 8th instant) twenty such meetings were held in twenty centres . . . Fear of arrest or the jail is gone.

Surely, this is a record of which any country would be proud.

LEST WE FORGET

The same Lahore correspondent, however, regretfully mentions that the khadi movement has suffered a set-back and that khadi is not so much in evidence in Lahore as it used to be some time ago. If this is so, it is a bad sign. A mere filling of the jails will not answer the whole purpose. If India does not return to swadeshi, no amount of going to jail will make her self-contained or fill the mouths of the hungry millions. Without the four vital parts of the programme, which are meant not for particular classes but for all, we cannot establish swaraj. The reader must not be tired of my repetition of them: Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Parsi, Christian, Jew unity; swadeshi, i.e., manufacture and use of hand-spun khadi to the exclusion of all foreign cloth; removal of untouchability by Hindus; and observance of non-violence by all. These are like the four posts of a bedstead. Remove one of them and it cannot stand.

BAN ON KHADI CAP

A friend has sent me papers in connection with a tussle that a local pleader is having with a Sub-Judge of Devrukh in the District of Ratnagiri over his khadi cap. Mr. J.V. Vaidya, the local pleader in question, had the following order passed against him by the Sub-Judge:

Mr. Vaidya has appeared in Court today in a khadi cap, commonly known as the "Gandhi cap". In conformity with the views of the High Court as expressed in the recent letter of the Chief Justice addressed to the District Judge, Ratnagiri, extract of which was forwarded to the Devrukh Bar, I have told Mr. Vaidya that I consider his appearance today in a khadi cap as amounting to disrespect of the Court and have ordered him to leave the Court at once and not to appear again before this Court in a cap unless and until the District Judge or the High Court directs otherwise. I have also warned him that if he appears in a cap after this order, he will expose himself to all the consequences of a contempt of Court. A copy of the statement of Mr. Vaidya and of this order will be forwarded to the District Judge for such action as he may deem fit to take in the matter.

The following is a copy of the extracts from the Chief Justice's letter for communication to the Bar:

The High Court is decidedly against the wearing of Gandhi caps in Court by pleaders and would consider any pleader wearing a Gandhi cap in Court as guilty of disrespect to the Judge.

We hope that the good sense of the pleaders will prevail provided they know what the views of the High Court are.

No pleader should appear in Court if he wears any head-dress except a turban.

Please inform these pleaders that the High Court strongly disapproves of their conduct.

To this the Sub-Judge appended the following hope:

The undersigned hopes that the pleaders will conform to the views of the High Court herein expressed and that there would be no occasion for the undersigned to enforce them in this Court.

Side by side with a discussion of matters of urgency, I do not hesitate to occupy the space at my disposal for discussion of an order which affects only a few pleaders. But the principle underlying this war against khadi caps is of the highest importance. It shows how innocent but moral and economic movements are attempted to be killed by their adversaries. Surely, the Chief Justice outside his official position could not possibly take exception to a headgear which is

accepted as respectable by thousands of men all over India occupying a high station in life. Nor do pleaders who adopt the national cap do so out of any disrespect for the Court, but they do it out of respect for themselves and the nation to which they belong. They do it because they do not wish to conceal their religion or their politics, whichever way one regards the adoption of the khadi cap. A man who does not respect himself becomes menial. Are pleaders menials or officers of the High Courts? Custodians as they claim to be of the people's liberty, are their to submit to a deprivation of their own? I understand that Mr. Vaidya has decided to give up his practice, if he cannot carry it on with dignity and self-respect. He has, therefore, lodged a protest against the order, ceased to appear before the Sub-Judge till the matter is decided in his favour. And I learn further that the other members of the local Bar are also conferring among themselves as to the steps to be taken for vindicating their honour and freedom of action in the matter of dress. One does hope that when pleaders are unable to suspend practice or students to withdraw from Government schools and colleges, they will at least put up a brave fight in order to sustain their own personal honour even as the medical students of Vizagapatam have done.

KRIPALANI AND CO.

A telegram has been received from Banaras advising me that Professor Kripalani¹ and fifteen members of his Ashram have been arrested. The sacrifice of the innocents is proceeding apace. Professor Kripalani is an educationist who has identified himself with his pupils. He has a number of devoted pupils whose character has been transformed by his touch. He implicitly believes in non-violence to which he has come by laborious processes. He has been devoting his own and his pupils' energy to the development of the constructive side of swadeshi, and has been conducting an ideal institution in Banaras. He had reduced his wants to the barest necessities of life and has been living with his pupils sharing with them the drudgery of the institution as also its privileges which mainly consist in his own inspiring company to his pupils. I have no advice as yet as to why he and fifteen of his pupils have been arrested. I dare say it is for

¹ Acharya J. B. Kripalani (b. 1888); took part in Champaran and Non-co-operation movements; Lecturer, Benares Hindu University, 1918-20; started Gandhi Ashram for khadi and village work in 1920; Principal, Gujarat Vidyapith, 1922-7; President, Indian National Congress, 1946

volunteering. For, he is not the man to shirk danger. Anyway, he has led the way for other such institutions. Let the purest-minded become volunteers and be imprisoned. The instruction of the Working Committee in this matter must be strictly followed. The purest-minded alone are fit to go to jail as civil resisters and no other. If we have been lax hitherto, let us be rigorously strict in our selection. I fervently hope that those who have not clean minds or who do not believe in non-violence or swadeshi or any vital part of non-co-operation, will refrain from applying. They will serve by their abstention.

SWORD-STICKS

Whilst considering the question of selection of volunteers, I was grieved to learn that there were places in Calcutta in which sword-sticks and such other weapons were found. Soldiers of non-violence should have neither sticks nor swords. We must eschew every symbol of violence whilst our weapon is non-violence. As Chhotani Mian¹ in his manifesto very properly says, we must not even think of violence.

IRELAND AND INDIA

Lord Reading has flung Ireland in our faces. Let us contemplate for a moment that romantic nation. I would like the reader to believe with me that it is not the blood that the Irishmen have taken which has given them what appears to be their liberty. But it is the gallons of blood that they have willingly given themselves. It is not the fear of losing more lives that has compelled a reluctant offer from England but it is the shame of any further imposition of agony upon a people that loves its liberty above everything else. It is the magnitude of the Irish sacrifice which has been the deciding factor. The late President Kruger², when with a handful of his undisciplined countrymen he hurled his ultimatum against the British Empire, said he would stagger humanity. He meant that he would sacrifice every Boer man, woman and child and leave not a single Boer heart to subdue, but he would gladly let Englishmen roam about the desert soil of South Africa dyed with the blood of the Boer martyrs. And England yielded when she was tired of concentration camps in which Boer women and children died like flies, and then she was choked with the bloody feast that the Boers had provided for her. And even so has Ireland been staggering

¹ A Nationalist Muslim leader of Bombay

² 1825-1904; President of the Transvaal, 1883-1900

humanity for many a long year. And England has yielded when she is able no longer to bear the sight of blood pouring out of thousands of Irish arteries. I know for certain that it is not legal subtleties, discussions on academic justice or resolutions of councils and assemblies that will give us what we want. We shall have to stagger humanity even as South Africa and Ireland have been obliged to. Only instead of repeating South African and Irish histories non-co-operators are learning from the living examples of these two nations the art of spilling their own blood without spilling that of their opponents. If they could do that, they could attain swaraj within a few days or a few months. But if they want slavishly to follow South Africa and Ireland, Heaven help India. Then there is no swaraj during the present generation. And I know that the swaraj promised by Mr. Montagu¹, no matter how well-intentioned he may be, will turn out to be a delusion and a snare. Councils are no factories for making stout hearts. And freedom is miasma without stout hearts to defend it.

WHAT IS SWARAJ?

The Times of India questions whether I have any clear notion of swaraj. If the writer will go through the back numbers of *Young India*, he will find a complete answer to the question. But I may mention here briefly that the least that swaraj means is a settlement with the Government in accordance with the wishes of the chosen representatives of the people. Therefore, the Congress representatives, if they can make good their claim by providing an inexhaustible supply of prisoners, will have a determining voice in any settlement that may be made. Swaraj, therefore, means the capacity of the people of India to enforce their demands. I totally dissent from the Viceroy's view that swaraj must come from the British Parliament, unless it comes through the sword. The British Parliament will only ratify the people's wish when the "sword" has made it irresistible. Non-co-operators are trying to use the sword of self-sacrifice in preference to that of steel. India's soul is pitted against British steel. We shall not have to wait long to know what popular swaraj is.

WORK IN JAILS

An esteemed friend asks me whether, now that the Government have provided an opportunity for hundreds to find themselves

¹ E. S. Montagu (1879-1924); Secretary of State for India, 1917-22 and co-sponsor of Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms

imprisoned and as thousands are responding, it would not be better for the prisoners to refuse to do any work in the jails at all. I am afraid that suggestion comes from a misapprehension of the moral position. We are not out to abolish jails as an institution. Even under swaraj we would have our jails. Our civil disobedience, therefore, must not be carried beyond the point of breaking the unmoral laws of the country. Breach of the laws to be civil assumes the strictest and willing obedience to the jail discipline because disobedience of a particular rule assumes a willing acceptance of the sanction provided for its breach. And immediately a person quarrels both with the rule and the sanction for its breach, he ceases to be civil and lends himself to the precipitation of chaos and anarchy. A civil resister is, if one may be permitted such a claim for him, a philanthropist and a friend of the State. An anarchist is an enemy of the State and is, therefore, a misanthrope. I have permitted myself to use the language of war because the so-called constitutional method has become so utterly ineffective. But I hold the opinion firmly that civil disobedience is the purest type of constitutional agitation. Of course it becomes degrading and despicable if its civil, i.e., non-violent character is a mere camouflage. If the honesty of non-violence be admitted, there is no warrant for condemnation even of the fiercest disobedience because of the likelihood of its leading to violence. No big or swift movement can be carried on without bold risks and life will not be worth living if it is not attended with large risks. Does not the history of the world show that there would have been no romance in life if there had been no risks? It is the clearest proof of a degenerate atmosphere that one finds respectable people, leaders of society raising their hands in horror and indignation at the slightest approach of danger or upon an outbreak of any violent commotion. We do want to drive out the beast in man, but we do not want on that account to emasculate him. And in the process of finding his own status, the beast in him is bound now and again to put up his ugly appearance. As I have often stated in these pages what strikes me down is not the sight of blood under every conceivable circumstance. It is blood spilt by the non-cooperator or his supporters in breach of his declared pledge which paralyses me, as I know it ought to paralyse every honest non-co-operator.

Therefore, to revert to the original argument, as civil resisters we are bound to guard against universal indiscipline. Jail discipline must be submitted to until jail Government itself becomes or is felt to be

corrupt and immoral. But deprivation of comfort, imposition of restriction and such other inconveniences do not make jail Government corrupt. It becomes that when prisoners are humiliated or treated with inhumanity as when they are kept in filthy dens or are given food unfit for human consumption. Indeed, I hope that the conduct of non-co-operators in the jail will be strictly correct, dignified and yet submissive. We must not regard jailers and warders as our enemies but as fellow human beings not utterly devoid of the human touch. Our gentlemanly behaviour is bound to disarm all suspicion or bitterness. I know that this path of discipline on the one hand and fierce defiance on the other is a very difficult path, but there is no royal road to swaraj. The country has deliberately chosen the narrow and the straight path. Like a straight line it is the shortest distance. But even as you require a steady and experienced hand to draw a straight line, so are steadiness of discipline and firmness of purpose absolutely necessary if we are to walk along the chosen path with an unerring step.

I am painfully conscious of the fact that it is not going to be a bed of roses for any of the civil resisters. And my head reels and the heart throbs when I recall the lives of Motilal Nehru and C. R. Das in their palatial rooms surrounded by numerous willing attendants and by every comfort and convenience that money can buy and when I think of what is in store for them inside the cold unattractive prison walls where they will have to listen to the clanking of the prisoner's chains in the place of the sweet music of their drawing-rooms. But I steel my heart with the thought that it is the sacrifice of just such heroes that will usher in swaraj. The noblest of South Africans, Canadians, Englishmen, Frenchmen, Germans have had to undergo much greater sacrifices than we have mapped out for ourselves.

AGHA SAHEB SAFDAR

No telegram but a letter has been just received that the Agha Saheb was arrested at Sialkot on the 10th instant whilst he was on a flying visit there. He was followed by a dense crowd. The Agha Saheb refused to be arrested unless there was a warrant or he was forced. At last the Magistrate had to come and order his arrest. The Agha Saheb obeyed this cheerfully though the Magistrate was not able to say why he was being arrested. As soon as the jail gates were opened, some of the crowd rushed in and asked to be arrested also together with the Agha Saheb. These intruders were naturally driven out. My

correspondent tells me-also that the Magistrate was insulted by the crowd. I congratulate the Agha Saheb but I cannot congratulate the crowd which had no business to follow the Agha Saheb. Those who entered the jail were guilty of misbehaviour in terms of the pledge of non-violence and those who insulted the Magistrate damaged the cause which they sought to espouse and were guilty not only of a breach of their pledge but of cowardice. The police party, I understand, was small. The officer in charge, I understand, behaved courteously. Probably relying upon our non-violence, the Magistrate was insufficiently protected. I warn the non-co-operators that any deviation from our pledge will postpone the advent of swaraj, which seems to be rushing towards us."non-violence in thought, word or deed" must be our motto.

I understand that the Agha Saheb appointed Lala Dunichand as his successor¹ in office. I wish the new President the same good luck that has blessed Agha Safdar Saheb.

Young India, 15-12-1921

116. WOMEN'S PART

The women of Calcutta have obstructed the gentlemen of Calcutta by trying to sell khadi and a telegram in the newspapers has announced that they have been consequently arrested². The company includes the devoted partner of the President elect³, his widowed sister and his niece.⁴ I had hoped that in the initial stages, at any rate, women would be spared the honour of going to jail. They were not to become aggressive civil resisters. But the Bengal Government, in their impartial zeal to make no distinction even of sex, have conferred the honour upon three women of Calcutta. I hope that the whole country will welcome this innovation. The women of India should have as much share in winning swaraj as men. Probably in this peaceful struggle woman can outdistance man by many a mile. We know that she is any day superior to man in her religious devotion. Silent and dignified suffering is the badge of her sex. And now that the Government of Bengal have dragged the woman into the line of fire, I hope that the women all over India will take up the challenge

¹ As President, Punjab Provincial Congress Committee

² On December 7, 1921, on a charge of obstructing the highway

³ C. R. Das

⁴ They were released subsequently.

and organize themselves. In any case, they were bound, when a sufficient number of men had been removed, for the honour of their sex to step into their places. But now let it be side by side with men in sharing the hardships of jail life. God will protect their honour. When, as if to mock man, her natural protectors became helpless to prevent Draupadi¹ from being denuded of her last piece of cloth, the power of her own virtue preserved her honour. And so will it be to the end of time. Even the weakest physically have been given the ability to protect their own honour. Let it be man's privilege to protect woman, but let no woman of India feel helpless in the absence of man or in the event of his failing to perform the sacred duty of protecting her. One who knows how to die need never fear any harm to her or his honour.

I would suggest to the women of India quietly but without loss of time to collect names of those who are ready to enter the line of fire. Let them send their offer to the women of Bengal and let the latter feel that their sisters elsewhere are ready to follow their noble example. It is likely that there will not be many forthcoming to brave the risks of a jail life and all it must mean to women. The nation will have no cause to be ashamed if only a few offer themselves for sacrifice in the first instance.

Men's duty is clear. We must not lose our heads. Excitement will not protect our women or our country. We have asked Government neither to spare women nor children. It certainly did not in the Punjab during those martial law days. I consider it decidedly more civilized that the officials in Calcutta should under a legal pretence arrest our sisters in Calcutta for what they consider is a crime than that a Bosworth Smith in the Punjab should spit upon, swear at and otherwise humiliate the women of Manianwala.² We did not offer our women to be insulted thus wise. But we do offer our women for imprisonment if they will arrest them in the prosecution of public service. We must not expect the Government to look on with indifference whilst the women are spreading the gospel of swadeshi and undermining the very basis of its existence—its traffic in foreign cloth and the consequent ability to exploit India's resources. If, therefore, we men allow our sisters to take part in the swadeshi

¹ Heroine of the *Mahabharata*; admired for her dauntless spirit

² *Vide* "Congress Report on the Punjab Disorders", On or Before March 25, 1920.

agitation, we must concede the right of the Government to imprison them equally with men.

We must, therefore, control our anger. It will be cowardly to challenge a duel and then swear at the adversary for taking up the challenge. Men must fill the jails. Men must prove to the Government that the awakening is not confined to a few men but it has permeated the masses, that the spirit of non-violence possesses not merely a select number but that it possesses the best part of India. We must show by our conduct that the sudden eruption was an exception and not a symptom of a general disease. And now, when the cause for irritation is almost the greatest, is the time for showing the greatest forbearance and self-restraint. I modify the adjective by using an adverb before it. For, I do not think that the greatest irritation has yet been offered. I can conceive occasions which may cause irritation to the straining point. If we are to gain freedom and vindicate the honour of the Khilafat and the Punjab, we must pay a much higher price and not lose equanimity in the midst of the greatest possible irritation. Let us prepare for the worst and give credit to the Government for decency by expecting the least. Let us acknowledge frankly that in most cases they are obeying the laws of war by being courteous. If they handcuffed Pir Badshah Mian and Dr. Suresh Banerjee, they have not done so in the case of the Ali Brothers, Lala Lajpat Rai, Maulana Mohiuddin or Pandit Motilal Nehru. Nor would I quarrel with handcuffing if they imposed it on all. It is a jail regulation to handcuff a prisoner. I should certainly have loved to travel to Allahabad to see Pandit Motilal Nehru and his son being handcuffed together and made to walk to their destination. I would have loved to watch the radiant smiles on their faces in the consciousness of their handcuffs hastening the advent of swaraj. But the Government did not provide any such treat. What I do not expect, what I do not want for the sake of man's dignity, is a repetition of the petty and degrading insults of the Punjab or the unthinkable inhumanities of the Moplah death wagon. But non-co-operators have stipulated for no such immunity. We have conceived the possibility of the worst happening, and under a full sense of our responsibility pledged ourselves to remain non-violent. Swaraj is within our grasp; let it not step away from us by self-forgetfulness.

With leaders in jails, there should be hartals wherever the Prince goes. No meetings are necessary to organize them. The people have sufficient training for spontaneous action. Let the Government realize that it was not force but willing response that brought about hartals. There must be nowhere any unauthorized or ill-conceived civil disobedience. Every forward step must be taken with the greatest

deliberation and calmness. The people can discuss things in their own homes. The merchants meet a thousand times for business. They may easily discuss and decide matters arising out of the situation as it develops hourly. But whilst I would like hartals to follow the Prince, I would take no risk of violence and would not countenance the slightest exercise of force or threat of it. Absence of prescribed hartal would somewhat discredit us, but an outbreak of violence would retard our progress and may even indefinitely postpone swaraj.

I hope, too, that every vacancy in the ranks of delegates will be filled and that there will be a full attendance at the Congress of members who will have made up their minds as to what they want and how they will have it.

Whilst this was being printed, advice was received that the three ladies were discharged after a few hours' detention. Nevertheless, I allow the writing to go to the public as the argument holds good in the main. I observe, too, that the ladies have been discharged with a caution.

Young India, 15-12-1921

117. FROM LALA LAJPAT RAI

DEAR MAHATMAJI,

I am writing this to you so early as, in all probability, I will be arrested by this evening. I am sorry I may look to have disregarded your wishes but the circumstances are such as leave me no alternative. We have called a meeting of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee for today at 2 p.m. The Deputy Commissioner calls it a public meeting. . . . Most probably he will prohibit the meeting. He has also served us with a notice calling *ward meetings* of ward Congress Committees also public. This means an entire stoppage of work. His orders are illegal. . . .

Under the circumstances, it is impossible for me to keep away from the meeting. It will be sheer cowardice. Please pardon me if my action does not meet with your approval. . . . Rest assured I will not bring disgrace on your movement. Pardon me if I have ever seemed to be critical and distrustful. In all my actions only one motive has been uppermost in my thoughts, viz., that of loyalty to my country and my people. If I have erred, I have erred in good faith. Even in my criticisms of my Moderate friends I have no other motive. . . .

The Sikh non-co-operators have set a noble example. . . . The Sikh community has so far kept its temper admirably well in spite of the provocations given. Most of the arrests have been made in the presence of hundreds and thousands. . . . Our Sikh friends deserve all the praise one can bestow on brave, noble, sufferers in the cause of truth.

We have selected Agha Safdar as my successor in the office of the

President, Provincial Congress Committee and I have in consultation drawn up a programme for immediate action. . . .

Mr. Stokes was this morning arrested.¹

Your devoted comrade,

LAJPAT RAI

December 3, 1921

7 a.m.

The reader will appreciate my sharing the foregoing² with him. It is remarkable how every leader has made complete arrangements in anticipation of going to jail. Of course Lalaji could not have acted otherwise than he did. I was anxious for him, if it was naturally possible, not to seek arrest till after the Congress³. But in the circumstances that faced him, he could not avoid attending the meeting without hurting the cause. A general ceases to be a general when he shirks battle that is offered to him. In every action of Lalaji I see nothing but thoughtfulness and calm courage. I fully endorse Lalaji's tribute to the Sikhs. Their resolute behaviour, their religious fervour, their calmness and their suffering command my highest admiration. One sees in everything that is happening in the country the throes of a new birth. May God grant that no hasty action, no outbreak of violence impedes our unmistakable progress towards our destined goal!

Young India, 15-12-1921

118. CHRISTIANS AND SWARAJ

THE EDITOR, *Young India*

SIR,

At this time when there is so much questioning about the attitude Of Indian Christians towards swaraj, I, as a representative of a large class of thinking Christians, should like to draw the attention of your readers to certain important facts with which very few of our Hindu and Muslim compatriots are acquainted.

Let me, in the first place, point out clearly that the so-called Indian

¹ *Vide* "Notes", 8-12-1921, Under Sub-title "Reward of Adoption".

² Only excerpts reproduced here

³ Which was to be held at Ahmedabad towards the end of December 1921

Christians are a community built up very largely by peoples in the West. . . . The two agencies which have completed the work of denationalizing the Christian church in India have been: (i) the Western missionary societies, (ii) our own Hindu and Muslim brethren. . . . Our Hindu and Muslim relations ... ostracized and boycotted us. . . . on our adopting a different religion. . . .

Through the influence of missionaries, Indian Christians adopted English ways of dress and living which instilled in them a sense of their own importance and completely destroyed the last germ of patriotism and national zeal. . . . God's name be praised that in spite of the missionaries' efforts to keep us down, a real awakening has, after all, come upon our community, and with growing means of education and prosperity a real sense of devotion to our motherland is also fast developing. . . . You will find that some Indian Christians are even worse Anglo-Indians in their views than many Europeans and Anglo-Indians themselves. But if you are true Indians, be patient with such . . . befriend them and prove to them that all Indians, whether they be Hindus, Muslims, Parsis or Christians, are the sons and daughters of the self-same mother and so true brothers and true sisters. . . . Assure your Christian brethren of your real love for them and you will find that the Christian Indian, when he is once inspired with the love of his country, will lay down his very life in her service and shed his very blood in her noble fight for freedom.

I am, etc.,

A CHRISTIAN SON OF MOTHER INDIA

I publish this letter¹ with the omission of two passages of personal reference because of the appeal made to Hindus and Mussulmans. I do not like the unqualified reference to the European missionaries. Though much of what the writer says regarding them is true, there are many European missionaries who are not anti-Indian or anti-Hindu or anti-Muslim. The task before nationalists is clear. They have to win over by their genuine love all minorities including Englishmen. Indian nationalism if it is to remain non-violent, cannot be exclusive.

Young India, 15-12-1921

¹ Only excerpts reproduced here

119. OF SPINNING-WHEELS

THE EDITOR, *Young India*

SIR,

The District Congress Committee has no expert spinner appointed whom they can and should consult about the charkha to be selected for introducing to the public. . . .

Most of the workers have yet to realize that a thin spindle with revolutions over 150 to one of the wheel is necessary for turning out good weavable yarn.

The charkha recommended in *Young India* is taken as a pattern in some places, but the revolutions of the spindle (which is generally at least half an inch in diameter) being lower than 40 increase the time as it is necessary after drawing out a length of yarn to turn the wheel so many times to ensure the proper twist.

The result of all this is seen in the number of charkhas lying idle or producing yarn which is refused by weavers being undertwisted and uneven. . . . if the Committee is going to spend the major portion of the Tilak Swaraj Fund on this item, it must lay down a clear stipulation when giving the money, that every District body thus supplied with money must have an expert spinner . . .

Yours etc.,

(DR.) A. K. NULKAR

November 21, 1921

VICE-PRESIDENT, EAST KHANDESH DISTRICT
CONGRESS COMMITTEE

I gladly publish the foregoing¹ to stimulate interest in the matter of improvement in the existing spinning-wheels and to show what keen interest educated men are taking in hand-spinning. I commend Dr. Nulkar's example for emulation.

Young India, 15-12-1921

¹ Only excerpts reproduced here

120. A PUZZLE AND ITS SOLUTION¹

Lord Reading is puzzled and perplexed. Speaking in reply to the addresses from the British Indian Association and the Bengal National Chamber of Commerce at Calcutta, His Excellency said:

I confess that when I contemplate the activities of a section of the community, I find myself still, notwithstanding persistent study ever since I have been in India, puzzled and perplexed. I ask myself what purpose is served by flagrant breaches of the law for the purpose of challenging the Government and in order to compel arrest.

The answer was partly given by Pandit Motilal Nehru when he said on being arrested² that he was being taken to the house of freedom. We seek arrest because the so-called freedom is slavery. We are challenging the might of this Government because we consider its activity to be wholly evil. We want to overthrow the Government. We want to compel its submission to the people's will. We desire to show that the Government exists to serve the people, not the people the Government. Free life under the Government has become intolerable, for the price exacted for the retention of freedom is unconscionably great. Whether we are one or many, we must refuse to purchase freedom at the cost of our self-respect or our cherished convictions. I have known even little children become unbending when an attempt has been made to cross their declared purpose, be it ever so flimsy in the estimation of their parents.

Lord Reading must clearly understand that the non-co-operators are at war with the Government. They have declared rebellion against it inasmuch as it has committed a breach of faith with the Mussulmans, it has humiliated the Punjab and it insists upon imposing its will upon the people and refuses to repair the breach and repent of the wrong done in the Punjab.

There were two ways open to the people, the way of armed rebellion and the way of peaceful revolt. Non-co-operators have chosen, some out of weakness, some out of strength, the way of peace, i.e., voluntary suffering.

¹ This is one of the articles for which Gandhiji was tried and sentenced in March 1922

² On December 6, 1921

If the people are behind the sufferers, the Government must yield or be overthrown. If the people are not with them they have at least the satisfaction of not having sold their freedom. In an armed conflict, the more violent is generally the victor. The way of peace and suffering is the quickest method of cultivating public opinion, and, therefore, when victory is attained, it is for what the world regards as Truth. Bred in the atmosphere of law-courts, Lord Reading finds it difficult to appreciate the peaceful resistance to authority. His Excellency will learn by the time the conflict is over that there is a higher court than courts of justice, and that is the court of conscience. It supersedes all other courts.

Lord Reading is welcome to treat all the sufferers as lunatics, who do not know their own interest. He is entitled, therefore, to put them out of harm's way. It is an arrangement that entirely suits the lunatics and it is an ideal situation if it also suits the Government. He will have cause to complain if, having courted imprisonment, non-co-operators fret and fume or "whine for favours" as Lalaji puts it. The strength of a non-co-operator lies in his going to jail uncomplainingly. He loses his case if, having courted imprisonment, he begins to grumble, immediately his courtship is rewarded.

The threats used by His Excellency are unbecoming. This is a fight to the finish. It is a conflict between the reign of violence and of public opinion. Those who are fighting for the latter are determined to submit to any violence rather than surrender their opinion.

Young India, 15-12-1921

121. MUNICIPALITIES IN TROUBLE

The municipalities of Ahmedabad, Nadiad and Surat are again in trouble about their education departments.¹ The Government intends to declare the municipalities unfit to run the departments and then take over their administration. It has, therefore, issued notices to the three municipalities to the effect that it will take over the control of their education departments unless they carry out its directions before 5 p.m. on the 17th instant. Where the municipality has the support of a clear majority for its decision, it will be difficult

¹ These municipalities had decided to impart national education in their schools and to refuse Government grants; for Nadiad Municipality's decision, *vide* "A Municipal Enterprise", 9-2-1921.

for the Government to take over the administration of a department.

In the present circumstances, a non-co-operator can continue as member of a municipality for one reason only, namely, to increase the strength of the people by every legitimate means and to reduce the control of the Government. Where there is a majority of those who co-operate with the Government and it is not possible to realize this aim, a non-co-operator should certainly not continue as a member merely for creating disorder or obstructing the proceedings. He should realize that such tactics do not increase the strength of the people but are only a waste of time. Experience shows us that a person who commands a majority cannot be clamoured out of his decision. When his principles are involved he does not hesitate to make the fullest use of his majority. The rule of majority yields excellent results in matters in which no fundamentals are involved. Where, however, fundamentals are involved, the convention of bowing to a majority leads to society's decline. It is, therefore, desirable that we continue members of only those municipalities in which we command a majority.

Let us examine the present situation from this angle. One way to prevent the control of education from passing into the hands of the Government, as also to cut short all argument with it, is to entrust the administration of education to the national institution in each town and to subsidize it with grants. A municipality has the power to make such grants. If this can be done, the Government's taking over the education department will be of little significance. It will not get control over the present students, who will remain self-reliant. The Government administrator may start new schools if he so chooses. No citizen will prevent him. From where, however, will the Government get the children to attend its new schools? We believe that all children who want schooling are already attending the existing municipal schools. Again, the Government will face difficulties in financing its new department. The municipalities will never sanction the expenditure of their own free will. The Government will have, therefore, to distrain upon the municipalities every time they need the money. This, again, will lead to ultimate discomfiture of the Government.

The second way, if the Government appoints its administrator, is that the municipality should advise the school-teachers not to carry out the administrator's orders and let him take whatever steps he

likes. This too will wear out the Government.

The third way is to work among the voters in case the Government succeeds in taking over the administration of the existing schools. That is, the people should be so educated that they will see to it that no child attends Government schools, and all people will send children to the new [national] schools instead.

All these three ways cannot be adopted simultaneously; we should select one of them and concentrate upon it. It is the duty of the members to educate the voters so thoroughly that they would be ready for any step which might be necessary.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-12-1921

122. MY NOTES

TO PARENTS

Parents who send their children to schools or Ashrams have certain obligations to fulfil. Their failure to fulfil them harms the children, the institutions as also the parents themselves. Parents should acquaint themselves with the rules of the institution to which they want their children to be admitted. They should know the habits and needs of their children and adhere to the decision once it is taken. During the time when the children are supposed to stay in the Ashram, they should not be called away to serve their parents' convenience or in order that they might be of service to the latter; how, then, can they be called away to attend marriages? Why should children be invited on such occasions? Just as parents do not involve children in their other social affairs, so also they should not involve them in the business of marriages. During student-life, children's attention should not be distracted from their studies; moreover, during this period, children should remain *brahmacharis*¹. If they are compelled to attend marriages and such other functions, they may find it difficult to do this. It is, therefore, necessary that we deliberately keep children away from such celebrations. Besides, at a time like this, when the very idea of marriage seems improper, it is an outrage on a child who, left to itself, would keep away from a marriage, to tempt it with the thought of attending one. In these days when we have become

¹ Celibates

weak-willed, when the strength to resist temptations has diminished, it is necessary to encourage a person in his determination to submit to a rule or make some sacrifice. If, instead, we ourselves oblige him to disregard a rule, we shall be encouraging weakness. What has been said with regard to marriage applies to many other affairs. Parents who desire to bring up their children thoughtfully will be able to recall many such occasions when, instead of helping the progress of their children, they have retarded it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-12-1921

123. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

Thursday [December 15, 1921]¹

CHI. DEVDAS,

I have your two letters. Your handwriting is as bad as the contents are beautiful. Try your best. I know that you are under pressure for time these days. Nevertheless, you have got to make the effort.

Harilal has done good work. Have just heard that he has been sentenced to six months' rigorous imprisonment.

More in my letter to Mahadev².

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 7775

¹ Harilal was arrested on Sunday, December 11, 1921

² Mahadev Desai (1892-1942); Gandhiji's secretary for 25 years

124. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Thursday [December 15, 1921]¹

CHI. MAHADEV,

I did write to you almost everyday. Swaruprani's² letter is wonderful, which means your letter is wonderful, does it not? But surely we do not want to get anything credited to our account? All our obeisances to the many gods ultimately reach Keshava [the Supreme Deity], as a matter of course We dedicate to Krishna whatever we do and so need have no worry.

Das's pamphlets are very brilliant. It seems he has drunk deep of the nectar of non-violence. Bengal has indeed risen to the top. At present, Gujarat stands last. I am even glad of this.

Pyarelal³ will tell you the rest. Make full use of him and take care of your health. I want you to send Devdas to jail. That is one of the reasons for sending Pyarelal there.

I shall not write a separate letter to Godbole⁴. Let him come here with all the papers, etc. Some of the work will be finished quickly if he comes here. I don't think there is any need of him there.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Surely, Godbole does not have to get his name registered as a volunteer.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11427

¹ In his letter to the addressee, dated December 8, 1921, which was a Thursday, Gandhiji had expressed the wish that Swaruprani should write to him; he also mentioned that he could readily send Pyarelal to assist the addressee. This letter was presumably written on the following Thursday.

² Wife of Motilal Nehru

³ Pyarelal Nayyar, Gandhiji's secretary since 1920; biographer of Gandhiji

⁴ M. S. Godbole; former professor, Gujarat Vidyapith; Joint Secretary, A.I.C.C.

125. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Thursday [December 15, 1921]¹

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I got both your letters together. I do not share your misgiving. I do not wish to give up the use of footwear, but I shall think over it. We should do what we can and leave the rest to Him. Today I am sending a copy of the resolution to Shankerlal. Please see it. You must take all the rest that you need to recover your health. If you can you may drop in on the 22nd.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

93 BAZAR GATE STREET

FORT, BOMBAY

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

126. TELEGRAM

[About December 15, 1921]³

NON-CO-OPERATORS PURELY ON DEFENSIVE. NO CON-
FERENCE CAN DO GOOD UNLESS GOVERNMENT PENI-
TENT AND PREPARED RECOGNIZE SUPREMACY PUBLIC
OPINION

GANDHI

Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi, p. 173

¹ From the postmark

² Sent in reply to a telegram from a landowner of Jabalpur, which read: "Situation extremely grave. Both sides equally determined. Undesirable happenings not unlikely. Your responsibility serious. Round Table Conference advisable. Viceroy also requested to hear."

³ From the source

127. TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD¹

[On or after *December 15, 1921*]

RAJENDRA PRASAD²

CHAPRA

DO ENLIST LEAVING INSTRUCTION [TO] YOUNG, RELIABLE
TEN ENSURING NON-VIOLENCE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7726

128. TELEGRAM TO SRI PRAKASA³

[On or after *December 15, 1921*]

SRI PRAKASA⁴

SEVASHRAM

BANARAS

HEARTY CONGRATULATIONS. WAS TOTALLY UNPREPARED FOR
SUCH CONSUMMATION.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7729

¹ Sent in reply to Rajendra Prasad's telegram received on December 15, 1921, which read: "Government proclaimed Volunteer Corps unlawful. Shafi, Janakdhari and fifty volunteers arrested for disregarding proclamation. We propose that Haque, Brijkishore, Deepanandan, myself should enlist. Wire instructions Chapra."

² 1884-1963; statesman and scholar; Chairman, Constituent Assembly of India. 1946-9; first President of India

³ This was sent in reply to Sri Prakasa's telegram of December 15, 1921, which read: "Father arrested under Section 107 Criminal Code, all well."

⁴ b. 1890; son of Bhagwandas, the eminent scholar of Banaras; Congress leader and freedom fighter; India's High Commissioner to Pakistan; later, Governor of Bombay

129. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

[On or after *December 15, 1921*]¹

GOOD. HOPE YOU WILL GET MAXIMUM PENALTY.

GANDHI

Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi, p. 172

130. DRAFT TELEGRAM TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA²

[*December 16, 1921*]³

WISH YOU WOULD RECOGNIZE THIS IS FIGHT TO THE FINISH. NON-CO-OPERATORS ARE PURELY ON THE DEFENSIVE. IF PROVOKING ORDERS DISBANDMENT AND STOPPING PUBLIC MEETINGS WITHDRAWN PRESENT CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE STOPS AUTOMATICALLY. BOYCOTT OF WELCOME MUST PERSIST SO LONG AS GOVERNMENT IRRESPONSIVE PUBLIC OPINION. CONFERENCE WILL BE ABORTIVE UNLESS GOVERNMENT TRULY PENITENT AND DESIROUS REMOVE RANKLING GRIEVANCES AND YIELD FORCE OF PUBLIC OPINION. WILL HOWEVER DISCUSS SITUATION JAMNADAS⁴ KUNZRUS⁵

GANDHI

Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi, Vol. II, P. 132

¹ The addressee was served with a notice under the Criminal Law Amendment Act at 12 noon on December 15, 1921, and was asked to take his trial on the same day at 4 p.m. The trial was, however, adjourned and, according to the source, Gandhiji sent this telegram on receiving news regarding the case.

² 1861-1946; founder of the Benares Hindu University; twice President of the Indian National Congress

³ This telegram was dictated to Krishnadas, Gandhiji's secretary, immediately on receipt of Malaviya's telegram of December 16, 1921, which read: "Am arranging deputation of about seven to Viceroy on 21st to press upon him necessity of Round Table Conference. Hence going to Calcutta, Jamnadas and Kunzru reach Sabarmati tomorrow to explain situation. Desire to have your authority to say that if conference is accepted and Government stays hands and releases leaders, you will withdraw opposition to Prince's welcome and suspend civil disobedience till termination conference. Calcutta address till 21 No. 31 Burtillo Street." According to Krishnadas, this draft was not sent. For the reply which was sent after Jamnadas and Kunzru met Gandhiji, *vide* "Telegram to Madan Mohan Malaviya", 19-12-1921.

⁴ Jamnadas Dwarkadas, a leading member of the Home Rule League

⁵ Hriday Nath Kunzru (b. 1887); President of the Servants of India Society; Liberal politician and parliamentarian

131. TELEGRAM TO BEGUM KHURSHED ABDUL MAJID¹

AHMEDABAD,
December 16, 1921

BEGUM KHURSHED KHWAJA SAHEB
NATIONAL MUSLIM UNIVERSITY
ALIGARH

CONGRATULATE YOU YOUR BRAVE HUSBAND. I KNOW
ALIGARH BOYS WILL LOYALLY OBEY YOU.

GANDHI

From a copy: A. M. Khwaja Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and
Library

132. CIRCULAR LETTER²

SABARMATI,
December 16, 1921

DEAR FRIEND,

I do not know who will be able to attend the A.I.C.C. meeting. I, therefore, send you draft resolution which I would like to have passed. Will you please send me your criticism if you cannot attend? And of course you will not come even if you are free if your presence is required in your province for keeping the peace. The draft is not for publication at all.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 9545

¹ This was in reply to the addressee's telegram in which she had informed Gandhiji of her husband's arrest, adding, "my husband having been arrested, I shall run the university"; *vide* "Notes", 18-12-1921, Under Sub-title "All Honour To That Wife".

² This was presumably sent to Congress workers in the various provinces

133. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM,
Friday [December 16, 1921]¹

CHI. DEVDAS,

I got your letter. The description of the prisoners is given in beautiful language but a shabby hand, so that the latter cancels the beauty of the former.

I am awaiting a wire to tell me that you have gone to jail and Mahadev has been arrested.

Please let me know by wire whether or not Mrs. Nehru and others are coming. Today I do not propose to write a separate letter to Mahadev.

You both ought to keep good health. With Pyarelal there, you should no longer feel short of help.

Anna², Gomtibehn³ and Sarkar's⁴ sister-in-law have arrived in the Ashram. Vasumatibehn is also here.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Andrews⁵, Jamnadas and Kunzru are coming tomorrow.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 7677

¹ Jamnadas Dwarkadas and Hriday Nath Kunzru mentioned in the postscript arrived at the Ashram on December 17, 1921

² Harihar Sharma; earlier, member of Ganganath Bharatiya Vidyalaya, Baroda; active worker of Dakshina Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha

³ Wife of Kishorelal Mashruwala

⁴ Patwardhan Yadawadkar, honorary worker on the editorial staff of *Young India*. He died during the Nagpur Congress in December 1920; *vide* "In Memoriam", 12-1-1921.

⁵ C. F. Andrews (1871-1940); British missionary; co-worker of Tagore and Gandhiji; honoured as "Deenabandhu" or "brother of the poor"

134. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

Thursday, [About December, 16, 1921]¹

DEAR SHANKERLAL,

I have received your two letters together.

Enclosed is the draft of a resolution² to be moved at the Congress. Please show it to Bhai Umar, Mrs. Naidu, Jayakar and others whom you think should see it and let me have your opinion and theirs. I am sending the draft to Vitthalbhai also. It is not meant to be published. I shall also send it to Chhotani Mian. All the copies may not be ready today. Do stay on there if it is necessary. I feel that Bhai Umar should come for the Working Committee. But if he too cannot come and has to stay back in order to maintain peace, he may stay back. Mrs. Naidu, I think, will certainly come.

There is no intention of bringing out a bulletin. The rumours appear to be unfounded. For the rest, read what I have written about swaraj in *Young India*. However, do write if you think it necessary.

Picketing has been stopped. For the present we have no need to resume it. Even by way of expiation for the burning of Parsee wine shops, it is necessary not to resume picketing.³ We certainly cannot have special volunteers to do picketing. We shall have to fight when the new corps is declared illegal. We shall have only one volunteer corps and picketing will not be its task for the present. Many of them will be there simply to court imprisonment. Others will be there to serve. You can divide them into two groups if you wish. But I think it would be advisable not to divide them into groups right now.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

[PS.]

I have received one letter. Read it and then destroy.

From a copy of the Gujarati : S. N. 32719

¹ From the contents; *vide* "Circular Letter", 16-12-1921.

² Which was moved later at the Congress Session at Ahmedabad on December 28, 1921; *ibid*.

³ On November 17, 1921, in Bombay, a violent riot had broken out in which Parsee wine shops had been burnt down and Parsee women had been molested; *vide* "Letter to Dayalji And Kalyanji", 17-11-1921.

135. *TELEGRAM TO JIARAM SAXENA*¹

[On or after *December 16, 1921*]

JIARAM²
CONGRESS COMMITTEE
ALLAHABAD

WORKING COMMITTEE TWENTY-THIRD.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7723

136. *TELEGRAM TO MAULANA ABDUL BARI*³

[On or after *December 16, 1921*]⁴

WE HAVE EVERY REASON PRAISE GOD FOR HIS MERCY. HOPE
YOU ARE WELL.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 7724

¹ Sent in reply to Jiamram's telegram of December 16, 1921, which read: "Letter Received. Kindly wire date Working Committee."

² Secretary, U. P. Provincial Congress Committee

³ 1838-1926; Nationalist Muslim divine of Lucknow who took active part in the Khilafat movement

⁴ This telegram was sent in reply to Maulana Abdul Bari's telegram of December 16, 1921, which read: "Have come back from Hyderabad today. I was

137. TELEGRAM TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR¹

[On or after *December 16, 1921*]

ACHARYA²

SALEM

YOU MUST JUDGE SITUATION THERE AND DECIDE ABOUT
COMING.³

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7728

138. TELEGRAM TO SHYAM SUNDER CHAKRAVARTY⁴

[On or after *December 16, 1921*]

VACANCIES SHOULD BE FILLED UP.

From a photostat: S.N. 7731

very much pleased by the victorious spirit of Maulvi Salamatullah and my other dearest Hindu-Muslim friends. I congratulate you on their arrest. We are proud of the citizens of Lucknow and Allahabad for their patience, tolerance, orderly manner, unity of action, and obedience to Congress orders. The correct report about hartal both in Lucknow and Allahabad is that it was complete, and perfect non-violence prevailed. Have just seen Pandit Motilalji and Maulana Salamatullah with their comrades in jail. All are cheerful and happy. Have just heard about your son's arrest. Heartly congratulations. Hopeful sign."

¹ Sent in reply to Vijayaraghavachariar's telegram of December 15, received by Gandhi on the 16th, which read: "Kindly wire whether my arrival 24th Sufficient if you think my attendance absolutely necessary earlier most inconvenient."

² C. Vijayaraghavachariar (1852-1943); leading lawyer and active Congressmen; presided over the Nagpur Congress session, 1920

³ Presumably to attend the Congress session at Ahmedabad

⁴ Editor of the *Servant*, Calcutta; succeeded C.R. Das as President of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee

This telegram was sent in reply to Chakravarty's telegram of December 16, 1921, which read: "Kindly wire opinion if places of imprisoned All-India Congress Committee members may be treated vacancies and filled up."

139. THINGS THAT SINK

December 17, 1921

To imprison those who, whether high or low, break the commandments, to treat them as common felons, to deprive them of their prison privileges, one can understand. I would not call that foul play. If you incur the wrath of one who is over you or who has you under his power for the time being, to be punished by him for your disobedience is what you expect. But if he humiliates you, if he makes your children do things you and they do not like and which you are not required in law to do, if he treats you like dirt, it becomes unbearable. One learns that in Cocanada a Magistrate had the swaraj and the Khilafat flags pulled down, that he issued orders prohibiting the use of such flags for one week, that the children of a school were compelled to salute the Union Jack, that a distinguished Professor in Calcutta, going out in his academic costume and on the strength thereof going up to an officer to stop a wanton hunt of inoffensive men, was brutally assaulted for his innocent inquiry as to the cause of the hunt, that a party of brave cultured young men were kicked about by those who were their warders for the time being. These are things that sink. These humiliations show that there is little change in the manners of our "masters". The O'Dwyerian spirit has not died out. Of what use is it that Lord Ronaldshay sends for the injured Professor, soothes him and assures him that the thing will not happen again? What will not happen again? The Professor will not be assaulted? Of course he will not be during the present crisis. The Professor himself will not again presume upon his academic costume and challenge an officer very soon. But has the officer any respect for the Professor? The Professor did not seek relief for himself. He interceded for injured humanity. Will Indian humanity be protected and respected in future because of His Lordship's assurance? It is the habitual training given to the soldier that matters. He is converted into a vicious animal to be let loose on harmless people on given occasions. The Dases and the Azads have gone to jail to prevent a repetition of such unmanly and brutal exhibitions. They have welcomed imprisonment in order that even the worst criminal may be protected against wanton injury, that even he may not have his self-respect wounded. They have not gone to jail for any mechanical transference of power. The organic change they want, that Lala Lajpat Rai has been pining for years, that has become the breath of life for the ease-loving Motilal Nehru and has made of him practically a fakir, is not to be brought about by Lord Ronaldshay, however well-intentioned he may be in his apologies, nor by Lord Reading's smooth phrases and his personal

care that officers and men might not overstep the limits of law. The organic change will be and call only be brought about by the suffering that has come to the people and for which, thank God, they find themselves prepared. A cautious friend in order to restrain my optimism tells me, that the suffering has only just begun, that for the end in view we must pay a much higher price still. He really expects that we shall have to invite a repetition of Jallianwalas and that instead of approaching the triangles of the crawling lane fame tremblingly and reluctantly, we shall have now to walk to them cheerfully and with a steady step and suffer lashes for refusing to crawl.¹ I assure the friend that my optimism has room for all these things and much worse that he can imagine. But I promise, too, that if India remains calm and unperturbed and does not retaliate even mentally—a very difficult process I admit and yet not so difficult in India's present exalted mood—our very preparedness and consequent absence of reaction will exhaust the brute spirit for want of nutrition, and Lord Reading, instead of talking big things to us, will himself adopt the human language of penitence and see ample occasion in the Indian atmosphere for a new diplomacy. Whereas if we forget ourselves and our pledge, we must be ready for a thousand Jallianwalas and India being turned into a vast shambles. The President elect has prepared us for such a consummation. He is sure that we have shed the fear of the prison. He is almost certain probably from the experience of his brave son and his company that we will be prepared to undergo the ordeal of assaults. But he bids us give up the fear of death itself. If that time is in store for us, I hope that there will be nonviolent non-co-operators enough in India, of whom it will be written:

“They suffered bullets without anger and with prayer on their lips even for the ignorant murderer.”

Well, if the reports are to be credited, two Assamese volunteers have been whipped, the volunteers of Lahore have meekly borne the wanton assaults committed on them. This fight is not a joke. We have disciplined ourselves for the past twelve months and more, and we must now go through it to the end. There is no turning back.

Young India, 22-12-1921

¹ For the incidents mentioned, *vide* “Congress Report on the Punjab Disorders”

140. WHAT WILL GUJARAT DO?

Five hundred fighters in Bengal have been arrested within the last ten days. Between two and three hundred persons must have been arrested in U.P., and about a hundred have been arrested in the Punjab. If the number of arrests is not larger in these two provinces, it is not the fault of the non-co-operators there. From the letters which I have received, I find that in all these three provinces the Governments get as many fighters as would please them to arrest. If the number of arrests so far appears small, it is due to the Government's own laxity. Hundreds are ready in every province to make the pilgrimage to jails.

At this hour, Gujarat is calm and quiet, waiting in patience. This composure, patience and silence appeal to me much, because I am sure that hundreds of Gujaratis are just waiting to court arrest. Gujarat had hoped to be the first to fill prisons; but that honour has gone to Bengal. If, however, we Gujaratis are in fact ready for imprisonment, we need not envy Bengal. I trust that when our hour arrives we shall quickly catch up with Bengal.

That hour is drawing near.

If Bardoli or Anand does not get ready, we cannot launch mass civil disobedience; but there is no restriction whatsoever on individual civil disobedience. Mass civil disobedience may bring the desired result early, while individual civil disobedience may mean some delay. It is my earnest hope that Bardoli at least will get ready and we shall be prepared both for mass and, if necessary, for individual civil disobedience.

Let Bardoli, Anand and Nadiad prepare themselves for mass civil disobedience; in other parts, individuals should keep themselves ready for the call. In every village, those who are willing to court imprisonment should get their names enrolled in the local village committee register. If there is no village committee or if no one is ready to take up the work of enrolling names, volunteers should register their names with the taluka committee. Village committees should send the names to the taluka committee. These names should be ultimately registered with the Gujarat Provincial Committee.

Those who do not believe that freedom can be won only by peaceful means, who, being Hindus, are not ready to give up the practice of untouchability, who are not good at spinning, who have not completely forsworn foreign cloth, who do not exclusively wear

hand-spun and hand-woven khadi, and who do not recognize the need for unity of the Hindus, the Muslims, the Sikhs, the Parsis, the Christians and the Jews, should not even think of courting arrest and should decidedly abandon the idea of getting their names enrolled as volunteers.

Those who have not purified themselves or have not given up liquor, will be rendering a service to the country by keeping away from this holy war, for by doing so they will show that they understand their limitations.

Those who get enrolled as volunteers will have to provide their own maintenance. They should not expect the Congress committee concerned to provide it. A person who desires to serve the country but cannot find a single friend to finance his needs at such a juncture cannot, in my view, be fit for national service. A volunteer's expenses cannot be heavy and surely they cannot be a burden on anyone.

What I have said about men applies to women too. Although it is not necessary to bring them out to court arrest, such of them as have tasted the nectar of patriotism should, however, keep themselves ready.

A friend from Kathiawar inquires what people in Indian States can do. Subjects of these States should not be enrolled within the States themselves. Such of them, however, as wish to court imprisonment may register their names with the Provincial Committee and even those who are not ready to register their names may cultivate the qualities I have mentioned as necessary for volunteers.

Our calm and patience will justify themselves and be appreciated as evidence of true courage only if we thus prepare ourselves and keep ready in our thousands to fill the jails. If, when the time comes, we are unable to display such strength and make the required sacrifices, we shall be looked down upon as spineless cowards. I have, however, no misgivings about Gujarat's courage.

All that I desire is that wisdom should accompany courage. The wisdom we require is about the need for swadeshi and for eradicating untouchability. Every person should enlighten his or her family and every married man should educate his wife about these matters. Our women have not yet developed sufficient love for khadi. Their fascination for multicoloured foreign cloth with insufferable designs has not yet disappeared. They have not yet rid themselves of the sin of untouchability. No effort has been made to explain these things to them with patience and love. It is easy for everyone to attempt this in

his own family. One may understand that success will not follow in all cases, but our efforts must begin at home, and just as we share our fresh acquisitions with our family members first, likewise they should be the first whom we should invite to join us when we undertake a new kind of sacrifice or try to bring about some reform.

Gujarat may remain busy this month with preparations for the Congress which is to meet in the last week of December but, in January, it will have no choice but to get ready for the test. Hence I wish to alert Gujaratis right now. The Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee's primary task in the new year according to the Christian calendar will be to prepare Gujarat for self-sacrifice.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-12-1921

141. CIVILITY

Civility, good manners and humility—these virtues are at such discount these days that they seem to have no place at all in the building of our character. If a person observes mere physical celibacy, he acts like a Bajirao¹, frowns upon and runs down everyone else and we tolerate his rudeness as we do kicks from a milchcow. Similarly, if a person is truthful in speech, we give him a licence to be sharp-tongued and a khadi-wearer can come down in fury upon those who do not wear khadi. In like manner, a person who offers civil disobedience sometimes acts as if he had a licence to be insolent to others. These corporals of the army of incivility are not a true *brahmachari* or a truth-lover or a khadilover or a civil resister, as the case may be. All the four of them are as far away from their vows as the north is from the south. It may be safely asserted that a person deficient in good manners lacks discrimination and that, lacking discrimination, he lacks every thing else. Vishvamitra's² *tapascharya*³ was considered incomplete till he had learnt civility.

Civility and humility are expressions of the spirit of nonviolence

¹ One of the Peshwas of the Maratha Empire

² A sage in the *Ramayana*. He had renounced his kingdom to practise austerities and be the equal of sage Vasistha, but did not succeed till the egotistic motive had left him.

³ Self-suffering as moral discipline

while incivility and insolence indicate the spirit of violence. A non-co-operator, therefore, ought never to be uncivil. However, the most persistent charge levelled against non-co-operators is that they lack manners and are insolent, and the charge has much substance in it. We are apt to believe that in becoming non-co-operators we have done something very great, as if a person who had done no more than pay his debt had thereby become entitled to get an address.

This lack of manners delays our victory in the struggle we are carrying on, for, as politeness disarms anger and hatred, incivility increases hostility. Had non-co-operators remained courteous towards those who co-operated with the Governments, had they, instead of abusing the latter, shown respect towards them, the existing bitterness between the two would not be there and the unhappy events¹ which were witnessed in Bombay would not have taken place. A student who has left his Government school should not harass or abuse another who may not have left his but should try, instead, to win him over with love. He should continue to render him the same service as he used to do before. A lawyer who has given up practice should not turn up his nose at another who may not have done so, but should maintain with him the same cordial relations as before. A person who has resigned from, Government service should not run down another who may not have left it.

Had we, right from the beginning, approached our task in this spirit, it is possible that we would have reached our goal by now and the country would have advanced much further than it has done. The Moderate party would not then have kept away from us.

I trust no one will understand politeness to mean flattery. Nor does it mean hiding our regard for our dharma. To be polite means to show respect towards others while clinging to our own dharma. Because I put a vermilion mark on my forehead, I may not sneer at another who does not do so. If I face the east when praying, I should not feel contempt for my Muslim brother who says his *namaz* with his face towards the west. Ability to pronounce Sanskrit words correctly does not entitle me to speak contemptuously of the sounds in the Arabic language. A lover of khadi, while wearing a khadi cap himself, can still be tolerant of a person who wears a sola hat and love him. If a man all clad in khadi starts swearing at a person wearing garments of foreign cloth, he will be acting as the most effective

¹ The riots on November 17, 1921

propagandist of such cloth. The incidents in Bombay have not made khadi more popular. On the contrary, it now stinks in the nostrils of some.

If we, khadi-lovers, wish to see the whole of India wearing khadi, we should patiently plead with people who used foreign cloth. However much we speak against such cloth, we should display nothing but love for those who use it. The plague is a dreadful disease but we, too, are likely to catch it if we turn away from any person who has got it. We may desire the disease to be rooted out but not the patient to be killed. If we look upon wearing foreign cloth as a kind of disease, we should attend on a person who suffers from it. May not a person who wears foreign cloth look upon us as the victims of a disease? By all means, let him do so. If, nonetheless, we continue to give our services to each other, sooner or later we shall discover which of us was in error. If we do not act in this way, we shall never discover the difference between what is dharma and what is *adharm*¹.

Just as it is necessary for us to be courteous to those who co-operate with the Government, so those of us who are imprisoned will also have to behave with civility in the prison. It is difficult to observe jail rules and yet maintain one's self-respect. Some of these rules are naturally humiliating. For instance, we have no choice but to let ourselves be confined in a cell. We must, thus, respect the rules which apply to all prisoners. At the same time, we should firmly oppose any measure which is intended merely to humiliate us. Once we have taught ourselves to behave with courtesy, we shall instinctively know how to act in a particular situation.

Where there is egotism, we shall find incivility and arrogance. Where it is absent, we shall find a sense of self-respect together with civility. The egotist thinks too much of his body. The man of self-respect recognizes the *atman*², is ever thinking about it and, in order to realize it, is always ready to sacrifice his body. He who holds his self-respect dear acts towards everyone in a spirit of friendship, for he values others' self-respect as much as he values his own. He sees himself in all and everyone else in himself, puts himself in line with others. The egotist keeps aloof from others and, believing himself superior to the rest of the world, he takes upon himself to judge everyone and in the result enables the world to have the measure of

¹ The opposite of dharma

² Self

his smallness.

Hence, the non-violent non-co-operator should regard civility as a distinct virtue and try to cultivate it. The importance attached to it provides the measure of an individual's or a nation's culture. A non-co-operator should realize very clearly that incivility is another name for brutishness and eschew it completely.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-12-1921

142. MY NOTES

ALL HONOUR TO THAT WIFE

Khwaja Saheb was at the head of those who manage the affairs of the National Muslim University. I count him among the most straightforward Muslims. He is as proud of his country as he is of his religion. He belongs to a noble family. As a barrister, he lived in great style. Today, he has embraced a fakir's life in the cause of his faith and the country. I have just received a telegram from his wife, Khurshed Begum, informing me that he has been arrested by the Government. She says: "You will be pleased to know that, my husband having been arrested by the Government, I shall run the university." I was very much pleased to receive this telegram, for, with instances such as the Khwaja Saheb's holy sacrifice on the one hand and the patience and courage of his Begum on the other, who can stop the coming of swaraj? Begum Khurshed will find no difficulty in carrying on her work, for the brave and straightforward students of the university will muster round her and it is possible that they will do for her what they did not do for Khwaja Saheb. Besides, she will certainly give them better training in spinning than what Khwaja Saheb could.

Victory will assuredly be ours when many Indian women are inspired by such courage. At this time of great awakening, I request women to cultivate good capacity for organized work. They, too, should start working together. And the simple way of doing so is for them to get engrossed in their own work, instead of criticizing one another. One whose only aim is service has no time for criticizing others.

PARSI SISTERS

I have received a letter—an extremely painful one—from a Parsi sister in Bombay. Her complaint is such that I would like to spend a life-time investigating its root cause, but it is not possible to undertake an inquiry on the basis of her letter alone. If that sister happens to read this, I request her to send me her name and address or to meet me. I shall certainly not print her name, but I shall make all possible inquiries and assist her as much as possible if she gives me all the facts. If men and women who are in distress write anonymous letters and do not give facts which can be verified, it is easy to see that nothing can be done to help them.

I should also like to request those Parsi sisters who know me that they should make all possible inquiries and inform me if they come across any cases of suffering.

However well ordered a society may be, there is bound to be an area of it in which, despite all measures, cruelties cannot be prevented. We do not even come to know of the crimes which are committed today in London, New York, Chicago and Paris, the cruel things which are secretly done in these cities. No one can investigate them either. Even the alert police of these places cannot detect them. I believe we cannot even imagine some of the crimes which are committed in these cities. It is the duty of each one of us, men and women, to assist as many persons in distress as we can, and, through our services, bring relief to the distressed and thus discharge our social debt. That country in which a large number of people regard others' sufferings as their own and find remedies for them enjoys swaraj.

THE HABIT OF BLAMING THE POLICE

A slave, a coward, is usually afraid and, therefore, puts the blame always on others. Among the letters which I have received regarding the painful incidents which took place in Bombay, there are some in which all the blame has been put on the police.

If the police are as corrupt as they are said to be in these letters, for that too we are to blame. Is it we, or some others, who tolerate such crimes? The police also are our brothers. If we look upon all policemen as our enemies and if we do not feel responsible for every wicked persons, how are we going to run the Government? How, under swaraj, shall we exercise control over such a corrupt police force or wicked persons? In the swaraj of our conception, the British

who will have stayed on will be people's servants and remain as our brothers. We shall not be able then to burden them with the responsibility of protecting the innocent. Who then will keep the wicked under control?

Even a moment's reflection will make it clear to us that we cannot win swaraj so long as we are unable to influence the police and those whom we describe as bad characters. The Government is able to rule by keeping them under check. We shall be able to run the Government by winning them over through love or by becoming even more cruel and wicked than they are. The third alternative is to rule by punishing them. We do not have the strength to do this even if we wish to do it. This means that either we should wait for 200 to 400 years till we have acquired such strength and then think of swaraj, or win them over today through love.

The very existence of this class is a sign of the prevalence of *adharmā* and wickedness. We shall not win swaraj by adding to the sum total of this wickedness. We can enjoy peace in the country only by conquering *adharmā* through dharma. We tolerate the British Government for this very reason, that it protects the weaker section of the people by keeping this class of wicked persons generally under check. But the reason I oppose it is that, while offering such protection, the price that it exacts from the public is so heavy that it has itself become a rule of the wicked. In other words, as the price of such protection we have to sacrifice our self-respect. If, in order to deliver ourselves from such tyranny, we seek the help of the bad characters, we shall be in a sorry plight indeed. The result will be the same if we estrange them either. We should, without flattering them, win them over with love and stop being afraid of them. In other words, we should make them see their dharma. If some among them see it, others will soon learn from their example. The same principle applies to the police. Why should we fear the police? Even if they come wearing white caps, why should they be able to deceive anyone? If we are good, the whole world is good. Why should we be such cowards that we may be deceived? Supposing a policeman, dressed in khadi, cruelly beats up someone. Why should we get excited in consequence? We should plead with him; If he does not listen, we should give up the effort and if we have the necessary strength, lay down our lives while trying to stop him in his evil course. If we do this, we shall have given proof of our courage. The police will

certainly improve when they see this courage of ours. The police become brutalized by beating up cowards. If a policeman attacks a brave person he will certainly get frightened afterwards. I have received a letter from a friend in Lahore in which he says that when even strong young men do not resist the police, the latter lose courage. They cannot harden themselves to beat such persons. Of course they cannot. I have had personal experience of many such instances. This fearlessness cannot be taught, it can only be cultivated through one's own effort. My correspondents, therefore, should realize that it is certainly our task to gain control over the bad characters, but we would be throwing ourselves from the frying pan into the fire if we try to do so through flattery. Although they are our brothers, they are like persons afflicted with a disease and we should treat them but should not place ourselves under their treatment. The police will become our friends the day we cease to fear them. Shedding fear of the police does not mean beating or abusing them, it means letting ourselves be beaten and abused by them, as the brave son of Chitta Ranjan Das did. He could have beaten the police in return. His friends were all strong young men. But they let themselves be beaten. To suffer being abused is one way; it is the way of non-co-operation. But to return two words of abuse for one is co-operation because then we shall be the guilty party. To let ourselves be overborne by abuse is to be enslaved by it. To suffer abuse does not mean doing the will of the person who abuses. It means the contrary. We should not even chant the name of Vishnu¹ if anyone tries to force us with abuse to do so. If the person who abuses us asks us to crawl on our stomach, we should walk holding ourselves erect. If he asks us to sit down, we should stand up and face his bullets. If we act in this way, he will be totally defeated, because his aim of bending us will not be fulfilled. Ravana carried away Sita on his shoulder but Sita did not do his bidding. Though he had thus the privilege of carrying her, he failed to be sanctified by physical contact with this Mother Divine but she, a helpless woman, became the Goddess Mother of the world. One should, therefore, let oneself be abused and beaten without fear. In this lies true courage. One who lets himself be abused through fear of being beaten is neither man nor beast. India is today learning the lesson of manliness. It will win swaraj if it masters this lesson aright.

¹ The Preserver in the Hindu Trinity

THREE FEARS

The three articles of Shri Deshbandhu¹ published before his imprisonment are indicative of his ecstatic state of mind, and are worth pondering over. "Remain peaceful in thought, word and deed." "Win over the Moderates, too, with gentleness." These are immortal words and are all the more beautiful for being penned at the time that they were. There are equally beautiful sentences describing the three fears. He says: "We have conquered the fear of prison", and then, as if addressing his son: "We have almost conquered the second fear—that of being beaten." The third fear is of facing bullets. When we have conquered that, swaraj is bound to follow. In fact, the key to swaraj lies in conquering this fear. If we could shed our fear of beatings or of death, neither the Government nor the bad characters can lord it over us, and we can win swaraj only if we have among us people who have conquered these three types of fear, otherwise we shall never get it.

BREACH OF PROMISE

A gentleman writes:²

This is but simple justice. The only difference is that I did not give the promise relying on my own strength. I am no more than the people's servant. I am their representative, their clerk. A clerk cannot make promises on his own. If, therefore, the Ali Brothers and their colleagues are not free on 31st December, I will put the blame on my correspondent and on the people. I will put it on the people of Bombay. I shall have been deceived by those very people who attended hundreds of meetings to hear me. I was taken in by the spectacle of the crowds on the 17th and the blazing bonfire on that occasion and I said: "This evening I shall leave for Bardoli and Anand and put them to the test, and I believe that we shall win swaraj in the middle of December through the civil disobedience which will be started there and because of the peace you have preserved; we shall get the prison gates opened and welcome the Ali Brothers, Gangadharrao Deshpande and others in our midst." In saying this, I put my

¹ C. R. Das

² The extract is not translated here. The correspondent had said that if Gandhiji failed to secure the release of the Ali Brothers before December 31, as he had promised he would, he would invite the same charge of breach of promise which he levelled against Lloyd George.

faith in the people of Bombay and India. The entire nation will have committed breach of promise if the Ali Brothers and others are not released this month. I, too, may be included among the guilty. Let people think that I was rather simple-minded to have reposed such faith. No matter what they say, I will always act on such faith.

According to me, however, the actual result is as good as the fulfilment of the promise. Is not the imprisonment of Lalaji, Das, Motilalji, Abul Kalam Azad, Mohiuddin, Salamatullah, Agha Safdar, Jawaharlal and others the same thing as securing the release of the Ali Brothers? Those hundreds who have accompanied them have gone to fetch the people who are in jail. It is for us to reinforce their efforts. If the country remains completely peaceful and, at the same time, people continue to court arrest, if they let their heads be broken and lay down their lives, we shall certainly be able to secure the release of the prisoners. I assure the correspondent that the imprisonment of the leaders has warmed the hearts of the Ali Brothers so much that their chains have fallen away, so to say. Occasionally, obstacles like the thoughtless behaviour of the people obstruct our progress, to our great loss. The people got excited when Agha Safdar was arrested. Some broke into the prison and some insulted the Magistrate. It is utterly wrong of us to use force or insult or abuse anyone. If, nevertheless, people go on committing errors, what is their poor representative to do? If he feels very unhappy, he may at the most resign and run away to the Himalayas.

ERRORS IN "NAVAJIVAN"

Another gentleman has pointed out some errors in *Navajivan*. My inquiry shows that there have been no such errors as he believes to have been made. In case, however, other readers also are under such misapprehension, in order to clear it I should like to say that I do not write all that appears in *Navajivan*, that I cannot go through all of it and also that I do not translate my articles which appear in *Young India*. Utmost care is taken to avoid errors. My co-worker who does the translation is, in my Opinion, the best I could find. But even when everyone makes an honest effort, errors will occasionally remain. Translating from one language into another is always more difficult than it appears. The original meaning can be preserved to some extent only if one has equal command over both the languages and is acquainted with the subject-matter. It is for this reason that a translation has always less value than the original. The reader,

therefore may rest assured that he will discover no error in *Navajivan* which has remained there through negligence and that, when any error important enough to need correction is pointed out, it will be corrected immediately on attention being drawn to it.

WITH BLOWING OF CONCHES

The circumstances under which Deshbandhu Das was arrested are interesting. He was arrested in his own house. When the police arrived at about four in the afternoon, all were having tea. Mr. Sasmal, the Secretary, went downstairs to meet the police. On his introducing himself, he was arrested. Meanwhile, Deshbandhu Das had also gone down.

“Do you wish to arrest me?”

“Yes, if you please.”

“Well, I am ready.”

Having said this, Deshbandhu did not go up to meet his wife but accompanied the police. When the carriage taking him away came out, people outside shouted with joy and the women upstairs blew conches. In Bengal, it is customary to blow the conch when welcoming a person or bidding farewell to anyone on an auspicious occasion. This is regarded as a good omen. When women give up crying on their husbands, sons or fathers being arrested and, instead, rejoice on the occasion, knowing that their imprisonment will serve the country and dharma, we shall see dharma prevail and *adharma* destroyed. I, therefore, see in this blowing of the conch India's victory.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-12-1921

143. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Sunday [December 18, 1921]¹

CHI. MAHADEV,

I am sure the reason for the shabby get-up of the *Independent* is defective machinery.

It is certainly proposed to have a resolution about volunteers passed at the Congress. Only the right type of men will be enrolled. You must have seen the draft.

Please let me know whether Swaruprani and other ladies are likely to come² and, if yes, when.

Hand over the accompanying letter to Mrs. Joseph³.

Godbole is already here. Malaviyaji is busy with preparations for the Conference.

Let me know about your and Durga's health.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Since Mrs. Joseph has gone to Calcutta, I am sending her letter to the address given by her.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11425

144. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

SABARMATI,

December 18, 1921

DEAR SHANKERLAL,

I had been to Karamsad yesterday. Hence, I have not been able to write about the late Dhondi. I have read his papers today. In such cases it seems proper that the Provincial Committee pays the money after investigation.

¹ In his letter of December 15, 1921, to Mahadev Desai, Gandhiji had expressed the wish that Godbole should go to Ahmedabad. he is mentioned in this letter as being "already here". Evidently, this letter was written on the Sunday following the letter of December 15.

² To attend the Congress session at Ahmedabad

³ Wife of George Joseph

Jamnadas and Kunzru have arrived today. Bhai Kanji will give you news of them.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32720

145. TELEGRAM TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR¹

[On or after *December 18, 1921*]

Ordinary

ACHARYA

SALELI

NO DIFFICULTY SHRADDHA².

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7744

146. TELEGRAM TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA³

December 19, 1921

MALAVIYA

SAW JAMNADAS KUNZRU. PLEASE DO NOT WORRY REPRESSION.
CONFERENCE WILL BE ABORTIVE UNLESS GOVERNMENT TRULY
PENITENT AND ANXIOUS SETTLE THREE THINGS.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7730

¹ Sent in reply to Vijayaraghavachariar's telegram of December 17, 1921, received by Gandhiji on the 18th, which read: "Local situations best handled after Congress. Can you arrange accommodation for performing *shraddha*. Also remember we can legally elect only acting substitute for Sriyut Das who must remain permanent President throughout year."

² The Hindu ceremony of oblation for the spirit of deceased ancestors

³ Sent in reply to Malaviya's telegram of December 16, 1921; *vide* footnote to "Draft Telegram to Madan Mohan Malaviya", 16-12-1921.

147. TELEGRAM TO C. R. DAS AND ABUL KALAM AZAD¹

December 19, 1921

C. R. DAS
A. K. AZAD

YOUR WIRE COMPOSITION DATE CONFERENCE SHOULD BE
PREVIOUSLY DETERMINED. RELEASE SHOULD INCLUDE PRISONERS
CONVICTED FOR "FATWAS"² INCLUDING KARACHI ONES. SUBJECT
TO THESE CONDITIONS IN ADDITION YOURS WE CAN IN MY
OPINION WAIVE HARTAL.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7730

148. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

[December 19, 1921]³

BHAISHREE SHANKERLAL,

I have received your cheque. I take it you will send the balance soon. If you are unable to come send your comments on the resolution.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: G.N. 11540

149. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

SABARMATI,
December 20, 1921

DEAR SHANKERLAL,

Invitations to the Liberals have been sent only as a matter of courtesy. They can come and witness everything as observers. They do not have the right to enter our organization in any other way. It is

¹ Sent in reply to Das and Maulana Azad's telegram of December 19, 1921, which read: "We recommend calling of hartal on following conditions: 1. Government calling a conference soon consider all questions raised by Congress. 2. Withdrawal of recent Government *communique* and police and magisterial orders. 3. Releasing all prisoners under this new law unconditionally. Reply immediately care of Superintendent, Presidency Jail, Calcutta."

² Decrees of Muslim divines

³ From the Postmark

another matter if any of them privately holds discussions.

You must have received the tickets by now. The authority of the Reception Committee had to be specially invoked for getting the sanction for these tickets. The Reception Committee had stopped issuing free tickets two months ago. Mr. Jinnah being a sensible man, would be quite useful as an intermediary.

If Dudabhai and Marwadi Master have been elected as delegates and if they ask for the train fare, etc., it would be proper to give it. The money for that purpose should be provided only by the Provincial Committee.

Accommodation can be provided for poor Maharashtrians if they are small in number. But they cannot be given tickets as observers. They would be able to see everything except the business sessions of the Congress. The minimum number of people should be encouraged to attend the business sessions.

The news about the arrest of Jairamdas has been received.¹

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

*150. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MATHURADAS
TRIKUMJI²*

Tuesday, December 20, 1921

. . . I shall be staying in Khadi Nagar³ from the 22nd instant. You also may stay there. I shall keep you with or near me. Your leg will soon be better here. The climate here is quite suitable for such wounds.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 41

¹ Jairamdas Daulatram was arrested on December 20.

² 1894-1951; social worker and author; co-worker of Gandhiji; Secretary, Bombay Congress Committee, 1922-23

³ The venue of the thirty-sixth session of the Indian National Congress, Ahmedabad

*151. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS ON ROUND
TABLE CONFERENCE*

[December 20, 1921]¹

Referring to Lord Ronaldshay's speech at the Bengal Legislative Council on Monday last, Mr. Gandhi made the following statement to the correspondent of the Associated Press at his Ashram late in the night:

I have read Lord Ronaldshay's speech in the Bengal Legislative Council. Whilst I appreciate the note of conciliation about it, I cannot help saying that it is most misleading. I do not want to criticize those parts of the speech which lend themselves to criticism. I simply want to say that the present situation is entirely his own and the Viceroy's doing. In spite of my strong 'desire to avoid suspecting the Government of India and the Local Governments of a wish to precipitate a conflict with the people, up to now all that I have heard and read leads me to the conclusion that my suspicion is justified. Whilst I do not wish to deny the existence of some sort of pressure, even intimidation, on the part of individuals, I do wish emphatically to deny that in connection with the phenomenal hartal on the 17th November in Calcutta, there was any intimidation, organized or initiated by or on behalf of the local Congress or the Khilafat Committees. On the contrary, I am certain that the influence exerted by both these bodies was in the direction of avoiding all intimidation. Moral pressure there certainly was and will always be in all big movements, but it must be clear to the simplest understanding that a complete hartal such as Calcutta witnessed on the 17th November would be an impossibility by mere intimidation. But assume that there was intimidation. Was there any reason for disbanding Volunteer Corps, prohibiting public meetings and enforcing laws which are under promise of repeal? Why has no attempt been made to prove a single case of intimidation? It grieves me to have to say that the Governor of Bengal has brought in the discovery of sword-sticks in one place in Calcutta to discredit large public organizations. Who intimidated the people into observing a complete hartal in Allahabad after all the leaders were arrested and in spite of the reported undue official pressure that was exercised upon shopkeepers and *ghariwallas*² at that place? Again His Lordship says:

¹ A brief report of the interview appeared in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 21-12-1921, under the date line "Ahmedabad, December 20".

² Drivers of carriages

If we are to assume that this development means there is genuine desire to bring about improvement, there must be a favourable atmosphere. In other words, it will be generally agreed that truce must be an essential preliminary to any possible conference. If responsible leaders of non-co-operation now come forward with the definite assurance that this is the correct interpretation, I should then say we were in sight of such a change of circumstances as would justify Government in reconsidering the position. But words must be backed by deeds. If I were satisfied only that there was a general desire for the conference and that responsible non-co-operation leaders were prepared to take action, then I should be prepared to recommend my Government to take steps in consonance with the altered situation.

This is highly misleading. If wherever the words "non-co-operation leaders" occur, the word "Government" were put in and if the whole of the statement came from a non-co-operator, it would represent the correct situation. Non-co-operators have really to do nothing, for they have precipitated nothing. . They are over-cautious. The disturbance in Bombay¹ was allowed to override their keen desire to take up aggressive civil disobedience but in the present circumstances the phrase "civil disobedience" is really a misnomer. What non-co-operators are doing today, I claim, every co-operator would do tomorrow under similar circumstances. When the Government of India or the local Governments attempt to make our political existence or agitation, no matter how peaceful, an utter impossibility, may we not resist such attempt by every lawful means at our disposal? I cannot imagine anything more lawful or more natural than that we should continue our volunteer organizations purging them of every tendency to become violent and continue also to hold public meetings taking the consequences of such a step. Is it not proof of the law-abiding instinct of hundreds of young men and old men that they have meekly, without offering any defence and without complaining, accepted imprisonment for having dared to exercise their elementary rights in the face of Government prosecution? And so it is the Government which is to prove its genuine desire for a conference and an ultimate settlement. It is the Government which has to arrest the fatal course along which repression is taking it. It is the Government that is to prove to non-co-operators its *bona fides* before it can expect them to take part in any conference. When the Government does that, it will find that there is an absolutely peaceful atmosphere. Non-co-operation, when the Government is not resisting anything

¹ On November 17, 1921

except violence, is a most harmless thing. There is really nothing for us to suspend. We cannot be expected, until there is actual settlement or guarantee of settlement, to ask schoolboys to return to Government schools or lawyers to resume practice or public men to become candidates for the Councils or titleholders to ask for return of titles. In the nature of things, it is, therefore, clear that non-co-operators have to do nothing. Speaking personally, I can certainly say that if there is a genuine desire for a conference, I would be the last person to advise precipitating aggressive civil disobedience, which certainly it is my intention to do immediately I am entirely satisfied that the people have understood the secret of non-violence; and let me say the last ten days' events have shown that the people seem clearly to understand its inestimable value. If then the Government recognizes that non-co-operators mean business and intend to suffer limitlessly for the attainment of their goal, let the Government unconditionally retrace its steps, cancel the notifications about disbandment of volunteer organizations and prohibition of public meetings and release all those men in the different provinces who have been arrested and sentenced for so-called civil disobedience or for any other purpose given under the definition of non-cooperation but excluding acts of violence, actual or intended. Let the Government come down with a heavy hand on every act of violence or incitement to it, but we must claim the right for all time of expressing our opinions freely and educating public opinion by every legitimate and non-violent means. It is, therefore, the Government who have really to undo the grave wrong they have perpetrated and they can have the conference they wish in a favourable atmosphere. Let me also say that so far as I am concerned I want no conference to consider the ways and means of dealing with non-co-operation. The only conference that can at all avail at this stage is a conference called to deal with the causes of the present discontent, namely, the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs and swaraj. Any conference again which can usefully sit at the present stage must be a conference that is really representative and not a conference to which only those whom the Government desire are invited.

Young India, 22-12-1921

152. TELEGRAM TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA¹

[On or after *December 20, 1921*]

REGRET EXCEEDINGLY INABILITY GIVE UNDERTAKING ASKED.
NON-CO-OPERATION CAN CEASE ONLY AFTER SATISFACTORY
RESULT CONFERENCE. IN NO CASE HAVE I ANY AUTHORITY
DECIDE FOR CONGRESS.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7730

153. TELEGRAM TO MAHADEV DESAI

[On or after *December 20, 1921*]

MAHADEV DESAI,
ANAND BHAVAN,
ALLAHABAD

BRAVO, GET AS MANY VOLUNTEER COPYISTS AS POSSIBLE.
MULTIPLY ON RONEO.³ GIVE BRIEFEST NEWS AND INFORMING
ARTICLE.. DAILY VOLUNTEERS TO SELL PAPER.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 7748

¹ This was in reply to Malaviya's telegram of December 20, 1921 which read: "implore you wire immediately to following effect: If points mentioned in Das's telegram to you accepted and composition and date conference agreed upon, you will call off hartal and see that pending conclusion of proposed conference non-co-operation activities other than those relating to national education, swadeshi and prohibition of intoxicants without picketing in any case will be suspended and that a real truce will be observed on your side. Such assurance essential in best interests of cause we all hold dear."

² This was in reply to Mahadev Desai's telegram of December 20, 1921 which read: "Security forfeited this morning. Notice served says articles "Mrs. Motilal Nehru's Message," and "Let Us Also See It Through" contained words having tendency to interfere administration law order. Next notice wired *Young India*. Intend issuing manuscript paper from tomorrow. Wire detailed instruction though hourly expecting arrest."

³ To bring out the handwritten *Independent*; vide "Notes", 22-12-1921, under the sub-title "The *Independent* Suppressed".

154. TELEGRAM TO SHYAM SUNDER CHAKRAVARTY

[On or after *December 21, 1921*]

MY OPINION EITHER CONFERENCE CAN TAKE PLACE WITHOUT SUSPENSION NON-CO-OPERATION OR IF TRUCE ESSENTIAL TERMS CONFERENCE ITS COMPOSITION ETC. MUST BE PREVIOUSLY SETTLED. WE ARE NOT OFFERING AGGRESSIVE CIVIL DIS-OBEDIENCE IF GOVERNMENT MEAN WELL THEY SHOULD RETRACE STEPS BY UNCONDITIONALLY WITHDRAWING NOTIFICATION DISBANDMENT AND PUBLIC MEETINGS AND DOING PARTIAL REPARATION BY DISCHARGING THOSE UNWARRANTABLY IMPRISONED. WAS IT NOT WICKED ENFORCE LAWS WHICH WERE UNDER PROMISE OF REPEAL? LET THEM PUT DOWN VIOLENCE VEILED OPEN OR INTENDED BUT WE MUST RESIST WITH OUR LIVES THIS WANTON VIOLENT SUPPRESSION FREEDOM OPINION.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7730

155. TELEGRAM TO JAMNADAS DWARKADAS²

[On or after *December 21, 1921*]

MY WORD TO YOU ABIDES. PREPARED INDIVIDUALLY UNCON-DITIONALLY ATTEND ANY CONFERENCE. VICEROY PUTTING YOU WRONG TRACK. TELL ME CONCRETE TERMS TO BE OBSERVED ONLY. CANNOT WAIVE VOLUNTARY HARTAL TILL TERMS STATED TELEGRAM³ DAS SATISFIED.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7753

¹ Sent in reply to Chakravarty's telegram of December 20, 1921, received by Gandhiji on the 21st which read: "Bengal opinion favours opportunity for negotiation which proposed conference will afford giving assurance of real truce. Thought reasonable releases suggested by you may be expected before conference actually meets. Wire advice immediately."

² Sent in reply to Jamnadas Dwarkadas's telegram of December 21, 1921, which read: "Can you imagine how heart-breaking it is for me. Cannot express despair in words. Came full of hope only to find that your subsequent telegram to Panditji and Das practically cancelled all you told me. Fail to understand. I venture to believe it is *not* yet too late. Earnestly beg of you to respond to the appeal for truce, in larger interest of country. You of all can not fail to take higher standpoint. Your consent may yet enable us to bring about conference which country at large including large number of your followers desire. Pray wire fully."

³ Of December 19, 1921

156. LETTER TO N. S. HARDIKAR

[Before *December 22, 1921*]¹

DEAR DR. HARDIKAR,

I would like you to tell the students in America that the best way in which they can serve the country there is to understand the non-violent character of the struggle. The violence which reigns supreme in the world today will only be conquered by non-violence, i.e., love. I would like the students also, when they write about the struggle, to be accurate in their facts and figures, which I often observe, they are not.

Yours sincerely,

M. K GANDHI

From a copy: N. S. Hardikar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

157. NOTES

December 19, 1921

A DELECTABLE ASSORTMENT

Here are titbits I pick up from letters, wires, and reports which have deluged me during the week:

“Two Mohammedan workers have just returned with heads broken by a zemindar supporter of the Government.” Sind.

“Volunteer organizations declared unlawful. Provincial, District, and other Congress offices, searched throughout Bihar. Papers, account books, cyclostyles, Congress seals, swaraj flags seized. Provincial Committee resolved to continue Volunteer Corps enlistment. Public enthusiastic and cheerful.” Bihar.

“Today (17th December) armed police took possession of the Shankar Hall, a religious institution of the Assam *Mahapurushia* sect in a part of which Barpeta Congress Committee established office. The action was without notice to the Shankar Hall authorities. The guarding constables are smoking inside the hall which is strictly prohibited, the wounding religious feeling of the people. The belongings of the Congress were carelessly thrown out by police who have been using it as their dwelling house, thus preventing people from performing religious ceremonies. People are still adhering to

¹ The addressee had quoted this letter in his letter dated 22-12-1921 to Indian residents in America.

non-violence. Work proceeding rapidly." Barpeta, Assam.

"Houses of Pandit Rambhuj Dutt Chowdhary, Professor Ruchiram Sahany, Lala Lajpat Rai, Congress Committee offices, Khilafat offices, Sirajdin's house, Sarala Devi's¹ press searched. Volunteers in Lahore and Amritsar severely beaten by the police. Prisoners reported to be caned in the Central Jail, Lahore."

I have given this assortment to show that swaraj is within easy grasp, if we can survive this treatment. Surviving means bravely facing it without losing temper. Let the administrators of an expiring system have the pleasure of being able to say, "We tried but failed." When the moth describes its violent revolutions round a lamp, he is surely dying. So is this Government fast disintegrating under the weight of its own violence. What is it, if it be not madness, to search private homes and public offices when they must know that there is nothing hidden, when they know that non-co-operators have no secrets? But these searches are no doubt intended to make the people feel as uncomfortable as they possibly could be made to feel. A correspondent tells me that already the jails are feeling the pressure. The jail authorities were unprepared for the number of men who are being daily sentenced. They have no room and no work for so many. Naturally, therefore, resort must be had to other methods of terrorizing. Consequently, we must expect even assaults with greater frequency. The reported caning is the worst thing yet come to light. I still hope it is untrue. I have taken the bit from *The Tribune* which is one of the most responsible journals that India has the good fortune to possess. This report reminds one of the lashings during the martial law regime in Lahore. It was at first denied but subsequently admitted. The reader will remember Col. Johnson justifying the use of the lash as a deterrent and as a swift method of punishment when imprisonment does not answer.² Well, whether the report be true or not, we must prepare for the worst. No suffering is too great a price for freedom. It will be all the dearer when we have paid a heavy price for it.

But worse in some respects is the occupation of a temple in Barpeta. It is a grave and uncalled for provocation. But I must plead

¹ Sarladevi Chowdharani, wife of Pandit Rambhuj Dutt Chowdhari and niece of Rabindranath Tagore. She and her husband became followers of Gandhiji in 1919.

² Vide "Congress Report on the Punjab Disorders" On or Before March 25, 1920.

for non-violence even under such grave provocation. Let it be remembered that our pledge is unconditional. We must stand by it at all cost. An intruder cannot defile a temple. Only votaries can by their unworthiness. In the language of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, let us think of the greater temple, namely, India, which has been defiled for so many years by our submission to slavery. And if we have stood that defilement all these long years, let us not be provoked into madness by the illegal encroachments upon local temples and their still greater defilement by the intruders' abuse of them. Is Lord Reading prepared to plead extenuation even in this case on the ground that the officials are engaged in the performance of a very trying duty?

CHITTAGONG'S TOLL

The same day that I received a graphic description of things in Chittagong, I received too a wire advising me that Babu Prasanna Kumar Sen¹ who had sent the letter was also arrested. The number of volunteers arrested there had reached a total of three hundred. The reader will find the following excerpts from Babu Prasanna Kumar Sen's letter to be interesting:

So long we have been literally at our wit's end to find out the best means of beginning civil disobedience. Following the resolution of the Working Committee at Delhi, we set out carefully educating our people to strict non-violence. Our propagandists were to return by the 8th December, but before the due date the Government of Bengal goaded by the Anglo-Indian extremists went almost mad over the hartal in Calcutta on the 17th November, rushed on to take advantage of forgotten laws and forsaken methods and proclaimed volunteer associations illegal. Thus it has come to our help.

For the last few days national volunteers in batches of not more than five have been going out with grim determination and cheerful anxiety to find themselves in jail. The discipline and self-restraint they are exhibiting are excellent, and if you do not think me guilty of exaggeration, I should not hesitate to declare them in this respect equal to best disciplined soldiers in the battle-fields. Within the last three days total arrests number sixty-three. Volunteers are pouring in from the moffussil and it is believed in no time authorities will find the Chittagong jail too small to accommodate the brave lads.

Thus the Government has declared peace to be unlawful and keepers of it to be criminals. It puts the people through periodical

¹ Lawyer and Secretary District Congress Committee, Chittagong

discipline to observe peace not of their free will but only under restraint.

MIXED MOTIVES

A friend tells me that the Government is suppressing the volunteer organizations because it is not sure that they will always remain peaceful. The correspondent adds:

They think at present under your mandate they are non-violent, but any day your orders or the orders of your successors may change and the volunteers may be asked to be armed in military fashion—a standing rebel army against the Government army.

The other hypothesis suggested by the same correspondent is that the Government dread this non-violence more than an armed revolt. The police-officers are getting tired and unnerved by being ordered to molest people who do not retaliate. Some of them confess,

Non-violence is a dreadful foe to meet. Violence we understand and do not mind. But it makes one feel so small to beat a man who does not beat you back.

The fact is that both the suggestions are sound. The Government dread the future and want to guard against the people acquiring the power to offer armed resistance and they dread the rapid evolution of peaceful strength. In short, they want us to be neither men nor women. They would have us belong to the neuter gender.

UNSEXING PROCESS

Belgaum furnishes a forcible illustration of the unsexing process being tried at present in India. A friend has prepared for me the following summary of a report from Belgaum:

The district authorities of Belgaum have devised an original method of suppressing non-co-operation. Mr. Hayter, the Superintendent of Police, issued a circular calling upon all Sub-Inspectors to use their power to stop the spread of non-co-operation. The Sub-Inspectors on their part circularized the village police that "all non-co-operation speakers should be forcibly suppressed. They should not be allowed to enter villages and should be expelled from villages. And speakers should be prevented from speaking. The Deputy Superintendent of Police hopes that it is enough if police *patels* are given to understand this. Superior officers will render proper assistance in the matter." But when the ex-lawyers in the non-co-operation camp raised the question of law in this matter, the D.S.P. came down with his circular No. 6359 of 1921 saying that section 51(B) of the District Police Act which

empowered the police to prevent the commission of offence was sufficient for his purpose. The D.S.P. further says, "Wherever these N.C.O.¹ gentry open their mouths in public, they commit offences under section 124A or 153A Indian Penal Code. Therefore, police-officers should do everything possible, consistent with law, to render the offence difficult."

The humour of all this was that armed with these notifications, the Sub-Inspector of Bailhongal, a taluka in Belgaum, actually proceeded physically to stop the mouth of one of the Secretaries of the District Congress Committee, when the latter was about to deliver a speech at Bailhongal. Let the Secretary speak:

. . . When I rose to address the meeting, the Sub-Inspector of police stood in front of me and told me not to speak. Asked for a written order he refused to give one but showed me Circular No. 6359 referred to above . . . He further told me that if I persisted in speaking, he would physically stop my mouth by laying his hand upon it . . . This being a somewhat novel proceeding . . . I obeyed the order and did not speak. The local Magistrate and *Mamlatdar* was present throughout. . .

Let me complete this lurid picture by adding a summary of events in Allahabad:

On the 25th November last a *Gazette Extraordinary* was issued by the Government extending the application of the Criminal Amendment Act of 1908 to the U.P. and declaring all Volunteer Corps of Khilafat, Congress and similar institutions having as their object boycott of foreign cloth, picketing or boycott of the Prince's visit as unlawful assemblies.

On the same day, according to the announcement previously made, a meeting of the Provincial Congress Committee was held which resolved to form a Volunteer Board on the lines laid down by the Working Committee. A form of pledge was drawn up and 75 members present at the meeting signed it as volunteers. The first victim of Government wrath was Pandit Harkaran Nath Mishra of Lucknow who had gone to Lakhmipur to address a meeting. Then followed the arrests at Lucknow of Maulana Khaliqzaman and others of the Congress and Khilafat Committees on the morning of 6th December. On the evening of the same day Pandits Motilal Nehru, Jawaharlal Nehru², Purushottamdas Tandon³ and others were arrested, who have since been

¹ Non-co-operator

² 1889-1964; statesman and writer; India's first Prime Minister, 1947-64; Bharat Ratna; author of *Glimpses of World History*, *Autobiography*, etc.

³ 1882-1962; lawyer and eminent leader of U.P.; founder, Hindi Sahitya Sammelan; President, Indian National Congress, 1950; Bharat Ratna. He was at that time Chairman of the Allahabad Municipality.

sentenced to various terms of imprisonment for enlisting as volunteers. Then followed a short pause which was broken on the 11th instant by the arrest of 67 volunteers, mostly while painting a placard on the walls of Anand Bhavan¹ requesting the people not to participate in the Prince's reception. The climax, however, was reached on the 13th instant when the whole Provincial Congress Committee was besieged by the police while in session, and the whole body of members excepting the two secretaries and two others were arrested. The Committee sat at 1 p.m. and continued the meeting till 9 in the evening. At about half past five, the police under one D.S.P. named Mr. Fergusson arrived with some six motor vans for carrying prisoners, entered the premises of the Committee and blocked all passages. They searched the office till 9. When, the meeting having terminated, the members informed the D.S.P. of their intention to leave, the D.S.P. went over to the meeting and demanded the proceedings to be shown to him and finding a resolution therein recommending all district and tehsil Congress Committees to organize Volunteer Corps, declared that an offence had been committed under the Criminal Law Amendment Act. He then asked all present one by one whether they were members of the committee and had supported the resolution. All the members having replied in the affirmative, he arrested fifty-five of them including all the prominent workers of the province.

During the search B. Shitalasahai editor of the *Swaraj* was kicked, boxed and otherwise assaulted by Mr. Fergusson so much so that blood came out of his skin. But he bore all that patiently. Several others also were badly treated and pushed and assaulted by the same officer. Everybody kept his temper. There was no search or arrest warrant produced, nor did the officers have their bodies searched before beginning the search. All papers, records and seals of the Provincial Congress Committee have been seized by the police and put under sealed locks.

It is evident to me that this utter disregard of law and decency is not an individual act but is part of a deliberate plan to suppress all healthy public life, to provoke popular violence and then issue a much enlarged edition of Jallianwala. With the best intention to put a charitable construction on the series of acts described above, I have been unable to come to any other conclusion,

VICEROY'S SHARE

I am sorry that I suspect Lord Reading of complicity in the plot to unman India for eternity. A friend has suggested an alternative. He says that whilst Lord Reading must be held responsible for the threats used by him in his recent utterances, he might be quite unaware of the

¹ Motilal Nehru's residence

lawlessness of the subordinate officials or that he must have become helpless, the subordinate officials having simply disregarded his wishes to be strictly within the law. I must reject both the interpretations. Lord Reading, if he is trying legitimately to suppress popular lawlessness, must study and regulate the development of his campaign which he will not even allow to be called repression. If his subordinates being interested parties have gone out of hand, he must forthwith resign, at least publicly disown and condemn such illegalities and assaults and not attempt to excuse them on the flimsy plea of "trying times". I have myself suggested a possible explanation. His Excellency sympathizes with our aspirations, and knowing his own countrymen, realizes that we have got to be severely tried before they think of coming to terms; he is, therefore, trying and directing repression to see how far we are capable of bearing it and, therefore, sincere in our desire for freedom, and then having made out a case for us his clients, desires to compel a settlement. I am afraid, however, that I have to state the case only to be rejected. Human nature does not work quite that way. Lord Reading is not so entirely selfless, and if he is, he cannot possibly remain in charge of a Government which under its present constitution can give no relief to the people. It is, therefore, with the greatest reluctance that I am forced to conclude that Lord Reading is trying to emasculate India by forcibly making free speech and popular organization impossible. I am prepared to believe that in all this he thinks that he is doing good to us and that we are not yet fit to be called men and women. He will soon have his eyes opened. We must not quarrel with his belief. Nor need we feel anxious about it. Let us acquit ourselves like men and women and we shall find that everything and everybody become favourable to us.

ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE

The pages of *Young India* are rarely occupied with an examination of what rulers think. It is an idle speculation. But as the papers are discussing, advising and debating upon such a conference, I have considered it appropriate to devote some space to an examination of the mentality of the chief actor in the drama now being played in India. In my opinion, such a conference is bound to prove abortive till Lord Reading is disabused of the idea that non-co-operation is confined to a few misguided zealots. If he wants co-operation and contentment, he must placate non-co-operators. He must see that non-co-operation is not the disease, it is the chief

symptom of a disease. The disease consists in a triple injury to the people of India. And no palliative will soothe the patient so long as the centre of the disease is not tackled. Outside the redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs and the grant of swaraj in accordance with a scheme framed by the chosen representatives of the people, repression is the easiest and the shortest way to a settlement. No Viceroy can, I freely confess, possibly allow things to drift. I admit that he must suppress civil disobedience as he would an armed rebellion unless he is prepared to remedy the evil towards which the disobedience is directed. Abstract truth has no value unless it incarnates in human beings who represent it by proving their readiness to die for it. Our wrongs live because we only pretend to be their living representatives. The only way we can prove our claim is by readiness to suffer in the discharge of our trust. We are on a fair way to proving ourselves worthy of it. But I hardly think we can yet claim to have given conclusive proof. Who knows if we shall not be found wanting when imprisonment means utter discomfort and even lashes? Who knows how many of us are ready to mount the gallows?

In my opinion, therefore, a conference at which the Government is represented will be useful only when the latter has tried the non-co-operators to its satisfaction and measured their strength in quantity and quality.

But since non-co-operation is a method of cultivating public opinion, I would certainly welcome a conference of co-operators and non-co-operators. I am sure that they want the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs redressed, I am aware that they want freedom for the country as much as non-co-operators. It has given me much pleasure to see almost every moderate journal condemning the present repressive policy of the Government. I had expected nothing less. And I know that if non-co-operators keep self-restraint, do not become violent, do not abuse their opponents, every liberal will become a non-co-operator. Indeed even Englishmen will veer round to the non-co-operators and the Government will, as it then must, capitulate. That is the expected and intended working of the method of non-co-operation. It reduces friction to a minimum. And if today it seems to have produced a contrary effect, it is because non-co-operators have only now begun to see that it is not enough to have been fairly non-violent in deed. It is equally necessary to be non-violent in word and thought. It is unlawful for a non-co-operator even to wish ill to his enemies. What our opponents dread most is

undisciplined violence breaking out under cover of non-violence. They do not believe in our sincerity, i.e., of the vast majority of us. They see in it nothing but chaos and perdition. This repression, therefore, has come as a blessing in disguise. It is showing them and us that we have acquired influence over the populace to keep it under check even under provoking circumstances. Our restraint has not yet been tried long enough to be considered permanent. We are still in a state of uncertainty. The people in Sialkot did stray away from the line, be it even so slightly. We have had so many such little jerks that we do not possess the sense of security required to inspire an outsider's faith in the movement. I would, therefore, welcome every opportunity of meeting the co-operators on neutral ground or for showing the *bona fides* of non-co-operators. The Government has shown itself in true colours by declaring its intention to suppress non-co-operation as such. It was on safe ground so long as it sought to put down violence or incitement to or approval of it. I have, therefore, no doubt that the co-operators will rise to a man against the Government madness—this vain attempt to stifle expression of opinion and agitation for redress of grievances. But I warn our friends against entertaining the idea of a conference with the Government till they find that it is truly penitent and means to appreciate the popular side. Let there be no conference on the boycott of welcome or the right of holding public meetings or forming associations of volunteers or others so long as they have no violent purpose. Boycott of the welcome will and must continue so long as the people's wishes are flouted, and public meetings and associations are elementary rights on which there can be no parleying. We must fight for them.

Let it be understood that non-co-operators are not offering civil disobedience that they had intended to. Their insistence on calling and attending public meetings and forming peaceful volunteer associations ought not to be dignified by the name of civil disobedience. Non-co-operators are merely on the defensive. They have not taken, as they certainly intend to take, the offensive as soon as they are fairly certain of non-violent atmosphere. The government has obliged them by anticipating them and providing them with a test of their own capacity.

December 20

THE RIGHT OF PICKETING

The Government must have thought that Bombay having stopped picketing of liquor shops, all other places would necessarily follow suit. But Poona has shown that it is a right that cannot be abandoned without good cause. As soon as orders were issued to prohibit picketing, Mr. Kelkar¹ says:

We decided to break the orders and this morning notice has been sent to the District Magistrate that we shall even today proceed to break the order at a place and time specified. Myself, my son and Messrs Bhopatkar, Gokhale, Paranjpye and about 16 others will form the first batch. Succession will, I am sure, be provided for by those who are left behind. Let us see how far Poona gives an account of itself in this matter.

The party went, they were arrested, their names taken, and they were let off. Fresh parties have since been regularly going with the same result. Of course Maharashtra will never lag behind in suffering. It possesses the hardiest body of workers in India. It is remarkable how in every province the front rank leaders have run the boldest risks. But whilst Mr. Kelkar and his party had not the good fortune to be imprisoned, the Ajmer people fared better. On prohibition notices being issued, the workers regarding picketing as a "religious right" took up the challenge. Pandit Chand Karan Sarada says:

*Swaraj Sena*² volunteers were posted on all liquor shops. The Government also posted its police force and mounted *sawars* on each shop with orders to arrest the pickets. As soon as one batch was arrested, the reserve volunteers took their place. The police arrested only 17 volunteers who were summarily tried and sentenced to 4 months and 3 weeks' rigorous imprisonment.

They offered no defence. No more arrests seem to have been made at Ajmer. Where picketing can be practised without violence and ill will against the liquor dealer or the drinker, it is a moral duty. That it has advanced the cause of temperance as nothing else has, no one can deny. Only the other day at Karamsad³ the Christian and Hindu *Dheds* gratefully informed me that as a result of picketing they had banished drink from their midst. Bombay has forfeited the right for the time being at any rate because of its wanton and malicious destruction of Parsi liquor shops and its disgraceful behaviour towards

¹ N. C. Kelkar (1872-1947); political leader from Maharashtra; author and journalist

² Swaraj Army

³ Gandhiji was at Karamsad on December 17

Parsis and Christians on the fateful 17th November and the two following days. I hope, however, that wherever picketing is practised, it will be entrusted to men or women of unimpeachable character and carried on in the friendliest spirit. We do not want to make people virtuous by force.

LIBEL ON MAHARASHTRA PARTY

Apropos of Mr. Kelkar's letter, I must not omit to mention that the criticism passed against the leaders who went to Akola was most undeserved. Here is what Mr. Kelkar says in the letter from which I have quoted:

Before concluding I wish earnestly to repudiate the most unkind charge levelled against me and the Akola Conference. Personally I was a mere witness and nothing more than a Regulator of Debate. None of the propositions passed or rejected had my full concurrence so far as their wording went. I was negotiating for a compromise amendment, but whatever one may say about the Conference at Akola, I want you to believe that the Conference having been decided upon in July or August last was held as mere matter of course, and it is cruel to say we joined the Conference because we thought it a good opportunity for airing our views as the ranks of leaders were being depleted owing to repression, or what is worse still, for saving our skin.

I heartily endorse every word of what Mr. Kelkar says. It should be remembered that the letter was written when he was just expecting to be imprisoned.

SELLING KHADI

The lead given by Shrimatis Vasantidevi Das¹ and Urmiladevi² in selling khadi from house to house and hawking it in streets has been quickly taken up in the other parts of the country. Shrimati Sarala Devi writes:

I have to go immediately to the city to arrange to send 40 ladies in 20 groups under two volunteers each to sell khadi in 20 lanes.

In Madras too they are organizing similarly. I cannot conceive any better occupation for ladies especially, besides, hand-spinning than popularizing khadi by hawking it themselves. It is fine training in throwing off false pride or false modesty. And it is a most harmless challenge to the police to arrest them if they dare. But if the practice is to become common, it must be regulated by grownup ladies of position and without any bluster. Needless to say, there should be no undue pressure put upon the public to buy. We must not sicken them.

¹ Wife of C. R. Das

² Vasantidevi's sister

Our business is merely to take this most useful national ware to their doors and give them the choice of buying or rejecting it.

A WORTHY WIFE

Gladly inform husband arrested this morning. He asked me to wire you that he went filled with joy. Hope I shall continue his work to my utmost capacity. Aligarh is peaceful yet fully energetic. Khurshed Khwaja.

I tender my congratulations to Khurshed Begum on her having sent such a noble message just as her husband was going to jail. Khwaja Saheb¹ is a barrister brought up in the lap of luxury. I have known him as a dandy conscious of his handsome features which he tried to set off with the finest fitting European clothes he could buy in the market, and I know him now as practically a fakir. He is one of the bravest and the truest of Mussulmans. He is as good a lover of India as he is of Islam. When Maulana Mahomed Ali could not possibly reside permanently at the National Muslim University, he fell back upon Khwaja Saheb who left a growing practice in Patna to serve the University. I know that Khwaja Saheb implicitly believes in non-violence but he also believes in deathless courage and knows the art of dying. Before the Rowlatt Act was born and when with some Mussulman friends I was thinking of embarking upon satyagraha for the purpose of compelling the release of the Ali Brothers², I asked Khwaja Saheb how many Mussulmans would join and be prepared to die without killing. He said at once,

Shwaib³ is certainly one. He is our Bayard *sons peur et sans reproche*. And probably, I am half of Shwaib. I am sorry I cannot give you many more names.

This talk took place in 1917 or 1916 but I have not forgotten the earnestness and the truthfulness and the humility that were written in those noble features as he was speaking the few sentences. Times have changed. Khwaja, I have no doubt, is a whole man and many more Mussulmans have proved their bravery as was expected by Khwaja Saheb. No wonder his proud wife does not hesitate to say: "Hope I shall continue his work to my utmost capacity." Let not the reader laugh incredulously. I know the Aligarh boys. They will twine themselves round Khurshed Begum as perhaps they did not in the case of Khwaja. When a pure woman adds bravery and motherliness to her purity, she becomes at once a magnet in a way no man

¹ Khwaja Abdul Majid, then Vice-Chancellor of the Aligarh University

² Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali

³ Shuaib Qureshi, editor of *New Era*

can. Dr. Mahomed Alam will look after the brains of the boys, but she will capture their hearts and turn them into gold. And what is more, as the students have to become masters of the art of spinning, Khurshed Begum, I doubt not, will out-distance both her husband and Dr. Mahomed Alam in teaching that art. Begam Mahomed Ali has collected monies where her husband might have failed. I have already given my opinion that she is a better speaker than the Maulana. Let me take the reader into the secret that it was Shrimati Vasantidevi and Urmiladevi who set Bengal on fire. I have before me a letter showing that the visit of the three ladies and their arrest struck the imagination of Bengal as the big sacrifice of Deshbandhu Das had not. It could not be otherwise. For woman is sacrifice personified. When she does a thing in the right spirit, she moves mountains. We have misused our women. We have possibly neglected them. But the spinning-wheel, thank God, is transforming them. And when all the leaders and others who are in the good books of the Government have been honoured with imprisonment, I have not the faintest doubt that the women of India will finish the work left by men and they will do it far more gracefully than men.

BABU BHAGWANDAS¹

When Professor Kripalani and his pupils were arrested, I said to friends, "How nice if Babu Bhagwandas is arrested. After all the Professor does not belong to Banaras. But Babu Bhagwandas won't be." I did not then know that Babu Bhagwandas was the author of the very cautious leaflet which Professor Kripalani was hawking. The next day his son sent the joyful message² that Babuji was arrested and quite happy over the arrest. Babu Bhagwandas is a non-co-operator who has been always non-violent in thought, word and deed. He is a Sanskrit scholar. He is a deeply religious man. He is a zemindar. If Mrs. Besant³ was the creator of the Central Hindu College, Babu Bhagwandas was its maker. His arrest, therefore, constitutes a sacrifice entirely pleasing to God. And the holy city could not possibly offer any better sacrifice. Babu Bhagwandas, as the readers of newspapers are aware, was trying to get the Congress to formulate a scheme for

¹ Scholar and public worker; took leading part in establishing Kashi Vidyapith, a national university at Varanasi

² *Vide* footnote to "Telegram to Sri Prakasa", on or after 15-12-1921.

³ Annie Besant (1847-1933); President of the Theosophical Society; President, Indian National Congress, 1917

swaraj. He has been labouring hard for it. He has sent me a long list of suggestive questions which I have not been able to handle owing to the recent developments. His one anxiety was to avoid violence. If his arrest does not betray an anxiety on the part of the Government to invite violence, I do not know what can. Fortunately, God often overrules man's plans and every event indicates more and more certainly that He is overruling the plans of this Government. The people are calm in spite of it.

REMARKABLE PROOF

A remarkable proof of the fact is furnished by the following¹ from Amritsar by Lala Girdhari Lal²:

Yesterday, 14th instant, 21 Punjab national volunteers passed in procession starting from Chawk Farid through Hall Bazar preaching use of khadi. Mr. Beaty, D.S.P., and M. Fakir Hussain, Sub-Inspector, asked volunteers to disperse. Volunteers offered themselves for arrest but refused to disperse. At this Mr. Beaty and M. Fakir Hussain began to beat volunteers mercilessly with cane and hunter. . . . Faces and bodies of volunteers bear marks of severe blows. Sub-Inspector used filthy abuse against Khilafat volunteers and public bore this cowardly attack silently and calmly. Volunteers only said that if police consisted of brave men, they must either arrest or shoot them (volunteers). . . . These courageous and bleeding volunteers again started swadeshi propaganda a little further up. . . . In spite of this grave provocation all is calm and quiet.

He thus amplifies the details in a letter³ from which I take the following:

The sight was most provoking. What I admire most is that the volunteers undauntedly began their procession again with smiling faces although their bodies were smarting with the pain of the blows and cuts of the hunter. Many feel the pain today and are not likely to be free from it for some days.

I rang up D.C. on the phone and asked him under whose orders and under what law were the volunteers beaten so shamefully. He pleaded ignorance of this severe beating. D. C. said. that he had given orders that volunteers' processions were to be dispersed as Government had declared National Volunteers Corps also as unlawful. He further said that his orders were to use minimum force. When I informed him that not minimum but maximum force

¹ Only excerpts reproduced here

² President, District Congress Committee, Amritsar

was used, he said he would enquire. I wanted to know why he did not enforce the law and arrest the volunteers. He replied that his orders were otherwise. They do not wish to arrest ordinary volunteers.

In Lahore on 13th a like treatment was meted out to the volunteers. . . . they were beaten on their backs with the butt-end of the police batons. Later on the volunteers were set free in batches one or two miles away from the city at two in the night. Their coats were removed. In this severe winter of the Punjab nothing could be more inhuman. . . . I learn that the the Punjab Government has sent circulars to all District Officers to disperse volunteer processions by force but not to arrest them. It is done solely to humiliate as also with a view to provoke violence. . . . So far people have observed peace.

God will soon reward the patience of the Punjabis who are bearing their sufferings in the bravest manner. What is happening in the Punjab we may expect throughout India, if the supply continues and there is no room in the Government prisons for so many prisoners. In a war of give and take, too, we would have to sacrifice many lives. When we have only to give, I have no doubt that the toll will not be, cannot be, so heavy as when we take and give. This is a commercial view to take of a sacred act. But it is a true view and I see no harm in our realizing that by refraining from retaliation we make ourselves responsible for the least possible human suffering.

A SPOTLESS SACRIFICE

Police has just arrested me under 124A. Thanks to Almighty for this privilege for humble service to motherland. I go without rancour or any other feelings but that of duty done truthfully and firmly for India's liberation. I feel that I shall be serving the country not less usefully and joyfully inside the prison walls than I have endeavoured to do outside them.

Thus wires Jairamdas¹. His letter received the same day informed me of the arrests of Mr. Vesumal Tejumal, Maulvi Fatteh Mahomed and Maulvi Syed Abbas all three prominent workers. These cases have brought up the total arrests to 95 for Sindh. I consider Jairamdas's a spotless sacrifice. I know that he had never harboured ill will even in thought, a claim that cannot be advanced for many. He has been ever punctiliously truthful and self effacing. The Government must know that Jairamdas would never encourage or contemplate violence. He

¹ Jairamdas Daulatram (b. 1892); Congress leader from Sind; joined Non-co-operation movement in 1920; Minister of Food and Agriculture, Government of India; Governor of Assam. He was then Secretary, Sind Provincial Congress Committee.

has been ever mindful to yield voluntary obedience to the laws of the state. He knows, therefore, the meaning of civil disobedience. But the only use the state can make of Jairamdas is to imprison him. It is such imprisonments that hasten the advent of swaraj in the religious sense of the term.

DOINGS IN DELHI

The sacrifice that Delhi is offering is also in the interest of peace. I am publishing the following¹ from Dr. Ansari² to show what extraordinary precautions Delhi is taking to keep up a peaceful atmosphere:

On the 14th no volunteers were sent. On the morning of the 15th, 43 submitted themselves for arrest. . . .

On the 16th 2 batches of volunteers comprising 40 and 46 respectively marched to Daryaganj Police Station and Sabzimandi but were not arrested in spite of their repeated requests. . . .

On the 16th there was an unusual display of force on the part of the authorities. . . . There were also mounted police, a number of sergeants, the D.C., the S.P. and the D.S.P., one Magistrate and several Indian Police-officers stationed at the Kotwali. All the banks were guarded by the police and a number of police pickets were placed at different places. A crowd had gathered in front of the Kotwali as crowds always do when they see such display of force, but our men in mufti kept them on the move and perfectly peaceful. But . . . some sergeants became aggressive in dispersing the crowd and used their whips in beating the harmless people. The Indian police showed marked restraint. . . but the sergeants' assaults on the people caused a number of serious injuries to them.

In spite of this violence the people showed a calm courage and did not retaliate. . . .

. . . we ascertained that the cause of all this display of force was the false rumour. . . that Hakim Ajmal Khan Saheb³ was going with a force of one thousand volunteers on the 16th.

We have changed our plans for the future, when we propose to employ the volunteers in their normal duties regarding the distribution of charkhas, the collection of yarn from the different quarters, the production and sale of khadi.

¹ Only excerpts reproduced here

² Dr. M.A. Ansari (1880-1927); physician and politician; President, Indian National Congress, 1927

³ 1865-1927; physician and politician; President, Indian National Congress, 1921

The fact that they have refused to arrest the volunteers is a clear proof of our moral victory, but we do not propose to rest on our oars. There is a vigorous movement set on foot in the city to enrol every adult male in the N.V.C.¹ We hope soon that every shopkeeper and his assistants, every tonga-driver, every coolie and cartman, in fact every single inhabitant of Delhi will appear dressed in the swadeshi uniform of N.V.C. even when following his daily vocation . . .

The letter exhibits a religious spirit about the manner of conducting the campaign in the teeth of the hooliganism of the authorities. The infection of Lahore and Amritsar is evidently spreading. The unprovoked assaults by custodians of order reported from Amritsar, Lahore and now Delhi, in the north, and their equally wanton behaviour in Calcutta, in the east, are putting a strain upon peaceful nature beyond endurance. Can anything but a fine religious spirit account for the calmness that is being sustained among the people of India?

REMARKABLE PLEDGE

To show the thorough nature of the work of ensuring peace that is being done in Delhi, I extract the following remarkable pledge from Mr. Asaf Ali's² letter which he wrote when he offered himself and fifty-two others for arrest:

With full consciousness of the omnipresence and omniscience of Gods I declare that it shall be my solemn duty, (1) to attain swaraj by peaceful means, (2) to preserve and foster unity between the members and followers of the various communities and religions of India, (3) to regard no class or community as contemptible or untouchable, (4) to sacrifice life and property for the honour and interests of my country, (5) to wear clothes made of cloth hand-spun and hand-woven in the country, (6) to obey without demur the orders of the officers, (7) so long as I am not discharged from the Corps, to observe myself and persuade others to observe nonviolence (for as long as the Congress continues to follow this policy) and (8) finally, I will cheerfully bear privations and troubles which may confront me during my connection with the National Volunteers Corps and neither I nor any of my dependents and relations expect any compensation.

THE TOLL FROM DRAVIDA LAND

Madras and Andhra are slowly but surely creeping up and

¹ National Volunteer Corps

² 1888-1953; barrister and nationalist Muslim politician; took a leading part in the Khilafat Movement; India's Ambassador to the United States of America

I should not be surprised if the Dravidians come up to the level of Bengal which has now 1,500 imprisonments to its credit. Erode alone has done bravely in the matter of temperance Mr. Ramaswamy Naiker¹ has, therefore, been rewarded with one month's simple imprisonment. During the past fortnight, thirty-seven convictions have taken place already in this little place. And now Mrs. Naiker and Mr. Naiker's sister are to take up picketing. The Criminal Law Amendment Act has just been put in force there, Lord Willingdon² has stated his policy. Like Sir Harcourt Butler³ he too wants to maintain the respect for law and order. We may any day, therefore, expect a perfect hurricane of arrests where at present only a breeze seems to be blowing. They are conducting Mr. Rajagopalachari's and Mr. Subramania Shastri's case under summons. The trial is practically finished. Rajagopalachari has asked for the highest penalty. I hope that the Magistrate will oblige him and transfer from friends to jailers the care of his ailing body which is causing anxiety to his fellow-workers. Like Pandit Motilalji he has been wearing away his body ever since the commencement of non-co-operation. Dr. Ansari is now the sole surviving Secretary of the Congress and I have no doubt that he will not be long getting his reward for meritorious service. The Government is preparing the country for the final declaration that the Congress and the Khilafat Committee are unlawful organizations, in which case everyone connected with them must render himself liable to arrest. Nor will such a declaration be a strange procedure. The Congress, if it is allowed to continue its peaceful career, must supplant the present Government, a contingency the latter cannot contemplate with equanimity. The Congress, if it is worth existence, cannot depart by a hair's breadth from its course and if it survives the present test, it will do so not by the sufferance of the Government but by the weight of its own unrivalled influence upon the masses. Viewed in that light, the survival of the Congress after the Government's challenge is swaraj.

ATTENDANCE A CRIME

A telegram from the Lahore Publicity Board says that the Deputy Commissioner of Hazara District has warned the delegates

¹ E. V. Ramaswami Naiker, a Congressman who later left the Congress and founded the Dravida Kazhagam

² Governor of Madras, 1919-24; Viceroy of India, 1931-36

³ Governor of U.P.

elected to the Congress that "if they attend the Congress, they are liable to be expelled from the District under Section 36 Frontier Crime Regulations." I hope that the Congress delegates in Hazara will take up the challenge and now regard it a point of honour to attend the Congress in their full strength. The Hazara Commissioner's action is in keeping with the raiding of the Congress and Khilafat offices in Bengal, the United Provinces and Assam. The unity of method betrays unity of design and, therefore, pre-arranged plan to kill the movement by killing the Congress and the Khilafat Committees.

RESPONSE FROM BIHAR

Thus runs a wire¹ from Patna:

Another telegram reads:

Eighteen batches volunteers paraded town 10 to 4 Monday chiefly law-courts. Appealing litigants send cases panchayats. One prominent *vakil* being requested follow example, other *vakils* abused, slapped two volunteers Habib and Abdul Majid who remained perfectly non-violent continued work more firmly. People realizing the truth of non-violence. Use of khadi getting general. Preparing for *further* civil disobedience.

Bihar, the land of Janaka² and Sita, the land of perhaps the most afflicted and docile people in all India, is a land of sorrows. Bihar is a province which has kept most non-violent. It has shown splendid results in most items of non-co-operation. Whereas eighteen months ago, the charkha and the use of khadi were unknown to Bihar, its villages today contain thousands of them, and thousands of men and women now habitually wear khadi. It contains both among its Hindus and Mussulmans, probably, the most selfless workers throughout India who work silently and without bragging. No one has uttered a whisper about the sincerity of its leaders. And yet even Bihar has come in for this ruthless interference with peaceful activity.

But it is all for the good of the country. The Bihari will feel all the stronger for the imprisonments, the kicks and the slaps if they are borne ungrudgingly, valiantly and without ill will. Let the people be tried as to their faith in non-violence, in khadi, in temperance, in avoidance of litigation, in self-restraint and self purification. That would be also our fitness for swaraj.

¹ Not reproduced here; it reported arrests of a dozen leading men besides 150 volunteers

² Father of Sita in the epic *Ramayana*

THE "INDEPENDENT" SUPPRESSED

It will be remembered that immediately after Mr. George Joseph's arrest when a new declaration was made by Mr. Mahadev Desai as publisher and printer, a security of Rs. 2,000 was demanded. Under Panditji's advice, the security demanded was lodged and the paper reappeared after a day's suspension. The security was deposited on the 7th instant. It was forfeited on the 20th. There was no change of tone or policy, for, there was nothing to change. The *Independent* was edited by a barrister who wrote always under restraint and with dignity. On Mr. Joseph's incarceration it was taken up by Mr. Mahadev Desai with whose style the readers of *Young India* are not unfamiliar. The security was forfeited because of its articles, "Let Us Also See It Through" and "Mrs. Nehru's Message". The first contains a list of volunteers and the second is a balanced review of the position. But the local Government contend that the articles "contain words which have a tendency to interfere with the administration of the law and with the maintenance of law and order." The law we know, the notification of disbandment; the order too we know, the prohibition of the holding of public meetings. And the *Independent* has certainly, in common with the whole of the nationalist Press, encouraged interference with such law and such order.

But the Government will soon find out its mistake. The *Independent* may die but the spirit that it has evoked among the people cannot die. The *Independent* may not be printed but it can be written. If the editor is a trustee for his employers, he has also his own individuality to keep. Mahadev Desai, the editor, lives, although the printer in him may sleep for a while. And I am hoping that he will now write his paper instead of printing it. The readers will benefit by the enforced condensation of news and editorial notes. For multiplying copies I suggest the use of roneo, cyclostyle or chromograph. And if the law or its arbitrary interpretation permits the Government to confiscate even a cyclostyle or a roneo, Mr. Desai's pen can still serve the country until he himself is confiscated and lodged in the Central Jail of Allahabad. Nationalist Press proprietors beware. They may not abandon their mission till the bottom penny has been spent up in the cause.

A "HOPEFUL SIGN"

There is no doubt that all this repression has stirred the lawyers and the students throughout India. Many lawyers in Calcutta would

have nothing to do with the reception to the Viceroy. Many Howrah lawyers have suspended practice. The Bar Association of the Punjab has lodged an energetic protest against the trial of Lala Lajpat Rai and others in jail and against the prohibition of attendance at the trial save to a few members of Lalaji's family. Many more pleaders in Bihar and Assam have announced suspension of practice. From Delhi, Dr. Ansari writes:

The most hopeful sign of all is the fact that our work has produced good effect on the lawyers and well-to-do people. They have formed all association for the assistance of the relatives of those who have gone to jail. Many of them have subscribed liberally from their income. So far they have arranged for a monthly sum of over Rs. 2,000 for this purpose. They have done this without any request or desire on our part, purely from a humanitarian point of view.

STUDENTS PROTEST

As with the lawyers so with the students. Many Bengal colleges are practically empty. Some students have struck for a period, others indefinitely. The Dayal Singh College students resolved to use khadi dress only from the 16th instant and to boycott the welcome to the Prince. They have also voted congratulations to the leaders who are undergoing imprisonment. It is a step in the right direction that the students of the Dayal Singh College have taken. Even if the student class have not been touched by the moving appeal of Shrimati Vasantidevi to leave their colleges, they are expected to take note of and give their due share in the mighty movement that is daily gathering force. Let them ponder over items like this taken at random from the Calcutta Press:

Two boys, Ramji. Prasad of 9 and Haribans Missir of 10 years of Chataria National School were caned mercilessly in the presence of the District Magistrate under his order by his orderly for reciting the *fatwa* regarding Government service but the brave lads asked the Magistrate to do what he could to the point of bending their backs to break the bones and said that even then they would not give up reciting the *fatwa*.

LANGUAGE OF THE HEART

This fire of suffering has brought forth some fine thoughts clothed in beautiful language. I must confess that I have seen nothing like it before in all the ponderous speeches and addresses which have tickled our ears or delighted our intellect. Whether one looks at Lalaji's manifesto, Pandit Motilalji's message, or Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's, one cannot fail to be struck with their beauty. But no

one has been more touching, more fervent, more prolific than the President elect. He has poured forth short, crisp messages that have come straight from the heart. I wish some enterprising publisher will collect all these messages and publish them in book form. But I cannot resist the temptation of culling two passages from his message to the students given after hearing of two years' rigorous imprisonment awarded to Professor Jitendralal Banerjee. The first is a striking quotation from Jiten Babu's own vigorous statement before the court. Here it is:

If it is a sin to have demanded liberty for my countrymen with full and passionate intensity of soul, then I have sinned grievously, sinned beyond pardon or penitence and I rejoice that I have so sinned. If it is an offence to have asked my people to shake off the fetters of foreign servitude that degrades and dwarfs our humanity, then I am one of the most offending souls alive, and I rejoice that God gave me the courage and hardihood to commit such an offence. And as the All-merciful gave me courage and strength in the past to speak out the truth that is within me, so I hope that He will give me endurance in the future to go through the agony of man's unrighteous persecution.

And here are the closing paragraphs of Deshbandhu's appeal:

What is Jitendralal Banerjee? I ask the students of Calcutta to realize the truth of his life. Words cannot convey it. The work that he did, the life which he lived, the qualities of his head and heart, all culminating in the grand sacrifice which he had the courage to make—these are more eloquent than any words that I can employ.

I ask again, what is Jitendralal Banerjee? I wish with all the craving of my heart the students of Calcutta knew how to answer this question. He had given his life for the well-being of his dear devoted students. Are there none now to tell us the meaning of his sacrifice not by speaking angry words, nor by shedding idle tears but by taking up the cause he loved so well and by strengthening that cause by their own sacrifice?

Merely existing is not living. I wish I could say students of Calcutta were living as men should live, as Jitendralal Banerjee lived. Now that his body is imprisoned, is there no one amongst the students of Calcutta who has the heart to hear the call of his soul?

Let no one underrate the importance of these appeals as mere emotion. Let no one belittle or scoff henceforth at Bengal's emotion. Bengal has moved out to the call of the country in a manner not expected even by me with all my staunch faith in Bengal. All the response that is being made is not confined to Calcutta merely, nor to Chittagong but to every place in Bengal where repression has gone. It is not froth. One does not undergo suffering by empty appeals or empty emotionalism. Bengal has proved the solidity of her emotion.

AN INSISTENT MESSAGE

Max Muller has somewhere written that truth must be repeated till it has gone home even as we are all enjoined to repeat not vainly but deliberately the name of God till we realize Him. The Sikh Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee which seems to possess a most efficient publicity bureau, has sent the second message of Sardar Khadak Singh from his imprisonment. It is almost a verbal repetition of the first. The Sardar Saheb tells the *Khalsa* that every Sikh should wear khadi, take simple food. Non-violence is the key to success. He further expects that all members of the Akali *jathas*¹ in particular and the Sikh public in general shall at once give up the use of tea. What the Sardar Saheb says is but too true. High thinking is not possible without simple living. If we are to identify ourselves with the masses, we have to live as simply as is consistent with health. There can be no other cloth for us but khadi. A simple life conduces to non-violence. I have not been able to understand the Sardar's insistence on the abstinence from tea. Whether tea has grown on the Sikhs more than any other drink, I do not know. I should have expected an exhortation to give up intoxicants of all kinds. But perhaps some Sikh friends will explain the stress laid on the disuse of tea.

CHARKHA IN THE MADRAS COUNCIL

The spinning-wheel was the subject of a debate in the Madras Council when one of the members introduced a resolution recommending that the Government should introduce improved patterns of spinning-wheels and stimulate hand-spinning and hand-weaving. The resolution was thrown out after a full discussion, 23 members voting in its favour. The arguments that were advanced against the resolution were that "khadi was nothing better than gunny and that no man of common sense would prefer it to cheap mill-made cloth," that "in this age of machinery, it would be criminal to go back to hand-spinning," that "hand-spun yarn was weak," and lastly, that "the spinning-wheel had been found to be economically unsound and that therefore public money ought not to be spent on it". All these arguments were sufficiently met by the advocates of the wheel in the Council. But the point of interest was that the doctrine of economic unsoundness of the wheel, enunciated by the Minister in charge of the Department in question, was opposed by the economics expert of the Madras Government, Dr. Slater, who appealed to the Minister "to keep an open mind" in the matter. Dr. Slater appreciates the fact that the agriculturists of India who are growing poorer need

¹ Bands of Akali Sikhs

some such supplementary occupation as spinning. But his expert opinion was disregarded by the prejudiced majority of the Council who would not even study facts, who do not know that the Madras Presidency to the present day manufactures very fine hand-spun khadi. They have not taken the trouble to learn that even a scientist like Dr. Ray¹, who passed all his life in making minute researches and promoting big companies, has become a convert to the charkha. Is it any wonder that ladies and gentlemen of station who know the message of the spinning-wheel find it necessary to hawk khadi in order to popularize its use?

Young India, 22-12-1921

158. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[December 22, 1921]²

CHI. MAHADEV,

I shall certainly try to write to you regularly. Khwaja has been arrested. His wife writes to say that she will continue his work.³

I am sending you the draft of the resolution as I think it ought to run. Please go through it carefully and offer your suggestions if you have any. It is useless to send a telegram because telegrams are not delivered. Some of them, no doubt, they do deliver.

I want you to send Devdas to jail immediately. You will understand the significance of this.

I found the English of Swaruprani's message excellent.

Take care of your health. I go over what Kristodas⁴ sends. It will not matter if you print off what I have revised without looking into it further.

Today's *Young India* also can fill half of your *Independent*. We have not been getting *Independent* for the last two days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original : S.N. 11426

¹ Dr. (Sir) P. C. Ray (1861-1944); scientist and patriot

² The letter from Khwaja's wife mentioned by Gandhiji was quoted by him in *Young India* of December 22, 1921, the issue referred to in the last paragraph as "today's *Young India*".

³ *Vide* 'Notes', 22-12-1921, under the sub-title "A Worthy Wife".

⁴ Krishnadas, Gandhiji's secretary

159. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Friday [On or before December 23, 1921]

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

I read your letter. There is no end to your joy as there is none to your "grief". One can look at the matter as one wishes. May you remain firm in your resolve.

You may stay on there or . . . as long as you feel that your presence is necessary. You have many obligations to your family to be discharged and have got to repay them.

It is not clear to me whether or not you should take the responsibility of seeing your sisters married. If I were in your place I would make the position clear with my father. And if it was left to me to arrange their marriage, I would depend upon Him Who gave away the customary presents on behalf of Narasinh Mehta² to his daughter's in-laws at the time of her first pregnancy, and would send my sister to her father-in-law's with only a garland of yarn round her neck. This is my advice. You should discuss things with Durga³ . . . and if she is in mourning, . . . to . . . father and seek his advice. After doing all this, you should follow the dictates of your conscience. If you give away everything, it will not matter; and if you do not give anything, I shall defend you before the whole world. What I said yesterday was the outpouring of my soul. I alone have to be carried away in its current. Others have not to. If, on their seeing the current that is carrying me, a similar current begins to flow in them, they may let themselves be carried away by it. The thing simply cannot be done on the advice of others. The reply Mathuradas gave was correct. He who wants to give away everything will do so of his own accord.

Yes, you are right in consulting me. I would give you the advice that I have given above. What is necessary is that we should learn to be more and more self-confident.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: S.N. 8763

¹ Presumably written before the addressee's incarceration on December 24, 1921, for his father died in 1923 and one of his sisters was married in 1922. The source is damaged in places.

² 1414-79; saint-poet of Gujarat and devotee of Shri Krishna

³ Wife of Mahadev Desai

160. INTERVIEW TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

[December 23, 1921]¹

The Working Committee sat both this morning and evening and exhaustively discussed the main resolution dealing with the Congress programme and the future work. Among other matters considered was the selection of the president to act for Mr. Das and, as had already been suggested, Hakim Ajmal Khan was selected for the office. His name will be submitted to the All-India Congress Committee for confirmation at its tomorrow's sitting.

Mahatma Gandhi interviewed by a representative of *The Bombay Chronicle* after the meeting was over said that the meeting was noted for absolute harmony and complete unanimity of opinion among those who took part. Besides the members of the Committee, there were leading representatives of the provinces and others specially invited. There is considerable feeling among Karnatak, Maharashtra and one or two other provinces that foreign propaganda, which was dropped last year,² should be resumed and carried out on completely new lines so as to present the outside world with impartial information regarding India's position. It is understood that a resolution in this behalf will be brought forward at the Subjects Committee meeting. It appears that Gandhiji is not in favour of such propaganda, but the outcome of the discussion will be awaited with interest. With reference to the Viceroy's speech³ Gandhiji was not apparently disappointed since he himself had previously anticipated that result. The speech had merely justified his own view regarding the futility of such deputation. It was by mere accident, said Gandhiji, that he had seen the report of Lord Ronaldshay's speech and had thought that it should be answered. He had already replied⁴ to it and nothing he had said was not justified by result. . .

The Bombay Chronicle, 24-12-1921

¹ *Vide* "Telegram to Jiam Saxena", on or after 16-12-1921.

² *Vide* "Speech on Foreign Propaganda, Nagpur", 29-12-1920.

³ Delivered at Calcutta on December 21, 1921 in reply to the deputation led by Malaviya

⁴ *Vide* "Interview to Associated Press on Round Table Conference", 20-12-1921.

*161. TELEGRAM TO JAMNADAS DWARKADAS AND
H.N. KUNZRU¹*

[On or after *December 23, 1921*]

AM STILL PREPARED ATTEND ANY CONFERENCE UN-
CONDITIONALLY. DO YOU NOT SEE WHEN OFFEN-
SIVE NOTIFICATIONS WITHDRAWN AND PRISONERS DIS-
CHARGED. THERE IS NO ACTIVITY LEFT TO BE
STOPPED? CAN YOU POINT ONE? BUT I AM,
AS INDIVIDUAL, WILLING ATTEND IN SPITE NON-WITH-
DRAWAL NOTIFICATIONS AND NON-CO-OPERATORS CONTI-
NUED DEFENSIVE. WISH YOU COULD REALIZE DE-
PUTATION PUT ON WRONG SCENT.

From a photostat: S.N. 7730

¹ Sent in reply to a telegram sent by the addressees from Calcutta on December 22, 1921, which was received by Gandhiji on December 23. The following are some excerpts from the telegram: "Read with profound regret your telegram to Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya which shattered all hope of amicable settlement . . . Your assurance you would make no conditions precedent to joining conference . . . made us confident you would not reject proposal that pending conference there should be suspension activity on either side . . . Viceroy's speech although one may not agree wholly with it, very conciliatory in tone and temper. He asked only for a temporary truce . . . Conference can still take place if neither side would insist on the other acknowledging itself to be in the wrong as a necessary preliminary . . . Earnestly request you reconsider matter . . . We understand Bengal is in favour adoption such a course. Please revise decision and bring peace to country. Terms reference composition, etc., we believe can be settled easily if indispensable preliminary condition accepted . . . You think Government particularly unjustified in using Criminal Law Amendment Act and Seditious Meetings Act which they had promised to repeal . . . As matter fact Government refused repeal Criminal Law Amendment Act Part Two in view existing situation and postponed decision to repeal Seditious Meetings Act in order see whether by next session Assembly better atmosphere would prevail country . . ."

*162. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS
ON VICEROY'S SPEECH*

AHMEDABAD,
December 24, 1921

Interviewed by an Associated Press correspondent, Mr. Gandhi made the following statement regarding His Excellency Lord Reading's speech¹ at Calcutta in reply to the deputation led by Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya:

I must confess that I have read the Viceregal utterance with deep pain. I was totally unprepared for what I must respectfully call his mischievous misrepresentation of the attitude of the Congress and the Khilafat organization in connection with the visit of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. Every resolution passed by either organization and every speaker has laid the greatest stress upon the fact that there was no question of showing the slightest ill will against the Prince or exposing him to any affront. The boycott was purely a question of principle and directed against what we have held to be the unscrupulous methods of the bureaucracy. I have always held, as I hold even now, that the Prince has been brought to India in order to strengthen the hold of the civil service corporation which has brought India into a state of abject pauperism and political serfdom. If I am proved to be wrong in my supposition that the visit has that sinister meaning I shall gladly apologize.

It is equally unfortunate for the Viceroy to say that the boycott of the welcome means an affront to the British people. His Excellency does not realize what a grievous wrong he is doing to his own people by confusing them with the British administrators in India. Does he wish India to infer that the British administrators here represent the British people and that the agitation directed against their methods is an agitation against the British people? And if such is the Viceregal contention and if to conduct a vigorous and effective agitation against

¹ Delivered on December 21, 1921, in which Lord Reading had, according to *India in 1921-22*, "fully explained the reasons which led Government to enforce special Acts; emphasized his determination. to protect law-abiding subjects, and, further, in view of the approaching visit of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, conveyed grave warning as to the effect likely to be produced on the public and Parliament of the United Kingdom by affronts offered to the Heir to the Throne. His Excellency insisted also as a condition precedent even to the discussion of any project of a conference, on the imperative necessity for the discontinuance of the unlawful activities of the non-co-operation party."

the methods of the bureaucracy and to describe them in their true colours is an affront to the British people, then, I am afraid, I must plead guilty. But, then, I must also say in all humility that the Viceroy has entirely misread and misunderstood the great national awakening that is taking place in India. I repeat for the thousandth time that it is not hostile to any nation or any body of men, but it is deliberately aimed at the system under which the Government of India is being today conducted and I promise that no threats and no enforcement of threats by the Viceroy or any body of men will strangle that agitation or send to rest that awakening.

I have said in my reply¹ to Lord Ronaldshay's speech that we have not taken the offensive. We are not the aggressors. We have not got to stop any single activity. It is the Government that is to stop its aggravatingly offensive activity aimed, not at violence, but at lawful, disciplined, stern, but absolutely non-violent, agitation. It is for the Government of India and for it alone to bring about a peaceful atmosphere if it so desires. It has hurled a bomb shell in the midst of material rendered inflammable by its own action and wonders that the material is still not inflammable enough to explode.

The immediate issue is not now the redress of the three wrongs². The immediate issue is the right of holding public meetings and the right of forming associations for peaceful purposes, and in vindicating this right, we are fighting the battle not merely on behalf of non-co-operators, but we are fighting the battle for all India down from the peasant up to the prince and for all schools of politics. It is the one condition of any organic growth and I see in the Viceregal announcement an insistence on submission to a contrary doctrine, which an erstwhile exponent of the law of liberty has seen fit to lay down upon finding himself in an atmosphere where there is little regard for law and order on the part of those very men who are supposed to be the custodians of law and order. I have only to point to the unprovoked assaults being committed not in isolated cases, not in one place, but in Bengal, in the Punjab, in Delhi and in the United Provinces. I have no doubt that as repression goes on in its mad career the reign of terrorism will overtake the whole of this unhappy land.

¹ *Vide* "Interview to Associated Press on Round Table Conference", 20-12-1921.

² Of the Khilafat, of the Punjab and of the denial of swaraj; *vide* "Notes", 22-12-1921, under the sub-title "Round Table Conference"

But, whether the campaign is conducted on civilized or uncivilized lines, so far as I can see, there is only one way open to non-co-operators —indeed, I contend, even to. the people of India. On this question of the right of holding public meetings and forming associations there can be no yielding. We have burnt our boats and we must march onward till that primary right of human beings is vindicated.

Let me make my own position clear. I am most anxious for a settlement. I want a round table conference. I want our position to be clearly known by everybody Who wants to understand it. I impose no conditions, but when conditions are imposed upon me prior to the holding of a conference, I must be allowed to examine those conditions and, if I find that they are suicidal, I must be excused if I do not accept them. The amount of tension that is created can be regulated solely by the Government of India, for the offensive has been taken by that Government

The Leader, 26-12-1921

163. TELEGRAM TO DEVDAS GANDHI

[On or after *December 24, 1921*]¹

SIMPLY DELIGHTED ABOUT MAHADEV. HOPE DURGA
 IS STRONG AND WELL. SHE AWAY RETURN IF SHE
 WISHES. HOPE YOU ARE CONTINUING THE PAPER
 TILL ARREST AND OTHERS READY TAKE YOUR
 PLACE.

BAPU

The Bombay Chronicle, 3-1-1922

164. MY NOTES

GOOD INTENTION PUNISHED

I have discovered through long experience that editing a journal is no light task. An editor should in the first place, accept responsibility for his own lapses. Next, he is held responsible for anything which even his assistant may write, as also for the errors of

¹ This telegram was evidently sent soon after the conviction of Mahadev Desai on December 24, 1921, under the Criminal Law Amendment Act for publishing the manuscript edition of *Independent*.

reporters or other contributors. If a compositor makes a slip, then again the res-ponsibility is the editor's; even if it is a proof-reader who has slipped, the editor has to face the music. If the machine fails and the copy misses the post or the types do not come out clearly, the editor will have to answer for the lapse. He cannot just write and leave everything else to others. I can cite incidents of all these types. The latest one, however, is such as will make the reader smile. It has led to a serious misunderstanding on the part of a friend. In *Navajivan's* issue of December 11, there was a note¹ about Parsis which contained the following sentence:"At any rate I assure my Parsi brothers and sisters that hundreds of Hindus and Muslims are ready to lay down their lives for them and for other communities except the Christians." As originally written, the words were *vi.*² *nani*³. What I meant was:"that hundreds of Hindus and Muslims are ready to lay down their lives for them and for other small communities like the Christians". The point after *vi.* having been left out, the result was another case of "[Kaka] *Ajmer gaya*"⁴ becoming "[Kaka] *aaj mari gaya*."⁵ A Christian friend read the sentence wrong and has protested to me. My other writings on this subject and the construction of the sentence leave no room for misunderstanding its purport. One should not be surprised however, if a person not familiar with *Navajivan* happened to read only this passage and were to misconstrue it as above. One of my aims in writing this paragraph is to apologize to this Christian friend and others who may have misread the sentence. Another is to request all readers to take a lesson from the error in this case, that, even when an all favourable construction may seem justified, a favourable construction should be accepted if the statement will bear it. My third aim is to plead for some sympathy for the editor. Realizing that the editor cannot possibly look after everything, readers should excuse unavoidable errors in the paper published under his name. I do not, however, say all this to secure a licence for mistakes. The editor is bound to discharge properly the responsibility which has come upon him, or leave the job. No one is forced to accept the editorship. If the printers, the compositors and the proof-readers are

¹ *Vide*"Notes", 11-12-1921, Under Sub-title"To Parsi Brothers and Sisters".

² Abbreviation for"and others"

³ Small. *Vinani*, read as one word, means"except"

⁴ Uncle went to Ajmer

⁵ Uncle died today

not all of them efficient, the editor alone is to be held responsible. Why did he, in such circumstances, accept the editorship? This, however, is only an ideal. If anyone decides not to start at all unless he can realize the ideal right now, he will never realize it. The reader, therefore, may certainly regard himself as a whip with which to punish the editor. Only, he should exercise discrimination in using the whip. One person may use it like Dyer and another may, like the large-hearted king, keep one for show and only on rare occasions let a restive horse know, when its misbehaviour is marked, that it is not entirely for show.

VISIT TO NEHRUJI IN JAIL

A letter received from an Ashram inmate who recently visited Pandit Motilal Nehru in Lucknow Jail is so good, most of it, that I reproduce it below:¹

RESIDENTS OF RAJKOT

How can I help being pained when anyone criticizes Rajkot? A sister told me a few days ago that, if I went there now, I would see nothing but khadi everywhere and that I would see very few people wearing foreign cloth. The lady lives in Rajkot at present and generally wears khadi outside her home. From her own practice, she seems to have assumed that everyone in Rajkot wears khadi. But a young man who observes the vow of complete swadeshi, is a resident of Rajkot and has not travelled much, has this to say about the city :²

This is no mild stricture. I found it confirmed, by chance, in what was said by another friend from Kathiawar who is a shrewd observer. If we discount the element of exaggeration which the criticism may possibly contain, the rest of it is likely to be based on facts. Kathiawar contributed handsomely to the Tilak Swaraj Fund. Amreli has an excellent arrangement for khadi work. Kathiawar produces a good quantity of khadi. I know all this. It is painful to know, however, that Kathiawaris living in big cities have not been able to give up their love of foreign cloth. Kathiawar should have been less infected by so-called progress. Its rocky soil should produce hardy, straightforward, brave, simpleminded and generous people. If, instead, we find love of pleasure increasing in its cities, what will come out of the high hopes which have been raised on its behalf? If Kathiawar does not make its full contribution to the *swaraj-yajna*, I, for one, feel

¹ The letter is not translated here.

² The extract is not translated here. The correspondent had said that Rajkot had made no progress in the field of swadeshi.

that it should sever its connection with the rest of the country. I have been hoping that, when the time for courting imprisonment comes, Kathiawaris will provide their quota of volunteers. If, however, we have not by then cultivated sufficient simplicity to wear khadi, how shall we be able to endure the austerity of jail life? When Deshbandhu Das wears khadi and plies the spinning-wheel, when Maulana Shaukat Ali, for whom it was difficult to adopt khadi, has started wearing it and works on the spinning-wheel in jail, should the residents of Kathiawar's cities keep away from khadi? I can now understand the reason for the complaint once made to me, to the effect that Kathiawar produces a good quantity of khadi but that the demand for it is not much. Will a time also come when the robust women of Kathiawar will indeed make *rotlas*¹ of *bajra*² and, in the early morning, churn liquid curds to obtain rich butter from them, but will give the *rotlas* to dogs and, their stomach too weak to digest butter, have some tea and biscuits, eat *fulkas*³ made from mill-flour obtained from Bombay because the Kathiawar wheat is too heavy for their digestion and too red in colour to please them? If someone, following Green, were to write a history of the rise and decline of our people, omitting the wars of kings, he would certainly be able to prove that as India took more and more to fine cloth, soft to the touch, the people also became increasingly weaker in constitution and lost their spirit. Will a *Rabari*⁴ woman of Kathiawar, six-foot tall, wear a *bhatigar*⁵ sari of Japanese muslin if somebody gave her one? And will she go out grazing her cattle dressed in such a sari? We have taken a wrong path altogether. Giving up cultivation of inward beauty, we fell under the spell of outward adornment and lost the country, forsook our traditional ways, sacrificed our health and, as for the *atman*, sent it to sleep.

Will the young men of Kathiawar give up talking and start working? Will the women of Kathiawar follow the example of Shrimati Vasantidevi and go round selling khadi? Will the people of Kathiawar hear our *Dhed*⁶ and *Bhangi*⁷ brothers crying for justice? People who consider themselves polluted by their touch will never go to jail, they are not fit to do so.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-12-1921

¹ Thick, round cakes of unleavened bread

² A variety of millet

³ Thin, light cakes of unleavened bread

⁴ A community in Gujarat tending cows

⁵ Multicoloured

⁶ Communities traditionally regarded as untouchable

⁷ *ibid*

*165. SPEECH AT SUBJECTS COMMITTEE MEETING,
AHMEDABAD*

December 25, 1921

The All-India Congress Committee met this morning and was engaged the whole day in a prolonged discussion of the main resolution moved by Mr. Gandhi regarding organization of volunteers? extension of civil disobedience, investing Gandhi or his successors with the full authority of the All-India Congress Committee to act in its name in case of emergency. . . .

Before the debates the President Hakim Ajmal Khan was flooded with amendments from all sides. Hasrat Mohani¹, the President elect of the All-India Muslim League, persistently led the opposition demanding the deletion of those phrases in the resolution which excluded the possibility of resort to violence, or even the thought of it, so long as the pledge was in force. . . on the ground that his religion allowed him to take to violence in case non-violence failed.

The debate revealed difference of opinion on this point among Mahommedan members themselves. Some expressed the opinion that the adoption of Maulana Hasarat's amendments would be a change in the Congress Creed itself. . . .

In moving his resolution in the morning Mr. Gandhi made a long speech announcing that he had agreed to slight additions or alterations in his original resolution as the result of a conference last evening with the leaders of the Maharashtra party who, whilst loyally accepting the programme of non-cooperation in all its details, had made no secret of their dissatisfaction with some of its items. He assured all that, while there was little of surrender of the main principle in those modifications, they could be sure of the hearty, willing and believing co-operation of the party which was unrivalled in its strength and sacrifice and which had traditions behind it of great services and filled India with an indomitable spirit of democracy. The great leader of that party, who became an All-India leader and who found a lodgment in the hearts of millions of his countrymen, died developing that spirit of democracy.

Proceeding, Mr. Gandhi pointed out that this party had desired the introduction into the resolution of a provision offering shelter against mischievous insult to those lawyers, teachers and others who, though quite as patriotic and honest as any non-co-operator pretended to be, had not found their way to make sacrifices in the particular form demanded by the Congress. But while he objected to the insertion of such provision, as it would lead to dangerous interpretation, he emphatically declared that they must fully respect all such people who, though considered weak from the non-co-operator's standpoint, were patriots every inch of them. He would not criticize lawyers in a carping spirit because it was the lawyers who had rendered

¹ 1875-1951; Nationalist Muslim leader

signal services to the country when everyone else was shivering with fear.

He continued:

I ask everyone of you to go away with the spirit of goodwill towards Moderates, lawyers, schoolmasters, Government servants and C.I.D.s¹. The Moderates are our countrymen, they are rallying round us today and when they find that the liberty of the country is really at stake, they are giving full expression to their views. It does one's soul good to read the leading articles in *The Leader* and the *Bengalee* and, after all, are we going to wash away the services of Sir Surendranath Banerjee²? I cannot possibly help shedding a tear when anything is said disparagingly of him. I urge upon this Committee to understand the admirable spirit in which the Maharashtra party has pleaded for toleration for those who do not see eye to eye with us. I am perfectly sure that when the time comes for sacrifice, Maharashtra will not be behind Bengal, or rather it is likely to come at the top.

Mr. Gandhi then expressed the hope that after his explanation, the provision proposed by the Maharashtra party would not be pressed because he wanted that the spirit which actuated it should be fully assimilated by all non-co-operators.

Concluding, Mr. Gandhi emphasized the programme and said:

Either we step into the new year with a full belief in this programme and finish it with lightning speed or we dissolve this compact of non-violence. So it is a fight to the finish with the Government in our own special manner. My belief in non-violence is so great that, if the country can only assimilate the mental attitude needed for the practice of real non-violence we can promise swaraj in form and substance even before the end of this month.

The Hindu, 26-12-1921

¹ Members of the Government's Criminal Investigation Department

² 1848-1925; President of the Congress in 1895 and 1902; later, one of the leaders of the Moderate Party

166. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

December 26, [1921]¹

MY DEAR PADMAJA²,

I am surprised not to see you in Ahmedabad. You have to be bright, strong and active if you want to do your bit of service in the battle for freedom.

With love,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

KUMARI PADMAJA NAIDU
GOLDEN THRESHOLD
HYDERABAD

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

*167. SPEECHES AT SUBJECTS COMMITTEE MEETING,
AHMEDABAD*

December 27, 1921

After four hours' sitting this morning, the All-India Congress Committee came to definite decisions on the most momentous issued. It not only adopted by a very overwhelming majority Mr. Gandhi's central resolution,³ but also defeated a formidable opposition of 52 members led by Hasrat Mohani who fought for a change in the Congress Creed in order to definitely lay down the attainment of swaraj without the British Empire as the object of the Congress

In opening the meeting, the President, Hakim Ajmal Khan, announced that he had received notices of amendments to Mr. Gandhi's resolution, which in their real-meaning came into conflict with the Congress Creed itself. He, therefore, ruled them out of order, but suggested that if the movers so desired they could bring them forward as substantive propositions.

As the position looked somewhat confused, Mr. Gandhi made a short speech in course of which he analysed the contending issues and placed them clearly before the House. He said that if Hasrat Mohani and others desired, they could move separate resolutions urging change in the Congress Creed, but, as his resolution was then

¹ The year has been inferred from Gandhiji's being in Ahmedabad on December

² Daughter of Sarojini Naidu

³ *Vide* "Speech at Congress Session, Ahmedabad-I", 28-12-1921.

before the House, he wanted all to remember that those who thought like Hasrat Mohani should not vote for his (Gandhi's) resolution, because the very basis of his motion was that the present Creed must remain intact and that non-violence alone should be the weapon to fight their battle to the end- The Hasrat Mohani party, on the other hand, he said, stood for complete independence and fighting the battle by all possible means. The issue was plain and he desired that those who did not want a change in the existing Creed should vote at least for the spirit underlying his resolution, remembering that, if later on they voted for the resolution of Hasrat Mohani, they would nullify Mr. Gandhi's resolution.

The speech over, Mr. Gandhi's resolution was put to vote and carried amidst acclamation, only 10 voting against.

Hasrat Mohani then moved his first amendment to the Creed, proposing the attainment of swaraj by all possible and proper means in place of peaceful and legitimate means.

This amendment did not get any appreciable support and the mover thereupon withdrew it.

His next amendment declaring swaraj without the British Empire proved to be the main bone of contention.

He was supported by a dozen members . . .

An equal number of speakers opposed the amendment. . . .

Mr. Gandhi then made a short speech. He said he wanted to make it clear that today his hope of getting redress of Punjab and Khilafat through the British Government was ever so much greater than it was at any time 15 months ago. Within the Congress Creed there was still a chance for two parties who wanted swaraj within or without the British Empire, but there could be no room for those who wanted to resort to violence, because the moment anyone joined the Congress he must sign a pledge of non-violence in terms of the Creed. Mr. Gandhi emphasized that the attainment of swaraj would by itself break imperialism. India even then would be certainly free. Concluding, he warned all against estranging from them the Moderates and others who were sympathizing with them, by taking steps which make the present easy task one of great difficult tasks.

Before the amendment of Mohani was put to vote all the visitors were asked to leave . . . it was rejected by a great majority, only 52 voting for it . . .

The Hindu, 28-12-1921

*168. SPEECH AT SUBJECTS COMMITTEE MEETING,
AHMEDABAD*

December 28, 1921

The Subjects Committee had its final sitting today and before adjourning rejected by an overwhelming majority Pandit Malaviya's proposition urging the Congress to declare its desire for a round table conference on reasonable terms and to delete from yesterday's main resolution that clause which advised aggressive civil disobedience.

The committee met at eight in the morning. . . Hakim Ajmal Khan could not come

Mr. Gandhi was thereupon voted to the chair.

In opening the proceedings Mr. Gandhi informed the house that the Madras members including messrs Vijayaraghavachariar, Kasturi Ranga Iyengar¹ and Satyamurti had been pressing upon him the desirability of the passing of a resolution in reply to the Viceroy's Calcutta speech, emphatically pronouncing on the part of the Congress that the destinies of India were not in the hands of the British Parliament but in the hands of the Congress and that the British Parliament could merely ratify the wishes of the people of India. On the other hand, he said Pandit Malaviya and Mr. Jinnah were pressing that the Congress should definitely state its position with regard to the suggestion for a round table conference.

Mr. Gandhi left it to the committee to adopt motions on the lines suggested by the two parties for he had not himself been able to draft resolutions which could meet their wishes. He said telegrams had passed between him, Pandit Malaviya, Mr. Das, Maulana Abul Kalam and Mr. Shyam Sunder Chakravarty on the subject of a round table conference. He had agreed with Messrs Das and Chakravarty to waive the hartal on the 24th of this month provided the notifications regarding the disbandment of volunteers and the prohibition of public meetings were withdrawn, and the prisoners undergoing imprisonment as a result of these notifications released. Mr. Gandhi said that he went a step further in his demand and wanted the *fatwa* prisoners, including the Karachi prisoners, also to be released because it was from the time of the Karachi trial that Government went mad. He added he did not want protection for those who had committed violence. To another telegram from Mr. Chakravarty saying that on

¹ Journalist and Congress leader of Madras

certain conditions Calcutta opinion favoured a round table conference, Mr. Gandhi had replied that either the conference should take place unconditionally, Government doing whatever it liked and non-co-operators doing whatever they chose, or, if a truce was essential then it was necessary that the terms and the composition of the conference were previously decided and the prisoners including the Karachi prisoners discharged and the objectionable notifications withdrawn unconditionally.

Continuing, Mr. Gandhi said he wanted to make his position quite clear.

Personally, I have not attached the slightest importance to the question of a conference. I think that it will be inconsistent with the dignity of the Congress to pass a resolution about the conference when there is nothing in the Viceregal pronouncement to show that the Congress is called upon to make any response. On the other hand there is nothing in the main resolution, which I hope you will pass today unanimously in the Congress *pandal*, which bangs the door in the face of the Viceroy or anybody who wants a round table conference, but there is in that resolution something which is extremely dignifying, namely, that if they want a round table conference that can only be had if we have certain indications of a change of heart, that we will really have a successful result from the conference. It will go hard with us if we go to a conference and come away from it with absolutely empty hands, but I assure you I find nothing in the Viceregal pronouncement that inspires me with confidence.

The Viceroy, he continued, had already declared his helplessness over the Punjab and the Khilafat and had presented the reforms in their face. Of course there was much in the view that when business men put their heads together they were not going to come away with absolutely empty hands, but

I say it is not for the Congress to make any such declaration upon the flimsy ground and upon the mere hope of catching a straw. And who catches a straw except a man who is about to be drowned? But not the Congress which is pulsating with life today. (Prolonged applause.)

Concluding, Mr. Gandhi asked Pandit Malaviya whom he described amidst applause as the noblest Indian to state his point of view. . . .

The Leader, 30-12-1921

169. SPEECH AT CONGRESS SESSION, AHMEDABAD—I

December 28, 1921

As Mahatma Gandhi got down the platform to reach the rostrum in his usual loin cloth, there was an enthusiastically devotional and deafening applause. Having taken his seat on the rostrum, he spoke in Hindi as under:

MR. PRESIDENT, BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Hakimji Saheb¹ has allowed me 30 minutes and I hope to be able to keep within the limit prescribed. The President, however, missed to add that the time taken in reading the resolution in Hindi and in English would be excluded. (Laughter.)

Those of you who do not know English will kindly excuse me. Later on, I shall give the substance of this in Hindi.

He then read out the resolution in English rendering it in Hindi, paragraph by paragraph, as he proceeded:

Whereas, since the holding of the last National Congress, the people of India have found from actual experience that, by reason of the adoption of non-violent non-co-operation, the country has made great advance in fearlessness, self-sacrifice and self-respect, and whereas the movement has greatly damaged the prestige of the Government, and whereas the country on the whole is rapidly progressing towards swaraj, this Congress confirms the resolution adopted at the special session of the Congress at Calcutta and reaffirmed at Nagpur, and places on record the fixed determination of the Congress to continue the programme of non-violent non-co-operation with greater vigour than hitherto, in such manner as each province may determine, till the Punjab and the Khilafat wrongs are redressed and swaraj is established, and the control of the Government of India passes into the hands of the people from that of an irresponsible corporation.

And whereas by reason of the threat uttered by His Excellency the Viceroy in his recent speeches and the

¹ Hakim Ajmal Khan

consequent repression started by the Government of India in the various provinces by way of disbandment of Volunteer Corps and forcible prohibition of public and even committee meetings in an illegal and high-handed manner and by the arrest of many Congress workers in several provinces, and whereas this repression is manifestly intended to stifle all Congress and Khilafat activities and deprive the public of their assistance, this Congress resolves that all activities of the Congress be suspended as far as necessary and appeals to all, quietly and without any demonstration, to offer themselves for arrest by belonging to the volunteer organizations to be formed throughout the country in terms of the resolution of the Working Committee arrived at in Bombay on the 23rd day of November last, provided that no one shall be accepted as volunteer who does not sign the following pledge:

With God as witness, I solemnly declare that,

1. I wish to be a member of the National Volunteer Corps.
2. So long as I remain a member of the Corps, I shall remain non-violent in word and deed and shall earnestly endeavour to be non-violent in intent, since I believe that, as India is circumstanced, non-violence alone can help the Khilafat and the Punjab and result in the attainment of swaraj and consolidation of unity among all the races and communities of India whether Hindu, Mussulman, Sikh, Parsi, Christian or Jew.
3. I believe in and shall endeavour always to promote such unity.
4. I believe in swadeshi as essential for India's economic, political and moral salvation, and shall use hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar to the exclusion of every other cloth.
5. As a Hindu I believe in the justice and necessity of removing the evil of untouchability and shall, on all possible occasions, seek personal contact with and endeavour to render service to the submerged classes.
6. I shall carry out the instructions of my superior officers and all the regulations, not inconsistent with the Spirit

of this pledge, prescribed by the Volunteer Board or the Working Committee or any other agency established by the Congress.

7. I am prepared to suffer imprisonment, assault or even death for the sake of my religion and my country without resentment.

8. In the event of my imprisonment, I shall not claim from the Congress any support for my family or dependents.

This Congress trusts that every person of the age of 18 and over will immediately join the volunteer organizations.

Notwithstanding the proclamations prohibiting public meetings, and inasmuch as even Committee meetings have been attempted to be construed as public meetings, this Congress advises the holding of Committee meetings and of public meetings, the latter in enclosed places and by tickets and by previous announcements, at which as far as possible only speakers, previously announced, shall deliver written speeches, care being taken in every case to avoid risk of provocation and possible violence by the public in consequence.

This Congress is further of opinion that civil disobedience is the only civilized and effective substitute for an armed rebellion, whenever every other remedy for preventing arbitrary, tyrannical and emasculating use of authority by individuals or corporations has been tried, and, therefore, advises all Congress workers and others, who believe in peaceful methods and are convinced that there is no remedy save some kind of sacrifice to dislodge the existing Government from its position of perfect irresponsibility to the people of India, to organize individual civil disobedience and mass civil-disobedience, when the mass of people have been sufficiently trained in the methods of non-violence and otherwise, in terms of the resolution thereon of the last meeting of the All-India Congress Committee held at Delhi.

This Congress is of opinion that in order to concentrate attention upon civil disobedience, whether mass or individual, whether of an offensive or defensive character, under proper safeguards and under instructions to be issued from time to time by the Working Committee or the Provincial Congress Committee concerned, all other Congress activities should be suspended whenever and wherever and to the extent to which it may be

found necessary.

This Congress calls upon all students of the age of 18 and over, particularly those studying in the national institutions and the staff thereof, immediately to sign the foregoing pledge and become members of National Volunteer Corps.

In view of the impending arrests of a large number of Congress workers, this Congress, whilst requiring the ordinary machinery to remain intact and to be utilized in the ordinary manner whenever feasible, hereby appoints until further instructions Mahatma Gandhi as the sole executive authority of the Congress and invests him with the full powers of the All-India Congress Committee including the power to convene a special session of the Congress or of the All-India Congress Committee or the Working Committee, such powers to be exercised between any two sessions of the All-India Congress Committee and also with the power to appoint a successor in emergency.

This Congress hereby confers upon the said successor and all subsequent successors appointed in turn by their predecessors all his aforesaid powers.

Provided that nothing in this resolution shall be deemed to authorize Mahatma Gandhi or any of the aforesaid successors to conclude any terms of peace with the Government of India or the British Government without the previous sanction of the All-India Congress Committee, to be finally ratified by the Congress specially convened for the purpose, and provided also that the present Creed of the Congress shall in no case be altered by Mahatma Gandhi or his successors, except with the leave of the Congress first obtained.

This Congress congratulates all those patriots who are now undergoing imprisonment for the sake of their conscience or country and realizes that their sacrifice has considerably hastened the advent of swaraj.¹

It has taken me exactly 35 minutes to read the resolution in

¹ These paragraphs are from the *Report of the Thirty-sixth Indian National Congress*. Those following are from *Young India, 19-1-1922*, where they appear with the introductory note: "The following is the text, as revised by him, of Mr. Gandhi's speech at the Congress session, introducing the central resolution."

English and in Hindustani. I shall hope, if I can at all avoid it, not to take even the 30 minutes that Hakimji Saheb has allotted to me. And I do not propose, if I can help it, to take all that time because I feel that the resolution explains itself. If at the end of fifteen months, incessant activity, you, the delegates assembled in this Congress, do not know your own minds I am positive that I cannot possibly carry conviction to you even in a two hours' speech; and what is more, if I could carry conviction to you today because of my speech, I am afraid I would lose all faith in my countrymen because it would demonstrate their incapacity to observe things and events; it would demonstrate their incapacity to think coherently; because I submit, there is absolutely nothing new in this resolution that we have not been doing all this time, that we have not been thinking all this time. There is absolutely nothing new in this resolution which is at all startling. Those of you who have followed the proceedings from month to month of the Working Committee, of the All-India Congress Committee every three months, and have studied their resolutions, can but come to one conclusion, that this resolution is absolutely the natural result of the national activities during the past fifteen months; and if you have at all followed the course, the downward course, that the repressive policy of the Government has been taking, you can only come to the conclusion that the Subjects Committee has rightly come to this resolution; and that the only answer that a self-respecting nation can return to the Viceregal pronouncements and to the repression that is overtaking this land, is the course mapped out in this resolution.

I am not going to take the time of the English-knowing friends over the religious subtleties of the pledge that the volunteers have to take. I wish to confine my remarks in Hindustani to that subject. But I want this assembly to understand the bearing of this resolution. This resolution means that we have outgrown the stage of helplessness and dependence upon anybody; this resolution means that the nation through its representatives is determined to have its own way without the assistance of any single human being on earth and with the help of only God above.

This resolution, whilst it shows the indomitable courage and the determination of the nation to vindicate its rights and to be able to stare the world in the face, also says in all humility to the Government: "No matter what you do, no matter how you repress us, we shall one day wring reluctant repentance from you; and we ask you to think

betimes, and take care what you are doing and see that you do not make 300 millions of India your eternal enemies.”

This resolutions if the Government sincerely wants an open door, leaves the door wide open for it. If the Moderate friends wish to rally round the standard of the Khilafat, and round the standard of the liberties of the Punjab and, therefore, of India, then this resolution leaves the door wide open for them too. If this Government is sincerely anxious to do justice, if Lord Reading has really come to India to do justice and nothing less—and we want nothing more—then I inform him from this platform, with God as my witness, with all the earnestness that I can command, that he has got an open door in this resolution if he means well, but the door is closed in his face if he means ill, no matter how many people go to their graves, no matter what wild career this repression is to go through. There is every chance for him to hold a round table conference, but it must be a real conference. If he wants a conference at a table, where only equals are to sit and where there is not to be a single beggar, then there is an open door and that door will always remain open. There is nothing in this resolution which anyone who has modesty and humility need be ashamed of. This resolution is not an arrogant challenge to anybody but it is a challenge to authority that is enthroned on arrogance. It is a challenge to the authority which disregards the considered opinion of millions of thinking human beings. It is a humble and an irrevocable challenge to authority which in order to save itself wants to crush freedom of opinion and freedom of association—the two lungs that are absolutely necessary for a man to breathe the oxygen of liberty; and if there is any authority in this country that wants to curb the freedom of speech and freedom of association, I want to be able to say in your name, from this platform, that that authority will perish, unless it repents, before an India that is steeled with high courage, noble purpose and determination, even if everyone of the men and women who choose to call themselves Indians is blotted out of the earth. God only knows, if I could possibly have advised you before to go to the Round Table Conference, if I could possibly have advised you not to undertake this resolution of civil disobedience, I would have done so.

I am a man of peace. I believe in peace. But I do not want peace at any price. I do not want the peace that you find in stone; I do not want the peace that you find in the grave; but I do want that peace

which you find embedded in the human breast, which is exposed to the arrows of a whole world but which is protected from all harm by the power of the Almighty God.¹

Young India, 19-1-1922; also *Report of the Thirty-sixth Indian National Congress*

170. SPEECH AT CONGRESS SESSION, AHMEDABAD—II

[December 28, 1921]²

SISTERS AND BROTHERS,

I shall not repeat to you what I have said in English. What I shall tell you, you already know and understand. Our problem is what to do about our Sikh brethren. I ask you to go on doing your work peaceably till the attainment of swaraj. You should be peaceful in thought and intent. While you maintain peace with the hand, you must also keep the tongue clean. Our speech so far has not always been clean. Those who would act peaceably ought to keep their speech also clean. If we want to retain the anger that is in our hearts, then I must tell you that it will be impossible to keep peace with the hand as well as the tongue. I will say to every- man and woman, if they would do any work, that they should remember this in their conduct and proceed about their work after taking a vow [of peace], after clearing their hearts of anger. I must ask you, if you wish to see India free, to take such a pledge. If you fail in this, you will do harm to the work. Harm will come to the Hindus as well as to the Muslims.

The mad Hindu will say that Mussulmans destroyed the temple of Somnath; the mad Mussulman will talk in the same vein. He will think of the might of Afghanistan. If you choose to give up peace, there will be no peace. There will be peace only if we maintain it. We have to keep in mind also the situation that prevails in India. If you want that the Hindus, Mussulmans and Parsis should live in mutual love, you must take this pledge. It will not do to draw the sword. Those who are thus disposed will only follow the English. Then there is also this: we are prepared for imprisonment; we are prepared to put up with beatings; we are prepared even for death. Our religion tells us

¹ After this, Gandhiji spoke in Hindi; for the text of his speech, *vide* the following item.

² From the *Report of the Thirty-sixth Indian National Congress*

this. And what is the other condition? The other condition is that we should master our anger and put up with things. But if we merely tolerate without mastering our anger then it is not tolerating. When a man spat at Hazrat Ali the latter did not become angry. If he had become angry Islam would not be there today. It is a traditional way of ours. It is not laid down either in the *Granth Saheb*¹ or in the Koran. Our religion tells us that if we act with patience, God will say, "Well done." We should not use the sword. It would be well if you should act in this way. If you wish to go and lay down your life, do so. Dying for India is not suicide. Suicide is bad both for Hindus as well as Mussulmans. Rather than violate a woman's chastity it is better for one to go and drown oneself. Suicide is bad but this type of suicide is good.² You have worked for fifteen months. You should continue working in this way. Have you or have you not benefited from peace? Is there or is there not something in non-co-operation? Swaraj is in self-control. Swaraj is not for the faint-hearted. Were Shaikat Ali here he would have said that we must all die for swaraj. It is not too great a price to pay for swaraj. If you want to work I say to you: "Lock yourself up in a room and seek guidance from God." If you cannot do this ask your hearts whether what I am telling you is not something important. If you feel it is not, then you may reject this resolution. If you feel it is, then respect it. And respecting it means acting on what is in it. Now what have you to say to this? If anyone goes against it, he will be creating great difficulties. You should work in the way I have suggested and peacefully secure swaraj and solve the Punjab and Khilafat questions.

[From Hindi]

Aaj, 2-1-1922

¹ Holy book of the Sikhs

² The *Aaj* report is obscure here. The last three sentences have been taken from *Report of the Thirty-sixth Indian National Congress*.

171. SPEECH ON HASRAT MOHANI'S MOTION—I¹

AHMEDABAD,
December 28, 1921

MR. PRESIDENT, BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

It grieves me to see that we have among us delegates who thoughtlessly proclaim that they want this and they want that. It shows that we are not aware of the situation that confronts us. At the same time I feel happy that there are men who are not afraid of speaking out. The time was when the very mention of swaraj frightened us. But today we have the courage to say that we cannot stay in the British Empire and want complete independence. And I am convinced that we shall not be afraid to voice even bolder sentiments.

You heard the bomb-shell that Hasrat Mohani burst. He has placed before us but one thing: complete independence. His resolution contradicts the previous resolution; it is also contrary to the Creed of the Congress. We cannot do a tiny thing but want to think of a very big thing—this is the meaning of Hasrat Mohani's resolution. What is good in his resolution is already contained in the resolution of the Congress. Hasrat Saheb's resolution will frighten away many people. We have not even fully achieved Hindu-Muslim unity. And we want to talk of big things in advance of it. This will only hinder our progress. I hope you will reject Hasrat Saheb's motion.

[From Hindi]

Report of the Thirty-sixth Indian National Congress

¹ Delivered at the Congress session in reply to Hasrat Mohani's motion which read: "The object of the Indian National Congress is the attainment of swaraj or complete independence, free from all foreign control, by the people of India, by all legitimate and peaceful means". Gandhiji spoke first in Hindi and then in English; for the latter speech *vide* the following item.

172. SPEECH ON HASRAT MOHANI'S MOTION—II

December 28, 1921

The following is the revised speech delivered in opposition to Maulana Hasrat Mohani's proposition on independence:

FRIENDS,

I have said only a few words (in Hindi) in connection with the proposition of Mr. Hasrat Mohani. All I want to say to you in English is that the levity with which that proposition has been taken by some of you has grieved me. It has grieved me because it shows a lack of responsibility. As responsible men and women we should go back to the days of Nagpur and Calcutta and we should remember what we did only an hour ago. An hour ago we passed a resolution which actually contemplates a final settlement of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs and transference of the power from the hands of the bureaucracy into the hands of the people by certain definite means. Are you going to rub the whole of that position from your mind by raising a false issue and by throwing a bombshell in the midst of the Indian atmosphere? I hope that those of you who have voted for the previous resolution will think fifty times before taking up this resolution and voting for it. We shall be charged by the thinking portion of the world that we do not know really where we are. Let us understand, too, our limitations. Let Hindus and Mussulmans have absolute, indissoluble unity. Who is here who can say today with confidence, "Yes, Hindu-Muslim unity has become an indissoluble factor of Indian nationalism?" Who is here who can tell me that the Parsis and the Sikhs and the Christians and the Jews and the untouchables about whom you heard this afternoon—who will tell me that those very people will not rise against any such idea? Think, therefore, fifty times before you take a step which will redound not to your credit, not to your advantage, but which may cause you irreparable injury. Let us first of all gather up our strength; let us first of all sound our own depths. Let us not go into waters whose depths we do not know, and this proposition of Mr. Hasrat Mohani lands you into depths unfathomable. I ask you in all confidence to reject that proposition, if you believe in the proposition that you passed only an hour ago. The proposition now before you rubs off the whole of the effect of the proposition that you passed only a moment ago. Are

creeds such simple things like clothes which a man can change at will? For creeds people die and for creeds people live from age to age. Are you going to change the Creed which with all deliberation, and after great debate in Nagpur, you accepted? There was no limitation of one year when you accepted that Creed. It is an extensive Creed; it takes in all, the weakest and the strongest, and you will deny yourselves the privilege of clothing the weakest amongst yourselves with protection if you accept this limited Creed of Maulana Hasrat Mohani which does not admit the weakest of your brethren. I, therefore, ask you in all confidence to reject his proposition.

Young India, 19-1-1922

173. A MODEL PRISONER

Should non-co-operators shout *Vande Mataram*¹ inside jails against jail discipline which may excite ordinary prisoners to violence, should non-co-operators go on hunger strike for the improvement of food or other conveniences, should they strike work inside jails on hartal days and other days? Are non-co-operators entitled to break rules of jail discipline unless they affect their conscience?

Such is the text of a telegram I received from a non-co-operator friend in Calcutta. From another part of India when a friend, again a non-co-operator heard of the indiscipline of non-co- operator prisoners, he asked me to write on the necessity of observing jail discipline As against this I know prisoners who are scrupulously observing in a becoming spirit all the discipline imposed upon them.

It is necessary, when thousands are going to jail, to understand exactly the position a non-co-operator prisoner can take up consistently with his pledge of non-violence. Non-co-operation, when its limitations are not recognized, becomes a licence instead of being a duty and, therefore, becomes a crime. The dividing line between right and wrong is often so thin as to become indistinguishable. But it is a line that is breakable and unmistakable.

What is then the difference between those who find themselves in jails for being in the right and those who are there for being in the wrong? Both wear often the same dress, eat the same food and are subject outwardly to the same discipline. But whilst the latter submit to discipline most unwillingly and would commit a breach of it secretly, and even openly if they could, the former will Willingly and to the

¹ The refrain of a patriotic song composed by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee

best of their ability conform to the jail discipline and prove worthier and more serviceable to their cause than when they are outside. We have observed that the most distinguished among the prisoners are of greater service inside the jails than outside. The coefficient of service is raised to the extent of the strictness with which jail discipline is observed.

Let it be remembered that we are not seeking to destroy jails as such. I fear that we shall have to maintain jails even under swaraj. It will go hard with us, if we let the real criminals understand that they will be set free or be very much better treated when swaraj is established. Even in reformatories by which I would like to replace every jail under swaraj, discipline will be exacted. Therefore, we really retard the advent of swaraj if we encourage indiscipline. Indeed the Swift programme of swaraj has been conceived on the supposition that we being a cultured people are capable of evolving high discipline within a short time.

Indeed whilst on the one hand civil disobedience authorizes disobedience of unjust laws or unmoral laws of a state which one seeks to overthrow, it requires meek and willing submission to the penalty of disobedience and, therefore, cheerful acceptance of the jail discipline and its attendant hardships.

It is now, therefore, clear that a civil resister's resistance ceases and his obedience is resumed as soon as he is under confinement. In confinement he claims no Privileges because of the civility of his disobedience. Inside the jail by his exemplary conduct he reforms even the criminals surrounding him, he softens the hearts of jailors and others in authority. Such meek behaviour springing from strength and knowledge ultimately dissolves the tyranny of the tyrant. It is for this reason that I claim that voluntary suffering is the quickest and the best remedy for the removal of abuses and injustices.

It is now manifest that shouts of *Bande Mataram* or any other in breach of jail discipline are unlawful for a non-co-operator to indulge in. It is equally unlawful for him to commit a stealthy breach of jail regulations. A non-co-operator will do nothing to demoralize his fellow prisoners. The only occasion when he can openly disobey jail regulations or hunger-strike is when an attempt is made to humiliate him or when the warders themselves break, as they often do, the rules for the comfort of prisoners, or when food that is unfit for human consumption is issued, as it often is. A case for civil disobedience also arises when there is interference with any obligatory religious practice.

Young India, 29-12-1921

174. INTERVIEW WITH BENGAL DELEGATES¹

AHMEDABAD,

December 29, 1921

MAHATMAJI: What I suggest is that you ask me what you like.

A DELEGATE: The question is difficult. We like to know what would be the procedure of our work.

MAHATMAJI: The resolutions that we have passed may be summed up really in this manner that we want to answer the repression of the Government expressed in the two notifications about the disbandment of volunteers and the prohibition of public meetings. Therefore we meet them by simply enrolling all men and women as volunteers and we meet the notification prohibiting public meetings by holding public meetings and committee meetings whenever necessary and even when unnecessary. But there are two ways; one is by goading the Government to take action against us by holding public meetings even when it is unnecessary. But my advice is: Do not do that. That will become offensive, not in the offensive sense of the term, but as the opposite of defensive. We need not and we ought not to take the offensive till we have exhausted the defensive. Therefore, so long as you can go on with enrolment of volunteers and taking work from them in the ordinary course, and so long as you can go on with your public meetings that may be required for your purpose—for your propaganda—for instructing the people—you should go on ceaselessly. That by itself is bound to result in risks. Do not worry so long as you are doing your duty. Do not worry as to what is happening to prisoners. There are ways. Naturally one way of releasing prisoners is to go to jail; but our goal is not the release of prisoners, our goal is, the attainment of swaraj and getting the key of the jail in our possession. That is our goal. Therefore, if you can reach that goal by doing all the national work that you have been doing but in an honest spirit, ceaselessly, without waiting for a single minute, then I tell you that it is more and more blessed to be in jail than to be outside—that is from a selfish standpoint. I assume that you are all true and honest men, and I am sure that you are so; and if you are not—all of you—I want you to be so. Then you may depend upon it

¹ Published in the source as the “full text of the report of the Conference held on 29th December last at Ahmedabad” between Mahatma Gandhi and the Bengal delegates.

that without a single one courting imprisonment for the sake of it, we will attain swaraj.

And you have got, therefore stiffer terms. You are to enrol men and women as volunteers; we have all to comply with those seven or eight pledges and the compliance with those is the automatic attainment of swaraj—absolutely real. If all the Indians sign those pledges and carry them to the letter, and in the spirit in which they are written, it is finished. You do not need to do anything more at all.

In spite of the non-violence that has been observed in Bengal to an enormous extent, I still doubt whether your minds are non violent. And yet I would like you to remember what Mr. Das has said. He did not ask you to go to jail with him, but he has asked you to remain non-violent in thought, word and deed. How many of us are non-violent in thought, word and deed? But if he expects us today to go to jail, which he does, whether he says it or not—there is no doubt about it—he expects all of us to go to jail, but the condition precedent to our seeking imprisonment is, that we have become non-violent in thought, word and deed. That is really the first thing for us to do.

Do not take the offensive, but take up the defensive by signing the pledge—knowing its contents, and knowing its importance—or do not sign the pledge at all. If you have signed that pledge without knowing its full importance, withdraw your name. If you have any hesitation at all about belief in that pledge, on no account I expect you to take up mass civil disobedience. You have to wait for me. The conception of civil disobedience is entirely mine, and I tell you it is not borrowed from anywhere else— the whole of the conception of civil disobedience is presented to you. The word is not mine. I am most anxious that such experiment of a world-wide importance should not be tried in an improper or unscientific manner, so that it may not be a failure. I want to guard ourselves against failure; I may fail myself but that is a different thing. But you will certainly be blamed and you will probably begin then to blame civil disobedience itself, when you have committed some atrocious blunder. Therefore, I say: Do not take up mass civil disobedience at all. Confine yourself to individual civil disobedience of a defensive character. A child even can take up that. So much in connection with one part of our programme of what is to be done

In Bengal today I know that there is a great deal of impatience and, therefore, intolerance, and let me also tell you, you won't, I am

sure, misunderstand me when I tell you that of all the places throughout India, I have not seen so much bitterness amongst ourselves as I have seen in Bengal, and therefore, so much intolerance. Take the two schools in Madras. There is Mr. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar representing really the moderate section of non-co-operators, and take the school that is led by Dr. Rajan¹—but the relation between them is sweet. Then take the case of co-operators and non-co-operators. The relations between them are by no means so estranged as they are in Bengal. I had occasion to remark that in Barisal. I do not know if that suggestion was ever reproduced. But every word of what I said then wholly stands true today. We in our impatience have believed that we ourselves are paragons of perfection and that those who differ from us are not only not well-wishers of the country, but its enemies. And therefore, we consider that even our best leaders—take Mr. Surendranath Banerjea—have I not seen what is written in the papers about him and what I have heard in private conversation—we seem to think, that he is an enemy of the country. I do not think he is so, I tell you that he is not an enemy of the country. If I went to Madras and said that Mr. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar was an enemy of the country, they would have resented that statement—they would not have tolerated it. But I know that in Bengal you would have tolerated my saying that Mr. Surendranath Banerjea was an enemy of the country. Take the extreme section. Mr. Thiagaraya Chetty²—I am not prepared to say that he is an enemy of the country—though really he has now come to the surface of public life—was by no means of a hopeful character.

A DELEGATE: But the life of Sir Surendranath has never been of a hopeful character.

MAHATMAJI: So far as I know—he has to say so. Therefore, I would warn you, if you are to be true to your non-co-operation and non-violence, not to be so uncharitable and not to think so ill of our own countrymen. And after all, is it not a reflection upon ourselves? Somebody told me that it is the pride of Englishmen that they were able to say during the last Great War there was not a single Englishman [who was a] spy, whereas we consider that barring ourselves every other Indian is an enemy of the country. This of course represents the view of a school of pessimism. When we have

¹ Dr. T. S. S. Rajan; leading Congressmen, later Minister in Madras

² Founder of the Justice Party in Madras

got such elongated [*sic*] opinion of ourselves, we are committing national suicide.

I want to warn every Bengali friend who has come here that if he wants to release these prisoners full of hope, and with our own power, there are ways and ways of releasing them. The most natural way to release them before their time is by our own power. The second method is—they are released by efflux of time; and the third is, and this is so hopelessly weakening—that they are released after their time. But, when they come from prison, they will find a new India, not the India of their hope, but an India in which they cannot live possibly for two days together. But I cannot contemplate the possibility of the last condition. But the condition will become a serious probability if the spirit of intolerance continues to haunt us. So it is against the very spirit of non-co-operation. Non-co-operation is not a doctrine of despair. Non-co-operation is not a doctrine of hatred and hopelessness. It is a doctrine of love. But, I do not want you just now to think of the Government with which we are non-co-operating. I simply want you to stretch your charity to your own countrymen—whether they are Moderates, whether they are in Government employ, in the police or in the C.I.D.—whatever they are, I ask you to be charitable towards them. And if you can, we shall have infinitely greater power than we have today. And I cannot urge upon you this one thing with too much earnestness.

I wish I could reproduce the conversation I had with Moti Babu. Of course, I cannot describe to you in detail the conversation¹ I had with him when I visited him in Calcutta last about the lawyers and how he urged me not to be harsh upon them. I know I have said many unpleasant things that could be proved and that were proper and then, too, in no uncharitable spirit and certainly not with a view to estranging them from us. I was anxious that they should be dislodged from their leadership, or the sole leadership which they possessed.

But there never was the slightest intention that they should be branded out of public service. On the contrary, I endeavoured to harness every lawyer—even a practising lawyer—with national service,—but², if he cannot fulfil the conditions, he cannot very well work officially in Non-co-operation Committees and so on. But, the

¹ *Vide* “Interview with Motilal Ghose”, 10-9-1920.

² The source has ‘because’

question undoubtedly arises that if lawyers may not do so and that was the question which was hotly discussed at Nagpur—what about others who do not fulfil the terms, as for instance the merchants. This was pressed home by Mr. Kelkar and he once challenged me in a public meeting, and even suggested that I was partial to the merchants, which of course was wrong. But, as I said in my address, we expected more from the lawyers, because they were leaders. We expected less from the merchants, because they never aspired for leadership. We have taken their money and no more. Therefore, so much could not possibly be expected from the merchants. There is no question of dispute between lawyers and merchants. But that is one thing, and to say that lawyers should be hunted out of our circles is totally another—even if we do not remove from our midst merchants who do not fulfil the terms. If we have in our midst people who do not fulfil the terms, let us at least be charitable to the lawyers, and in a becoming manner, in a dignified manner, receive the benefit of their knowledge and of their service. So I would ask you to see whether you can get the assistance of every lawyer in the manner, in the limited manner, I have suggested. I do not want you to take lawyers as chairmen of your committees. I have no doubt that it will be dangerous because today the most important thing is fearlessness, bordering upon recklessness, and unless we are prepared to take the boldest risk consistent with the pledge of non-violence, we cannot possibly finish our programme within the limited time at our disposal. Therefore, I ask you to take service from the lawyers in every other department but in leadership, and for leadership, take an untouchable if he has got iron courage, a brave heart, and if he is so reckless as to sacrifice all the things of the earth that are nearest and dearest to him, including his nearest relatives, his children, if he is prepared to leave all these and follow this path, then I would say that an untouchable is any day an infinitely superior chairman to a lawyer who is a finished gentleman, a brilliant member of his profession with a record of unique success, but he is absolutely no good for us. So, I would certainly ask you not to install anybody but honest and bravest men in your chairs. But, apart from that I would ask you to seek their co-operation. Go out of your way and get the co-operation of lawyers. But, that is again a smaller thing than the one which I have mentioned to you. Be charitable to all. Remember that we want to take them with us in our programme of swaraj. We do not estrange our countrymen from that. And, if we cannot possibly enlist

their sympathy and their co-operation, there is something wrong in us. We have certainly not fulfilled to the letter and spirit the pledge of non-violence. So I would ask you really to think of these things, and remember them. I do not know if I have any thing more to say.

Questioned as to how a practising lawyer can serve the country according to the resolution, Mahatmaji said:

A practising lawyer can certainly wear khadi, but he cannot be a volunteer.

QUESTION: Suppose a lawyer out of sheer necessity is forced to remain a practising lawyer—he cannot be a volunteer, he has got a large family to support, he cannot risk going to jail.

MAHATMAJI: I know; such lawyers and such persons must keep out today because we cannot possibly find maintenance for thousands of people, and the present resolution is planned not in order to get the largest member of recruits at the sacrifice of quality, but to get the largest number consistently with the highest requirements as to quality. In other words, we must not risk quality for quantity. We shall really postpone the attainment of swaraj if in our search for quantity we sacrifice quality and, I can prophesy, we shall lose the battle in the end. I may tell you I can get all the labourers of the Ahmedabad mills—there are fifty thousand of them today—but I do not want a single one of them to sign the pledge without understanding it. I want only those who have been in the struggle for years, who understand the value of the pledge that they take up. I can see my way to get swaraj even with the fewest possible men of that type. I do not want a crore of volunteers who do not know what non-violence is, and who, because of their weakness to offer violence, follow or pretend to follow the Congress programme. I would far rather that they become co-operators frankly, veer to the Government side, and do what they like.

P: In that case, work will stop in some places for want of men.

MAHATMAJI: I don't mind that you have many associations, and many men about you to do your work, who do not want to go to jail. You will certainly get their help in connection with your work among the untouchables, or for temperance work, or in connection with swadeshi, but they cannot be members of the Volunteer Corps.¹ The

¹ Gandhiji subsequently disowned this statements *vide* "Practising Lawyers and Volunteering", 2-2-1922.

Volunteer Corps is being formed in defiance of the Government notification, and only those are fit to go to jail who are pure-minded men.

SJT. ANANGA MOHAN GHOSE: I admit that, but call sacrifices only be sufficient for leadership, without intelligence?

MAHATMAJI: Two things are necessary—sacrifice and honesty. I said that if you have got an honest and a brave man he can lead today.

ANANGA BABU: He must have intelligence too.

MAHATMAJI: I cannot possibly imagine that a man who is offering intelligent sacrifice is not really intelligent enough to lead. Really, I feel that I can give you scores of instances of such men who are leading today.

ANANGA BABU: So far as our experience goes, we do not find such men.

MAHATMAJI: Because we have not given a chance so long to our other countrymen. We have really isolated them and so far we have insisted upon only those becoming patriots who know English—that has been our ban. Such men are certainly wanted.

ANANGA BABU: We fail to find non-co-operators with the necessary qualification to take up charge of the committee or become the president and so on.

MAHATMAJI: I do not deny that there is difficulty, but we can do all our work with the materials we have at hand today, if only those materials could be rendered efficient, and sufficiently mobile, and brave enough to lead us.

ANANGA BABU: Another question with regard to volunteers: There is a clause that the volunteers cannot expect anything in case they go to jail, but so long as they work as volunteers are they to get any remuneration?

MAHATMAJI: If they are getting it, they may; but personally, I would, for these Volunteer Corps, ask for men who do not require any money at all. The programme we contemplate is that as soon as one registers oneself as a volunteer he will be arrested in due course in a few days, but if the Government simply does not do anything and yet does not withdraw the notification, then the question of payment occurs, and then the payment has got to be made to those whose services are required, but not to those who simply register their names, and are not in the active volunteers' list, or in the profit-bearing list. I would not really care for volunteers who would go about from village to village delivering speeches. That time is gone, but we want volunteers who can organize swadeshi or any such thing and bring in money to us and organize India so as to get rid of our wretched

pauperism.

SJT. GUNADA CH. SEN: The Congress Resolution speaks about cessation of all other activities—shall we not then go on with our swadeshi, national schools and so on?

MAHATMAJI: So far as necessary. We may not be opening new centres which require the services of many volunteers. We cannot spare so many because we want all hands to be enlisted for going to jail and if the Government take them we must supply every available hand. Therefore, the use of “so far as necessary” comes here. If we find [that we have] exhausted the list of those who are engaged in swadeshi, we have got to draw them from the national schools which absorb a very large staff. That staff must be made free. When all other national activities stop, it means the staff have come out.

SJT. SURESH CH. MAJUMDAR: You have spoken about public meetings: kindly instruct us whether we are to send volunteers out on the streets to court arrest for the sake of arrest, as we are doing hitherto.

MAHATMAJI: You may do that so long as they continue to arrest, but when they do not I would not worry about that. But as long as they continue to arrest, there is no other work but simply to go out and be arrested.

A DELEGATE: Can we stop paying chowkidari tax?

MAHATMAJI: Not yet. That would be offensive civil disobedience.

Questioned as to the meaning of untouchables, Mahatmaji said:

Untouchables are all those whose touch we in our arrogance think defiles us—that is untouchable. Therefore, we must not only mechanically touch them; we must serve them. We must eat after we have found food for them, that is, found the means of procuring their livelihood, if they are starving. We must drink after we have given them to drink, if they are thirsty. If one is suffering from fever or bitten by a snake, I would kiss that wound, just as I would if my son were bitten by a snake. No interdining, no interdrinking, no intermarriage. That is, it is not prohibited. but that is not insisted upon.

Questioned as to whether one can volunteer oneself and go straight to jail with foreign clothes on, Mahatmaji said:

It is not only mischievous but injurious to the cause. All those who come must wear khadi. It is a privilege to go to jail. He does not oblige us by going to jail. He obliges himself.

A delegate remarked that in that case there would not be enough volunteers as pure hand-spun, and hand-woven could not be had in Bengal in sufficient quantity.

MAHATMAJI: If, then, there are not enough volunteers in Bengal, I should think she should be swept into the Bay of Bengal and make room for better men and women.

A delegate from Midnapur having questioned as to who would take up the work of the teachers of the national schools in case they went to jail, Mahatmaji said that Midnapur ladies who were expert spinners might take up their work.

QUESTION: When the public are assaulted, what is the duty of the volunteers?

MAHATMAJI: They should go and intervene to prevent that and receive the blows themselves.

A BARABAZAR DELEGATE: What would they do with the merchants who signed and gave an undertaking not to order foreign cloth up to February and March?

MAHATMAJI: We have to ask them to sign again.

Mahatmaji, after having spent two hours with the delegates, retired.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 14-1-1922

175. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

Friday [December 30, 1921]¹

CHI. DEVDAS,

Herewith Mrs. Joseph's letter. I have written to her to say that you will send her money from there. You may meet the Directors of the *Independent* and make the necessary arrangements or take whatever other steps which may suggest themselves to you. See that she does not find herself in difficulty when you go to jail.

I am very glad that Govind² went to jail. That they have not yet arrested you is a deliberate thing on their part. Do not worry about this. If they do not arrest you, the new undertaking will be put on its feet; if they do your arrest will arouse the people.

Paul Richard³ is staying here at present. I introduced Kishorelal⁴

¹ Paul Richard referred to in the last paragraph was in Ahmedabad during the last week of December, 1921. He visited the Gujarat Mahavidyalaya on Saturday, December 31, 1921, accompanied by Gandhiji.

² Son of Madan Mohan Malaviya. He was arrested on December 20, 1921, for picketing but was subsequently discharged.

³ A French writer

⁴ Mashruwala

to him. The former had recently been here to meet him and so met me also. Miss Petersen¹ is here today. She came yesterday and will leave today. Mr. Richard will leave on Sunday. Mrs. Santanam is still here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 7683

176. INTERVIEW WITH U. P. CONGRESS LEADERS

AHMEDABAD,

December 30, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi said:

It is not necessary just yet to start civil disobedience. It is enough to get ourselves enrolled as volunteers—regardless of our being arrested or not—and to continue the work entrusted to us.

My methods of securing swaraj are the very reverse of those advocated by Hasrat Mohani. If I thought we were fit for it I would at once declare complete independence—because having made such a declaration it would be a sin to go on using the railway, post and telegraph and so on. If a majority of people join me, complete independence can be secured within just three months.

Now if my countrymen desert me, or even my wife deserts me, I am ready to work alone.

It is the wish of Sir Harcourt Butler, the Governor of the United Provinces, that there may be a rebellion such as that of 1857 and that then the people may plead for pity.

It would be better for the present to halt the work of setting up the national *Kotwali*². But since the work has begun it is only right that it should be continued.

I am sorry that the work of propagating swadeshi in U. P. has not been done as much as was necessary. I am dissatisfied about it.

In the offices of Congress Committees the work of enrolling volunteers should be continued.

¹ Anne Marie Petersen, who along with Esther, a Danish Missionary, worked in South India and lived at Sabarmati for some time.

² Literally, police station. Here, headquarters

Pandit Motilal Nehru wants that the *Independent* should be brought out in Hindi and Urdu. Volunteers should extend full help in its publication.

We should not entertain violent thoughts even towards thieves and dacoits. Ahimsa should be our sole mode of conduct.

So long as people are not ready for jail, so long as we have not got ready to face death and have not mastered anger, the problems of the Punjab atrocities and Khilafat cannot be solved.

Swaraj means our full control over the army.

Lists of volunteers should be published in newspapers and sent on to the national *Kotwali*

Volunteers should move about and sell khadi. Their dress should be that of a low paid *chaprasi*. Picketing of shops selling foreign cloth is unnecessary. But picketing of liquor shops should continue.

National schools should be turned into hand-spinning and hand-weaving factories. Boys below eighteen years of age should work in them and women should supervise them.

Students over eighteen years of age and teachers who refuse to be volunteers should be expelled from schools

The Hindi *Swarajya* published from Allahabad should be handwritten. Those whose properties are attached should renounce them with pleasure, for it is a sin even to own property in such a tyrannical regime. The properties will be given back to the owners as soon as swaraj is attained.

[From Hindi]

Aaj, 1-1-1922

177. MESSAGE TO UTKAL¹

December 30, 1921

Interviewed by Sjts. Bhagirathi Mohapatro, Gopbandhu Chowdhury, Niranjan Patnaik and Naba Krishna Chowdhury, Mahatmaji delivered the following message on the 30th December last (1921):

¹ The old name of Orissa. The message is reproduced in the source from *The Servant*.

Utkal haunts me. The scene I have witnessed is simply shocking. Banish poverty from the land. Give the message of charkha to every home. Make Utkal the store-house of khaddar for the rest of India. Feed the hungry men and women. This is the best political training that you can give to your people. Don't worry yourselves with the question of aggressive mass civil disobedience. If the Government throws a challenge, go on recruiting volunteers and at least fifty thousand Utkalis, I hope, will fill up the jails.

The Bombay Chronicle, 14-1-1922

**178. SPEECH AT GUJARAT VIDYAPITH,
AHMEDABAD**

December 31, 1921

Mr. Paul Richard delivered a lecture at the Gujarat Vidyapith, Ahmedabad, on Saturday morning, on "Message of India", Mahatma Gandhi presiding. Mr. Richard spoke in French and Mrs. Sarojini Naidu read a translation.

Mahatma Gandhi said he thought it was a great honour to be present at the lecture. Although he could not spare time owing to his having to interview the Congress delegates for the last two days, he had come to the lecture to hear Mr. Richard. He asked the audience to take up and follow what was good in Mr. Richard.

The Bombay Chronicle, 2-1-1922

179. LETTER TO DAYALJI AND KALYANJI MEHTA

Friday [1921]¹

BHAI DAYALJI AND KALYANJI,

I wrote you a letter yesterday. It is now the morning hour. I have read the enclosed letter. I am sending it for both of you to read. There may be exaggeration in it, but it does not appear wholly baseless. Still, you must both give careful thought to it. We must do nothing that is unclean. Do not feel enraged even inwardly with the writer of the letter. If what he writes is nothing but the truth then he should be considered a satyagrahi. If he has exaggerated or resorted to falsehood, he deserves to be pitied. There should not be any ill-will towards him. For this reason, I am forbidding others to give out the name.

I am staying on here today and tomorrow. I shall leave on Saturday and reach there in the morning. I shall spend Monday there. Then there is Tuesday too. I shall let you know if there is a change. If both of you wish that the Working Committee should meet in Bombay, it is possible to do that too.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2672

¹ The date could not be determined. See, however, letter to the addressees in "Letter to Dayalji and Kalyanji", 17-11-1921.

180. TELEGRAM TO MAULANA ABDUL BARI

January 1, 1922

DICTATORSHIP DOES NOT ARISE WHILE WORKING
COMMITTEE CAN BE CALLED. AUTHORITY SAME AS
WORKING COMMITTEE'S WHEN LATTER NOT POSSIBLE
CALL. IMPRISONMENT ASSAULT DEATH TO BE SUFF-
ERED NOT FOR THEIR SAKE BUT FOR SAKE
RELIGION OR COUNTRY.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7779

181. DIRECTIONS TO KRISHNADAS²

[Silence Day, Mondays January 2, 1922]³

Directions to Kristodas

Where are all the letters received in Khadi Nagar and not assorted?

You may prepare a digest of the convictions and interesting paras in the reports.

Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi, Vol. II, p. 250

¹ In reply to Abdul Bari's telegram from Bombay, dated December 31, 1921, which read: ". . . Kindly wire answer of following so that I may remove doubts arising from religious point of view: Is your authority as a dictator the same which Working Committee had or more? Can Working Committee confiscate dictator's authority. What will be main object of Volunteer Corps to suffer imprisonment, assault, even death while serving for country or to suffer them for the sake of them?"

² From a facsimile

³ From the source

182. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

Wednesday [January 4, 1922]¹

CHI. DEVDAS,

Your paper² has been coming, no doubt, but there has been no letter from you. Even in the midst of all this labour, do not forget to improve your handwriting. This time, you will see in *Young India* a great deal [of matter] from *Independent*. We propose to give a digest of all the issues of your paper, so that you will easily have its weekly [edition]. You have used the phrase “mute silence”. What could this “mute silence” be?

The impression of letters [in your paper] is not yet clear enough to be legible. I think it would be better if you discontinue typing altogether. The person who writes for you has a good hand.

Your third page is not good. Too much space has been left in typing. Who will give news about the Governor of Bengal? The man who writes that Malaviyaji breaks the law must be sent to the gallows. He did not even go to Madras.

On the second page, the title “Round Table Conference” appears twice.

Today members of the Nehru family left for Lucknow, all of them in third class. You may write a note on this. Urmiladevi, too, travels in the same way.

I shall be in Bombay on the 14th. The Moderate Conference is being held on that day. I may have to be there on the 15th also. Sundaram will stay on here for the present.

You should go over every line of your paper. You may still reduce the matter, but you should see that what you give is sound and in a presentable form.

Blessings from

BAPU

¹ The members of the Nehru family left Ahmedabad after the Congress session which ended on December 28, 1921, and Govind Malaviya was sentenced before January 8, 1922.

² The handwritten *Independent*, which Devdas had been bringing out after Mahadev Desai's arrest and conviction

[PS.]

You ought to give news regarding swadeshi, Those who have leisure should work for swadeshi, spin, card, weave, sell and so on.

I have received a wire about Govind's re-arrest. I cannot imagine why he has been arrested this time. I shall know about it from you hereafter.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 7720

183. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SABARMATI,
*Posh Sud 6 [January 4, 1922]*¹

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. You have left your watch here. Most probably I shall be coming to Bombay on the 14th. Ask for it then.

See Durga's letter published in *Navajivan*.² It has been despatched today.

You must console Anand by talking to her about Prahlad, Dhruva, Sudhanva, Gopichand, etc. She is religious-minded. So she will understand. Going to jail is also for the sake of religion and many have gone to jail.

Permission to meet Mahadev³ will certainly be granted. It is good to go there once. But if you go there, you should be prepared to go to jail, should an unforeseen eventuality arise.

Christo Das is a yogi. With him I think I am in good company. His modesty, calm, thoughtfulness and seriousness are qualities of a high order.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

¹ The addressee received the letter on January 6, 1922. *Posh Sud 6* corresponded to January 4 in that year.

² For Gandhiji's comments on Durga Desai's letter, *vide* "Notes", 8-1-1922, Under Sub-title "Another Illustration".

³ Who was sentenced on December 24, 1921 to one year's rigorous imprisonment for publishing the hand-written issue of the *Independent*

184. INTERVIEW TO "SWARAJYA"¹

[Before January 5, 1922]

The special correspondent of the *Swarajya* writes from Ahmedabad:

I interviewed Mahatmaji on the present situation, regarding the proposed truce².

QUESTION: What is the opinion of Lala Lajpat Rai and Motilal Nehru?

ANSWER: As regards Motilalji, his opinion is contained in the latest issue of *Young India*³. Lalaji has asked me not to worry about those who are in jail.

Suppose volunteer organizations are not declared unlawful in other provinces and public meetings are not prohibited, then what should volunteers and Congress workers do, to get into jails?

In their case civil disobedience can only be of an offensive nature. For this they should wait till I have launched upon it. Meanwhile, they must go on organizing the volunteers, must spin at least four hours a day, and produce at least one *tola* per hour, of even, twisted yarn of about 10 or 12 counts.

Should the volunteers picket foreign cloth shops and liquor shops?

They may be picketed by people who understand their responsibility, and do it peacefully.

How long do you expect the struggle to continue in the new year?

I don't know. In the present state, it may not continue for more than two months. We must be prepared for indiscriminate flogging and shooting by the Government from all parts of India. We must not flinch even then. The present struggle is not so much to right the Punjab and Khilafat wrongs, much less for swaraj. We are now fighting for the elementary rights of free speech and freedom to form associations, and on this question we expect Moderates and others to be with us. When this intermediate skirmish will be finished, our way will be clear.

Mahatmaji added that any swaraj scheme must include the control of the military and the police.

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-1-1922

¹ Reproduced by the source from the *Swarajya*

² Being negotiated by Malaviya

³ Dated 29-12-1921, under the caption "Another Gaol Letter" Motilal had written: ". . . 'No reduction in the triple demand,' should be the only basis of any negotiations . . ."

185. NOTES

JAIL TREATMENT

Starvation, or its alternative, canine food, no covering much less any worth the name to protect against the severe Delhi winter, microbe-infected, lice-laden, blood-stained tatters, the worn off relics of common felons, and finally, the awful ghastly climax, preferential treatment or release, constantly suggested and enforced in favour of the very rare civil resister, whose frailty succumbs to the temptation.

Such is the report sent by Lala Shankar Lal of Delhi as he was being taken from the Delhi Jail to Mianwali. The friend that has sent me the report says:

We have heard of the closed Moplah death wagon, but this Delhi Jail wherein some of the best and noblest of our workers have been clapped, has by ingenious cunning been converted for non-co-operators into an open area where death and the devil hold their court. Emotion chokes me as I write. Is it that the hand which is silencing many a Shankar Lal in our beautiful and lovable country is stifling also my feeble voice? Woeful tales of non-co-operators being flogged till the hand that flogs them tires of the process, of civil resisters being stripped of all vestige of human covering and subjected to a slow and gradual death from toxicity and infection, have filled my ears.

The writer is a highly cultured sensitive young man. I have removed some of the descriptive passages from the letter. Unused to suffering he has been deeply touched by the version of the ill-treatment given in the Delhi Jail to non-co-operators. But the substance of the charge is true. For it is corroborated from many sources unconnected with one another. There seems to be no doubt that the Government having failed to bend the non-co-operators and to extort an apology from them by mere confinement, the order has gone round for inflicting physical hardships on civil resisters. There does come a time when with all the will in the world the flesh refuses to suffer any further and makes the spirit its unwilling slave. The administrators are exploiting their knowledge of this to humble the proud spirit of civil resisters. And I would not be surprised if some of them not being able to stand the inhuman treatment that is evidently being systematized apologize in order to escape unbearable torture of the flesh.

But if the spirit has at times been found weak enough to yield to the flesh after a certain point, it has also been found superior to the

most excruciating tortures. Given sufficient previous mental preparation, the very extreme of suffering becomes an anaesthetic that deadens pain; where the spirit is willing, the exultation induced by the willingness counteracts the sensation of pain. The pleasure of serving one's country or religion more than balances the pain involved in it.

It is then the duty of a civil resister to bear all torture of the flesh but it is equally his duty to resist insanitation or humiliation. He will cheerfully take the lash. He must not crawl. He will cheerfully go bare-bodied and shiver to death. He must resolutely reject germ-laden filthy blankets or shirts. He may go without food, but he must refuse to take bread or dal laden with pebbles. He may do without his bath but he must refuse to bathe in foul water. Where submission is unmanly resistance becomes a duty.

Well have the civil resisters got the privilege of voluntary suffering. It is the noblest service. They are purifying the jails. Even felons are entitled to human treatment. Let the authorities give the Plainest food and clothing but both must be clean and sufficient.

It is no pleasure to me to publish accounts of inhuman treatment no matter where and by whom meted out. I do not want to believe that human beings can be so brutal as many stories related about them would prove them to be. I am most anxious that this fight is fought in a sportsmanlike spirit. It cuts my human flesh to the quick to find human beings not playing the game.

But if it is to be a dirty game on the other side, so be it. Non-co-operators have made no stipulation, they have no choice but to take things as they come to them and cut their way through every difficulty. Is it not reported of the Japanese that when they came to a ditch their army could not cross, they filled it with human corpses? Shall we do less because we are vowed not to kill but only to be killed? Our pledge exacts from us more than from the Japanese soldier. For we must go through the fire without the drum beat of war.

The charge brought by my correspondent is serious. Let me adduce corroborative evidence. Here is a graphic and detailed description of the treatment of Mahadev Desai, the editor of the *Independent*. Readers of *Young India* know his connection with this journal.¹ He is one of the soberest of workers. He has a most sensitive frame. A friend visited him with Mrs. Desai. The writer says:

¹Mahadev Desai was the publisher of *Young India*.

We are preparing for strong repression. I have wired you regarding Mahadevbhai's imprisonment. He had received a summons to attend court for trial. He was quite joyful when he went to jail. We went yesterday to see him but the jailer would not let us. I took food, clothing and books. But the jailer would not take them. This morning we were able to meet him. He has been put with the ordinary criminals and is being subjected to all the jail regulations. He was dressed in jail clothes. He had a black shirt with sleeves reaching to the elbow and half pants. The clothes were dirty, stinking and lousy. He had two blankets which could not have been washed for months and which must have been and were full of lice. He had a rusty iron bowl for water, so rusty as to make the water unfit in a few minutes for drink. Therefore, that water could not be drunk during night. It would be found perfectly yellow in the morning. There is a dirty tank from which drinking water is taken and which is used for bathing too. I do not know whether buckets are supplied. A loin-cloth is supplied for bathing. But no towel is allowed for drying. After the body is dried in the sun the same dirty clothes have to be worn again. It is impossible in the cold climate of this place for the weak body of Mahadevbhai to wash these clothes and to remain bare-bodied whilst these clothes are drying. He has only jail food. He took nothing last night. He had something like gruel this morning. It contained pebbles and other dirt. For natural purposes the prisoners have to go out. And they use the drinking pot to carry their water in. For night use an uncovered pot is supplied. The only thing not yet done is to put irons on.

I hear from another quarter that special instructions have been issued to subject him to ill-treatment for the reason that Mahadev Desai's was a calculated defiance of authority. That the *Independent* could be issued independently of printing and the consequent declaration proved too much for the authorities.

Well, I have no doubt that Mahadev Desai will prove his editorial skill inside the prison walls by retaining his independence in the face of physical tortures. Let me console the reader with the information that Mahadev Desai carries with him a heart of love which has place in it for his torturer and carries too a stock of spiritual anaesthetics in the shape of sacred *bhajans*¹ which he will sing to ward off all feeling of pain. I do believe it as literally true that Mirabai² never felt the pains inflicted upon her at the instance of her husband. Her love of God

¹Devotional songs

²A medieval saint-poetess of Rajasthan. Queen of Mewar, she spent her days in the worship of Shri Krishna, incurring her husband's displeasure.

and conscious repetition of that precious name kept her cheerful for ever. I can only picture the Rajput women of old rejoicing as they leapt into the funeral pyre with the name of God on their lips. Latimer¹ certainly never felt the pain as he majestically stretched forth his hand straight into the fire. His faith in God and His righteousness had saved him. The age of miracles is not past. But a little faith in God and His protecting power, and we are ensured against *unbearable* sufferings. Let no civil resister with faith in his mission doubt that at the crucial moment God will protect him.

I shall be surprised if Mahadev Desai does not by his humble yet dignified bearing melt even the stony hearts of his persecutors.

But to resume the corroborative narrative. Let us look at Lucknow. Things seemed to be going only too well there. The necessary conveniences were allowed to Pandit Nehru and his co-prisoners. So much was this the case what I had begun to think that the United Provinces Government, whilst they followed out the consistent policy of imprisoning those who chose to disregard their notifications, were civilized enough to treat political prisoners with courtesy and decency. But a change seems to have come over even Lucknow. I have just received the information that Sheikh Khaliqzaman and ten others have been removed from the District to the Central Jail and the conveniences that were given them are to be withdrawn and that probably the visits would be disallowed. Pandit Nehru and the remaining prisoners have sent an energetic protest against such invidious distinctions and have asked to be treated in every respect in the same manner as other political prisoners. It must be a matter of pride to every Indian that some of the best men of India are today putting themselves on a par with the common people and seeking no privileges for themselves.

1st January

Since writing the foregoing notes I have received a wire saying that Mr. Desai had been seen again and that he was hale and hearty and was better treated. I am glad for the sake of the authorities that the treatment has been changed for the better. But the insanitation described above should have been impossible from the very beginning. That a Mahadev Desai has compelled better treatment is a

¹Hugh Latimer (c. 1485-1555); the English reformer who was condemned as a heretic and burnt at the stake

matter of little moment. The question is one of larger humanity. What must be the condition of ordinary prisoners? Have they any rights? This imprisonment of cultured men is from that standpoint a godsend. The political prisoners will incidentally solve this question of human rights.

THE NEW "INDEPENDENT"

The written edition of the *Independent* commenced by Mr. Mahadev Desai when the security of Rs. 2,000 was forfeited continues its difficult career. It has been regularly published in its new form. Arrangements have been made for a succession of editors should the present one be arrested. Its front page is proudly ornamented with the names of the editors and assistant editors already imprisoned within a short space of time. These are Messrs Ranga Iyer¹, George Joseph, Kabadi and Mahadev Desai. I do not think any other paper except the *Zamindar* of Lahore has such a proud record. I publish in another column gleanings from the seven issues to hand. I have already published in full the first issue. The reader will not fail to notice the care with which the news items are collected, collated and compressed nor will he fail to note the condensed thought in the editorial notes. I do hope that the Allahabad public will watch the experiment with sympathy and support the appeal made by its youthful editor. The enterprise is fraught with great possibilities. The Government may not stop at anything and arrest every one of the editors. The object of the new experiment is to demonstrate that when there is a sufficient number of men to stand its punishments, no Government can enforce its will in opposition to that of the people. Before we feel and become free we must be able to dispense with all its favours. We must acknowledge that in spite of our non-co-operation we do indulge in many things by the grace of the Government. If it chooses, it can isolate everyone of us and deny to us the use of railways, post and telegraph. All it cannot curb without our consent is the spirit within us. And in order that India's spirit may be and remain free, we must be prepared to face and conquer every obstacle the Government may place in our way.

Indeed, if the editor can secure the services of good copyists, he will be able to make a thousand copies without difficulty. I would advise him to be still more sparing of words. He will find that by a

¹ C.S. Ranga Iyer

little practice he will be able to say all that he has to say in two sides of a foolscap sheet. I promise that the compressed newspaper will be far more readable than the long drawn out agony that the printed sheets inflict on the public from day to day. When all the padding, the verbiage, the flaring headlines and advertisements are removed from the average daily, one will find that the remainder can be easily reduced to a foolscap sheet. Let the editor try to give the news and the thoughts the others do not give and he will find that his copy will be multiplied a thousandfold without effort. At the same time let him remember that a written daily requires a different type of organization. Its agents are more copyists than distributors. The manager of a written daily will keep a list of agents and subscribers who are served by such agents. The agents in their turn will have local copyists who will make enough copies for their respective areas. Thus a more intimate and living relation can be established between the staff of a written daily and its readers. What is more, when the idea is properly worked out, it will be found that there is less worry, less waste of time, energy and money and more lasting and quicker results.

NOTICE TO A BARRISTER

Mr. T. A. K. Sherwani, it will be remembered, was in charge of the National Muslim University when immediately after the disturbance in Aligarh he was arrested. Mr. Sherwani is undergoing his sentence at the central prison at Naini, Allahabad. He has now been served with a notice from the High Court to show cause why his name should not be struck off the roll of advocates or why he should not be suspended from practice on the ground that he has been convicted under Section 153A I.P.C. He has to show cause on the 23rd instant. Two years ago the best of lawyers would have shivered to receive such a notice. It would have been regarded as an impending doom. Today happily things have changed. I know that the notice has not disturbed a single night's rest for Mr. Sherwani. He had already suspended practice as a non-co-operator. And he has faith enough in himself and his country to know that when swaraj is established as it must be very shortly, his name will be restored with honour, even if it is removed by the High Court on the 23rd.

Young India, 5-1-1922

186. THE CONGRESS AND AFTER

THE SUBSTANCE

The Congress week was a week of joy and celebration. None thought that swaraj was not attained. Every one seemed to be conscious of the growing national strength. There was confidence and hope written in every face. The Reception Committee had provided for admitting one hundred thousand visitors to the Congress *pandal*. But the lowest calculation puts down the figure at two lacs. The rush was so great that it became impossible to issue either season tickets or the entrance tickets. And this phenomenal attendance would have been still larger if all kinds of false rumours had not been started to scare away people. The imprisonment of leaders and workers and their courage has filled the people with a new hope and a new joy. There was a feeling in the air that the people had found in suffering the surest remedy for the attainment of freedom and breaking down the mightiest force that might be pitted against it.

The Constitution has worked for a year and in my humble opinion it has proved a thorough success. There was a serious business air about the Subjects Committee which had ample time for deliberation. It was a Committee not chosen haphazard, but deliberately by electors who knew what they were doing. The Congress itself was an impressive spectacle. Hakimji¹ made an ideal and patient President in the place of Deshbandhu Chitta Ranjan Das. The delegates insisted upon their doubts being solved before they voted. They insisted on understanding everything that was going on.

Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel, Chairman of the Reception Committee, took no more than fifteen minutes to read his address in Hindi. There were no speeches to induct the President. The whole of the function was performed by the All-India Congress Committee. That saved at least two hours of the twelve thousand delegates and visitors. The President's address took no more than twenty minutes. Every speech was to the point and not a minute was allowed to be wasted in idle talk.

In the nature of things too it could not well be otherwise. The resolutions were addressed to the nation. They presented a programme of earnest work that had got to be done if the nation was to find her place in the world.

Extraordinary care was, therefore, taken both in the Subjects

¹ Hakim Ajmal Khan

Committee and the Congress to see that the resolutions were properly understood before they were voted upon.

So much for the business side.

THE EXHIBITION

The spectacular was no less impressive. The *pandal* itself was a majestic structure covered with khadi all over. The arches also of khadi, the Subjects Committee *pandal* of khadi. A beautiful fountain surrounded by green lawns ornamented the front of the *pandal*. At the back was a large *pandal* for Overflow meetings where all that had gone on in the Congress *pandal* was explained to the thousands of spectators, men and women, who could not gain entrance for love or money.

The whole ground was a blaze of light at night, and being on the river bank and just at the end of Ellis Bridge, presented for full eight days for thousands of admiring spectators on the other side a gorgeous appearance.

The exhibition ground was quite near. It attracted huge crowds. It was a complete success. The attendance was beyond all expectation; no less than forty thousand visited the exhibition daily. It was a unique demonstration of what India can produce. The chief attraction was the party from Chikacole who demonstrated all the processes of cotton leading to the drawing out of yarn up to 100 counts. No machinery could possibly make the snowlike slivers that the delicate hands of the women of Andhra produced with their simple bones. No machine could draw the exquisite thread that the delicate fingers of the Andhra women drew. The music of the spindle, as it performed its gentle revolutions, is incapable of being reproduced. The evolution that khadi has undergone during the year could also be studied in a room where every variety of khadi was collected. The paintings from Shantiniketan and elsewhere and the beautiful carvings afforded instruction to the close student as well as the ordinary spectator. The musical concerts in which musicians from all parts of India took part was an irresistible attraction for thousands of spectators. It ended in the convening by Vishnu Digambar Shastri¹ of the first All-India Musical Conference whose object is to popularize music in national assemblies and organize *bhajan mandalis*².

¹ Pandit Vishnu Digambar Paluskar, an eminent exponent of Indian classical music

² Groups singing devotional songs

KHADI IN EVIDENCE

The Khadi Nagar, the adjoining Muslim Nagar, and the Khilafat *pandal* next to it were a triumphant demonstration of Hindu-Muslim unity and an ocular demonstration of the hold that khadi has on the public. The Reception Committee used only khadi manufactured in Gujarat and worth three hundred and fifty thousand rupees. The Committee paid Rs. 50,000 for the use of the khadi. All the tents including a big kitchen and storehouse were covered with khadi. Nearly two thousand volunteers, both Hindu and Mussulman and including a few Parsis and Christians, looked after all the arrangements for the guests in both Khadi Nagar and Muslim Nagar.

The sanitary arrangements were a special feature. Trenches were dug for the purpose. Perfect privacy was secured by khadi partitions. And the excreta were covered over with clean earth after every use. Every time the trench was used, it was, therefore, found to be in a clean condition. The work of attending to the trenches was done not by paid *Bhangis*¹ but by unpaid volunteers belonging to all castes and religions. Those only were taken who had no repugnance to this necessary work. The reader may not know that the process is so clean and so expeditious that the cleaner does not have to touch either the excreta or the earth. He has but to take a few shovelfuls of the cleanest earth, and with it carefully cover up the dirt. The result of this simple attention was that the camp was clean, sweet and free from the plague of flies. All the camps were lighted by electricity.

WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

I must not omit to mention the Women's Conference presided by Bi-Amma, the brave mother of the Ali Brothers. It was a soul-stirring spectacle. The whole of the spacious *pandal* was filled by no less than fifteen thousand women. I do not say that they all understood what was going on. But I do say that they knew instinctively what it was. They knew that their assembly advanced India's cause and that they were expected to play their part side by side with men.

In the midst of all this rush there was, so far as I am aware, no accident. The police, be it said to their credit, never interfered with anything or anybody. On the Congress side of the bridge, all

¹ A backward Hindu Community traditionally regarded as untouchable

arrangements were left to the Congress and the Khilafat volunteers.

THE DARK SIDE

So far I have given the bright side of the picture. But like every picture the Congress picture, too, has its shades. Though there was the greatest enthusiasm, there was at times unruliness on the part of the visitors. When they grew impatient, they made a rush for the *pandal* and forced entrance once or twice. It was all good-humoured but it could also prove disastrous. We must be able to regulate such functions in perfect order and that is possible only when the mass of people instinctively and voluntarily obey instructions from their own men: Self-restraint is the key to swaraj, self government. Even the delegates were not all punctilious in obeying instructions. Some of them would not even occupy the blocks reserved for them. They did not hesitate even to suggest that they were out for civil (?) disobedience and would, therefore, sit where they liked. Even some members of the All-India Congress Committee were not above such incivil criminal disobedience. Some delegates would not pay for their board and lodging. And I am sorry to say that there was even impersonation by at least one Gujarati who used a friend's ticket as visitor although he knew that the ticket bore his friend's name and that it was non-transferable. What adds to the grief is that he is a well-known member of the Provincial Congress Committee.

AND AFTER

When, therefore, I think of the darker side of the picture my heart sinks within me. I know why there is delay in our realizing our ideal. But when I think of the brighter side, the picture is too attractive to enable the shades materially to mar its beauty. At the same time it would not do for us to be forgetful and relax our vigilance. The movement depends for its success only upon developing our moral strength. Even as one false note spoils a whole musical piece, so does a single individual suffice to crush a great movement like ours. Let us remember that we have staked our all upon Truth and Non-violence. Whatever others may be able to do being free from any such pledge, bound by our own pledge we are sure to, fall to pieces if we break our own deliberate pledge. As, therefore, I have often said in these pages, the thorough working of the Congress Constitution leads automatically to the establishment of swaraj. Let us see.

FINANCIAL

Though the All-India Congress Committee has a fair balance still at hand, the provinces undoubtedly will have used up the monies left with them. They have an automatic source of income. Every Congress member is liable to pay four annas per year to enable him to retain his or her vote. If, therefore, each province has its quota of members, it must be able to collect at least Rs. 50,000, counting two lacs to be the least number on the roll of membership. I have been told that this is merely a mirage, that it costs more to collect the amount than it is worth. A government that spends more than it earns is a despotic or a corrupt government. The Congress is claimed to be a voluntary organization. And if we are unable to collect our subscriptions at a nominal cost, we have no right to exist. Under swaraj we shall expect to get our revenue at no more than 2_ per cent cost and then not by force but by the free will of the people. The least, therefore, that we are entitled to expect is that every province must now be able to finance itself. It ought not to be difficult again to get at least one crore members, i.e., twenty-five lacs of rupees throughout all India for membership. Indeed, if we are a growingly popular organization, say a government, we should be able to double our membership. We should be able to have enough number of unpaid honest volunteers to do just this one work of collection and no more. If we have not them, we must declare our bankruptcy. If we represent a healthy and natural growth, we must be able to collect this nominal personal annual tax without any effort whatsoever. And as with the Congress organizations, so with its many institutions, colleges, schools, weaving factories, etc. No institution is worth keeping that does not command local support by reason of its own moral strength. Only that institution is a necessity in a district which is supported by its inhabitants. The biggest missionary institutions financed from America or England are a superimposition and have nowhere been assimilated by the people. If the missionaries had from the very commencement relied purely upon the goodwill and support of the people, they would have rendered infinitely greater service to India. Even so if Congress organizations and institutions are supported from the central body, they are likely to become foreign growths and hardly beneficial to the people. It may be laid down as a general rule that no local institution should exist which is not locally supported. Self-reliance is the surest test of capacity for self-government. It is

possible that there are places or provinces which have not yet become self-conscious. They will need to be developed and helped in the initial stages. They cannot today be counted in any scheme of battle we may devise. In this swift struggle we must rely only upon those places that have developed political consciousness. It must, therefore, be in the rarest cases that the central body may be expected to finance local effort.

UNTOUCHABILITY

Similarly we must make a Herculean effort to deal with the question of untouchability. Not until the “untouchables” certify to the reformation in Hinduism, may we claim to have done anything in the matter. To my dismay I have found much misunderstanding on this question even in one of the most advanced and best awakened provinces, namely Andhra. The removal of untouchability means the abolition of the fifth caste. There should, therefore, be no objection to a *Panchama*¹ boy drawing water from the common well of a village and to his attending its common school. He should freely exercise all the rights of a non-Brahmin. In the name of religion we Hindus have made a fetish of outward observances, and have degraded religion by making it simply a question of eating and drinking. Brahminism owes its unrivalled position to its self-abnegation, its inward purity, its severe austerity,—all these illumined by knowledge. Hindus are doomed if they attach undue importance to the spiritual effects of foods and human contacts. Placed as we are in the midst of trials and temptations from within, and touched and polluted as we are by all the most untouchable and the vilest thought currents, let us not, in our arrogance, exaggerate the influence of contact with people whom we often ignorantly and more often arrogantly consider to be our inferiors. Before the throne of the Almighty we shall be judged, not by what we have eaten nor by whom we have been touched but by whom we have served and how. Inasmuch as we serve a single human being in distress, we shall find favour in the sight of God. Bad and stimulating or dirty foods we must avoid as we must avoid bad contact. But let us not give these observances a place out of all proportion to their importance. We dare not use abstinence from certain foods as a cover for fraud, hypocrisy, and worse vices. We dare not refuse to serve a fallen or a dirty brother lest his contact should

¹ A backward Hindu community traditionally regarded as untouchable

injure our spiritual growth.

HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

There is still much left to be desired as to Hindu-Muslim unity. The combination is still suspected to be a menace to the free existence and growth of the small communities. Let us not repeat the mistakes of the past regarding our attitude towards the Moderates or the Independents. They must not feel unsafe in our company but by our toleration we must disarm their suspicion and opposition except as to our ideals.

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

We dare not pin our faith solely to civil disobedience. It is like the use of a knife to be used most sparingly if at all. A man who cuts away without ceasing cuts at the very root and finds himself without the substance he was trying to reach by cutting off the superficial hard crust. The use of civil disobedience will be healthy, necessary, and effective only if we otherwise conform to the laws of all growth. We must, therefore, give its full and, therefore, greater value to the adjective "civil" than to "disobedience". Disobedience without civility, discipline, discrimination, non-violence is certain destruction. Disobedience combined with love is the living water of life. Civil disobedience is a beautiful variant to signify growth, it is not discordance which spells death.

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187. LEGALIZED PILLAGE

Whilst imprisonments of thousands of non-co-operators and their unavoidable hardships fill me with delight, the incidents I am about to relate, though they bring swaraj nearer, do grieve me. I would fain not think so ill of the Government as its acts now make me do.

The hartal¹ in Calcutta was apparently as thorough as it was in Allahabad. The citizens did not go mad as some did in Bombay on the 17th November, although the danger in Calcutta of a breach of the peace by the people was the greatest. Their peacefulness was exemplary. Their secretary Babu Satkodipati Rai, Sardar Luchman Singh and Swami Vishwanand were arrested, as it would appear, for no

¹ on December 24, 1921

fault save that of trying to keep the peace. Yet the people remained calm. Soon it will be possible to say of our countrymen that they can act without leaders or that all are leaders.

This spontaneous hartal in spite of the Herculean efforts to break it and preservation by the people of the peace despite provocation enraged the “civil” guards and the Europeans generally. The Viceroy is clearly to blame for it. He has brought the Prince when he should not have. Having brought him, he is trying to enforce public welcomes wherever the Prince is being taken and having failed in so doing, His Excellency has excited the passions of the British residents by calling the boycott an affront to the Prince and the British nation. The expected has happened. The police and the civil guard have construed the various declarations of the Government to be a licence to do as they please. They have looted shops. They have, if the reports in the *Servant* are true, walked into mosques with shoes on and even committed thefts. Innocent men have been injured. Some have even been killed. The people of Calcutta have borne this legalized lawlessness with great forbearance. They have done the right thing. In my opinion the shoes of scoffers have not desecrated the mosque in question. The amazing forbearance of the mosques-goers has made it more sacred and proved the religious nature of the struggle.

The authorities have behaved no better in parts of Bihar. Here is what the Secretary of the Thana Congress Committee, Sonpur, writes:

On the 21st December 1921, at about 3 p.m., 10 volunteers with some workers were patrolling the road asking the shopkeepers to observe complete hartal on the 22nd instant, during the Prince’s visit. When they reached the Sonpur Police Station, the S.P. (Mr. Parkin) who has been posted here on account of H.R.H. the Prince’s visit came out with about 100 constables and snatched away from the volunteers flags, badges and even khadi clothes which they had on them and tore everything to pieces.

Immediately after this the S.P. marched up to the Congress office followed by a band of constables in plain clothes and with lathis in their hands. On reaching the office the S.P. ordered the constables to plunder (“*Maro aur looto*” were the words he used); whereupon the constables broke open the door and entered the office room pushing the volunteers right and left and assaulting them. Mr. Parkin then thoroughly searched the office, and breaking open a box which contained cash and an almirah which contained records, he then removed all records, khadi pieces, national calendars, pictures, badges, khadi caps, and religious books such as the *Ramayana* and

the *Gita* which were there and burnt them in front of the office. They have also taken away about Rs. 120 in cash which was sent here from the District Congress Committee for distribution among the flood-affected people and also as contribution to the national school.

The following from Banaras completes the dismal picture of daylight robbery by the very Government that professes to act in the name of law and order:

During the last three days the volunteers did not parade the streets to court arrest. Altogether nearly 500 were arrested, most of them were released after 24 hours or fined Rs. 10. In default, the police stripped them of their blankets, coats, caps, shoes, watches etc.

One hears of such things done by hooligans. In law the persons and property of citizens are held so sacred that they cannot be touched without processes of law. I have seen debtors in courts walk away in unconcern with gold chains dangling on their waistcoats in spite of orders of payments against them. I have seen accused charged with crimes being fined and yet walking away with diamond rings on their fingers covering the amount of their fines. In all such cases recovery has been made after warrants of public attachment and public sales. But the law that is being just now administered against non-co-operators is a law without restraint. The caprice of an official represents the whole law in India. I imagine that even under martial law some of the things that are reported to have happened could not be done with impunity. It is a pity that human beings can be found and used for playing a game so low as is being played by the Government of India.

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188. INDEPENDENCE

Maulana Hasrat Mohani put up a plucky fight for independence on the Congress platform and then as President of the Muslim League and was happily each time defeated¹. There is no mistake about the meaning of the Maulana. He wants to sever all connection with the British people even as partners and equals and even though the Khilafat question be satisfactorily solved. It will not do to urge that the

¹ During the Congress and the Muslim League sessions held at Ahmedabad in December 1921

Khilafat question can never be solved without complete independence. We are discussing merely the theory. It is common cause that if the Khilafat question cannot be solved without complete independence, i.e., if the British people retain hostile attitude towards the aspirations of the Islamic world, there is nothing left for us to do but to insist upon complete independence. India cannot afford to give Britain even her moral support and must do without Britain's support, moral and material, if she cannot be induced to be friendly to the Islamic world.

But assuming that Great Britain alters her attitude as I know she will when India is strong, it will be religiously unlawful for us to insist on independence. For, it will be vindictive and petulant. It would amount to a denial of God for the refusal will then be based upon the assumption that the British people are not capable of response to the God in man. Such a position is untenable for both a believing Mussulman and a believing Hindu.

India's greatest glory will consist not in regarding Englishmen as her implacable enemies fit only to be turned out of India at the first available opportunity but in turning them into friends and partners in a new commonwealth of nations in the place of an Empire based upon exploitation of the weaker or undeveloped nations and races of the earth and, therefore, finally upon force.

Let us see clearly what swaraj together with the British connection means. It means undoubtedly India's ability to declare her independence if she wishes. Swaraj, therefore, will not be a free gift of the British Parliament. It will be a declaration of India's full self-expression. That it will be expressed through an Act of Parliament is true. But it will be merely a courteous ratification of the declared wish of the people of India even as it was in the case of the Union of South Africa. Not an unnecessary adverb in the Union scheme could be altered by the House of Commons. The ratification in our case will be of a treaty to which Britain will be party.

Such swaraj may not come this year, may not come within our generation. But I have contemplated nothing less. The British Parliament, when the settlement comes, will ratify the wishes of the people of India as expressed not through the bureaucracy but through her freely chosen representatives.

Swaraj can never be a free gift by one nation to another. It is a treasure to be purchased with a nation's best blood. It will cease to be a gift when we have paid dearly for its The Viceroy was confused

when he said that swaraj would have to come from the Parliament unless it came by the sword. He paid no compliment to his country when he allowed his audience to infer that England was incapable of listening to the moral pressure of suffering, and he insulted the intelligence of his audience if he wished it to understand that the British Parliament would give swaraj when it wished irrespective of India's desires and aspirations. The fact is that swaraj will be a fruit of incessant labour, suffering beyond measure.

But His Excellency is unused to any substitute for the sword and, therefore, does probably think that by exercising our debating skill in the legislative councils, some day or other we shall be able to impress the British Parliament with the desirability of granting us swaraj. He will soon learn that there is a better and more effective substitute for the sword and that is civil disobedience. It is daily becoming increasingly clear that civil disobedience will afford the course of suffering through which India must pass before she comes to her own.

We have not come to our own. There is still mutual distrust between Mussulmans and Hindus. The untouchables have not yet felt the glow of the Hindu touch. The Parsis and the Christians of India do not yet know their future under swaraj to a certainty. We have not yet learnt the art nor realized the necessity of obeying our own laws. The spinning-wheel has not yet found a permanent place in our homes. Khadi has not yet become the national garment. In other words, we have not yet understood the art or the conditions of self-protection.

There is still a body of opinion diminishing in volume but not yet negligible which considers that violence alone will bring swaraj to us and that, therefore, violence might be permitted to continue side by side with non-violence, i.e., our non-violence should be regarded as merely a prelude to and a preparation for violence. Those who hold these views little know that their attitude constitutes a fraud upon the world. Our pledge requires that whilst we are under it we believe in the efficacy of non-violence for the quickest attainment of our goal. Each one of us is under a sacred obligation to cancel the pledge as soon as he believes that swaraj is unattainable by non-violence or except by violence. Non-violence is a creed while it lasts. It is an expedient because it is an experiment. But whilst we are under the pledge we are not only bound to believe in and observe non-violence but we are equally bound to persuade others to be non-violent and condemn

those who do violence. I am more than ever convinced that we have not reached our goal because even we who have subscribed to the Congress creed have not all remained non-violent in word and deed nor endeavoured to be non-violent in thought or intent.

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189. THE IMMEDIATE ISSUE

Swaraj, the Khilafat, the Punjab occupy a subordinate place to the issue sprung upon the country by the Government. We must first make good the right of free speech and free association before we can make any further progress towards our goal. The Government would kill us if they could by a flank attack. To accept defeat in the matter of free speech and free association is to court disaster. If the Government is allowed to destroy non-violent activities in the country, however dangerous they may be to its existence, even the Moderates' work must come to a standstill. In the general interest, therefore, we must defend these elementary rights with our lives. We cannot be coerced into welcoming the Prince nor can we be coerced into disbanding volunteer associations or giving up any other activities which we may deem desirable for our growth.

The safest and the quickest way to defend these rights is to ignore the restriction. We must speak the Truth under a shower of bullets. We must band together in the face of bayonets. No cost is too great for purchasing these fundamental rights. And on this there can be no compromise, no parleying, no conference. Withdrawal of notifications of disbandment and prohibition orders and discharge of all who are imprisoned for non-violent activities must precede any conference or settlement. We must be content to die, if we cannot live as free men and women.

I wish I could persuade everybody that civil disobedience is the inherent right of a citizen. He dare not give it up Without ceasing to be a man. Civil disobedience is never followed by anarchy. Criminal disobedience can lead to it. Every State puts down criminal disobedience by force. It perishes, if it does not. But to put down civil disobedience is to attempt to imprison conscience. Civil disobedience can only lead to strength and purity. A civil resister never uses arms and hence he is harmless to a State that is at all willing to listen to the voice of public opinion. He is dangerous for an autocratic State, for

he brings about its fall by engaging public opinion upon the matter for which he resists the State. Civil disobedience, therefore, becomes a sacred duty when the State has become lawless, or which is the same thing, corrupt. And a citizen that barter with such a State shares its corruption or lawlessness.

It is, therefore, possible to question the wisdom of applying civil disobedience in respect of a particular act or law; it is possible to advise delay and caution. But the right itself cannot be allowed to be questioned. It is a birthright that cannot be surrendered without surrender of one's self-respect.

At the same time that the right of civil disobedience is insisted upon, its use must be guarded by all conceivable restrictions. Every possible provision should be made against an outbreak of violence or general lawlessness. Its area as well as its scope should also be limited to the barest necessity of the case. In the present case, therefore, aggressive civil disobedience should be confined to a vindication of the right of free speech and free association. In other words non-co-operation, so long as it remains non-violent, must be allowed to continue without let or hindrance. When that position is attained it is time for a representative conference to be summoned for the settlement of Khilafat, the Punjab and swaraj but not till then.

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190. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

[After *January 5, 1922*]¹

CHI. DEVDAS,

If I have read your letter correctly, it means that Choudhary should put in two months. If so, it would be better if he did that first. I am not sure that I have understood fully what you have written. I find some difficulty in deciphering your handwriting too.

Your criticism of Maulana Hasart is not justified. He has pointed out the impossibility of a parallel government.

I have had no letter yet from Malaviyaji.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 7919

¹From the reference to Devdas Gandhi's criticism of Hasrat Mohani, the first part of which was reproduced in *Young India* on 5-1-1922

191. LETTER TO HARIBHAI DESAI

[After January 5, 1922]¹

It is good that Mahadev is jailed. He will get rest thereby. The work outside is so heavy that he would have fallen ill. Although there is hardship in jail now, I am sure that conditions will improve very soon. Mahadev has the knack of winning over people wherever he goes. I am sure that by speaking sweetly and modestly he will have any undue hardship in jail life removed. You should neither lose patience nor worry.

Mahadev Desai's Early Life, p. 64

192. TELEGRAM TO DEVDAS GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,
January 6, 1922

DEVADAS GANDHI

ANAND BHAWAN

ALLAHABAD

CONGRATULATION KRISHNA KANT² KHANNA SYED MOHIUDDIN AND
GOVIND UPON THEIR GOOD FORTUNE.³ HOPE STREAM VOLUN
TEERS WILL REMAIN UNINTERRUPTED.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 7790

¹An account of the ill-treatment meted out in jail to Mahadev Desai, the addressee's son, had appeared in *Young India*, 5-1-1922; *vide* "Notes", 5-1-1922, under the sub-title "Jail Treatment". It is likely that this letter was written following the publication of that item.

²Nephew of Madan Mohan Malaviya and editor of *Abhyudaya*

³*Vide* "My Notes", 8-1-1922, under the sub-title "Malaviyaji's Son".

193. WELL DONE, BUT WILL THIS CONTINUE?

Gujarat can claim to have given an excellent account of itself.¹ Khadi tents were erected at a cost of three and a half lakhs, canopies constructed, electric lights installed, a picturesque exhibition was held, *bhajans* were sung and the splendour of Indian music demonstrated. Hindus and Muslims lived side by side. Not an angry word was uttered by either. Gujarati girls worked as volunteers, Gujarati youths served the delegates even by performing the tasks of scavengers; a huge meeting was held for women and speeches were delivered. All who spoke in the Congress *pandal* respected the law of-economy and talked to the point. No one indulged in long harangues and an effective but moderately worded resolution was passed in answer to the policy of repression adopted by the Government.

No one doubts that by doing all this Gujarat has enhanced its prestige as also that of India. But what is to follow?

Nothing has been left undone to present a bold appearance nor have brave words been lacking; but will brave deeds follow? Will Gujarat be able to compete with Bengal, U.P. and the Punjab? Will they win the credit of getting the prisoners released and securing swaraj? Will they go to jail? Will they submit to beatings and face even death, without anger? If we understand things properly, this will be but child's play. If not, it will be as difficult as breaking boulders.

We must be non-violent in thought, word and deed. Even a *Bhangi* must be regarded as a brother. We must behave with consideration and love towards our Parsi, Jew and Christian brothers and also those who co-operate with the Government. Nor may we show anger to a British neighbour. We must scrupulously follow swadeshi. We must wear only khadi. It is our duty to go to jail, to take beatings, even to die, for the sake of truth—for following truth.

He who keeps this difficult vow will live though slain, and will give new life to his country. Many others have died, have had their heads broken or have gone to jail. They did not enhance India's prestige nor saved her. On the contrary, they brought her a bad name. India's ills will not be cured by the sufferings of criminals or their tears. The remedy for her malady lies in the sacrifice of the

¹ During the Congress session in Ahmedabad in December 1921

innocent.

Ravana carried away the chaste and devoted Sita and the demon kingdom was destroyed. Had he kidnapped a prostitute, the world would not today be remembering Ravana, adoring the prostitute. If a criminal is punished too severely, the world does not care. If, however, even the hair of an innocent person is touched, the world will not bear it.

But what did I see? One of the most respectable delegates from Gujarat got hold of another's ticket for attending as a visitor a meeting of the All-India Congress Committee.¹ This gentleman was caught and a volunteer brought him to me. I felt ashamed. I felt it would be better for me to run away from Gujarat. For a moment I was so shaken that I wondered if it was worth while struggling for swaraj. If this person goes to jail, how will the country benefit? I did not at that time regard this incident as unimportant, nor do I do so now. Even one small sore on the body can prove fatal. Even a minute amount of arsenic falling into fifty maunds of milk renders the latter useless. If fresh milk comes into contact with filth, we throw it away.

Gujaratis, whether you are men or women, take heed. Do not in a moment lose all that you have won. This fight has no use for untruth. There can be no hypocrisy or deceit here. Your responsibility is great. This fight can be won only by humility, civility, courage, charity, and purity in thought, word and deed.

Those who are impure may stay away. There is dirt in Gujarat as there is elsewhere in the world. But impurity cannot be permitted to mingle with purity. Those who cannot adhere to truth may—they must—stand aside; those who cannot speak the truth should remain dumb. In time even their habit of thinking unworthy thoughts will leave them, for they will have no reason to do so. What need was there to attend the meeting with another's ticket? What was there to see?

Murmurings continually reach my ears that the conditions are too difficult. But there is absolutely nothing new in them.

What we planned and decided upon at Nagpur and at Calcutta, and have reiterated in thousands of meetings, has now been incorporated in the pledge. Now that the time has come for us all to declare openly our intention, why are we upset? Were we all these days

¹ It seems he was a delegate to the plenary session of the Congress but had not been elected a member of the All-India Congress Committee.

merely deceiving people by saying that we meant to win swaraj by truth, by love, by removing the blot of untouchability and by self-sacrifice? Or, did we imagine that these conditions were for others and not for us?

I hope that no thoughtful Gujarati man or woman will fail to enter his or her name in this holy *yajna*¹. It does not matter if Bardoli or Anand is not ready. Neither will find it possible to hold back. Individual civil disobedience, however, we can undertake even today. I am sure there are persons in every town and village who are ready for this. They should now fill the jails.

Personally, I wish that as long as Gujaratis have not gone to jail, there should be no settlement and no non-co-operator serving sentences of imprisonment should be released. While, however, cherishing this unkind wish, I assume that one who has voluntarily courted imprisonment will not wish to be released till the goal has been reached, and to see it reached it is absolutely necessary that we go through a good deal of suffering. If Gujarat does not go through this suffering, which other province will? The way to reduce the suffering to the minimum is for the best men and women to take upon themselves the largest share of it. I, therefore, appeal to every Gujarati man and woman to read and understand the pledge to be taken by every volunteer and sign it. Having done so, they should avail themselves of the many harmless ways of courting imprisonment which are open to them.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-1-1922

194. KHILAFAT CONFERENCE

The Khilafat Conference and Muslim League meet generally *at* the same time as the Congress. This enables Hindus and Muslims to learn a great deal from each other and to strengthen their friendship. A person like me who has faith in God cannot *but* see His hand behind the fact that the President of the Khilafat Conference also happened to be the President of the Congress. Deshbandhu's arrest has done greater service than his attending the Congress would have done and Hakimji, being free, accepted the burden of Congress

¹ Sacrifice

presidentship in addition to that of the presidentship of the Khilafat Conference and thereby strengthened Hindu-Muslim unity. The Khilafat camp and the Congress camp thus came so close to each other that nobody would think of them as separate camps.

For similar reasons, it was suggested by Shri Abbas Tyabji that there was no longer any need for the Muslim League to continue as a separate body. When Hindus and Muslims were becoming united in heart, where was the need for two separate political bodies? So long as they were fighting with each other for their respective rights, there may have been such a need. Now the Khilafat Committee should be sufficient. It should, of course, continue, as it is connected with religion.

There is, thus, a perfectly genuine and convincing reason for the view that the Muslim League should be wound up. Yet, so long as Muslim opinion has not crystallized in favour of this course, it will be safe not to propose dissolution of the Muslim League.

I have written about the discussions in the Khilafat Conference and the Muslim League on the question of severing the British connection in any event.¹ It is, therefore, unnecessary to say more here. I prefer to write about the daily increasing amity between the two communities which I observed during the Khilafat Conference and the Muslim League session. The impressive spectacle of large numbers of Muslims on the dais in Congress meetings and of Hindus in the Khilafat Conference and the sessions of the Muslim League freely taking part in the proceeding is a memory worth treasuring by all.

Though Hindu-Muslim relations are thus improving, we are not free from dangers. There still remain in our paths many deserts to be crossed, many forests, valleys and hills. The road has yet to be cleared, metalled and rolled. It is still very necessary to employ all possible means to promote this unity. These are now widely known to all. They are:

1. to share each other's joys and sorrows,
2. to respect each other's feelings,
3. to shed fear of each other, and
4. to pay special attention to tasks in which the interests of

¹ Gandhiji attended the Khilafat Conference on December 27 and the Muslim League session on December 30

both parties are involved.

The Khilafat has shown us the way to fulfil the first requirement.

By refraining from interfering in each other's religious observances, Hindus and Muslims can display mutual regard.

The fact that the Hindus are in a majority should not frighten the Muslims and the Hindus should rid themselves of the fear that, with the help of other Muslim nations, Indian Muslims will suppress the Hindus.

Swadeshi and spinning involve the interests of both. If Hindus and Muslims equally realize their significance and benefit, unity between them would be very much strengthened.

But the best method of strengthening it, is for both Hindus and Muslims to take it upon themselves to protect the minority communities. They should love and respect Parsis, Christians and Jews, protect them and never so much as dream of harassing them or forcing them to do anything. In this way, protecting and serving them will become a tradition among Hindus and Muslims and, in the measure that the spirit of service grows among us, we shall become more united.

A person becomes worthy of others' regard in the measure he does his duty. One who is always seeking his rights does not attend to his duties and eventually comes to be regarded as a tyrant who thinks only of his rights. We are fighting the Government because it recognizes only its own rights and does not so much as consider its duty towards us.

If Hindus and Muslims attempt to pose as patrons or benefactors of each other, they will certainly end up as enemies. If, on the other hand, they regard themselves as each other's servants, the bond of mutual regard will grow stronger day by day and a time will come when nothing can break it. Fire will not burn it nor will water dissolve it. Only when such a wonderful bond has been forged between the two communities will the flower of freedom bloom in all its beauty. When this happens, arguments, such as whether we should strive for complete independence or maintain our connection with the British, whether we should fight with the sword or win our freedom by peaceful means, will become superfluous. When this auspicious moment arrives, we shall only have to ask and we shall receive. It is, therefore, the sacred duty of all of us—Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Christians, Jews—to stop worrying about the future and to strive for improving conditions in the present. May God help us all to do this!

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-1-1922

195. MY NOTES

AWAKENING AMONG CHRISTIANS

I have noted that non-co-operation has brought about a great awakening among Christians too. A conference representing all the Christians in the country was held a short time ago in Lahore under the presidentship of Mr. Mukerji. Very good resolutions regarding swadeshi and prohibition were adopted at the Conference. The swaraj-spirit can be felt in all their proceedings. Speakers dwelt at length on the need for adopting khadi. Everyone has realized now that khadi is the poor man's life-line and that the spinning-wheel means prosperity in the poor man's home, and so Indian Christians have also embraced the movement. Although the President spoke against non-co-operation, he, too, wants swaraj. In his speech, he strongly criticized the Government's repressive policies.

THE PRINCE OF WALES IN INDIAN STATES

A question has arisen what the subjects of Indian States should do when the prince visits their States. It seems to me that, since they have not started non-co-operation against their rulers, they may not do anything which might embarrass the State. They are not bound to honour a guest of the State, but at the same time they are not entitled to agitate against such a guest being honoured. When, therefore, the Prince visits an Indian State, the public should not declare a hartal or hold a protest meeting. Thoughtful subjects of these States, however, are sure to feel bound up with the rest of the country and, therefore, they should as far as possible refrain from taking part in functions held in honour of the Prince. In the States, there is very little democracy, in fact none at all. the public there does not have to associate itself with the actions of the ruler. People join only in activities which interest them or under compulsion. In all such matters, therefore, a person will be admired for courteously exercising his freedom as an individual. In Indian States, the relationship between the ruler and the ruled is governed entirely by self-interest. If the ruler is a good man, he can do some good; if he is a bad man, the subjects have no appeal against him other than to take up arms or offer non-co-operation. This seems to be the state of relations between the rulers and the ruled in British India, where the Government acts in

disregard of the people's interests and, as a result, non-co-operation has been launched. The condition of the Indian States is at present so difficult that it would be a serious matter for their subjects to start non-co-operation. Such a step can be taken only where oppression has become intolerable and the subjects have developed collective soul-force.

SOME QUESTIONS

I am asked so many questions that if I attempted to answer them all, I would have time for nothing else. I, therefore, answer only those which seem to me important. There is, however, an anonymous letter containing questions which I shall consider, not because of their importance, but because they illustrate the ignorance which still prevails among the people. My object is to enlighten even such people.

Q. What are you going to do with swaraj?

A. I am working myself to secure what I want; what the people want, however, they alone can secure.

Q. What are you going to do with the money you have collected?

A. The various Provincial Committees are utilizing it. I have no right to use even a pie of it. The accounts of the Fund have already been published.

Q. Who will rule under swaraj after your death?

A. Swaraj means one's own rule. Everyone has to rule over himself. When all have learnt to rule over themselves, then it will be rule by all, by the people. My living or dying is irrelevant to the issue. I am merely a physician.

Q. Why do you write in English?

A. Because I want to spend all that I have in the service of the country.

Q. Why do you travel by train?

A. That is the Government's kindness and I avail myself of it to further my own work.

Q. You want people to wear khadi, but it is dear.

A. Foreign cloth is costly even if you get it free and khadi is cheap even if it costs more, because all the money spent on the latter goes into the homes of the poor in the country. Moreover, khadi lasts longer and the simplicity that goes with the use of khadi influences other aspects of life and its fragrance makes public life clean and

wholesome.

Q. Why do you play with people's lives?

A. I do nothing of the kind. People come forward to sacrifice their lives for their country or their religion because this gives them joy.

Q. Why do your co-workers wear boots and European clothes ?

A. This merely illustrates my consideration for others. I wish to maintain friendship with them and show, with love, that neither European clothes nor boots are necessary in India.

Q. Why do you interfere in matters of religion?

A. I do not interfere in anyone's religion. Nor are people so simple, either, that they would allow me to do so. But I try to place before them those principles which are common to all religions and I intend to go on doing so.

LEST THEY GO WITH THE WIND!

The strong wind of peaceful non-co-operation is delightful and stimulating, but we must take care that khadi is not carried away or yarn does not fly away in this wind. Those who are engaged in propagating khadi must certainly register their names as volunteers, but they must not neglect spinning or khadi either. They need not come forward to court arrest. They are to act as watchmen. These latter come out when the need for protection arises; otherwise they remain engaged in their own work. Those who have been working for propagating swadeshi ought not to get arrested except for spinning, or selling khadi. Of course, if the number of others going to jail from among those doing other work is insufficient and the swadeshi workers come to their aid, it will be a different matter. The true soldier is he who dies at his post. Death while doing one's appointed task ensures one's welfare, whereas attempting to do another's duties is fraught with danger.¹

THE KHADI PLEDGE

It is indeed surprising that of all the conditions in the pledge which the Congress has prescribed for the volunteers, the one requiring the use of khadi is felt to be the most exacting. As a matter of fact, one would expect that the condition of non-violence even in thought or even when one is assaulted would be regarded as more

¹ *Bhagvad Gita*, III.35

difficult. If, however, the condition of wearing khadi is felt to be difficult, the reason must be that when we break this rule we know that we do so and the fact of our having broken it is immediately observed by others as well, so that one cannot in this matter deceive either oneself or others. My advice is that we should show as much vigilance in all the conditions as we are obliged to do in regard to khadi. The meaning of the condition about khadi in the pledge has not been clearly understood. But it can have only one meaning. It can apply only to the clothes we wear. One should certainly discard foreign or mill-made cloth from our bedding, etc., but this is not made obligatory in the pledge as there are difficulties in the way of immediate self-purification to this extent. For many, such a step may even be beyond their means. Once, however, we have made this change-over in regard to the clothes we wear, it is unlikely that, for other purposes in the home, we would continue to use mill-made or foreign cloth in preference to khadi. It is not at all difficult now to use khadi for one's clothes. If a man is very poor, he may limit himself to a loincloth but this should be of khadi.

One more question has been raised in this matter, viz., is khadi to be worn by volunteers only when on duty or at all times? As long as one's name stands in the list of volunteers, having taken the pledge one must wear khadi at all times, in private and in public.

BRAVE MOTHER

During the Congress week, I received a letter from the mother of Shri Govindji VasANJI Mithaiwala, but at the time I could not use it in *Navajivan*. Some of the facts of this case have appeared in newspapers but I do not wish to discuss them here. A gentleman has replied to certain statements made in the court by Shri Govindji's mother. I do not wish to comment on this either. I wish exclusively to draw attention to the heroism of the late Sakarbai which shone out during the hearing of the case. She went bravely to the police; in the court, too, she stood near her son in the dock and protected him so that he might not yield to weakness. Shri Govindji has always lived in luxury. His wound was not yet healed; he has had no experience of the hardships of jail-life. His friends had tried to get him released on bail and to persuade him to allow himself to be defended, telling him that this was an individual case and had no political significance. Sakarbai stood near the dock in order to protect her son against all these dangers and to uphold the truth. She herself refused to get Shri

Govindji released on bail. This lady knew that one who takes a pledge of non-co-operation may not defend himself in court, whether the charge against him is true or false, whether the case is public or private. In order, therefore, to see that this pledge was honoured, she mustered courage to attend the court. News of similar instances has come from other places also. Help and courage are being offered in various ways by mother to son, sister to brother, wife to husband. It is in this firmness and courage that I glimpse the coming of freedom. Women and men are at present bringing glory to India not by their learning but by their truth and heroism.

ANOTHER ILLUSTRATION

Shri Mahadev Desai's wife is in Allahabad. She is herself a volunteer, goes out to work, cooks for and feeds other volunteers and helps them in other ways and spins regularly. Immediately after Mahadev Desai was arrested, she wrote a letter to me which would bring gladness to any reader. I, therefore, reproduce it here:¹

She has of course my blessings, but who am I to bless ? Indian women are developing heroism with their own *tapascharya*. It is not as if only one or two men have gone to jail. Large numbers of them have gone and their wives are keeping up courage; they willingly let their husbands and other relatives court arrest and are ready to go to jail themselves. A wire has just come to say that the ill treatment of Shri Desai has now stopped. Jail is bound to mean suffering, though unnecessary suffering can be averted by courage and courteous behaviour on our part. But, whether it is thus averted or not, and however severe the hardships of jail-life, we must brace ourselves to bear them.

MALAVIYAJI'S SON

Malaviyaji's youngest son, named Govind, and his nephew Krishna Kant Malaviya were arrested some time earlier, fined and released. The son has been arrested again for making a speech and has been given one and a half years' hard labour. I regard this as India's good fortune. That Malaviyaji's son should go to jail for non-co-operation reminds one of our ancient religion traditions. Shri Govind spared no effort to obtain Panditji's permission. As long as he

¹ The letter is not translated here. She assured Gandhiji that her husband's arrest had not at all made her unhappy.

could, he respected his revered father's wishes. The father, too, on his part, gave his son full freedom. When, after the arrest of Pandit Jawaharlal and others, Govind could no longer restrain himself, he wrote a very courteous letter to his father and joined the freedom fight. I know that there has not been the slightest diminution in Govind's devotion towards his father. I am sure that Panditji, too, is not angry with Govind for his action. The relationship between father and son remains as affectionate as ever and will always remain so. Thus, in this *swarajyajna*, people have learnt to obey their conscience and we see father and son in different camps. All these are signs of spiritual awakening—of swaraj.

DEVOTEES IN JAIL

Different from this case of Govind, though equally uplifting, is the lesson we get from the incarceration of Prof. [J. B.] Kripalani in a Banaras jail. His nephew writes:¹

GUJARAT'S GOOD FORTUNE

The dispute regarding the schools in Nadiad, Surat and Ahmedabad will provide an opportunity to people to court imprisonment and the residents of Godhra have, so to say, the Ganga flowing by their doorstep. Processions have been banned there for two months. This period expires on the 17th. During the intervening period, therefore, the people of Godhra have a chance to fill the jails, on condition that they remain peaceful and fulfil the other requirements of the pledge. The Magistrate's notice is as follows:²

This ban-on hymns and innocent national songs cannot be tolerated. I hope that in situations of this kind the Provincial Committee will give permission to the towns or talukas for individualcivil disobedience and that Gujarat will make a start and exhibit her capacity for sacrifice.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-1-1922

¹ The letter is not translated here. The nephew had received a letter from J. B. Kripalani saying that he had kept up in jail the daily routine of the Ashram.

² Not translated here

196. TELEGRAM TO ESTHER MENON¹

SABARMATI,
January 11, 1922

GOD BLESS YOU BOTH.

GANDHI

From the original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child*, p. 74

197. NOTES

TOO OPTIMISTIC

C. Rajagopalachari is an accurate student of satyagraha. He began to follow it when it was first commenced in South Africa. In my opinion, he knows the science of Satyagraha as no one else perhaps does. And he has tried to live up to it for years. When, therefore, the opportunity for going to jail came to him, he embraced it without a second thought. He felt that although he was guiding the movement in Madras in his own unassuming manner, he would serve and guide it better being in prison. The reader will, therefore, appreciate the optimism underlying the following from him written immediately on receiving the sentence of three months' simple imprisonment:

Three months' simple is all too little, but if swaraj is won by you easier it makes no difference. I hope when I come back, you will have finished the swaraj work and got back to your normal occupation of research in dietetics.

Whilst I feel that swaraj has already come in a sense (and that is an important sense), the extraordinary situation that has arisen will not permit me quite so soon to revert to my favourite "normal occupation of research in dietetics". This letter was written on the 21st ultimo, as I have said, just after the sentence. The following long letter was written the same day but before the sentence:

I have your note enclosing draft resolutions.

I am not in favour of including in the resolution the claim that we have

¹ *Nea* Esther Faering, a Danish missionary whom Gandhiji treated as his daughter. She came to India in 1916 and later joined Sabarmati Ashram

This telegram was evidently sent after her marriage with Dr. Menon and their return from Denmark. The Menons were then helping Miss Petersen with her school and Ashram at Porto Novo.

achieved swaraj in substance though not in form. I understand the meaning of the claim, but feel that it should rather go into your writings than become part of the resolutions of Congress.

I do not see any specific resolution sanctioning in express terms mass or individual civil disobedience. I think it would be necessary and desirable to have a clear resolution on the subject. As the resolutions are drafted, there is only one form of civil disobedience sanctioned, viz., disobeying the volunteer organizations prohibition. I fear this prohibition may be removed or at least slackened; and there are other forms of disobedience handy such as orders under S.144. I, therefore, suggest that after the resolution about volunteer organizations, we should have a resolution sanctioning civil disobedience in such form and with such limitations as may from time to time be issued by the Working Committee or yourself.

I have no idea what results the pressure of “constitutionalist” visitors will have on the proceedings of Congress. But I press on you my view that no negotiations should be undertaken now nor till we have advanced a bit further in the civil disobedience struggle. The Ali Brothers, Das, Lalaji and Panditji should have a voice not only in the negotiations but also in fixing the time when we should enter truce. Moreover, a conference of the Government and Congress should be the only machinery. Congress should nominate the non-official leaders of all parties. Congress, not Government, should nominate Moderate leaders. We are always corrupted by Government nomination. I am positive that there should be no resolution of Congress in this session referring to or anticipating any negotiations. We may have a special session, if necessary, later.

I do not like the idea, some people have, that we should now wrangle over and divert the attention and energy of the country to questions of what form of government and what constitution should be put forward as our claim for India. This question may be taken up when we are nearing the end of the struggle.

Some people are talking of parallel Government. I have never discussed this with you and therefore have to venture an opinion without sufficient examination. I do not think it physically possible to have a parallel Government. As long as there is a Government running on the basis of violence, we cannot have a parallel Government without counter-violence. On the basis of non-violence we can only work up non-co-operation or civil disobedience, not run a parallel, positive set of institutions beyond a very limited extent. the method of non-violence can, as the world now stands, only take up a negative and destructive attitude and follow it up with a new

Government but not run a contemporaneous parallel Government as the Irish are supposed to have done. If I have not expressed myself clearly do not worry about it. I referred to the subject as I believe some may press a resolution on the subject.

I do not know when we shall next meet or under what circumstances. But I feel I am realizing the object of my life as I am approaching the prison. The following was written on the 20th ultimo:

I am feeling more and more strongly every day that the truce and negotiations have been forced a little too early. I wish you could find some way to put them off till we won a few more battles. Government would like very much to negotiate at once, because necessarily our terms would be less than what they would be after a month. And our Moderate friends are too eager to enter now; they see we are not terror-struck and must win, and they out of their incorrigible weakness wish to end the strife before it should get severer, and there is so much competition among them for a good idea, that it gets to be premature. Government is shrewd. They have seen their error and realized that we won't be bullied. So they are quietly retracing. Madras Government have definitely declared they won't declare associations unlawful and so also Bihar and Orissa Governments.

Government now see that the Moderates have deserted them. But it should stop there, till the thing gets a bit more mature. The Prince must go back and then in February we should think of settlement after Gujarat has given an account of itself. It is absurd in any case that people should talk of conferences when Nehruji and Das and Lalaji are in prison. They should fix the time for the armistice.

The Moplahs are now going in 3rd class compartments with only bars in the windows. We see constables giving water and even running about for it at some stations. The crucifixion of the seventy has not been in vain. Thousands of Moplahs have since had human treatment.

I have been giving the letters received from imprisoned workers for they demonstrate, as nothing else can, the fierce nature of the struggle as also the grim determination of the people. Rajagopalachari's reflections on the resolutions have, the reader will notice, been mostly anticipated. His advice not to mention in the central resolution anything about a settlement has much to be said in its favour. Weak as we have been and possibly still are, there is need for us not to divert our attention from the path of suffering. Yet I feel that the mention in the manner made in the resolution was inevitable. We must know and confess our weakness and we must act, too, in

anticipation of becoming strong. I should not be surprised if we have many truces and settlements and several abortions before we come to the end. A true soldier takes life and things philosophically. He is unattached to results. His is to work with all his might, treating suffering and rest alike. His rest is but a preparation for greater suffering if need be. We must develop the faculty of suffering without the atmosphere of excitement. Voluntary suffering being a new experience, there is a feeling that if the excitement of the moment subsides, we may not respond to a fresh dose of repression, whereas permanent readiness to suffer is an essential condition of swaraj. Does not England provide for a permanent armament in order to keep herself immune from attack? No doubt it is mad, it is suicidal and it amounts to a denial of God and His justice. But she cannot do otherwise so long as she considers it necessary to impose her commerce and to prey upon other nations. She wishes to be feared by the nations of the earth and has to pay heavily for it. India, I hope, wishes to be loved by them and, therefore, must depend upon perpetual readiness to suffer for her freedom. We have involuntarily suffered so long that it is difficult for us even to imagine that we can do without it. Let us transmute the unwillingness into willingness to suffer and we are protected against a combination of all the nations of the earth. Anyway that is the course India has chosen, and as soon as it becomes an established fact that our capacity to suffer has become normal, we are altogether a free nation. When we have attained that state we shall approach conferences and settlements without misgiving and with perfect equanimity.

Rajagopalachari's reference to the now human treatment of Moplah prisoners has a lesson for us. Many of us will have to die before we are free from our prolonged political asphyxiation which is worse than the physical asphyxiation of Moplahs although it so shocked our humanitarian instinct. The Moplahs who died in that death wagon will not have to answer before God for unmanliness, if they were, as many must have been, innocent prisoners. Not so with us who knowingly and weakly submit to political degradation. I trust that the Moderate friends who see Rajagopalachari's letters will not mind his friendly hits at them. The letters were not meant for publication. They were naturally written without reserve which publicity imposes on a writer. But I have hoped that the Moderate friends will not misunderstand Rajagopalachari. There is no denying the fact that there is today a temperamental difference between co-operating

Moderates and non-co-operating Extremists. The latter impute timidity to the former rather than faithlessness to the country. Both are well-wishers and servants of the country. It is open to the Moderates to consider Extremists to be rash and even reckless. We must be able to stand such honest criticism without feeling irritated or offended.

“ALREADY FREE”

The readers of *Young India* are not unfamiliar with Mr. W. W. Pearson's¹ name. He has been associated with Dr. Tagore's work at Shantiniketan for several years. He was deported for having written a pro-nationalist book on India. He has recently been permitted to return to his work at Shantiniketan from where he sent through Mr. Andrews the following message during the Congress week. After a personal reference he wrote:²

I want also to add something of a more public nature which may be used publicly or not at the Congress. . .It is this:

. . . Your work has borne its fruit, for India is already free. . .

But at the same time, although complete and unconditional swaraj is assured, I would urge the adoption of some practical constructive programme of social service . . .

The Irish Agricultural Organization Society will, I am convinced be the firm foundation on which the structure of Irish freedom can be built. India also will need such a basis on which can be constructed a free and independent State and for this an immediate programme of practical swaraj is an essential condition.

I share Mr. Pearson's view that India is “already free”. She became free when Lalaji, Pandit Nehru, Chitta Ranjan Das and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad were arrested. She became free as soon as it became clear that repression had fallen flat and that the people were not to be deterred from forming associations and holding public meetings even though they were assaulted and flogged. Freedom was ours when we were ready to pay the price for it. The settlement of our differences with the administrators is a matter of time. We cannot be said to be free so long as we need a certificate of freedom. He is not healthy who has need to prove his health by producing a health certificate. Every man and woman who visited the Congress *pandal* felt in his or her own person the glow of freedom.

¹ A Christian missionary and an active supporter of Indians

² Only excerpts reproduced here

Whilst Mr. Pearson has noticed in the Indian air the electricity of freedom, he misses the constructive side of the movement. The spirit of freedom is like the leaven all-pervading. The constructive work which gives the movement stability cannot be felt. It has to be observed by seeing the work that is silently but surely going on in thousands of homes. He will find it in swadeshi, in the spinning-wheel. India will be permanently organized to the extent that hand-spinning is organized. India's joint family system which affects even Mussulmans and her other special characteristics make further and immediate agricultural organization impossible. The small holdings daily getting smaller, the custom of vivisectioning farms must ever make mere agriculture in spite of improvements a poor remedy for driving away her poverty. But the restoration of the spinning-wheel to its ancient status at once supplies the felt want and automatically provides for the natural increase in families. It defies the pranks of the monsoons and constitutes a general insurance against many risks. It gives the country an incentive to industrial effort and renders co-operation on a national scale absolutely necessary for success. The khadi movement is revolutionizing the village life and putting hope into millions of human breasts. No wonder Dr. Roy¹, in order to accelerate the charkha movement, it is reported in the Calcutta Press, went to his native village, Katipara, and

exhorted everybody to take to spinning during leisure hours, for, according to him, the charkha would prove the salvation of the country. With great emphasis he said that his heart's desire would be fulfilled if, within a period of six months, the villagers could clothe themselves with clothes spun and woven by themselves.

CONGRESSMEN BEWARE !

Whilst on the khadi movement, I would like to warn Congress Committees or Khilafat Committees against relaxation of effort in the matter of swadeshi. Concentration on civil disobedience must mean double zeal for swadeshi. Civil disobedience without swadeshi is death without hope of creation. It is like tearing down a field without any prospect of sowing a new crop. Civil disobedience should mean an added incentive to the khadi movement. All the women, old men, the children who are not imprisoned, must devote their spare energy,

¹ Dr. P. C. Ray

every available minute, to the work of manufacturing yarn and khadi and of spreading it among others. My faith is as bright as ever that perfect swadeshi leads automatically to swaraj. Swadeshi is to the nation what personal purity is to the individual.

THE "TIMES" TESTIMONY

In its trade supplement of 10th December, the writer of the trade notes dealing with the cotton trade depression says:¹

The depression in the cotton trade is quite unrelieved. . . . Lancashire's patience, courage and confidence are being sorely tried.

A more important consideration for the cotton trade is that the agreement among the merchant dealers in Calcutta not to buy imported cloth is coming to an end. While there has been much talk about the boycott continuing until February and later, the period to which the compact actually applied ends with the close of the year, and there seems to be little probability of the prohibition continuing beyond that date. . . . In any case, as far as is known, there is no proposal before Calcutta to renew the prohibition. With this particular feature of the Gandhi movement out of the way, it seems practically certain that there will be a revival in trade with India. . . . and if India comes in even for modest quantities of goods, other markets are likely to follow.

I wish it were possible to hold out any hope whatsoever of the prospect pictured by the writer materializing. Swadeshi is not a temporary programme. It is coeval with swaraj. The khadi hand-spun and hand-woven must be religiously the covering for India. Boycott of foreign cloth is not a measure of punishment, it is a measure of purification and permanent relief. It cannot be exchanged for swaraj. The latter is rather dependent upon the former. Pressure on England there is by means of swadeshi. But if England became totally indifferent about the khadi movement, it would still have to continue. In so far as Lancashire depends upon the Indian market for its piece-goods trade, it will have to revise its programme. No consideration can possibly induce India to remain idle and pauper for the sake of Lancashire or any other interest. If all goes well and if England and India are to become and remain friends and partners at will, as I hope and wish they will, there are plenty of other things England can sell to India and the latter can profitably receive from the former. Cloth she may not receive from anyone whether friend or foe. An India, regenerate, well-to-do and free, will furnish a better market to England and to the world than an India

¹ Only excerpts reproduced here

groaning under the heels of English and other exploiters.

IN GOD'S HANDS

Though the letter from Badadada¹ and the one from an English missionary have a personal touch about them, they are so important that I cannot resist the temptation of putting them before the public. Badadada's letters I always regard in the nature of blessings for me. It is a matter of great consolation to me that at this time of life he takes such lively interest in the struggle and gives it his blessings. The letter² published in this issue besides blessing the movement solves a spiritual difficulty that must have perplexed many an earnest seeker. A reformer having to deal with measures and men as they are must take risks and is bound to accept acts performed even from expedience. Hence the necessity of acts being always morally sound. Honesty from policy is as acceptable as honesty for its own sake. But dishonesty is unacceptable even though it may be actuated by excellent motives. A good motive increases the value of a good act. But a good act done even from a bad motive does not lose all its value. It is at least good for the world. The doer alone is the loser because having a bad motive he deprives himself of the share in the merit of his own act. In the matter of non-violence, then, all that we need to guard against is pretence of non-violence for the sake of covering violence.

“An English missionary” is a well-known worker in missionary circles. She has kindly sent her name as well as her address. The transparent honesty of the writer and the frank confession made by her show the English residents of India the way to peace.³ I have no doubt that if only non-co-operators remain true to their pledge of non-violence to the end in spite of the greatest provocation, every Englishman and Englishwoman in India will become a full nationalist. Non-co-operation with our own humiliation by Englishmen must lead eventually to co-operation in friendship with them. The events that are happening just now show clearly how untenable the existing state is.

¹ Dwijendranath Tagore, eldest brother of Rabindranath Tagore; affectionately called “Borodada”

² Not reproduced here

³ In her letter, not reproduced here, she had expressed admiration for Gandhiji and sympathized with the cause of Indian nationalism, deploring the “culpable blindness and misunderstanding of many of my people.”

But the charm of both the letters is in each writer from his or her own standpoint recognizing the hand of God in the movement. I am painfully aware of the fact that during the late War both the English and the Germans claimed God to be on their side. I do not yet know that the German defeat is a test of God's desertion of them or that the English victory betokens God's grace. God's ways are inscrutable. He often tests His favourites through defeats and manifold tribulations. I accept, therefore, their estimate because the struggle is being admittedly conducted for a right cause and by means that are at least professedly and in the case of many non-co-operators certainly non-violent. Non-violence assumes entire reliance upon God. I should certainly lose my head, if I were to arrogate to myself the credit for the wonderful manifestation of courage, purity and truth. But it becomes easily explicable if we believe that God is guiding the movement and is using poor things like me as instruments in His hands.

HUNTED

Mr. Manilal Doctor's¹ case to which Mr. Banarasidas Chaturvedi² draws attention in these columns is a remarkable instance of how a man can be hunted down in the "great" British Empire for holding an opinion. Because the Fiji Government have reported against him although nothing has been proved against him in a court of law, he has been denied residence and practice in New Zealand, Australia, Singapore and now Ceylon. So far as the public is aware Mr. Manilal's crime is that he has served his countrymen and has been exercising potent influence over them. The Fiji Government has been challenged by Mr. Manilal to prove a case against him, but it has been too cowardly to do so and too mean even to maintain him after depriving him of the means of livelihood. This secret maligning of

¹ Barrister and son-in-law of Gandhiji's old associate, Dr. Pranjivan Mehta. For several years he fought for the cause of Indians in Mauritius. In 1912, he went to Fiji from where he was deported without trial in 1920. Subsequently, he was refused permission to practise law in New Zealand and Australia. In Singapore, he was disallowed residence. On his way back from New Zealand, he was denied permission to practise in the Supreme Court of Ceylon and was ordered by the Governor to quit by January 9, 1921.

² 2 (b. 1892); Member of Parliament, journalist and Hindi writer; resigned from Chief's College, Indore, in 1920 and joined C. F. Andrews at Shantiniketan; co-author of *Charles Freer Andrews, A Biography*

men is one of the worst features of the Empire system, betraying its weakness rather than strength. An Empire that requires such calculated persecution of a man without even offering to prove anything against him deserves only to be dissolved. Be it remembered that Mr. Manilal Doctor is a barrister of many years' standing. People are used to thinking that lawyers can at least protect themselves against persecution. Well, the lawyers of none of the places where Mr. Manilal has tried to establish himself have even attempted to protect one of their own profession. Indeed the Law Society and the Court in New Zealand actually conspired to keep Mr. Manila Doctor out of his practice.

THE MALAVIYAS

The most remarkable feature in the remarkable non-cooperation struggle is the fact that it has divided families. And of all such instances none is so striking as the division in the Malaviya family. It furnishes, in my opinion, an object-lesson to India in toleration and civil disobedience. Pandit Malaviyaji's toleration is really beyond compare. I know that he is against seeking imprisonment. I know, too, that if he believed in it, he is not the person to shirk it. I should not be surprised to find him, when the agony has reached white heat and when his faith in British justice is completely gone like mine, to be the foremost in seeking imprisonment. But whilst he is himself against the course of civil disobedience for the present, he has never interfered with the choice of even those who are nearest to him and over whom he has unquestioned authority by right of love and eldership. On the contrary he has left even his own sons absolutely free to do as they please. To me the instance of Govind's civil disobedience is one to treasure. Panditji tried hard to wean that brave boy in his own gentle and sweet manner. Govind tried his very best to carry out what he knew to be his father's wish up to the last moment. He prayed for light. He was torn by conflict of duties. The arrests of the Nehrus proved too strong for the young man. And invoking the blessings of his great and great-hearted father, he decided to throw himself into the struggle, and the jails of India probably hold no more joyous heart than Govind Malaviya's. I make bold to say that he has by his act of civil disobedience proved as dutiful to his father as he has been dutiful to his country. Govind's act is a pattern for our time in dutiful civil disobedience of children. There is, I am sure, no gulf between father and son. Probably Malaviyaji is prouder of his son Govind now than he was before the latter's decision to seek imprisonment. It is truthful

acts like these which prove to me the religious nature of the struggle. I cannot resist the temptation of quoting Govind's courageous statement¹ before the court.

I invite the reader to join me in congratulating both the father and the son. The country has every reason to be proud of both, and where youths show the courage that Govind has shown, the result of the struggle is a certainty.

LALAJI'S LETTER

At last the trial of Lala Lajapat Rai, Pandit Santanam, Malek Lalkhan and Dr. Gopichand is over. Lalaji and Pandit Santanam have eighteen months each and Malek Lalkhan and Dr. Gopichand sixteen months each.² The conviction was a certainty notwithstanding the farce of forcing on the distinguished prisoners a counsel for their defence even in the teeth of their protest. Just before the sentence was pronounced Lalaji was able to send me the following cheerful note:³

Very many thanks for your affectionate note and the message. . . I never went on hunger strike because I am opposed to any fuss for the sake of comfort.... I am engaged in compiling the History of India, Hindu Period, for the use of national schools and national colleges. Santanam is making very good use of his time by studying Sanskrit and religious books. I had been informed of what was done at Ahmedabad and about the Round Table Conference. Please do not be influenced by our "troubles" in arriving at any decision about principles. Rest assured we are prepared to suffer for any length of time and in every way to achieve what we desire. Now that we are in for it, we should see it through.

Let us hope that Lalaji and Pandit Santanam will be permitted to continue their studies. I would venture to suggest to him and his comrades that they copy the example of Messrs Shaukat Ali and Rajagopalachari and their companions and add the spinning-wheel to their literary pursuits. I promise that both the History of Lalaji and the Sanskrit studies of Pandit Santanam will in no way suffer for the change of occupation.

I commend Lalaji's reference to the proposed Round Table Conference to those public men who, actuated by the finest instinct in man, are trying to hasten a settlement for the purpose of securing the

¹ Not reproduced here

² Lajpat Rai and Santanam were sentenced on January 7, 1921

³ Only excerpts reproduced here

discharge of the prisoners who are in jail for the crime of loving their country and obeying the voice of conscience. We may put no obstacles in the way of an honourable settlement, but we would be unjust to the imprisoned patriots if out of consideration for their bodily comforts, we were hustled into an unsatisfactory peace. We would not read correctly the temper of the country if we yielded unjustifiably a tittle for the sake of minimizing self-invited sufferings.

A CORRECTION

Shrimati Urmila Devi sends the following correction from Calcutta which I gladly publish:

As I find a few mistakes in the printed interview in *Young India* arising out of the fact that it was given in a hurry and your representative consequently missed a few points, I would request you to publish the following corrections in *Young India*:

1. In answer to the question as to what I thought of the present general situation in Bengal I said:

It is marvellous. Bengal has come to her own now. During the last session of the A.I.C.C. meeting in Delhi, I was sad because I felt that Bengal was not responding fully to the swadeshi programme and consequently was not in a position to lead this movement. I always want Bengal to lead in every movement. Now I have not the least apprehension, for, I feel that Bengal is leading now.

2. In answer to the question as to the cause of the present outburst in Bengal, I said:

The illegal order of the Government is the general cause. The arrests of ladies and leaders have given a great impetus to Bengal.

AN INSTRUCTIVE TABLE

By the courtesy of the Secretary of the Reception Committee I am able to give the following table showing the number of delegates who attended the Congress and their composition:

NUMBER OF DELEGATES

No. of delegates

<i>No.</i>	<i>Name of Province under the Constitution</i>		<i>Actual Arrivals</i>
1.	Andhra	360	383[sic]
2.	Kerala	160	33
3.	Maharashtra	292	263
4.	Karnatak	320	304
5.	Gujarat	185	185

6.	Bombay	18	17
7.	Burma	100	56
8.	Punjab and N.W.F.	540	518
9.	Sind	71	63
10.	Delhi	100	92
11.	Rajputana	400	399
12.	Utkal	300	108
13.	C.P. (Marathi)	50	44
14.	Assam	63	17
15.	Berar	61	58
16.	Madras	410	162
17.	Bengal	986	373
18.	United Provinces	960	888
19.	C.P. (Hindustani)	209	205
20.	Bihar	588	558
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		6,173	4,726

ANALYSIS OF THE ATTENDANCE

No.	Ladies	Mussul- mans	Parsis	Sikhs	Antyajjas	The rest
1.	8	10				365
2.	1					32
9						253
4.	9	29				266
5.	11	22	5		2	145
6.	3	2				15
7.						51
8.	17	67		54		380
9.	1	11				51
10.	7	13		4		68
11.	11	13				375
12.		3				105
13.	1	5				38
14.		2				15
15.	2	5				5
16.	2	13				147
17.	10	36		4		323
18.	10	114		3		761
19.	6	29				170
20.	<hr/> 7	<hr/> 83	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/> 468
	106	469	5	65	2	4,079 [sic]

It will be noticed that out of the total permissible (6,173) as many as 4,726 attended the Congress. Hitherto the number has been swelled by local delegates who could under the old constitution become delegates for the asking by simply paying Rs. 10. This time not even Pandit Malaviyaji could be regarded as a delegate because he was not elected. The actual attendance of 4,726 was, therefore, a fine record. That the United Provinces and Bengal, in spite of so many arrests, could have sent 888 and 373 respectively and the far off Assam should have sent 17 and Utkal 108, shows the keen interest that is being taken in the National Assembly. No less remarkable is the attendance of 106 lady delegates representing almost all the provinces. The attendance of 65 Sikh delegates must also be regarded as altogether remarkable. Hardly few [*sic*] Sikhs attended two years ago. But now that community is everywhere pushing itself forward in all national movements. The number of 469 Mussulman delegates is a good number, but we must not be satisfied till we have got the full quota which must be more than 1,200. I am sure that there were more than 2 "untouchable" delegates. I cannot imagine the Punjab and the Andhra provinces not sending any such delegates. The presence of 5 Parsi delegates is, of course, beyond their numerical proportion which is 2. The Parsis, as I have so often remarked, have in proportion to their numbers occupied the foremost place whether in point of sacrifice, attendance, ability or generosity. I know, as a matter of fact, that there were at least two Christians. And of course, if Messrs Stokes and George Joseph had been free, they would have attended. But it is up to the Hindus and the Mussulmans to go out of their way to induce a more general interest in the movement on the part of the Christian community.

VISITORS

If the attendance of delegates was most satisfactory, that of visitors was not less so. The troubled state of the country scared away the richest men, and so not a single ticket for Rs. 5,000 each was taken up. 21, however, paid Rs. 1,000 each, 20 paid Rs. 500 each, 162 Rs. 100 each, 81 Rs. 50 each and 1,686 Rs. 25 each, making a total of Rs. 93,400 in receipts. The Reception Committee contributed more than its quota. The total strength was filled up, the receipts being Rs. 78,625. 11,261 season tickets of Rs. 3 each were issued permitting attendance everywhere at the Congress sessions. 64,469 four-anna tickets were issued. As I have already remarked the issue of season

and entrance tickets had to be stopped owing to the great rush. Altogether Rs. 2,49,527 were received by the Reception Committee in various fees.

ALL-INDIA CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE

This Conference held under the presidency of Mr. Mukerji was striking for the interest it evinced in the political life of the country. From the President down to the ordinary delegate, there was insistence on the necessity of Indian Christians sharing the national awakening.

We must demonstrate by words and deeds that Christianity has made us neither un-Indian nor un-national. Can it be for a moment conceived that we as a community shall dissociate ourselves from our brethren, Hindus and Mussulmans, whatever differences there may be in our religious convictions ?, says Professor S. C. Mukerji. The Conference adopted sixteen resolutions touching almost every phase of national life. It condemned the repressive measures, urged withdrawal of Government notifications and discharge of prisoners, it advised non-co-operators to suspend the campaign of non-co-operation, urged a round table conference, approved of total prohibition, sympathized with the Indians beyond the seas. I must give the full text of the swadeshi resolution showing as it does the extent to which the spirit of swadeshi has touched the Indian Christian mind:

This Conference is strongly of opinion that a true swadeshi spirit should dominate every sphere of Indian Christian life which would, in its turn, serve to give a real impetus to all indigenous enterprises in the country. That as an art expression of our swadeshi spirit we must forthwith start wearing clothes of Indian manufacture. In view of the fact that the Indian Christian community has been very frequently and severely accused of lacking the swadeshi spirit, this Conference recommends that all Provincial Leagues make strenuous efforts to find ways and means of inculcating the swadeshi spirit in the Indian Christians through the local leagues and lose no time in putting such a programme into effect.

All this is very encouraging. I hope that the resolution will be followed up by corresponding action and that charkha and khadi will be as popular among the Indian Christians as they have become among the Hindus and Mussulmans. It remains for the Hindus and Mussulmans to cherish the response of the Conference and make it a point to cultivate the friendliest relations with the Christian countrymen.

MORE NOTABLE ARRESTS

News of arrests continue to pour in from all sides. Shyam Babu's¹ pen will no more adorn the columns of the *Servant*. He has been imprisoned because he will not recognize the authority of the court by giving evidence as a witness. The Congress resolution neither requires one to go to that length nor prevents one from so doing. Shyam Babu has chosen the more unbending attitude. Having got the chance of joining the workers in the Calcutta prisons, he would not miss it. The readers of the *Servant* which established for itself a stable reputation within two years of its inauguration in the face of great difficulties will miss his directing hand. But I have no doubt that Shyam Babu is better serving the country by being in jail. His example of suffering is a more powerful editorial than what even his able pen could produce.

Karnatak has been honoured with the imprisonment of Mr. Majli who took Mr. Deshpande's place in Belgaum. For his parting message he has reproduced the late Mr. Hume's words, "What avail your wealth, your learning, Empty titles, sordid trade? True self-rule were worth them all, Nations by themselves are made." Mr. Majli was asked to furnish security to be of *good behaviour*. As he did not know that he was guilty of bad behaviour, he refused to furnish security and preferred to go where persons of good behaviour find today their true shelter. Mr. Majli wants to be discharged from prison only by a free India and prays to all to wear pure khadi, the emblem of pure and liberated India, and discard foreign clothes, the emblem of foreign yoke.

For default similar to Mr. Majli's, Dr. B. Subramaniam, Secretary, Andhra Provincial Congress Committee, has been sentenced to one year's rigorous imprisonment at Cocanada.

THE GURDWARA MOVEMENT

The latest *communique* from the Sikh Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee shows that the Commissioner offered to return the Keys of the Golden Temple at Amritsar upon certain conditions. To this belated offer the following spirited reply was sent by Sardar Bhagat Jaswant Singh. After acknowledging the official communication he says:

¹ Shyam Sunder Chakravarty

I have the honour to draw your attention to the following resolution passed by the S.G.P. Committee on the 6th December 1921:

Resolved that no Sikh should agree to any arrangement about the restoration of the Keys of the Golden Temple, unless and until all the Sikhs arrested in connection with the Keys affair are released unconditionally.

I am, therefore, instructed to inform you that the Committee cannot avail itself of the proffered temporary and conditional restoration of Keys, unaccompanied by the unconditional release of all the Sikhs arrested in connection with the Keys affair.

The Sikh *communiqué* appends the following pertinent observations to the foregoing:

From the above correspondence it is clear that the Government has got to objection now to handing over the Keys of the Durbar Saheb to the Shiromani Committee temporarily, pending the decision of the civil suit regarding the Golden Temple. Could not the Government have adopted this very attitude from the beginning? While the Keys remained with the Gurdwara Committee, the Government could at the same time have pleased itself by carrying on its civil suit in which, of course, as now the Gurdwara Committee would have taken no part. Where was the necessity of creating so much heart-burning by taking away the Keys forcibly and arresting hundreds of Sikhs for protesting against high-handed action the futility of which the Government now tacitly admits?

APOLOGIZING

It is reported from Allahabad that “eight accused under the Criminal Law Amendment Act were released on tendering apology and regretting the joining of illegal associations and unseemly and foolish agitations”¹ Having known what happened only a few months ago in Mathura, I distrust this message. In Mathura, sham non-co-operators were arrested and were made to apologize; and then it was claimed on behalf of the authorities that non-co-operators had apologized. But whilst I distrust the message, I would like workers to profit by it. We need not be surprised if, when large bodies of young men are daily being imprisoned, some of them weaken and retrace their steps, especially if the treatment even temporarily is anything like what was given to Mahadev Desai.¹ It is better for us to be satisfied with fewer imprisonments rather than that we should have weak persons offering themselves under the impulse of the moment and then succumbing.

¹ *Vide* “Notes”, 5-1-1922, under the sub-title “Jail Treatment”.

ABOUT LAWYERS

The Jamnalal Bajaj¹ fund of one lac of rupees that was given last year for the support of lawyers who had suspended practice as a result of the Nagpur resolution² is nearly, as it was intended to be, exhausted. The lawyers cannot go back to practice with any show of decency, and I am sure that many will not countenance even the idea of a return when the country is showing such a wonderful example of self-sacrifice. But it would not be proper to leave the lawyers to their own resources. I would, therefore, certainly suggest to the Provincial Committees that they should take up the burden subject to assistance from the central fund, if it was at all found necessary. The rearrangement should be quickly made so as to avoid suspense and delay in the even tenor of national work.

This, however, is the least among the difficulties that surround the lawyer class at the present moment. They are eager to take part in the national awakening. The spirit is willing, the flesh is weak. I still feel that practising lawyers cannot lead. They cannot but weaken a movement which demands complete, almost reckless, sacrifice. The whole cause can be lost if top men weaken at a supreme crisis. But the Congress has purposely opened an honourable door for them. The original draft was perhaps uncertain as to any but full non-co-operators being entitled to sign the volunteer pledge. The conditions for them are easy of fulfilment, being mostly matters of belief. The use of khadi may cause some little inconvenience at first but I feel sure that they will not mind it, if otherwise they believe in the requirements of the pledge. And as among non-co-operators imprisonment covers a multitude of defects, practising lawyers who go through the fire of imprisonment will by that one fact come to occupy the position of honour which once was theirs. There is also the general resolution appealing to and inviting all including full co-operators to take up such activities as do not admit of any sacrifice or any difference of opinion. I hope, therefore, that lawyers will to the best of their ability and opportunity respond to the country's call in many of the various ways open to them. Where all are expected to help none should be found wanting or indifferent. Non-co-operators on their

¹ 1889-1942; merchant, banker, social worker and philanthropist; devoted follower of Gandhiji; served as Treasurer of the Congress for many years

² On non-co-operation adopted at the Nagpur Congress in 1920

part instead of priding themselves upon their achievements should be humble enough to receive all the aid that might be rendered to the country's cause. The spirit of toleration should take the place of intolerance and exclusiveness. It can do no credit to the movement or good to the cause if a man who has nothing or little to sacrifice claims by reason of his putting on khaki the right of slighting practising lawyers or others who may be honestly and according to their lights serving the country in various ways. Whatever is offered upon the altar of service to the motherland with a willing heart must be thankfully received.

DISTRESS WARRANTS

Inquiries are being made in several places as to what should be done in cases where fines are imposed and distress warrants issued for recovery. One finds a readiness to suffer imprisonment and assaults but not loss of goods. The anomaly is at first sight difficult to understand but it is really easy to appreciate. We are so much tied down to our goods and other possessions that when no disgrace attaches to imprisonment, we prefer the inconvenience to loss of property. But we must perceive that we will lose a winning game if we are not prepared to sacrifice our earthly possessions as well as bodily ease for the sake of it. In an ill-managed State, a man with conscience pawns to it his goods, all other wealth, and his body and sets his conscience free. This struggle, therefore, can give us victory only if we become indifferent to everything through which the State can press us into subjection to its will. We must be prepared, therefore, to let our goods and our land be taken away from us and rejoice over the dispossession even as we rejoice today over imprisonments. We may rest assured that the Government will be more quickly tired of selling our chattels than it is already of taking charge of our bodies. And if we are sure, as we must be, of winning full swaraj before long, we must have faith enough to know that all the land that can be taken away will return to us intact and the best part even of money. When Belgium was overrun by the Germans, the Belgians knew that they would return to their own lands so long as they retained the will to suffer for the restoration of their property. The late General Botha¹ was a fugitive from his own rich possessions including hundreds of acres of land

¹ 1862-1919; Boer general and statesman; Prime Minister of the Transvaal, 1907, and of South African Union 1910-19

and finest cattle in South Africa. He did not count the cost, put up a fine fight and became virtually the crowned king of South Africa and had all his property returned to him with honour. We may not do less than the Boers and the Belgians especially as ours is a struggle in which we are pledged to make all sacrifice and exact none. We must voluntarily though temporarily embrace poverty if we will banish pauperism and pariahdom from the land. The sacrifice of the ease by a few of us is nothing compared to the reward which is in store for us, viz., the restoration of the honour and prosperity of this holy land.

Young India, 12-1-1922

198. NEXT IS GUNPOWDER

The reader will peruse with careful attention the informing resume¹ by K. of the new type of repression that is fast coming into vogue. It is possible that there is exaggeration in the details but almost all the reports hitherto received from non-co-operation quarters have proved so accurate and the denials so false that I am not disposed to discount the graphic details collected by K. from the correspondence received by me and from the newspapers.

The police are mostly our own countrymen but it is evident that they are being incited to become lawless by the example and the precept of their superior officers. When a mob becomes unruly, it knows no better; when the police become unruly, their action is deliberate and unpardonable. The mob frenzy can be controlled, the police frenzy spells disaster for an unprepared people. We have groaned under it all these long years. Thank God, India is today prepared to meet the ordered frenzy of the Government.

We must tear down the mask of the so-called. enforcement of the ordinary law against so-called intimidators and we must invite and welcome honest martial law. O'Dwyerism² and Dyerism³ are honest ideals, be they ever so indefensible. But what is going on in India today is indescribable hypocrisy.

If it is true that under the cover of distress warrants the police have entered our homes in Banaras and taken away ornaments even

¹ Not reproduced here

² The repression practised by Sir Michael O'Dwyer, Lieutenant- Governor of the Punjab, and General Dyer during the Punjab disorders of 1919

³ *ibid*

from the inmates, if it is true that in Bulandshahr under the pretence of preserving order they have entered people's homes in order to assault them, if it is true that they have stripped prisoners almost naked in order to execute distress warrants, the case is complete for the fiercest civil disobedience of the most aggressive type consistently with the preservation of non-violence on our side. We must not wait for gunpowder to be used upon helpless people nor can we afford to put an undue strain upon the people's patience by merely remaining on the defensive and letting the Government agents pillage and plunder our homes. We must draw the gunpowder on our own heads and that too at the earliest possible opportunity. We, the principal workers, cannot afford to watch with philosophic calmness these exasperating criminal assaults upon inoffensive people although they are volunteers and have, therefore, undertaken to suffer.

The shooting of a Mussulman youth by a European "youth," (are European youths armed?) for the crime of wearing or selling (whichever it was) a khaki cap, cannot be passed by in silence. We must avenge the wrong if necessary by inviting the shooting on our own heads.

The Government want to goad us into violence or abject submission. We must do neither. We must retort by such civil disobedience as would compel shooting.

They want civil war. We must not play into their hands. Here is what I call open canvassing for civil war. The Magistrate of Aligarh is responsible for the following circular¹ to the *raises*² of the Aligarh District:

As you are doubtless aware the Khilafat and Congress Volunteers have been declared by the Local Government to be illegal associations and orders have been received for their suppressions. . . .

The number of police at my disposal is limited and I am very reluctant to ask for military assistance. . . .

I am, therefore, writing to a number of the leading *raises* and gentlemen of the District to ask for their assistance....I would ask you kindly to select 50 of your retainers and tenants, stout able-bodied men, whom you could send in, on receiving a message that they are required for enrolment as special police.

¹ Only excerpts reproduced here

² Men of property

A present it is only necessary that selection of the men should be made and list prepared of their names and residence. . . .

We must refuse the bait by letting the gullible *raises* do as they like. We must seek only such forms of civil disobedience as would prevent any clash with our own people, whether turned into civil guard or still laymen. Given unflinching courage and preservation of complete non-violence, the fight can be brought to a victorious end inside of a month. May God grant India light and courage.

I had hoped that the pledge to face death was a distant event. Evidently God wills that we must be tested thoroughly and well. In His name was the battle begun. He must give us the strength to go through it.

Young India, 12-1-1922

199. *DESHBANDHU'S ADDRESS*¹

I must apologize to the public for the delay in issuing Deshbandhu Das's presidential address. It was received by me in a fragmentary condition with instructions to revise it and put it in shape. The reader will be glad to learn that beyond restoring one sentence which had been ruled out and adding one to complete a thought and beyond slight verbal immaterial alterations, the address is being printed as received. I see from the sentences ruled out in the original that Deshbandhu's intention was to give a review of the year's work and his considered opinion in detail on non-co-operation. But sufficient appears in the printed text to enable us to know his opinion. We know it, too, from his emphatic and stirring messages to the country just before he was silenced. In appreciating the address the reader will be helped to know that it was prepared just before his arrest. The reader will not fail to note the marked self restraint with which the address is prepared as also the fact that Deshbandhu believes in non-violence as his final creed. That the only use the Government has for such a man is to put him in prison is about the greatest condemnation it can pronounce upon itself.

Young India, 12-1-1922

¹ Owing to his arrest, C. R. Das could not deliver his presidential address at the Congress session at Ahmedabad in December, 1921; it was subsequently published in *Young India* with this prefatory note by Gandhiji.

200. LIBERTY OF THE PRESS

One by one the pretensions of the Government that the reforms¹ represent more liberty and more concession to popular feeling are dropping out under the stress of circumstances. The pretensions can be justified only if they can stand the test under a severe strain. Liberty of speech means that it is unassailed even when the speech hurts; liberty of the Press can be said to be truly respected only when the Press can comment in the severest terms upon and even misrepresent matters, protection against misrepresentation or violence being secured not by an administrative gagging order, not by closing down the Press but by punishing the real offender, leaving the Press itself unrestricted. Freedom of association is truly respected when assemblies of people can discuss even revolutionary projects, the State relying upon the force of public opinion and the civil police, not the savage military at its disposal, to crush any actual outbreak of revolution that is designed to confound public opinion and the State representing it.

The Government of India is now seeking to crush the three powerful vehicles of expressing and cultivating public opinion and is thus once more, but happily for the last time, proving its totally arbitrary and despotic character. The fight for swaraj, the Khilafat, the Punjab means fight for this threefold freedom before all else.

The *Independent* is no longer a printed sheet. The *Democrat* is no more. And now the sword has descended upon the *Pratap* and the *Kesari* of Lahore. The *Vande Mataram*, Lalaji's child, has warded off the blow by depositing Rs. 2,000 as security. The other two have had their first security forfeited and are now given ten days' notice to deposit Rs. 10,000 each or close down. I hope that the security of Rs. 10,000 will be refused.

I assume that what is happening in the United Provinces and the Punjab will happen in the others in due course unless the infection is prevented from spreading by some action on the part of the public.

In the first place I would urge the editors of the papers in question to copy the method of the *Independent* and publish their views in writing. I believe that an editor who has anything worth saying and who commands a clientele cannot be easily hushed so long as his body is left free. He has delivered his finished message as soon as he is put under duress. The Lokamanya spoke more eloquently

¹ The Montford Reforms of 1919

from the Mandalay fortress than through the columns of the printed *Kesari*. His influence was multiplied a thousandfold by his incarceration and his speech and his pen had acquired much greater power after he was discharged than before his imprisonment. By his death he is editing his paper without pen and speech through the sacred resolution of the people to realize his life's dream. He could not possibly have done more if he were today in the flesh preaching his *mantra*¹. Critics like me would perhaps be still finding fault with this expression of his or that. Today all criticism is hushed and his *mantra* alone rules millions of hearts which are determined to raise a permanent living memorial by the fulfilment of his *mantra* in their lives.

Therefore, let us first break the idol of machinery and leaden type. The pen is our foundry and the hands of willing copyists our printing machine. Idolatry is permissible in Hinduism when it subserves an ideal. It becomes a sinful fetish when the idol itself becomes the ideal. Let us use the machine and the type whilst we can to give unfettered expression to our thoughts. But let us not feel helpless when they are taken away from us by a "paternal" Government watching and controlling every combination of types and every movement of the printing machine.

But the handwritten newspaper is, I admit, a heroic remedy meant for heroic times. By being indifferent to the aid of the printing room and the compositor's stick we ensure their free retention or restoration for all time.

We must do something more. We must apply civil disobedience for the restoration of that right before we think of what we call larger things. The restoration of free speech, free association and free Press is almost the whole swaraj. I would, therefore, respectfully urge the conference² that is meeting on Saturday next³ at the instance of Pandit Malaviyaji and other distinguished sons of India to concentrate upon the removal of these obstacles on which all can heartily join than upon the Khilafat, the Punjab and swaraj. Let us take care of these precious pennies and that pound will take care of itself.

Young India, 12-1-1922

¹ Literally, a sacred verse

² Of leaders of all parties

³ January 14, at Bombay

201. INTERVIEW TO “THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE”

[Before January 14, 1922]

Mahatma Gandhi who has expressed his readiness to attend the Conference, interviewed by our representative, stated that there was no budging from the position that had been taken up by the Congress regarding the Round Table Conference and the conditions¹ that he had defined in the Congress Subjects Committee as precedent to any such conference must be satisfied by Government before the Congress could be expected to fall in with the idea. So far as he was concerned, his object in accepting the invitation, said Mahatmaji, was to see if he could bring round his Moderate friends on the narrow issue which he had presented to the readers of *Young India* lastweek²—namely, the issue of freedom of speech and freedom of association. Mahatmaji hoped it would be possible to persuade his Moderate friends to see eye to eye with the Congress on that issue.

The Bombay Chronicle, 14-1-1922

202. SPEECH AT LEADERS’ CONFERENCE, BOMBAY³

January 14, 1922

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya opened the proceedings . . . and requested Sir Sankaran Nair⁴ to take the Speaker’s chair. Sir Sankaran Nair then took the chair and called upon Mr. M. A. Jinnah⁵ to place draft proposals on behalf of the conveners before the Conference for its consideration. After Mr. Jinnah had done this, the Speaker called upon Mr. Gandhi to open the discussion.

Mr. Gandhi began by thanking the conveners for bringing all parties together on a common platform and added that he was pining for an opportunity to lay bare his heart to his Moderate friends. He pointed out that so far as he was personally concerned, he was quite willing to attend any conference without making any conditions; but so far as the Congress and the non-co-operators were concerned, the position was different. Certain conditions which he outlined in his speech, including the release of political prisoners besides those imprisoned under the Criminal Law Amendment Act and the Seditious Meetings Act, must, he said, necessarily be fulfilled

¹ *Vide* “Speech at Subjects Committee Meeting, Ahmedabad”, 28-12-1921.

² *Vide* “The Immediate Issue”, 5-1-1922.

³ Published in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 18-1-1922, under the sub-title “Official Report of Proceedings”. An earlier report appeared in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 16-1-1922, excerpts from which have been given in footnotes wherever necessary.

⁴ 1857-1934; President, Indian National Congress, 1897; Judge of the Madras High Court; appointed member of the Viceroy’s Executive Council in 1915

⁵ 1876-1948; Muslim leader; founder and first Governor-General of Pakistan

by the Government before the non-co-operators could accede to the proposal for a round table conference. He did not insist on the humiliation of anybody, not even General Dyer, but was only concerned to see that the Government went to the Round Table Conference in the true spirit of penitently undoing the harm which their action had caused.¹ He mentioned a long list of events which had caused great discontent in the country and added that unless these causes were removed and the harm undone, the Round Table Conference would not be held in the proper atmosphere of peace and harmony. In accepting the invitations to the Conference, he and his fellow non-co-operators wanted to prove their sympathy for the object of the Conference but beyond that he was of opinion that it would be fair to all sections who had met there that the non-co-operators should not be parties to the resolutions of the Conference, though he promised his co-operation in the deliberations of the Conference and his

¹ Here *The Bombay Chronicle*, 16-1-1922, has: "Mahatmaji mentioned a long list of Government's sins of omission and commission which had made the situation what it was today, which was worse than that under martial law. And he mentioned, as an illustration, the case of Sitamarhi in Bihar which had been saddled with punitive police. He asked the Conference if they realized what the stationing of punitive police meant, and as long as such things were happening in the country by the express sanction of Government, the talk of a conference must be futile. Continuing, he regretfully acknowledged that some non-co-operators had been guilty violence and he apologized to them all for such conduct. But barring such incidents which were few and far between, the progress made by the non-co-operation movement was quite satisfactory and he had no reason to be disappointed with the results already achieved. As regards the suffering voluntarily and cheerfully borne by his co-workers, Mahatmaji pointed out that not one of the sufferers had ever complained. There was Maulana Shaukat Ali who had lost 30 lbs. in weight during his incarceration but he had wanted to reduce his weight. Dr. Kitchlew wanted to gain in weight and he had gained, while Pandit Motilal Nehru had found the rest in jail which he had vainly looked for when free. As for Lala Lajpat Rai he was using his time in writing a text-book for national schools. So that, said Mahatma Gandhi, who adroitly gave a humorous turn to this portion of his speech, they had no reason to regret it at all.

"Proceeding Mahatmaji pointed out that in accepting the invitation to the Conference, the non-co-operators merely wanted to prove their sympathy for and with the conveners, but beyond it, they did not intend to be party to the passing of the resolutions by the present Conference. But that did not mean that they did not want to associate themselves in the effort to bring about an honourable settlement under a proper atmosphere. There was a wall between the N.C.O.'s and other parties. It could not be broken without the former surrendering a vital principle or by the latter joining them. A conference was not their goal, but a proper declaration of penitence on the part of the Government, and there could be no favourable atmosphere until the Government retraced their steps"

support on behalf of his party and, in particular, the Working Committee of the Congress in arriving at proper conclusions.

The Speaker then invited a general discussion in which Messrs S. R. Bomanji, J. A. Wadia, J. B. Petit, S. Srinivasa Iyengar, Sheshagiri Ayer, Satyamurti, Gokaran Nath Misra and Kunzru took part.

Mr. Gandhi in reply explained why the non-co-operators had not identified themselves with the resolutions of the Conference and also the reason why it was desirable for them to do so. He appealed to the Moderates and the Independents to form a link between the Government and the non-co-operators and added that the non-co-operators were willing to give them every help to make the work of the Conference a success.

In the course of the debate, Mr. Gandhi spoke on behalf of the non-co-operators once more making clear his position as their leader with reference to the resolutions accepted by the Conference.¹

The Bombay Chronicle, 18-1-1922

203. WOMEN OF GUJARAT

When Smt. Vasanti Devi Das, Urmila Devi Sen and, Suniti Devi were arrested², some sisters from Ahmedabad decided to form a Volunteer Corps and court arrest. Consequently, forms of the pledge were placed before them. The first idea was to publish the list after fifty names had been enrolled. This happened before the Congress session.

Meanwhile, the Bengali ladies were released. The Government did not have the strength to hold them for long. In consequence, the publication of the Ahmedabad list was suspended, though signatures continued to be obtained. As a result of the effort, about 140 women signed up and more are following suit. Of these, three women have had some experience of jail in the past.

Of what consequence, however, are the signatures by themselves? What is of inestimable value is the firm determination which, we hope, has inspired them.

¹ *The Bombay Chronicle*, 16-1-1922, has: "Before adjourning, the Conference appointed a Committee finally to settle the terms of the resolutions to be placed before the Conference today [January 15]."

² *Vide* "Women's Part", 15-12-1921.

If, in this way, the signatures have value, the responsibility of those who have obtained them has also increased. And since I am the author of this idea, my responsibility is the greatest.

If it had been merely a matter of replacing one Government by another, I would never have advised women to come forward. I have seen that there is much sordid work in an effort to secure that. But, at the end of this struggle, we hope to establish *Ramarajya*¹ and the poor hope to get protection, women to live in safety and the starving millions to see an end of hunger. When the struggle ends, we hope to see the resurrection of the spinning-wheel, decrease in the poison of communal discord, eradication of the practice of untouchability so that the so called untouchables may look forward to being treated as our brothers, the closing of the liquor shops and the disappearance of the drinkhabit, the preservation of the Khilafat and the protection of the cow, the healing of the Punjab wounds, the restoration of our traditional culture to its rightful place and the introduction, in every home of the spinning-wheel to take its place along with the oven.

How can women stand aside from a movement which is inspired by such great hopes? I have, therefore, been requesting women to come forward and take part in it. It is these hopes, I think, which have roused women throughout the country.

But should I, trusting to this enthusiasm, advise women to go to jail? I feel that I cannot do otherwise. If I did not encourage them to do so, that would be a reflection on my faith in them. A *yajna* is incomplete without women taking part in it. Fearlessness is just as essential for women as it is for men. I thought, therefore, that it would be good if women give their signatures and get used to the idea of going to jail. It also occurred to me that if women ceased being frightened by the thought of jail, it would be easier for men to court arrest.

But just as I have a responsibility, so also have these sisters who have made a beginning. Having given their signatures, they should start work. Women can picket liquor shops. Customers will surely be put to shame by their presence. If any women want to take up this work, they will have to carry wooden plates round their necks,² like Abbas Saheb. They will also have to find out the homes of drink-addicts and persuade them to abstain. I would first suggest to the women that they should postpone the picketing of liquor shops

¹ Rule of Rama, traditionally regarded as the ideal political and social order

² *Vide* "Nadiad's Effort" in the succeeding item.

for the present and start going round to sell khadi. Pure khadi is not available in all khadi shops. Moreover, those who have not so far thought about swadeshi will not go to these shops and will wear khadi only if it is taken to their doors. If women carry khadi with them, they can display it and thus tempt even those who wear foreign cloth or mill-made cloth to buy it. They should go from house to house and sell khadi. They should also keep a stock of khadi caps and sell these. As they go about doing this, they will lose their fear and the Government then will feel impelled to arrest them. As long as the work does not affect the Government's revenues nor increase the people's strength in any way, it will not arrest women. Besides, it will be more fitting if women think of going to jail after they have developed capacity for organized work.

I also hope that women will fulfil the conditions of the pledge they have taken. I believe that they will remain peaceful and bear love for Hindus, Muslims and all others. But will they wear pure khadi even in their homes? Will they regard *Dhed*¹ and *Bhangis* as brothers? Will they stop giving left-over and rotten food to them and cease to regard themselves as defiled by contact with them? The women who have given their signatures belong to all communities. If these women can fulfil their pledge in its true spirit, then the 140 will soon become 1,400 and this number will rise to 14,00,000.

It is in this hope and faith that I give the sacred names of these women.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-1-1922

204. MY NOTES

NADIAD'S EFFORT

It would appear that the efforts made at Nadiad by Abbas Saheb and his band to court arrest have been wasted. They carried wooden plates hung from their necks. This certainly made good show, but it did not help them to get arrested. And so they were disappointed. A satyagrahi must never lose hope. He keeps on trying and trusts in God. It is for Him to give the reward, and He gives it as and when He wills. There is no arbitrariness in His will. He never makes a mistake.

¹ A backward Hindu Community traditionally regarded as untouchable

There is always pure justice in what He wills. This Judge, therefore, gives to us what our efforts deserve.

One reward has been gained. That Abbas Saheb should go about carrying a wooden plate hung from his neck and inscribed with slogans, is no ordinary event. What a contrast between what he was then, a judge admonishing others, and what he is now, an ex-judge who, with a wooden plate hanging from his neck, had sallied forth with his comrades, determined to let himself be manhandled by the police!

The effect on the students will be an additional gain. Those who do not come round even after this will feel ashamed of themselves. Their parents will also start thinking. How can children attend schools of a Government which can, in broad daylight, force open our houses without even a warrant from a court? In such schools, they will merely receive instruction but learn nothing. That is much too heavy a fee to pay for mere instruction. Who will want to be educated at the cost of his self-respect and integrity ?

Since those of us who go out for picketing remain courteous, our picketing is bound to have some results. Only those things which are intrinsically objectionable should be picketed, so that our action will be both morally justified and legitimate. As long as there is no coercion in our picketing we have the right to picket anything which public opinion condemns. We should not, however, exercise this right and start picketing all such items. Where there is a strong difference of opinion, picketing would be a form of coercion. Would it not annoy us if some article of which we approved but others disapproved was picketed? As a general rule, therefore, we should picket only those things against which public opinion has been educated fairly well. Personally, I am convinced that in Nadiad public opinion is opposed to Government schools. Where pupils have not been withdrawn from such schools, we have to take it that the parents are not in favour of such a step; and when the parents are not in favour, how can we say that public opinion is united behind non-co-operation?

Education is, of course, essential. A knowledge of letters is necessary, but it is not everything. It is not an end, it is only a means. What does it matter if one lacks knowledge of letters, provided one has understanding? The great teachers and reformers of the world were not men of letters. Had Christ or Mahomed any knowledge of letters? Yet the light which they gave and the service which they rendered,

neither learned philosophers nor economists have done. President Kruger of the Boers knew only enough to enable him to sign his name with difficulty. The late Amir of Afghanistan had also no better education. But both these were men of profound wisdom.

Some may protest that I am referring to uncommon men. That is true. But I am using these illustrations to prove that a knowledge of letters is not indispensable. Even today a large part of humanity is illiterate, but that does not mean that they are bereft of understanding. We live because of them. With their simple understanding, they keep the wheels of society moving. My point is that, if our children remain without education during the freedom struggle, both they and society will benefit. Just as we would be wise to abandon for the time being any building in which poisonous gases had spread, so we shall profit if we abandon Government schools which are poisonous in their own way. Those parents who will not understand even this are probably not impatient for swaraj. The Government has forcibly taken over municipal schools in Nadiad and, if we still send our children to these schools, then we deserve the treatment we have received. It was, therefore, right that Abbas Saheb and his comrades went about with wooden plates hanging from their necks.

PEOPLE'S SPIRIT

The spirit of the people of Surat, Ahmedabad and Nadiad is being tested. The municipalities in all these cities are non-co-operating in the matter of education.¹ In all three, the people's chosen representatives have, by a majority, nationalized the education being given by the municipality. The Government's action in taking possession of the school buildings cannot be tolerated.

It is for the people to see that this robbery perpetrated by the Government is not rewarded. If parents refuse to send their children to schools run in the name of the Government and teachers refuse to serve in them, the buildings forcibly taken over by it will remain empty and the funds which have been illegally confiscated will be returned. We must not get frightened by the Government's robbery but rest confident that we shall get back the buildings and the funds which the Government has taken over.

But, until then, what about the children? If the public is

¹ *Vide* "Municipalities in Trouble", 15-12-1921 and "My Notes", 8-1-1922, under the sub-title "Gujarat's Good Fortune"

enlightened, we should be able to use the community buildings for teaching children; if even these are not available, we can teach them in open spaces, make them spin and sing hymns and teach them drill. In accordance with the Congress Resolution¹, most of the teachers should get ready to go to jail. We should, therefore, change the present system of education so that a minimum of teachers will be required. I would have no hesitation in handing over the children to the care of elderly women. They will, of course, be spinning; in addition, they will keep an eye on the pupils. If the latter have been taught good manners, they will be more respectful to these women and learn to be more courteous. The women, on their part, will be doing a service.

.WOMEN'S CONTRIBUTION

Women must make their full contribution in this struggle. They served as volunteers and made the Congress session a great success. This was the first experiment of its kind in the history of the Congress. It is a matter of joy for Gujarat that this good fortune fell to its women. The experiment was a complete success and created a good impression on all. If women start contributing their share in every field of service which is safe for them, our capacity for work will be doubled.

We also know that the Government will not, as far as possible, arrest women. Men, of course, are to get themselves arrested. Women, therefore, will have to take over much of the men's work.

NEED FOR FEARLESSNESS

All that is needed for this purpose is fearlessness. Only those who are pure can possess it. Our minds have become so corrupt that we are always apprehensive about women's purity. In acting thus, we defame all people in the world. We regard woman as so weak that we think she is incapable of preserving her virtue, and man so fallen that his attitude towards woman can be only lustful. Both these notions are disgraceful. If our men and women are really what we think them to be, then we must confess that we are entirely unfit for swaraj. We have no reason to assume that Englishmen and women observe no restraints. Englishwomen do all kinds of work by way of service, whereas if we require a nurse, we find it difficult to get anyone who

¹ Adopted at Ahmedabad in December 1921; vide "Speech at Congress Session, Ahmedabad-I", 28-12-1921

will do the work.

If swaraj is really drawing nearer, women will daily become more capable of protecting their honour. They must shed their fear. The notion that a woman is incapable of preserving her virtue is false. It is contrary to experience and a matter of shame for both men and women. There certainly are brutish men in the world who commit such crimes, but that man does not exist nor will he ever be born who can force himself upon a woman who values her chastity. It has, of course, to be admitted that not every woman possesses this spiritual strength and purity. We ourselves have brought this about. From the very start, we train our girls in such a way that they become incapable of protecting themselves. By the time the girl has become a woman, the false teaching has taken firm hold of her and she is convinced that a woman is utterly helpless before a man, whoever he may be. If, however, there is such a thing as truth and purity in the world, I wish to state categorically that woman has within her sufficient strength to preserve her chastity. The woman who calls upon Rama when in danger will surely be protected by Him. Which evil man will dare to approach a woman who is prepared to die? Her very eyes will shine with such light that any vicious man will be unnerved by it.

The power to die everyone has but few desire to use it. When someone wishes to dishonour a woman, when a man is in danger of being overmastered by lust, such a man and woman have a right to commit suicide. It is indeed their duty to do so. Those who have the necessary strength of mind can do it with ease. Even in the grip of no matter how strong a person, any man or woman can kill himself or herself by biting off the tongue or, if the hands are free, by pressing the wind-pipe. If a person is prepared to risk death, no matter how securely he or she is tied,—tied to a tree— he can struggle himself free provided he does not mind broken bones. The strong overpower the weak because the latter cling to life and, therefore, do not resist to the point of death. A black ant sitting on a lump of jaggery will rather let its leg be broken than allow itself to be dragged away from it. If a child pulls very hard, its parents let go of its hand for fear that the arm may get dislocated. Every person has the strength necessary to let any limb of his be broken, but he cannot endure the resulting pain, the pain of dying. It is, however, the duty of every man or woman fighting for freedom to be ready to suffer this pain. If we pray to God daily for such strength, we shall surely receive it. I urge every sister to

pray thus on arising every morning: "O God, keep me pure, give me strength to preserve my chastity, strength to preserve it even at the cost of my life. With Thee as my Protector, whom need I fear ?", Such a prayer made with a pure mind will surely protect every woman.

BUT WHAT ABOUT MEN ?

As I discuss this matter, I feel ashamed of being a man. is man, who was born of woman, whose mother carried him for nine months, for whom she suffered pain, who slept only after putting him to sleep and ate only after she had fed him,—is man born an enemy of that mother's kind that they should live in fear of him? A woman does not run away from a tiger; she runs away only from man's lust. I have already pleaded with women. I wish to plead with men as well. Is not a man bound to remove the fears of women, of whom his mother was one? Should he not always pray: "Take my life before I cast lustful eyes upon any woman. If I ever incline to immorality, give me the strength to kill myself. Remove from me all uncleanness so that no woman will fear me but will feel safe with me as with a brother" ? I pray to God that, as long as our men are incapable of protecting our women, He should keep us in slavery. If in a country the men do not protect the women, they are not men at all and are fit only to remain slaves.

MY HOPE

But I am confident that in India both men and women know the limits they should observe. Both have tasted the sweetness of purity. The girl volunteer whom I saw was without fear. I was filled with joy to see a girl standing fearlessly near the Ellis Bridge and selling khadi caps. Did she fear anyone? She knew that all men were her brothers. If one is good oneself, so is the world. The women who flocked in their thousands to the Congress *pandal* went there without fear. If, therefore, women refrain from taking part in activities which are safe for them, it will be because of men's selfishness or the women's laziness or ignorance. If a woman is not allowed freedom from household chores or if she wastes her time in decking herself up or in gossiping, what service can she do to her country?

READINESS TO DIE

In the fact that Abbas Saheb was not arrested in Nadiad, God's purpose may be that he who has known the sufferings of the Punjab and has often wept over them, cannot escape with mere imprisonment.

Such a one can pass the test only by dying. It was Gujaratis who first passed the resolution of non-co-operation. How can imprisonment suffice for them? Their lot must be death. Can this possibly be the reason why God does not send Abbas Tyabji to jail?

To tell the truth, what fear has jail now for us? Does anyone mind the hardships of jail? The prisoners convey their view to me and tell me: "Do not, for our sakes, accept an unfavourable compromise. We are not impatient." We should not claim undeserved credit for braving dangers which have lost all terrors for us. There is no way for us but to go forward. The intermediary stage of receiving beatings is being cleared by the Punjab and it seems as if the country has left only death for us. I personally would wish it so. If India is required to conquer the fear of death as well, then may this burden fall upon Gujarat. Gujarat has enjoyed much praise. Death is not too great a price to pay for the honour of holding the Congress session here. And he who voluntarily meets death will ever rest in blessed sleep. Death is but a long sleep. Muslim and Christian friends believe that the dead shall rise again on the Day of Judgement. Hindus say that death is the passing from one body to another until finally one reaches the place where there is no sleep. All three believe that death is not complete annihilation. The test of one's faith in dharma comes at the moment of death. He who dies wailing, who does not want to die, descends into purgatory. Rather than die in this way, should we not go forth to meet death like a friend? It is beyond doubt that, if Gujaratis—Indians—shed the fear of death, the fewest will actually have to meet it. We are slaves because we are afraid. If we could get rid of the fear of jail, of being beaten, of dying, of losing our property, then we would never want to kill, would never kill, a single human being. Thus readiness to die goes hand in hand with giving up the desire to kill. When we are ready to die, no one will be particularly eager to kill us. This is why the universe has been described as a wave in one's mind. If we wish to inspire fear in others, only then shall we ourselves have cause for fear; we may be killed only if we wish to kill others. Serpents bite us only because they fear us.

It is easy to say that one should shed the fear of death, but I know that it is not easy to shed it. I do not, therefore, expect that all Gujarati men and women will give up this fear in a moment. But I do earnestly hope that there are in Gujarat passionate lovers of swaraj who have discarded all fear of death and stand eager to embrace death

for the sake of their country and their dharma. May their number increase, I pray, and may the time of our testing come soon.

READY TO SACRIFICE LIFE, BUT NOT PROPERTY

“We will go to jail, let ourselves be beaten, meet death, but will not sacrifice our property. Where has Congress made any mention of property ?” So say some brave warriors who are ready to die but not to let go their land or allow their cattle or goods to be sold. The reference to the Congress is meaningless. It made no separate mention of property assuming that one who is ready to die will be ready to lose his all. But our attachment to property, movable and immovable, is such that even when giving up our life we are not willing to part with it! This is, therefore, a matter to which we must give some thought.

For terrorizing us, the Government will use every means which can bring us to our knees. If it discovers that we regard a fine as more of a hardship than imprisonment, it will impose fines. Already in some places imprisonment and fines are imposed simultaneously.

We must completely give up our fear of losing property. Under a tyrannical government, the rich also have to be partners in tyranny. Under such a government, therefore, poverty becomes the path of virtue. We should thus realize that, if we want to non-co-operate, we must give up all attachment to wealth. Only when we are ready to starve to death rather than submit to tyranny will our non-co-operation be complete.

It should also be noted that when large numbers have shed the fear of punishment by fine, it becomes difficult for the Government to collect the amounts. It is far more troublesome to auction the property of a thousand people than to send them to jail. Punishment can be imposed only on a comparatively small number. When many people act in a particular way, it becomes almost impossible to stop them. Property may be confiscated, but to whom is it to be sold? Land may be taken over, but it cannot be picked up and put down somewhere else. Is there anyone who would be willing to bid for another's land?

Moreover, those who believe in swaraj should have faith in their expectation about the ultimate result. They should, therefore, have confidence that, even if their property is confiscated by the Government today, they will get it back when swaraj is won. General Botha owned thousands of acres. None possessed cattle like his. All this was seized by the British. But he did not yield. He held out with

determination and, finally, not only did he regain his property but became the *de facto* king of the whole of South Africa. He was confident that, if he survived, he would get back his property and, if he died, he would go to heaven. We who do not wish to resort to violence in our struggle should be even more unconcerned about our property. The question will be asked how we can maintain ourselves if our property is seized by the Government. If we have taken the pledge not to yield even if we starve, why should we worry about ourselves or our people starving? In this large country there will always be someone to give us food, and, moreover, we have with us now our beloved spinning-wheel. Why, then, should we worry? When a whole family has become expert in spinning and weaving, its members do not have the slightest reason to worry about their livelihood.

All our fear arises from lack of faith. If we put our faith in God, that is, if we trust that everything will happen as ordained by Him, we would never worry. But it is only when we on our part have done our best that we can console ourselves with “whatever is to happen will happen”. Man’s efforts are assuredly rewarded by God’s grace. Putting faith in God means that, even when our property is being seized, we continue to give Him our praise. If we praise Him in anticipation of our property being spared, that is only a bargain. God is not pining for bargains He wants devotion and He severely tests the love of His devotee. He is as cruel as He is merciful. When He judges, He shows consideration to none. He shows no favour. He rewards both devotees and unbelievers according to their deserts. The devotee does good and receives the right reward. The bad man’s actions are wicked and he gets his punishment.

In our struggle there is no room for hypocrisy, hatred or impatience. It is for this reason that it has been called a holy war. May Gujarat demonstrate religious spirit—I live in the confidence that she will.

THE PURCHASER WILL PERISH!

I hear that the Kheda District is pure only in name. The people there will not attack any Government employee but, should anyone come forward to bid for a *Patidar’s* property which is being auctioned, he cannot hope to escape with his life. The *Patidar*, so proud of his blood, will not miss an opportunity to have his revenge. What sort of non-violence is this? Whoever buys our property automatically becomes a Government man. If so, how can we, having

passed a resolution saying that no supporter of the Government should be injured, kill the person who buys our property? Moreover our pledge makes no such exception. If *Patidars* or others compromise their pledge in this manner, be it only in thought, we cannot win swaraj. Our pledge is not that we will secure swaraj by any means, fair or foul. It is the general principle of the Congress, which is especially binding on non-co-operators, that it will fight for swaraj by peaceful and truthful means. It must not be forgotten that the conditions of truth and non-violence are binding on all who join the Congress. There are innumerable occasions in non-co-operation when people may get provoked and start fighting. That is why, by way of added precaution, the adjective “non-violent” has been joined to it. I, therefore, hope that *Patidars* and others who are anxious to save the honour of Gujarat will banish from their minds all evil thoughts and shed every fear.

BARDOLI-ANAND

These two talukas owe a special duty. If they do not quickly get ready, Gujarat will be put to shame. The Hindus and Muslims of U.P. and Bengal and the Hindus, Sikhs and Pathans of the Punjab have already passed the test of fearlessness, of readiness for imprisonment and ability to endure beating. If, now, Bardoli and Anand which have been much talked of do not get ready soon, we shall lose face. We are, of course, ready for imprisonment, but we have to make ourselves fit, and cultivate the strength, to lay down our lives. If we become fit, we shall get the necessary strength. All should start wearing khadi. The Committee has with it some sacred khadi which was used in Khadi Nagar. This should be used first, and afterwards only khadi produced in one's own district should be worn. Women, too, should accept this common dharma. In every home people should work hard and spin strong, good quality yarn. Every village should take up carding, people should treat *Dheds* and *Bhangis* as brothers and serve them, admit their children to national schools and go personally to fetch them and show them kindness. They should also remove the fear of those in their midst who may be co-operating with the Government. Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, and Christians should cultivate good relations with-one another. What is difficult in all this? What sacrifice does it involve? The spinning-wheel and khadi bring us money. The other things require abandoning our wrong ideas. That cannot be a burden. I want the people of Bardoli to labour day and night to qualify

themselves and on the 20th at the latest send me an assurance, through their Secretary or President, or a written statement from either of them, that they are now fit and ready [for the campaign]. Similarly, the residents of Anand should by that date, or even earlier, send an assurance through Abbas Saheb.

IF THEY ARE TRUE

If these friends are true and bold, they should stop paying revenue to the Government from today onwards. Those, at any rate, who have resolved to join the fight should stop doing so. I hope the residents of the taluka will not first pay up the revenue and then declare that they are ready to fight.

WHAT ABOUT THE OTHERS ?

Some people tell me that the whole of Gujarat is ready to suspend payment of revenue and ask me if I would not advise them to do so. I can give no such advice. I would not restrain anyone who voluntarily withholds payment. Who am I to compel him? But I would not take the risk of advising all the people to stop payment of revenue.

We seek to serve no interest of our own by refusing to pay it. Our refusal must be civil. If we wish to disobey the revenue law civilly, it is essential that we purify ourselves. Hence, those who regard unity of Hindus, Muslims, Christians and Parsis as a moral obligation, who have understood the significance of non-violence, who treat *Dheds* and *Bhangis* as brothers and do not think themselves defiled by their touch, who wear khadi exclusively and have the courage to die and to let their property be confiscated, these may certainly withhold payment without seeking my advice.

This, however, refers to individuals. I can never advise the whole population to withhold payment so long as the slightest need remains to educate the people further. The main reason for this is that I am not convinced that people in all the talukas of Gujarat are ready to the extent that they will not give way to anger when their properties are auctioned on their withholding payment. It is, therefore, wiser to advise the general mass of people to pay. If any of them still refuse to pay, they may do as they choose. Those who pay may help in any other way they can. All people in the rest of the country will be paying revenue and will not, by doing so, have betrayed the cause. We shall seek their help in many other ways. I have, therefore, two

different courses to advise:

1. If Bardoli and Anand want to offer mass civil disobedience, the people in these talukas should withhold payment even if, in consequence, *Inami* lands¹ are taken over by the Government.

2. To the people in the remaining talukas, my advice is that they should pay up the revenue dues but help the non-co-operation movement in other ways.

Those who, despite this advice, withhold payment on their own responsibility, having firmly resolved to abide by all the conditions of the pledge, will deserve our congratulations. But they must not be puffed up with pride, thinking that they have displayed great courage and the rest have been timid, Believing that everyone serves according to his capacity, even those who make heavy sacrifices should remain humble and come forward to give even more.

SHRI MAHADEV'S LETTER

I reproduce below a letter from Shri Mahadev Desai, leaving out only the salutation and the signature.² I believe that the posting of the letter was a breach of jail discipline. In South Africa, I refused even to act upon such letters, but in this case I feel that Mahadev Desai's harmless breach of a rule is pardonable. There is no other way to expose in time the Dyerism being practised in jails. If anyone suffers for this indiscipline, it will be Mahadev himself. I will not mind if he, too, like Lakshminarayan, is flogged till he gets sores on the back. Mahadev did right in taking this risk and writing. If any time the Government gives the slightest latitude to prisoners, they may put it to good use as Mahadev has done in writing this letter. I do not at present wish to comment upon the facts given in it. At the moment, I am simply bathing in a sea of joy and amazement at the courage and restraint displayed by the country. I had not hoped for this degree of self-purification. The prisoners shouted cries of victory, not in a spirit of defiance but because they believed that they had a right to do so. When Mahadev drew Lakshminarayan's attention to the error, how candidly did he admit it at once? Truly, God's hand is behind our struggle.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-1-1922

¹ Lands held under privileged tenure

² The letter, not reproduced here, described the maltreatment, including flogging, of political prisoners, and mentioned particularly two volunteers, Kailash Nath and Lakshminarayan, who had been flogged.

205. EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR¹

*Sunday Morning [January 15, 1922]*²

I got your note just when I was in the thick of a meeting. I have now got up early to reply to your note and to frame resolutions for the 10 o'clock meeting.³

I have taken the insult offered to you as I have taken the insults offered to me by Mr. Patel⁴ not once but on many occasions. It has become second nature with him. I had really come to think that you and he had, somehow or other, become the best of friends. Now, if you permit me, I should like to show your letter to Mr. Patel for his own good. I take it, you know, that he and I frankly do not agree. His way is not my way. He knows that we travel in different directions, so much for Mr. Patel.

I have no party save that of Truth. I want to live for nothing but Truth. Whether you remain in the non-co-operation ranks, or whether you do not, I cannot desert you, even as I cannot desert Malaviyaji, no matter where I find him for the time being. For, I consider you to be a man of Truth. You have left in me the impression that you are too cultured to do anything wrong, knowing it to be such.

The Story of My Life, Vol. I, p. 524

¹ M. R. Jayakar (1873-1959); lawyer and liberal leader; Judge, Federal Court of India; Vice-Chancellor, Poona University

This letter was sent in reply to Jayakar's letter of January 14, 1922, in which he had complained about Vithalbhai Patel's remarks on the first day of the Leaders' Conference at Bombay.

² From the source

³ Presumably of the Committee set up on the previous day by the Leaders' Conference. Gandhiji dissociated himself from the resolutions passed by the Conference; *vide* the succeeding item.

⁴ Vithalbhai Patel (1873-1938); elder brother of Vallabhbhai Patel; called to the Bar in 1908; Member of the Bombay Legislative Councils first elected President of Indian Legislative Assembly, 1925-30

206. SPEECH AT LEADERS' CONFERENCE, BOMBAY

January 15, 1922

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

It is quite proper that Mr. N. V. Gokhale should ask three or four questions. He has asked those questions and I think I should render full explanation of what part I have taken in assisting the Committee to frame these resolutions. You will see there are not many vital changes in the resolutions as they were read to you yesterday. The Conference should remember that I do not propose to be a party to the resolutions of this Conference and so far as I am concerned, the non-co-operators also will not become parties. ("Hear, hear.") They will not take part in the discussion either. I am humbly of opinion that it is the special prerogative and duty of those who are not non-co-operators to consider fully the bearings of these resolutions and to accept them or to reject them as they choose. I defined the functions of non-co-operators yesterday and I repeat every word of what I said yesterday, and their function is this, namely, of advisers; but they do not identify themselves with these resolutions. That does not mean that they do not hold any opinion about these resolutions. They do certainly hold an opinion about these resolutions. There are certain things which the non-co-operators are called upon to do in the event of certain contingencies. Personally, I may explain to you what the attitude of the non-co-operators will be with reference to the obligations that these resolutions seek to impose upon them. With reference to the first resolution, I have absolutely nothing to say beyond what I said yesterday. I say it remains intact.

The second resolution also remains intact. With reference to that I have to tell the Conference, that I repeat the remark I made before the [Conference] Committee, that the resolution will be placed before the Working Committee², if it is sent to it officially by this Conference, and the Working Committee will consider that resolution, and I have assured the Conference Committee, and I repeat the assurance, that I

¹ According to *The Hindu*, 17-1-1922, the Committee appointed by the Conference on January 14 had met on January 15 before the resumption of the Conference and Gandhiji had attended this meeting "as an adviser and unofficially". The Conference resumed its session at 6 p.m. and this speech, taken from *The Hindu*, 18-1-1922, was published under the description "full text of Mahatma Gandhi's speech"

² Of the Congress

shall advise the Working Committee to suspend general civil disobedience contemplated by the Ahmedabad Congress resolution pending the negotiations that the Committee to be appointed by this House will enter into with Government in the hope that there will be a round table conference granted. But beyond the 31st of this month, it will not be possible for me to advise the country to suspend general civil disobedience. I must also tell you that I was pressed to extend that limit of time but I feel grieved that I could not do so. I want to tell the reason very briefly for my inability to do that. To me even 15 days matter. Another reason I placed before you yesterday in view of what was going on in the country today. As to the repressive acts in the country, in spite of the faults or the crimes that the non-co-operators may have committed, hold these acts of repression to be absolutely indefensible and the only answer that the non-co-operators can give is general civil disobedience. But in order to buy the support of those countrymen of mine who are not non-co-operators, in order to enlist their sympathy on our side, I have reluctantly said that we shall postpone general civil disobedience for a fortnight. ("Hear, hear.") I expect I shall be able to carry the Working Committee with me in this matter. We had an informal discussion on the subject last night amongst ourselves—the non-co-operators, and I was authorized by them to say that they had decided to wait for a fortnight in order to enable the Committee appointed by this Conference to enter into negotiations with the Viceroy. That will put us square with the Viceroy and show that we are reasonable people. We do not taboo a round table conference if a round table conference can be summoned with any prospect of success. And what is most important of all is that we want to place ourselves right with those of our countrymen who do not see eye to eye with us. Discharge the *fatwa* prisoners, discharge political prisoners against whom convictions exist or prosecutions are pending under the ordinary law or under the Criminal Law Amendment Act and the Seditious Meetings Act. This is what we asked for yesterday and they are the conditions which I have been urging. My non-co-operator friends will perhaps be angry that I have been yielding to the blandishments of my Moderate friends. If they charge me with that, I am guilty. (Laughter.) With reference to political prisoners convicted or under prosecution under the ordinary law, I told you yesterday that it would be the Committee to be appointed by this Conference which could decide whether all such prisoners could

be covered by the recommendations of this Conference, but I was borne down by the logic of facts and the pressure of friends. Therefore, I said, "If you want to appoint one nominee from yourselves and another from Government with power to appoint an umpire, I shall accept the proposal". I hope that my non-co-operator friends will not be angry with me for having accepted this proposal. As regards the persons who have been imprisoned in virtue of the normal law of the country which has been misused or misapplied, this small Committee will consider their cases and recommend their discharge. I have no hesitation in feeling that in the hands of that Committee the interests of our imprisoned countrymen will be quite safe. You will see that in yesterday's resolution there was a condition that activities of a hostile nature would cease today. I placed a phrase before the Committee in this connection and I found that I had landed myself into difficulties. (Laughter.) You will be surprised to find that the keen intellect of Pundit Kunzru detected a flaw in it, and that flaw put me on the proper track, and I said "No". I do not want to use any phrase of a general character, not for one moment. Our struggle is of the purest character. We have nothing to conceal from the country or from the Viceroy. So far as I am concerned, they should all know exactly what is in our minds. There is the question of activities of a general hostile character to be suspended pending this Round Table Conference. I can only bring myself to accept a definite thing, and, therefore, in order to enter into a compromise have sacrificed the interest of a number of women of Erode (Madras) and of Mr. Lavate of Poona. I have said that we shall suspend even the liquor shop picketing during the time the Conference is going on. This sacrifice I have made in order that I can gain the other purpose that neither the Viceroy nor anybody else can charge us with breach of faith. Provided those conditions that are to be fulfilled by Government are accepted by Government, we shall suspend hartal, we shall suspend picketing, and we shall suspend civil disobedience. Of course, it grieves me to say that we shall have to suspend lawful, peaceful and *bona fide* picketing of liquor shops, but I hope that my non-co-operator friends will not be angry on that score. The chief thing that I want to say is that no other non-co-operating activity is to be suspended. Mr. Kunzru asked me whether if these prisoners are discharged and this notification is withdrawn, I would not stop enlisting volunteers. I say "No" emphatically. I would not stop the enlistment of volunteers for a single moment. It is not what we can

possibly undertake to do on the ground that it . . .¹ preparation for civil disobedience. The preparation will not be of an offensive character nor of a hostile character. It is in the interest of those who are now ready for embarking upon general civil disobedience. They will have to embark upon civil disobedience at a given moment, so that they should keep the atmosphere of preparations ready for themselves. I do not consider that there I am doing anything of a hostile character. But I want this Conference to understand what are the implications of the undertaking that I have proposed to give after consulting the Working Committee which will meet tomorrow after the deliberations of this Conference are over. I have finished the whole of my work. I said to the Subjects Committee also that these things are all right. The Government may or may not grant these things today. To me the chief thing is that the Viceroy should not be able to say that we have given away the Khilafat. There is no open mind about the Khilafat. There is no open mind about the Punjab. The irreducible minimum has been before the country for a long time. All that can be discussed is, how to give effect to the Khilafat terms that are demanded, how to give effect to the Punjab terms that are demanded. ("Hear, hear.") I do want to appreciate all the difficulties that face the Government, but the vital principle of these demands is full Dominion Status. How is that to be arrived at? At the Round Table Conference also my emphatic submission to the Viceroy will be for a scheme in accordance with the spirit of this demand for full Dominion Status that will be evolved by duly elected representatives of the people of this country. I mean by the expression "duly elected representatives" all those elected representatives, elected under the Congress constitution, that is to say, under the four-anna franchise. That is, those who pay four annas each will be duly registered as voters and they will elect representatives. These representatives will evolve a scheme for full Dominion Status. I know this is a big question. I do not conceal that from you, from the country or from myself. I know also, I feel keenly, that this country is not really ready for making a demand of that character. I have many misgivings about the Round Table Conference becoming successful. But I would have been false to my creed, to those friends whose association I have the privilege of enjoying and to the Viceroy—I do not want to be false to the Viceroy—I shall be false to myself, if I withheld these things from

¹ Some words are missing here

you, or from the country. So far as my advice is accepted by the non-co-operators or by the country I shall certainly press that they should not take a little less. Till we have all these things *we* shall not be free from the miseries that the country is oppressed with today. We gloat in our miseries, we take glory in them. We do not want the miseries to be sprung upon us as a surprise. As Lala Lajpat Rai said, this country is screwed up. I have less faith in the interests of my own countrymen because they have not suffered enough. Therefore I have got my own misgivings. I feel that the Committee that will be appointed will convey this humble message of mine in the name of non-co-operators to the Viceroy, that if he wants to convene the Round Table Conference, he should summon that Conference expecting that the non-co-operators will be satisfied with nothing less than what I have said. I am here to confess that we are fully able to take charge of all military dispositions of the country and that we are fully able to deal with all foreign complications. The worst that may happen is that we may be blotted out from the face of the earth. I am quite willing to be blotted out from the face of the earth so long as I can breathe the free atmosphere of India. ("Hear, hear..')

The Hindu, 18-1-1922

207. SUMMARY OF TELEGRAM

[Before, *January 16, 1922*]

Mr. M. Singaravelu, President, [Madras] City Congress Committee, writes:

Mahatmaji wires to us that whilst he was delighted that almost complete hartal was observed, there was damage done by some people to the decorations, etc., and advises us to strain every nerve to find out the disturbing elements for further control.

The Hindu, 16-1-1922

208. THE LAW OF FRIENDSHIP

Many Hindus have been offended by Maulana Hasrat Mohani's speech about the Moplahs.¹ Some Congress workers in Madras have written letters² complaining against him. It would be better for the reader to pay attention to neither side. The Maulana takes one view while the Hindus of Malabar take another. The Maulana, assuming a certain state of affairs, is applying the law of war to it. The Hindus of Malabar have described the situation as they believe it to be, and have protested against the Maulana's remarks. The Maulana considers that the Moplahs had started a jihad and, according to the rules of jihad, those who help the enemy become enemies themselves. The Hindus gave information to the Government's officers and, therefore, became enemies; in such circumstances, the Moplahs would have fought even Muslims, let alone Hindus. The Malabar Hindus say: "The Moplah uprising cannot be called a war, or, even if it is regarded as war; Hindus, who are themselves slaves, cannot be regarded as enemies. Even if some Hindus, to protect their lives, reported the whereabouts of the Moplahs, they should not for that reason be regarded as enemies; if, nevertheless, they are so in the eyes of the Moplahs, at least their women and children and their temples should remain inviolate. All Hindus should not be regarded enemies because of a few. What the Moplahs have done does not exemplify neighbourliness nor have they followed the law of war. Defence of the Moplahs is not justified and is likely to create suspicion in the minds of the Hindus." I think this argument is reasonable, but I do not blame the Maulana. He looks upon the British Government as an enemy. He would defend anything done in fighting it. He thinks that there is much untruth in what is being said against the Moplahs and he is, therefore, not prepared to see their error. I believe that this is his narrowness, but it should not hurt the Hindus. The Maulana speaks what is in his mind. He is an honest and courageous man. All know that he has no ill will against the Hindus.

¹ During their uprising in August 1921, the Moplahs had committed atrocities on the Hindus and Hasrat Mohani in his Presidential speech at the Muslim League session in Ahmedabad, had justified their conduct as legitimate retaliation.

² For excerpts from two of these letters, *vide* footnote I to "Hindus and Moplahs", 26-1-1922.

What he says is not out of hatred for the Hindus but out of anger against the British rule.

What should the Hindus do in these circumstances? They should defend the Malabar Hindus and explain their view to the Muslims without getting angry with the Maulana or Muslims in general. Those Hindus who believe that some Moplahs indulged in criminal acts have a right to criticize them. Those Muslims who deny the charge are free to defend the Moplahs. Neither party speaks from first-hand knowledge.

It should be remembered, besides, that all Muslims do not argue as the Maulana has done. Many of them have condemned the Moplahs' conduct. The Government has thoroughly exploited the Moplahs' madness. They have punished the entire Moplah community for the madness of a few individuals and have incited the Hindus by exaggerating the facts. Malabar Hindus, like the Moplahs, are an excitable people and the Government has incited them against the latter. The measures which the Government has taken are not for the protection of the Hindus; they are only for its own protection.

Both Hindus and Muslims are weak. It is the weak who get angry and hate others. The elephant does not hate the ant. One ant hates another ant. Neither the Hindus who are filled with fear because of the Moplahs' misdeeds or the Maulana's defence of them, nor the Muslims who, without examining the facts, rush to the defence of the Moplahs, have understood Hindu-Muslim unity, which is one of the conditions [for the success of non-co-operation]. Hindus should not lose hope merely on account of the misconduct of a few Muslims or the Maulana's ignorance. The Muslims should stop putting up a defence like the Maulana's. If, however, both sides to a quarrel could show wisdom simultaneously, would the quarrel or the bitterness ever have come about? There must always be two sides for a dispute to arise. When one party commits an error, it behoves the other to remain calm. Only then can Hindu-Muslim unity survive. To remain good provided the other side remains good—this is no law of friendship, nor of war. It is but a bargain. In friendship, there is no room for bargaining. Friendship can exist only between brave parties and bargaining between weak parties. We are both weak and strong. Consequently, the relationship of Hindus and Muslims is both one of friendship and of bargaining. Let us hope that, day by day, the element of bargaining will disappear and that of friendship grow. If one side progressively purifies itself and becomes stronger, this

friendship will become permanent.

Bravery does not mean browbeating others. He is not a brave man who uses his strength to terrorize others. The brave man is he who, though possessing strength, does not use it to intimidate others but, on the contrary, protects the weak. Can a brave man know fear? Muslims are physically strong. Even if they have the support of the whole world, Hindus should not be afraid of them but, placing their trust in God, should refrain from deviating, by a hair's breadth, from the path of justice. Muslims, too, should be ashamed to seek help from outside and should trust the Hindus despite the latter's numerical superiority. However, even if both sides do not act in this civilized manner and only one side does so, there need be no disruption of Hindu-Muslim unity. That is, even if one side is firm in doing its dharma, there will be no enmity between the two. He alone may be said to be firm in his dharma who trusts his safety to God and, untroubled by anxiety, follows the path of virtue. If Hindus apply this rule to the Moplah affair, they will not, even when they see the error of the Moplahs, accuse the Muslims. They will help those Hindus who have suffered losses and will enable them to stand on their feet.

Swaraj means that even if a person is in a minority of one, he may oppose the rest and be unafraid. Hindus should not depend wholly on the Muslims good sense. Nor should the Muslim be frightened by the meanness of some Hindus. Each community should rely on its own strength and help the other. Why should a single Hindu have run away on account of the Moplahs' atrocities? Why should even one Hindu have reported the whereabouts of the Moplahs out of fear of the British troops? No Hindu was bound to report where the Moplahs had taken shelter. Why should a single Hindu have made a show of going through Islamic religious rites out of fear of the Moplahs? The rule which we follow in our fight against the British rule, viz., laying down our lives, should be followed in all cases of oppression. If we are ready to die at the hands of the tyrant rather than do his bidding, we shall be stronger than even the lion. Anyone who overpowers a tyrant by killing him will one day be tempted to become a tyrant himself, for, instead of looking to God for support, he will have learnt to depend on his own brute strength. A person who regards himself as God is bound to be destroyed. He can never be free because he has sought to usurp God's place and, in consequence, has lost his own rightful place. He has yet to strive and know what he is.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 16-1-1922

209. MY NOTES

A GUJARATI'S REMORSE

If I do not admonish Gujaratis, who else will? I have heard that the person who had attempted to enter the Congress meeting with another's ticket¹ now feels extremely sorry. I am glad to hear this. The incident had pained me greatly because I trusted everyone. After one has repented, there is no more need for shame. Abbas Saheb once told me a story about himself, and that too very proudly. Though he lived like a king, once in a light moment he felt tempted to defraud the railway. However light-hearted, his action was theft all the same. He bought a second-class ticket for a relation of his and put her in a first-class carriage. The Tyabji family having become younger in spirit, now enjoy travelling third class. In the past, they always travelled by first class. When he reached home, he felt ashamed of himself. "I am the nephew of Badruddin", he thought. "If the world hears of my dishonesty, what will it say? And even if my action is not known, what would Badruddin have said? How can I forgive myself?" Repenting thus, the gentleman returned to the station. Remitting money for the purpose, he sent a wire asking her to pay the excess and get the ticket changed at the next station. By thus spending double the amount that he would have saved by his dishonesty and publicizing his misdeed to the entire station, he atoned for his error immediately. He can now narrate the incident to illustrate the nobility of the Tyabji family. Similarly, if this friend has felt sincere remorse—and everyone tells me he has—then he has indeed escaped a great danger. He has no longer any reason to feel ashamed and now he serves both the country and himself with great vigilance. There are no degrees in purity. Just as all right angles are of equal magnitude, so is all purity. As long as there is even a trace of impurity in us, we cannot be regarded as pure. Therefore, when judging ourselves, we should forgive nothing. We have a perfect right to be merciless to ourselves, to get angry with ourselves. If we learn this art, our attachments and aversions, poor things, may have some rest—and it is our duty to see that they get it.

LALAJI'S LETTER

Lalaji has received a sentence of 18 months, so also has his

¹ *Vide* "The Congress and After", 5-1-1922.

comrade Pandit Santanam. Two others, Malek Lalkhan and Dr. Gopichand have got 16 months each. In a letter, written before the sentence was passed, Lalaji says in effect: "Do not worry about us. Do not think of our hardships and let the national cause suffer. Now that we are in for it, we should see it through. I did not go on a hunger-strike. I would not do that in order to secure special privileges. I am writing a history of India for the national schools. Pandit Santanam is engrossed in the study of Sanskrit. It is not a small matter for India that nowadays men of stainless character and learning are taking the place of criminals in our jails. The history of modern India commences now."

POETIC QUALITY

Once when I was talking with the Poet¹ about the Jallianwala Bagh Memorial and trying to persuade him to interest himself in it, he replied, "What poetry is there in it to attract me? Only what is poetic can have interest for me, a poet. In Jallianwala Bagh, unsuspecting men who had been trapped were shot down. Such an incident cannot inspire new life in people. It merely illustrates their utter helplessness. Does it deserve a memorial?" There was deep meaning in this criticism. I explained that the proposal for a memorial had not been made from a poet's point of view. I said that, if the public forgot Jallianwala, it would be incapable of creating poetry. When he had understood me, he agreed to write a letter for the Bombay meeting and did so. But as he felt that the meeting lacked poetry, he could not summon the courage to attend it.

But now the Poet has got a poetic subject. A lion like Lalaji will not be helplessly led into jail; he walks into it deliberately. There, he does not ask for any special privileges for himself. On the contrary, he regards hardships as privileges. Satyagrahis submit to beating in several places and allow their property to be seized, not from weakness but as a sacrifice. Sufficient material for poetry is thus piling up and the poets in the country can lay their hands on as much of it as each likes.

An English poet-painter has said that the people's art flowers at the end of a war. This is a half-truth. In so far as one people destroys another, it is not art but evil which flowers. It is to the extent that people willingly suffer and sacrifice their lives that art flowers. That is

¹ Rabindranath Tagore

why now, at the end of the Great War, England and Germany are not progressing; on the contrary, poison has spread in them. It is true that both have suffered, but the intention was rather to inflict suffering than to suffer. Neither country has cleansed its heart. Both, therefore, are again preparing to fight.

In this kind of war in pursuit of self-interest, there is a greater possibility of the vanquished reforming themselves. So Germany may perhaps rise. But there appears to be no such possibility for England. England has one hope and that is our non-co-operation. If our non-co-operation is truly a self-purification, then both we and England will rise to great heights. Where even one man performs *tapascharya*, the atmosphere is cleansed. When soda is applied to dirty clothes, the dirt is washed away. Self-purification is like this soda. With non-co-operation, it is unlikely that we shall rise and England fall. Our non-co-operation has offered England an opportunity for cultivating humility and repenting. If England avails herself of this opportunity, she will emerge glorious. If she does not, and if our movement is not genuine non-co-operation, England is already fallen but we also shall be crushed more than we now are. We are impotent. Although we are crushed under Britain's heel, we do not know we are. We, therefore, help her to crush us. But the tyrant who crushes others will degrade himself. Just as a foot placed in mud cannot but get dirty, so those who hold us down cannot escape degrading themselves.

I am, therefore, confident that in consequence and at the end of our struggle, the poets of India will have a sea of poesy from which they may carry away as much as they choose and yet not lack for more.

DESHBANDHU'S ROAD

Just as Lalaji is an exemplary prisoner in the Punjab, so Deshbandhu Chitta Ranjan Das in Bengal. When his case was heard in the court, his khadi and his simple exterior so impressed the lawyers that they could not but stand up in his honour. Only a few months ago, he was a jewel among the lawyers of Bengal. Why would they not stand up? He was offered a chair, but he courteously refused it. He remained standing in the dock throughout. The chair was placed before him but he did not use it.

Thus, on all sides, we see flowing the nectar of heroism, of endurance. I am now impatient to see Gujarat counted among the

provinces in which it flows.

POONA'S COURAGE

Perhaps readers of *Navajivan* do not know that I am in love with Poona. I expressed my admiration as long ago as 1915¹ when I returned from England. Poona's sacrifices are intelligent. No other place equals Poona in scholarship. Nor is there anywhere her simplicity and her voluntary poverty. Sanskrit learning spread from Poona. The Lokamanya and Gokhale lived here. The city has shrunk from no sacrifice. Poona can do much. Even now I feel that in making sacrifices, Poona will outstrip all. Shri Narsopant Chintaman Kelkar is carrying on his work with thoroughness. The Government also is testing him cleverly. The picketing of liquor shops is getting very well organized. The best non-co-operators go out to picket. Shri Kelkar sends out his entire family for this purpose. The Government merely imposes fines. If it refuses to arrest anyone, what can the Poona non-co-operators do? Women have now been sent out. I certainly envy this. I had hoped that the women of Gujarat would really take the lead in this matter. Bengal started, but the Government did not take up the challenge. The Poona women, by their action, seem to have created a situation in which either the Government must arrest them or repeal its law. Smt. Kelkar, Smt. Gokhale, Shri Gokhale's sister, Smt. Indumati Naik, Smt. Yashodabai Phadke and four other women set out to picket liquor shops. They were removed to the police-station and there set free. It is clear that there cannot be even a suggestion of force in this picketing and the liquor-booths are sure to close down as a result of it. Poona's women are intelligent and strong-minded. I have no fear about the outcome of the movement which they have started. It cannot but gather momentum and the Government will have to admit defeat. The fighters of Maharashtra have accepted the method of non-violence as a practical policy and there is no doubt, therefore, that they will proceed non-violently. And where there is a confluence of non-violence, sacrifice and wisdom, there can be no result other than victory.

It now remains for the women of Gujarat to compete with those of Poona. When will the men of Gujarat equal the sacrifice of Poona? Even if they keep pace with it, I shall be satisfied. Up till now, Gujarat has set no value on poverty, simplicity, heroism, fortitude and service

¹ *Vide* "Speech at Poona Public Meeting", 13-2-1915.

of the country. Now Gujarat is showing zeal, but she has still to be tested by suffering. May God save Gujarat's honour.

FRUIT OF SACRIFICE

Sacrifice means that the parson making it dies or suffers' for another. Those who suffer to advance their own interests make no sacrifice. Such persons do not deserve to be called human beings. The scripture has described those who live only for themselves as thieves.¹ It appears from a letter from Shri Rajagopalachari that the Moplah prisoners are not being ill-treated now. They are kept in properly ventilated carriages and are also given water, etc., on the way. Thus, as a result of the sacrifice of seventy Moplahs, the rest have got some relief. The Moplah prisoners who died had not sought death. Poor creatures, they were merely killed. If, then, innumerable Indians deliberately court suffering for the sake of the country, is it surprising that the latter should prosper? The man who purifies himself and gives up all for the sake of others will enjoy greater power than even an emperor. O God! Wilt Thou not give to any of us such purity and such strength to suffer? We will live as Thy slaves, but this is the strength we wish to have. We do not ask for a throne. We want the sufferings of those in misery to end. As the helpless Moplahs were choked to death, wilt Thou not give us the strength to come forward willingly to die in like manner for the sake of the country and the world? Grant it, I beseech Thee. And we shall ever remain grateful.

WE HAVE INDEED BECOME FREE

Pearson, who lives in Shantiniketan with the Poet, has recently returned to India after an absence of five years. Having witnessed what he had never witnessed before—people's capacity to suffer for the country—he has sent the following message through C. F. Andrews:

I am whole-heartedly with you in your splendid struggle for freedom. Your work has borne its fruit, for India is already free. Her spirit is no longer in subjection. Swinburne in his "Songs before Sunrise" writes:

Open thy soul to see,

Slave, and thy feet are free:

Thy bonds and thy beliefs are one in kind.

This is true of India, for we all realize now that India is no longer blind and,

¹ *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 12

therefore, her feet are free. Of this I personally have not the shadow of a doubt and I am able to see India after an absence of five years.

Hundreds of prisoners are today witnesses to this fact. Deliberate courting of imprisonment has given the country a vision of the goddess of freedom. India's chains snapped when Shaukat Ali, Motilal Nehru, Lalaji, Chitta Ranjan Das and Abul Kalam Azad went to jail. Let a settlement come when it will. Who knows whether happiness will come through a settlement or whether it lies in giving a stiff fight and going through painful suffering? A settlement is of the nature of a certificate. A dull student may require one. He who is confident in his possession of knowledge, will he use a certificate to prove it? Where is the need for a doctor's certificate to one who is healthy? The thousands who attended the Congress felt the glow of freedom. If they did not, then Pearson's letter has no meaning either.

But thousands felt the dawn of a new age just as Paul Richard did. If we are sure of this, then we need not worry about a settlement.

A "RISHI'S" BLESSING

The Poet's father was known as *Maharshi* or great sage. I have seen that the Poet's elder brother, who is now over 70 years of age, also deserves this title. Even today his strength is impressive. In India's progress he sees that of the world and looks upon the non-co-operation movement as a holy struggle. I welcome a letter from him as in the nature of a blessing. I occasionally place before readers letters from him which are likely to be of interest to them. At the time of the Congress session he sent a wire but, not satisfied with that, he has now sent a letter. I give its substance below:¹

SIKH HEROISM

Sikh courage reaches greater heights every day and along with their courage grow their endurance and their spirit of non-violence. The Government is now willing to return to the Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee the Keys of the Golden Temple of Amritsar which they had earlier taken possession of. But the Committee has refused to accept them until the Government agrees to release every Sikh leader who has been arrested. The Government, therefore, is in a dilemma. If it releases the Sikhs, it will be ridiculed and the strength of the Sikhs

¹ A Gujarati translation of the letter followed. For the original letter, *vide Young India*, 12-1-1922.

will increase two-fold. If it does not release them, their strength will increase ten-fold. It must, therefore, decide whether it would be wiser for it, to allow the Sikhs' strength to increase ten times or to releasethe Sikh prisoners and be laughed at, taking consolation in the fact that the strength of the Sikhs will then only be doubled.

AN ENGLISHWOMAN'S CONFESSION

There is no doubt that non-co-operation is producing its good effect even on the British. I have with me three letters of which two cannot be published. But there is one from an Englishwoman which I must publish. This lady has given her name and address; she does not want these to be made public, though she desires that the letter should be published. The substance of the letter is as follows:¹

Frankness shines in every line of this letter. This woman sees the hand of Christ in all my work. A devout Hindu may see the hand of Rama or Krishna and a Muslim that of *Khuda* and the Prophet. For myself, I shall be satisfied if it has the hand of Truth. God, with His thousand names, is included in truth and I am certain that, if we abide by Truth and non-violence, we shall rise higher everyday and the very British, who today seem to be our enemies, will become our friends and upholders of nationalism.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 16-1-1922

210. LETTER TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

[January 16, 1922]

SIR,

What purports to be an interview with your correspondent appears in today's² issue of the *Chronicle*. I never gave your correspondent or anyone else an interview. The conversation reported was not for publication. I should not mind if all the humour and the gestures that accompanied the conversation could be reproduced. As it is, the whole interview is a caricature of a random talk. As it is difficult for me to correct the impression created by the interview

¹ A Gujarati translation of the letter followed. For the original letter, *vide Young India*, 12-1-1922.

² Of January 16, 1922

without dotting the i's and crossing the t's, I must ask your readers to dismiss the whole "interview" from their minds. I hope Sir Sankaran Nair will not see the "interview", but if he does I shall ask him to see the forthcoming issue of *Young India*¹ too.²

Yours etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-1-1922

211. WORKING COMMITTEE'S RESOLUTION³

January 17, 1922

A meeting of the Working Committee of the Congress was held in Bombay⁴ on 17th January to consider among other things the recommendations of the Malaviya Conference. The resolution passed by the Committee on the subject is given below:

The Working Committee places on record its thanks to Pandit Malaviyaji and his fellow conveners for convening the conference of persons belonging to the various political parties in the country, for the purpose of considering the existing tension, and having considered the resolution of the conference, the Committee resolves that the offensive civil disobedience contemplated by the Ahmedabad Congress be not started till the 31st day of January 1922 or pending result of the negotiations undertaken by the Committee of the Malaviya Conference for a round table conference, whichever may be the first date.

The Working Committee considers it necessary for the purpose of creating an atmosphere favourable for a successful round table conference that:

(a) All notifications and notices declaring illegal and prohibiting

¹ *Vide* "The Malaviya Conference" 19-1-1922.

² The source published the following note along with this letter: "In view of Mahatma Gandhi's statement about my conversation with him regarding the Conference and its achievements, I extremely regret that through a misunderstanding of the position, on my part, an unfortunate impression should have been caused. In the circumstances, I willingly accept the entire blame for the mistake. I may add that I have Mahatmaji's generous assurance that there was not wilfulness on my part and that he has forgiven the error of judgment. —Your Special Representative."

³ Presumably drafted by Gandhiji

⁴ At Gandhiji's residence, according to the report in *New India*, 18-1-1922

the formation of volunteer corps, public meetings, picketing and other normal activities of the Congress or the Khilafat Committees be withdrawn and prisoners undergoing prosecution or conviction in respect of such notices be discharged or released as the case may be.

(b) All *fatwa* prisoners including the Ali Brothers and their companions be released.

(c) All other prisoners already convicted or under trial for non violent or other innocent activities be dealt with and discharged in the manner appointed therefor in the third resolution of the Conference and

(d) Simultaneously with the performance of the foregoing acts by the Governments concerned and in the event of a round table conference being called and pending such conference, all hartals, picketing and civil disobedience should cease.

In order to avoid any misunderstanding about the Congress demands, the Working Committee desires to draw the attention of the committee appointed by the Malaviya Conference to the Khilafat, the Punjab and the swaraj claims as stated publicly from time to time from Congress platforms and to state that therefore the Congress and the Khilafat representatives will be bound to demand full settlement of the three claims.

Young India, 19-1-1922

212. LETTER TO K. VENKATAPPAYYA¹

BOMBAY,

January 17, 1922

DEAR VENKATAPPAYYA²,

I have given much anxious thought to the no tax campaign going on there³. Apart from the possibility of suspension of mass civil disobedience by reason of a round table conference ever forthcoming, I think that you are not yet ready for non-payment of taxes. Fifty per cent of the population of the area of experiment has not yet, I apprehend, got rid of untouchability nor is that proportion of population accustomed to ways of non-violence, nor to khaddar

¹ The source has reproduced this from *Janmabhumi*.

² President, Andhra Provincial Congress Committee

³ In Andhra

manufactured in the respective areas. I omit the other items such as the unity between races and creeds. In these circumstances, I think it is the bounden duty of all of us to refrain from mass civil disobedience till the masses have undergone the necessary discipline and self-purification. In any other case, mass disobedience will be not *civil* but *criminal* and will, therefore, render us unfit to conduct our own affairs as an orderly civilized nation. I, therefore, strongly suggest that you advise the ryots in all the districts to pay up at least the first instalment and devote the whole of the time and the energy of all the workers to acquiring the necessary qualifications. This opinion, I know will disappoint many ardent spirits, but I am sure our success lies in that disappointment, for if the people are really eager for swaraj, and eager for civil disobedience, they will make the necessary mental change, under the pressure of that strong desire. The inimitable aptitude of Andhra women for artistic spinning and of Andhra weavers for artistic weaving should make the production of khaddar in the respective areas easy of accomplishment. But whether the acquisition of these qualifications is difficult or easy, we dare not avoid it without endangering the attainment of our cherished goal.

Yours sincerely ,

M. K. GANDHI

The Hindu, 21-1-1922

213. INTERVIEW TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

January 17, 1922

Mahatma Gandhi was interviewed yesterday by our representative about the letter¹ written by Sir Sankaran Nair to *The Times of India* in regard to the recent Round Table Conference held in Bombay. Sir Sankaran, it might be remembered, walked out of the Committee meeting owing to difference of opinion.

The Mahatma said:

I have read Sir Sankaran Nair's letter to *The Times of India* with deep pain. It bears in itself traces of hurried draftsmanship and anger. I propose, therefore, not to answer seriatim the many misrepresentations it contains, but to give only broad facts.

Between the Conference and myself there was perfect harmony in spite of differences of opinion. I make bold to say that on matters

¹ For excerpts from the letter, *vide* Appendix I.

that were not of vital importance I yielded without hesitation. The resolutions are the result of mutual discussion and deliberations. It is undoubtedly true that I want the Government to be penitent, not in order to humiliate it, but in order to set it right with the people, and there will, certainly, be no peace in the land and no settlement until the Government acknowledges its mistakes and retraces its steps. The resolutions are calculated to enable the Government to do so gracefully. Nobody questions the right of the Government to put down violence. Sir Sankaran forgets what I said in reply to Mr. Jehangir B. Petit, namely, that I could conceive even the existence of justifiable martial law, when it is introduced to protect people and has the endorsement of public opinion. The present proceedings of the Government, which bear all the characteristics of martial law, without the odium of the name, are intended neither to protect the people, nor have any public backing whatsoever. They are intended to consolidate the power of an utterly irresponsible bureaucracy. The Khilafat claim certainly includes the evacuation of Syria by the French, but Sir Sankaran should remember what I said. I declared in the clearest possible language that I would be satisfied if Great Britain sincerely supported the Mussulman claim regarding Syria. I said that the Mussulmans, and I, in common with them, thoroughly distrusted Great Britain's intentions regarding the aspiration of Turkish Nationalists and the just claims of Indian Mussulmans. It is open in a round table conference to the Government to demonstrate to the satisfaction of non-co-operators that Great Britain is ready to do all in her power to satisfy the Mussulman claim. Sir Sankaran hardly does justice to himself, or to me, when he reports me as having said that I wanted the evacuation of Egypt, as a term of peace. In answer to an ejaculation about Egypt I remarked that although the Khilafat demand did not, and would not include the evacuation of Egypt, when India had full swaraj she could certainly not permit a single Indian soldier to leave India in order to coerce the brave Egyptians into submission to a foreign yoke.

Sir Sankaran's attack upon the Ali Brothers is hardly worthy of him. The Ali Brothers do believe in the possibility and necessity of the use of violence for the vindication of religious or national rights. But, I know that they are absolutely at one with the Congress programme and that they are more than ever convinced that as India is circumstanced, non-violence is the only remedy open to her for the attainment of her freedom.

Sir Sankaran ought to know better than to impute to me a promise of swaraj within one year. If I had made any such promise I would not have kept my head on my shoulders. All that I said was that India could have swaraj within one year, less time, if she fulfilled the conditions categorically named at Calcutta¹ and repeated at Nagpur² in 1920.

Lastly let me correct Sir Sankaran by saying that the case of the Ali Brothers does not fall within the reference to the arbitration, but, being included among the *fatwa* cases, falls in the same category as imprisonments in virtue of the recent notifications. It surprises me to notice that Sir Sankaran imagines that a round table conference is possible without the presence of the Ali Brothers. That the Government might not see its way to release such formidable opponents as the Ali Brothers. I can well understand, and they will release them only if Government desires to placate Indian opinion and substitute the force of public opinion for the force of arms.

The Bombay Chronicle, 18-1-1922

214. THE MALAVIYA CONFERENCE

The Conference was both a success and a failure. It was a success in that it showed an earnest desire on the part of those who attended to secure a peaceful solution of the present trouble, and in that it brought under one roof people possessing divergent views. It was a failure in that, though certain resolutions have been adopted, the Conference did not leave on my mind the impression that those who assembled together as a whole realized the gravity of the real issue. The mind of the Conference seemed to be centred more on a round table conference than upon asserting the popular right of free speech, free association and free Press which are more than a round table conference. I had expected on the part of the Independents to declare their firm attitude that no matter how much they might differ regarding the method of non-co-operation, the freedom of the people was a common heritage and that the assertion of that right was three-fourths of swaraj; that, therefore, they would defend that right even with civil disobedience, if need be.

¹ In the Congress session held in September

² *ibid*

However, as the attention of the Conference could not be riveted on that point but on a round table conference, the discussion turned upon the essentials of such a conference.

My own position was clear. I would attend any conference as an individual, without any conditions. My purpose as a reformer is to convert people to the view I hold to be right and therefore to see everybody who would care to listen to me. But when I was asked to mention the conditions necessary for an atmosphere favourable for a successful conference, I had to press home certain conditions. And I must own that the Resolutions Committee approached my viewpoint with the greatest sympathy and showed every anxiety to accommodate me. But side by side with this, I observed an admirable disposition on its part to consider the Government's difficulties. Indeed the Government's case could not have been better presented, if it had been directly and officially represented in the Conference.

The result was a compromise. The withdrawal of notifications and the discharge of prisoners coming under the notifications and of the *fatwa* prisoners, i.e., the Ali Brothers and others who have been convicted in respect of the *fatwas* regarding military service, was common cause. The Committee saw the force of the suggestions that the distress warrants should be discharged, the fines imposed upon the Press, etc., should be refunded and that the prisoners convicted for non-violent or otherwise innocent activities under cover of the ordinary laws should be discharged upon the proof of their non-violence. For this purpose I had suggested the Committee appointed by the Conference. But on the Resolutions Committee showing that it would be difficult for the Government to accept such an uncontrolled recommendation, I agreed to the principle of arbitration now imported in the resolution. The second compromise is regarding picketing. My suggestion was that in the event of the round table conference being decided upon, non-co-operation activities of a hostile nature should be suspended and that all picketing except *bona fide* peaceful picketing should also be suspended, pending the result of the Conference. As the implications of hostile activities appeared to me to be too dangerous to be acceptable, I hastily withdrew my own wording and gladly threw over even *bona fide* peaceful picketing, much though I regretted it. I felt that the friends interested in liquor picketing for the sake of temperance would not mind the temporary sacrifice.

I agreed too to advise the Working Committee to postpone general mass civil disobedience contemplated by the Congress to the 31st instant in order to enable the Committee and the Conference to enter into negotiations with the Government. This, I felt, was essential to show our *bona fides*. We could not take up new offensives whilst negotiations for a conference were being conducted by responsible men. I further undertook to advise the Committee, in the event of the proposed conference coming off, to stop all hartals, pending the Conference. This I hold to be inevitable. Hartals are a demonstration against bureaucracy. We cannot continue them, if we are conferring with them for peace. Workers will bear in mind that as yet no activity of the Congress stops save general civil disobedience. On the contrary, enlistment of volunteers and swadeshi propaganda must continue without, abatement. Liquor shop picketing may continue where it is absolutely peaceful. It should certainly continue where notices unnecessarily prohibiting picketing have been issued. So may picketing continue regarding schools or foreign cloth shops. But whilst all our activities should be zealously continued, there should be the greatest restraint exercised and every trace of violence or discourtesy avoided. When restraint and courtesy are added to strength, the latter becomes irresistible. . Civil disobedience being an indefeasible right, the preparations for it will continue even if the Conference comes off. And the preparations for civil disobedience consist in:

1. the enlistment of volunteers,
2. the propaganda of swadeshi,
3. the removal of untouchability,
4. the training in non-violence in word, deed and thought,
5. unity between diverse creeds and classes.

I hear that many are enrolled as volunteers in various parts of India, although they do not wear khadi, do not believe in complete non-violence, or, if they are Hindus, do not believe in untouchability as a crime against humanity. I cannot too often warn the people that every deviation from our own rules retards our progress. It is the quality of our work which will please God and not quantity. Not all the lip Mussulmans and the lip Hindus will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Islam is no stronger than the best Mussulman. Thousands of nominal followers of Hinduism belie their faith and discredit it. One true and perfect follower of Hinduism is enough to protect it for all

time and against the whole world. Similarly, one true and perfect non-co-operator is any day better than a million non-co-operators so called. The best preparation for civil disobedience is to cultivate civility, that is, truth and non-violence, amongst ourselves and our surroundings.

THE DEMANDS

In order that all may approach the Round Table Conference with perfect knowledge of the Congress demands, I laid all our cards on the table and reiterated the claims regarding the Khilafat, the Punjab and swaraj. Let me repeat them here:

1. So far as I can write from memory, full restoration to the Turks of Constantinople, Adrianople, Anatolia including Smyrna and Thrace. Complete withdrawal of non-Muslim influence from Arabia, Mesopotamia, Palestine and Syria and, therefore, withdrawal of British troops, whether English or Indian, from these territories.

2. Full enforcement of the report of the Congress Sub-committee¹ and, therefore, the stopping of the pensions of Sir Michael O'Dwyer, General Dyer and other officers named in the report for dismissal.

3. Swaraj means, in the event of the foregoing demands being granted, full Dominion Status. The scheme of such swaraj should be framed by representatives duly elected in terms of the Congress constitution. That means four-anna franchise. Every Indian adult, male or female, paying four annas and signing the Congress Creed, will be entitled to be placed on the electoral roll. These electors would elect delegates who would frame the swaraj constitution. This shall be given effect to without any change by the British Parliament.

“If the Congress programme is so cut and dried, where is the necessity for a conference?”—asks the critic. I hold that there is and there always will be.

The method of execution of the demands has to be considered. The Government may have a reasonable and a convincing answer on the claims. The Congressmen have fixed their minimum, but the fixing of the minimum means no more than confidence in the justice of one's cause. It further means that there is no room for bargaining.

¹ Appointed to enquire into the Punjab disorders of April 1919. For its report, *vide* “Congress Report on the Punjab Disorders”, On or Before 25-3-1920.

There can, therefore, be no appeal to one's weakness or incapacity. The appeal can only be addressed to reason. If the Viceroy summons the conference, it means either that he recognizes the justice of the claims or hopes to satisfy the Congressmen, among others, of the injustice thereof. He must be confident of the justice of his proposals for a rejection or reduction of the claim. That is my meaning of a meeting of equals who eliminate the idea of force, and instantly shift their ground as they appreciate the injustice of their position. I assure His Excellency the Viceroy and everybody concerned that the Congressmen or non-co-operators are as reasonable beings as may be found on earth or in India. They have every incentive to be so for theirs is the duty of suffering as a result of rejection of any just offer.

I have heard it urged that on the Khilafat the Imperial Government is powerless. I should like to be convinced of this. In that case, and if the Imperial Government make common cause with the Mussulmans of India, I should be quite satisfied and take the chance with the Imperial Government's genuine assistance of convincing the other powers of the justice of the Khilafat claim. And even when the claim is admitted much requires to be discussed regarding the execution.

Similarly regarding the Punjab. The principle being granted, the details have to be settled. Legal difficulties have been urged about stopping the pensions to the dismissed officials. The reader may not know that Maulana Shaukat Ali's pension (I suppose he occupied the same status as Sir Michael O'Dwyer) was stopped without any inquiry or previous notice to him. I believe that service regulations do provide for removing officers and officials from the pensions list on proof of gross neglect of duty or disloyal service. Anyway, let the Government prove a case for refusal to grant the Punjab demand save the plea of the past services of these officials. I must refuse to weigh their service to the Empire against their disservice to India, assuming the possibility of two such things coexisting.

The swaraj scheme is undoubtedly a matter on which there will be as many minds as there are men and women. And it is eminently a thing to be debated in a conference. But here again there must be a clean mind and no mental reservations. India's freedom must be the supreme interest in everybody's mind. There should be no obstruction such as the preoccupation of the British elector or the indifference of the House of Commons or the hostility of the House

of Lords. No lover of India can possibly take into account these extraneous matters. The only question to consider will be: Is India ready for what she wants? Or does she ask like a child for food she has no stomach for? That can be determined not by outsiders but by Indians themselves.

From that standpoint, I do consider the idea of the Conference for devising a scheme of full swaraj premature. India has not yet incontestably proved her strength. Her suffering is great indeed, but nothing and not prolonged enough for the object in view. She has to go through greater discipline. I was punctiliously careful not to make non-co-operators party to the Conference resolutions, because we are still so weak. When India has evolved disciplined strength, I would knock myself at the Viceregal door for a conference, and I know that the Viceroy will gladly embrace the opportunity whether he be an eminent lawyer or a distinguished militarist. I do not approach directly because I am conscious of our weakness. But being humble I make it clear through Moderate or other friends that I would miss not a single opportunity of having honest conferences or consultations. And so I have not hesitated to advise non-co-operators thankfully to meet the Independents and place our services at their disposal to make such use of them as they may deem fit. And if the Viceroy or a party desires a conference, it would be foolish for non-co-operators not to respond. The case of non-co-operators depends for success on cultivation of public opinion and public support. They have no other force to back them. If they forfeit public opinion, they have lost the voice of God for the time being.

For the manner of preparing the scheme, too, I have simply suggested what appears to me to be a most feasible method. The All-India Congress Committee has not considered it nor has the Working Committee. The adoption of the Congress franchise is my own suggestion. But what I have laid down as the guiding principle is really unassailable. The scheme of swaraj is that scheme which popular representatives frame. What happens then to the experts in administration and others who may not be popularly elected? In my opinion, they also should attend and have the vote even, but they must necessarily be in a minority. They must expect to influence the majority by a constant appeal to the logic of facts. Given mutual trust and mutual respect, a round table conference cannot but result in a satisfactory and honourable peace.

AN UNFORTUNATE INCIDENT

The abrupt withdrawal of Sir Sankaran Nair was an unfortunate incident. In my opinion, he had nothing to do with my, or later, with Mr. Jinnah's opinions. As Speaker, especially, he was exempt from any implied or express identification with anybody's views. I cannot help feeling that Sir Sankaran erred in the conception of his duty as Speaker. But as we progress towards democracy, we must be prepared even for such erroneous exercise of independence. I congratulate Sir Sankaran Nair upon his boldly exercising his independence, which I have not hesitated to call cussedness in private conversation, and upon the independence of the Committee in not suffering a nervous collapse but quietly electing Sir Vishveshwarayya¹, and voting thanks to the retiring Speaker for the services rendered.

Young India, 19-1-1922

215. WORSE THAN MARTIAL LAW

For the time that savage repression continues, I must fill the pages of *Young India* with authentic tales of repression till India puts an end to it by an act of supreme sacrifice. I call the repression savage because it is wooden, wild, uncultivated, cruel. Grant that there is intimidation and even violence resorted to by some non-co-operators in pursuit of hartal or other activity. Is it difficult to find and punish the culprits? If the Government cannot get witnesses, does it not show that the whole populace is behind the so-called intimidation? An act, however reprehensible in itself, when it becomes the act of a people, ceases to be a crime capable of being dealt with by its laws. Therefore, repression by an irresponsible government can never be a popular act or an act designed for the safety of the people. But in the present instance, repression is designed to suppress the rising agitation directed against the misdeeds of the Government and is, therefore, doubly unpardonable.

However, it is not the purpose of this article to demonstrate its unjustifiable character, but to demonstrate its brutal quality, to show that it is worse than martial law.

The Punjab martial law was comparatively a civilized measure and being so named at least served the purpose of producing a shock.

¹ Sir M. Visvesvaraya, eminent engineer; former Dewan of Mysore

The acts now being done under the protection of the ordinary law but really without any law at all are absolutely without any check. Martial law has its own code of honour, but this state of lawlessness has none.

Take the Faridpur flogging. Dr. Maitra is a well-known physician of Calcutta. He is a non-party man. He has given a graphic report of his visit to the Faridpur Jail. Two cultured men, one a head master, were tied to a whipping triangle and whipped for the offence evidently of not salaaming the jail officials. When Dr. Maitra visited the jail, the punishment was not even registered anywhere. He found many prisoners including under-trial ones in handcuffs for whole nights. One prisoner had standing handcuffs for three days.

Nearly double the number of prisoners have been huddled together in particular rooms or cells of the jail than their allotted capacity of accommodation, without adequate attention to their diet, clothes and bedding in this cold weather.

The only thing that the Bengal Government have to say, is not to deny any of the acts but to justify them on the ground of discipline. The Government *communique* says, "The punishments have had the desired effect and discipline has since been maintained."

Now let us travel to Allahabad. The U. P. Government have produced a certificate of character from Mahadev Desai who is able to say truthfully that now he is humanely treated. But let the reader digest the blood-curdling story of the ill treatment of the prisoners in the Naini Jail including the flogging, supplied by him.

From Sitamarhi comes the news that a fine of Rs. 25,000 and a punitive police have been imposed upon its inhabitants. Sitamarhi is a sub-division in Bihar. The fine and the punitive police means sacking of the households of Sitamarhi. The *Motherland* gives an account¹ of the looting of villages—Sihulia, Chandarpur and Bharatawa.

In Sind things are no better, as the following letter² from the Sind Congress Committee will show:

The Hindu. publishes a letter from one Rahmat Rasool, a Punjabi martial law prisoner who along with two other co-accused is now confined in Hyderabad Central Prison. He writes that on their arrival in this jail from the Andamans in November last, they were locked up in a cell meant for prisoners condemned to death and there no meals were given to them for three days, till

¹ Not reproduced here

² Only excerpts reproduced here

the Medical Officers saw them and got them meals. Later on, whenever the Superintendent approached them they were required to raise their hands as a Muslim does in prayer with the greeting—"Sarkar is one." This immoral rule interfering with the fundamental principles of Islam, Rahmat Rasool refused to obey, telling the Superintendent that for him God alone is one and that he can raise his hands in prayer before God alone . . . with the result that his religiousness was rewarded with the fivefold punishment of thirty stripes, six months' solitary confinement, six months' gunny-clothing, six months' cross fetters and six months' bar-fetters . . . the political prisoners . . . are all treated as if they were worse than even common criminals . . .

It will also be remembered that in July last police had fired on innocent people in Matiari, killing one and wounding several others. The Government Commission report has been pigeon-holed in Bombay Secretariat . . .

Recently, with a view to recover a fine he [Sub-Inspector] entered the house of a convicted and imprisoned non-co-operator and forcibly removed his property from the possession of *pardah* ladies occupying the house, including a gold nosering which he forcibly snatched from the nose of the convict's brother's wife . . .

Neither person nor property, neither man nor woman is safe from the attention of the Government. Nor is life easy in the jails. Mere custody of the body does not satisfy the requirements of the Government. Tortures and humiliations have also been added.

Thus we have martial law less Jallianwala Bagh. And this is worse. Jallianwala Bagh, though atrocious, was the cleanest demonstration of the Government intentions and it gave us the needed shock. It was an open air transaction. What is now going on is being done inside the cold prison walls or in little unknown villages and, therefore, has no theatrical value. Our duty, therefore, clearly is to invite martial law and "no damned nonsense" and evolve the courage to draw the rifle fire not in our backs as in 1919 but in our open and willing breasts and without resentment.

Young India, 19-1-1922

216. A CORRECTION

To

THE EDITOR, *Young India*

SIR,

I have just seen your note¹ on Agha Safdar's arrest. Your correspondent has indulged in some gross untruths. I may tell you that (1) the Magistrate was not insulted by the crowd, (2) the crowd did not enter the jail, (3) the police officer's attitude was not courteous. You have entirely misreported on these three vital points You would in future test the credentials of a correspondent before publishing his statement.

Yours sincerely,

SIALKOT, 20-12-1921

SECRETARY,

CITY CONGRESS COMMITTEE

I gladly publish the correction by the correspondent.

Young India, 19-1-1922

217. HOOLIGANISM IN MADRAS

Dr. Rajan in a letter written on the 13th, the day of the hartal² in Madras, writes:³

The Madras hartal has been thoroughly successful. The whole city seems to be dead for the day But I never dreamt of the underlying risks of a hartal in a great city. We had prided ourselves that the inflammable parts of the city had been brought under control. . . . I, Ramanathan and Audinarayana Chettiar were at three or four danger spots and averted an impending riot. It is hard to lay the blame on any particular party. The mob simply get furious at those who defy public opinion, but yet a kind word, a gentle remonstrance from those who represent the Gandhi party pacifies them. The sight of the armed men irritates them. One little boy was bayoneted in his thigh in the city. So far we have heard of no other incidents. Just as I am writing, I hear that two were shot at near Mount Road. . . .

Lord Willingdon, the Governor, and Sir P. Thyagaraja Chetty, the chief of the ministerial party, went in person to the Kotwal Bazaar, the heart of the

¹ *Vide* "Notes", 15-12-1921, under the sub-title "Agha Saheb Safdar".

² Observed to boycott the Prince of Wales' visit to Madras

³ Only excerpts reproduced here

city. They promised military aid

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

I am just now informed that Sir Thyagaraja Chetty is besieged in his own house by the crowd. He did not attend the Council today when the Prince came. . . . I understand nothing has happened to his person nor is likely to happen.

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

Dr. Rajan and his lieutenants left no stone unturned to make and keep the hartal peaceful. All honour to them. But Madras teaches us a lesson as Bombay has. We have still much work to do before we can really establish a swaraj atmosphere. Either we believe in a successful peaceful revolution or we believe that non-violence is merely a preparation for violence. If the latter represents the true state of things,

we must revise our creed. But I am optimistic enough to believe that India has imbibed the spirit of non-violence in a most remarkable way. The exemplary self-restraint exercised in Amritsar, Lahore, Aligarh, Allahabad, Calcutta, Barisal and other places too numerous to mention, shows that where only pledged non-co-operators work, we can rely upon non-violence being observed, but where, as in Madras, an undisciplined mob gathers together, non-co-operators have no control. We must not despair of devising a remedy against repetition of the Madras hooliganism. Equally unfortunate is the attack in Hardoi upon Mr. Baker who has fortunately escaped death. The stray maniacs are most difficult to trace or handle. I doubt not that it is the work of some unknown person unconnected with non-co-operation. But we must deal with such cases also. In a non-violent atmosphere such occurrences must be almost impossible. But it must be confessed that the requisite atmosphere has not yet been reached. It will only be, when we have eradicated violence from our thoughts.

Young India, 19-1-1922

218. NOTES

NON-PAYMENT OF TAXES

I observe a desire in some places to precipitate mass civil disobedience by suspending payment of taxes. But I would urge the greatest caution before embarking upon the dangerous adventure, We must not be indifferent about violence, and we must make sure of masses exercising self-control whilst they are witnesses to the confiscation of their crops and cattle or forfeiture of their holdings. I know that withholding of payment of taxes is one of the quickest methods of overthrowing a government. I am equally sure that we have not yet evolved that degree of strength and discipline which are necessary for conducting a successful campaign of non-payment of taxes. Not a single tahsil in India is yet ready, except perhaps Bardoli and to a lesser degree Anand. More than fifty per cent of the population of such tahsil has to rid itself of the curse of untouchability, must be dressed in khadi manufactured in the tahsil, must be non-violent in thought, word and deed, and must be living in perfect friendliness with all whether co-operators or non-co-operators. Non-payment of taxes without the necessary discipline will be an act of unpardonable madness. Instead of leading to swaraj, it is likely to

lead to no-raj. I must, therefore, repeat the caution I have so often uttered that mass civil disobedience ought not to be tried in the first instance, except under my personal supervision, and certainly never without the fulfilment of the conditions laid down at Delhi¹

“SARKAR SALAAM”

I have reproduced the letter from Sind, showing what is required of prisoners in Hyderabad.² A telegram has been received from Noakhali, enquiring whether non-co-operation prisoners should utter the formula”Sarkar Salaam”. In my opinion that formula, as also *Sarkar ek hai*, is degrading, and the latter is even profane. No religiously minded person can say or believe: Sarkar is only one! That can be said only of God, and Him alone. Therefore, whilst I would advise political prisoners to conform to the jail regulations in so far as they are intended to keep discipline, they must even at the risk of their lives resist all degrading practices which may be imposed in the name of discipline. Similar to the”Sarkar Salaam” formula is the practice of stretching forth the palm of one’s hands in front of officials or that of sitting in a crouching posture. These things may be necessary for dangerous criminals, but a non-co-operator must not be expected to conform to such unmanly exhibitions of themselves.

NEW SPINNING-WHEEL

An improved spinning wheel with many spindles was exhibited at the Ahmedabad exhibition. It is perhaps the most successful of all efforts. But I warn the public against waiting for revolutionary inventions. The existing charkha is perfect of its type. In the interest of economy of mental effort and national time, I would urge lovers of swadeshi to forget improved charkhas that are expected to give much larger output of yarn than the ancient type. Let all energy be devoted to making the ancient pattern more durable and cheap and portable.

CHRISTIAN AWAKENING

Mr. Andrews writes as follows:³

When I was in Lahore a short time ago in order to see Mr. Stokes in the Central Jail, a group of some fifteen to twenty Indian Christian students came to see me . . . they asked me particularly concerning my recent visit to East

¹ *Vide*”The All India Congress Committee”, 10-11-1921.

² *Vide*,”Worse than Martial Law”, 19-1-1922.

³ Only excerpts reproduced here

Africa and Uganda. I tried to point out to them how beautiful a thing it would be, if some of them could go out to Central Africa, not to make money, but simply to help the Africans in love . . . two of them came back and said to me, "We wanted to come back on behalf of everyone of us to tell you that we had a short informal meeting outside after we had left you, and we passed a unanimous resolution asking you to give to Mahatma Gandhi our love and to tell him that our hearts were with him."

YOUNG MEN'S SACRIFICE

The young Mr. Barua who has gone to jail thought it worthwhile to send the following long telegram¹. I give it as a sample of earnestness and desire to act correctly.

FROM AMERICA

The national movement is producing a deep impression upon our people outside India. Prof. Kosambi writes² from Cambridge (Mass.):

The accompanying appeal for the T.S.F.³ was issued here about seven weeks ago and the subscription that was collected up to this date is \$ 156 or Rs. 570 for which I am enclosing a cheque herewith . . . Most of the contributions come from the poor Indian students who have to depend upon their labour or scholarships for the maintenance in this country. . .

From the time of the Boston Tea Party and the Battle of Bunker Hill up to the Sinn Fein movement in Ireland, all the nations on earth had employed force as the only weapon to liberate themselves from domestic or foreign tyranny; but it was left to India under your leadership to discover a new means for freedom, which is, as the *Nation* (New York) puts it, "a secret not learned in centuries of warfare". And the Press of this country from the most radical to the most conservative is unanimous in praising you and the Indian national movement. This is indeed a great gain to us. . . .

I omit the appeal as its purport appears in the letter. The money has been earmarked for the depressed classes work.

Young India, 19-1-1922

¹ Not reproduced here. Mr. Barua had said that he had founded a non-co-operation organization at Golaghat, his birth-place, and that since he was going to jail, his brother would "fulfil the task".

² Only excerpts reproduced here

³ All-India Tilak Swaraj Fund

219. FLOGGING IN PRISONS

The following is the translation of a letter¹ received from Mr. Mahadev Desai on his way to the Agra Jail. It is possible that the posting of the letter is a breach of jail discipline. I hate any breach of discipline but in this instance I have no choice. Duty compels me to publish the letter as it has compelled Mr. Desai to post the letter. I do not mind Mahadev Desai being rewarded with flogging for the indiscipline which is certainly more mischievous than the refusal to wear lousy clothes or the innocent shouts of *jais*².

Young India, 19-1-1922

220. TELEGRAM TO K. VENKATAPPAYYA AND OTHERS³

[Before January 20, 1922]⁴

YOU ARE THE BEST JUDGES OF THE SITUATION.
IF DELHI CONDITIONS ARE SATISFIED AND IF YOU
FEEL CONFIDENT, I HAVE NO RIGHT TO INTERFERE.
GODSPEED. HE WILL BLESS ALL HONEST
HUMBLE EFFORTS. KEEP ME DAILY INFORMED.

GANDHI

The Hindus, 23-1-1922

¹ Not reproduced here; *vide*, however, footnote to "My Notes" ,15-1-1922, under the sub-title "Shri Mahadev's Letter".

² *Jai* means victory.

³ Sent in reply to a telegram from Venkatappayya and others which read: "After deep and respectful consideration of your letter [of January 17, 1922] . . . I . . . submit the following regarding Guntur . . . The movement is far ahead. Village officers, including *Panchama* and Christian *vettians*, are resigning in large numbers. Arrests. . . are increasing in different places. . . *Panchama* and Christians are enlisting. Excepting wells, untouchability is disappearing. The attachment, though very provocative, the people are peacefully submitting. Cooking vessels, even with food, are distrained even by Christian officials entering Brahmin kitchens, but these acts are not objected to. The taluqs in experiment are self-sufficient in khaddar. Not less than 60 per cent in villages, including women, wear khaddar We respectfully submit that Delhi conditions are satisfied.

"The Military arrived at Guntur with armoured cars and motor lorries. Advocacy of payment under the circumstances will result in the ultimate effacement of our district from the movement seriously jeopardizing even other districts. Awaiting your favourable consideration. Reply."

⁴ The addressees sent the text of this telegram on January 20, 1922, for publication in *The Hindu*.

221. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM,
Friday [January 20, 1922]¹

CHI. MATHURADAS,

The money is to be paid not for Harijan temples but for Harijan work. Harijan work may pertain to a temple, school, club or party. Money should be provided so long as the intentions are not dishonest. We are not providing from the special fund because something must be done by the Provincial Committee also. Amritlal Thakkar has taken the responsibility of forming the trust of the temple and looking after its management. If he was going to spend the money on his own or if there was no plan for the temple, then we would not pay. Besides, he is not in a position to take money for the temple from Birla. Hence we should forget the temple and remember that the money is to be paid only for helping the Harijan cause. You will have regained your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

222. LETTER TO A FRIEND²

January 21, 1922

MY DEAR . . . ,

I assure you that I shall take no hasty step. I am constantly praying for light and guidance.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi, p. 207

¹ The addressee received this letter on January 21, 1922. The Friday preceding it fell on January 20.

² Addressee not known. According to the source, Gandhiji had been receiving many letters "cautioning him against any indiscriminate or hasty step" and this letter was written by him, just before his departure for Bardoli, "to a very particular friend of his".

223. *WHERE IS SWARAJ?*

After the arrest of Lalaji, Das, Nehru and Maulana Abul Kalam, God knows what happened, but people have ceased to ask, "Where is swaraj?" My anxiety has disappeared and I feel that nobody will henceforth ask me for any explanation. People have started sending wires: "Congratulations on attainment of swaraj." Paul Richard came and spoke on December 31 as if a new era had dawned. Pearson wrote from Shantiniketan saying that, on returning after an absence of five years, he found that India had become free.

Swaraj is a state of the mind. When it becomes permanent, swaraj will take visible shape. But, the state of mind having changed, it has already arrived.

Although I never let go an opportunity for a settlement, I am hesitant to seek one now after discovering India's strength. If there is a political settlement before we have developed our full strength, what will be our fate? Such a settlement will be like a baby born before its time and dying soon after. There was an overnight revolution in Portugal and a new government was established with the result that revolutions followed one another and there was no stable government. Everybody congratulated Turkey when there was a sudden change of government there in 1906. It, however, turned out to be a short-lived affair. The revolution came and vanished like a dream. Turkey has had to suffer much since then and no one knows how much more still its brave people will have to suffer.

With these experiences in my mind, I feel perplexed and do not know what is good. At this juncture, I positively shake with fear. If there is a settlement, who knows where it will lead us?

People have not yet realized clearly that swaraj can be secured with the help of a contrivance which even an inexperienced village carpenter can make and which an innocent and tender girl can operate. As days pass, however, I get more convinced that India will win freedom only through this machine and in no other way.

Have we been convinced, even now, that the real education of the people consists not in literacy but in building up character and in learning to use one's hands and feet—to work with the body? Parents even in Gujarat have not overcome their hankering after literacy. They, too, have not yet recognized the right place of literacy in education and do not concede that children should first be taught

respect for moral rules, then comes the training of their bodies and proficiency in some craft which will secure them their livelihood, and then the training of the intellect, instruction in the three R's by way of embellishment. Abbas Saheb informs me that most parents are simply unwilling to withdraw their children from the Government high school at Nadiad. All parents in Gujarat are not yet ready to send their children to the national schools which inculcate a better outlook in them, or to appreciate the value of the training in freedom which they impart.

As regards lawyers, the position is worse still. Have they overcome their infatuation for law-courts? Have we started settling our disputes among ourselves? Have the lawyers realized that justice should not be costly? Even now, religious leaders who are considered to be pillars of their respective faiths hope to secure justice in the Privy Council in disputes concerning their religious affairs. Lawyers have not yet overcome the allurements of fat fees and, in consequence, the cost of justice continues to be counted in terms of gold and guineas. If there is a settlement today, we shall not have suffered to the very soul and, after the settlement, who will be interested in these matters? The law-courts will carry on as they are doing today. How, then, shall we establish *Ramarajya*? In *Ramarajya*, justice cannot be sold.

Have the Hindus and Muslims achieved complete unity? Has their mutual distrust disappeared? Is there an identity of ideals in regard to the future of the country? Both have realized the need for friendship, but their hearts have not yet united; they are in the process of being united. If there is a settlement, this process will be interrupted. It is, therefore, fruitless to talk of freedom as long as the two have not-united.

As long as the truth about the self
Is not understood,
Your spiritual effort
Has not borne fruit.¹

These lines are completely true about swaraj. We may substitute "swaraj" for self and we shall clearly see how. We have yet to understand the meaning of the different aspects of swaraj. If Hindu-Muslim unity means enmity towards Parsis, Christians or Jews,

¹ The lines are from a poem by Narasinh Mehta.

that unity will be a curse for the world. So long, therefore, as we have not fully understood the meaning of Hindu-Muslim unity, the very desire for settlement is wrong.

Have we, besides, imbibed the spirit of non-violence, which is the prerequisite of dedicated effort? Have we accepted the fact that our peaceful non-co-operation is a sign of strength? We still regard our non violence to be the weapon of the weak, do not recognize its real worth and so we bring discredit to it. This is as foolish as giving away a guinea taking it to be a half-rupee coin. Non-violence is a weapon of the strong and is respected only when employed by them. Non-violence means forgiveness and this is the glory of the brave. He who does not eat because he has no appetite does not acquire the merit of fasting. If someone does not kill because he cannot kill, he practises no virtue. There can be no virtue in anything done unwillingly. When the fighters who are getting ready in Bardoli and Anand do not harass or do not harbour ill will against any Parsi or Englishman or any other person co-operating with the Government, then only will they be considered fit to be enrolled in a non-violent army. One who uses non-violence as a cover for violent thoughts is not only a traitor to his own country but to the entire world, because the world is watching intently, like a person thirsting for water, our experiment with the weapon of non-violence. As long as the country has not learnt to regard non-violence as a weapon of the strong, we should look upon a settlement as something which will defile us and we should keep miles away from it.

What shall I say, moreover, to Hindu readers? Though I regard myself to be a devout Hindu, I make bold to say that, as long as Hindus do not treat *Dheds* and *Bhangis* as their own blood-brothers, they are not themselves Hindus. There will be a shower of flowers from the heavens when caste Hindus embrace *Bhangis* with affection. Then alone will the cow receive real protection. Compassion and hatred of man by man cannot go hand in hand. The shortcomings of *Dheds* and *Bhangis* have to be overcome through love. The words of Anandshankar Dhruva always ring in my ears. Our enemies are the *Dheds* and *Bhangis* in our hearts. They are the real untouchables. The human beings in flesh and blood, whom we commit the sin of treating as untouchable, are our kith and kin. We should mix with them and serve them and thereby earn the merit which accrues to virtuous

deeds. If a *Vaishnava*¹ sucks out poison injected by the bite of a serpent into the body of a *Dhed* or a *Bhangi* and afterwards enters a temple without taking a bath, even the temple will be sanctified. It would be like Sudama² or Vidura³ visiting Krishna at his home. As long as we have not plucked out the weed of untouchability or have not understood, as Anandshankar Dhruva has done, the real meaning of untouchability, we should not even think of a settlement.

We can fulfil these great tasks and purify ourselves only by suffering. He alone who is prepared to die for liberation can attain it. Those who do not welcome their death go to miserable worlds. One who dies voluntarily becomes fit for liberation. Similarly, if we steadfastly cling to the means indicated above, give up the fear of death, then, and then only, shall we win freedom—swaraj. Das, Lalaji, Motilalji, Abul Kalam Azad and others are teaching us the *mantra* of dying willingly. It seems we have learnt that lesson, and so no one asks the question, "Where is swaraj?" Everyone says that, now that we have the strength to die willingly, we have won swaraj. The rest is all a mirage.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-1-1922

224. JOINT CONFERENCE

The All-Party Conference convened by Bharat Bhushan⁴ Malaviyaji has ended. Let us examine its gains.

It can be said that those who doubt the utility of non-co-operators participating in such a conference have not understood the meaning of non-co-operation. A non-co-operator does not let go a single opportunity for co-operation. Every time, however, he considers whether such co-operation will advance his cause. Every peaceful movement is sustained by public opinion. One who is pledged to propagate his views peacefully has no other strength except the justice of his cause and, therefore, he is always ready to

¹ Devotee of Vishnu

² A fellow-student of Krishna. He later paid a visit to his boyhood friend living as a renowned Prince in Dwarka and Krishna felt greatly honoured by the visit.

³ An humble character in the *Mahabharata* who held Krishna in reverence

⁴ "Ornament of India"

explain them to everybody. It was thus the duty of non-co-operators, when invited, to accept the invitation

Though they attended the Conference, they did not become a party to it. They refrained from voting. Non-co-operators were willing to utilize the services of neutral persons as intermediaries, and I think that was the right attitude. They enhanced the prestige of the National Congress and saved people's time by proceeding systematically and by selecting me as their sole spokesman. Besides, in a conference like this, there was more for non-co-operators to listen to than to explain. By adopting this attitude, we maintained decorum. The Conference went through its business without hot exchanges.

Sir Sankaran Nair got angry for no reason. In the first place, he got angry over my stand.¹ He did not like my laying down so many conditions one after another. At that very stage, he expressed his desire to withdraw. But, finding that Malaviyaji, Mr. Jinnah and others did not like his attitude, he cooled down. When, however, the matter of releasing *fatwa* prisoners came up, he could bear no longer and walked out of the Conference.

He had been appointed the "Speaker". A president can adopt a partisan attitude, but a "Speaker" has no right to do so. A "Speaker" is appointed to conduct the meeting in accordance with the rules of procedure. He has no right to express his own views. Sir Sankaran Nair, therefore, ought to have refrained from expressing his views. Instead, he intervened in the discussion and ultimately left the chair. Everyone regretted this but nobody felt discouraged. As soon as he had left the meeting, Panditji proposed Sir Visvesvaraya and he took the chair. A year ago, Sir Sankaran Nair's leaving the chair would have created a sensation and led to much persuading. But now the people have become free, they know their rights and the limits beyond which one must not go and are, therefore, able to manage such situations with patience.

All the resolutions adopted at the Conference can be said to be reasonable. They could have been more elaborate and stronger. If, however, the resolutions which have been passed are acted upon by the Government, the foundation for a settlement will have been laid.

But there is little hope that the Government will act upon the recommendations of the Conference. It will be a bitter pill for it to

¹ *Vide* "Extracts from Sir Snkaran Nair's Letter", 17-1-1922.

release the Ali Brothers. If it permits enrolment of volunteers and holding of meetings, releases the hundreds who have been arrested and returns the securities of the presses, it will then have to accept the demands in respect of the Khilafat, the Punjab, etc. If it does not accept these demands, the freely expressed public opinion will be so strong that no government in the world can afford to ignore it.

There is every possibility of a happy outcome if the Government convenes a conference after accepting these conditions. We can see, however, that it will do nothing of the sort. What, then, was the good of attending the Conference convened by Malaviyaji? It is that our demands got wider publicity and the Moderates cannot argue now that we do not wish to meet or to listen to anybody. We showed humility by attending the Conference. Those who are resolute and strong would meet their adversaries and critics a hundred times and yet stick to their own views as long as they are convinced that they are in the right.

As I write this, I have before me the reports of the debates of the Central Legislative Assembly in Delhi on this subject. From the debates, it would appear that many of the members are not at all aware of the present conditions in the country. We were being urged to enter such a legislature. We can see that it is a legislature which respects not public opinion but the views of the Government. Let nobody think that if there were in the Assembly others—non-co-operators themselves in place of the present members—the result would have been better. They also would have been in the same plight. Let us suppose that all other members in the legislature were united; even then the Government would have followed its own way. As long as the Government remains power-drunk, no person can achieve anything by entering the councils. While the Executive is totally independent of the Legislature, no other result is possible.

As long as we have no control over the army and the police, we are bound to remain dependent. And there are many simple minded people among us who believe that, in order to acquire this control, we ourselves should learn military drill and control the mischievous elements. The non-co-operation movement shows that if we cease to be afraid of the army, we can win power without learning military discipline. For this purpose, we should learn the lesson of peace, the hearts of Hindus and Muslims should be cleansed, or moral character

should be reformed and we should have greater self-confidence.

We have not yet acquired the necessary self-confidence. In view of this weakness of ours, I made it clear to Malaviyaji that I would, of course, attend if the Viceroy called a conference, but that we were not equipped with sufficient strength to compel acceptance of our demands. We have not yet acquired sufficient control over mischievous elements and the forces of violence. There was, no doubt, a successful hartal in Madras, but soon the trouble-makers went back to their old ways.¹

A poor cinema exhibitor was harassed and Sir Thyagaraja Chetty's house was surrounded by miscreants. These people are also counted among non-co-operators. They, too, had joined the hartal. The volunteers could not bring them round. The incident means that when the Government relinquishes power, it is the rowdies who will rule, not we. If, thus, every time there is trouble the rowdies have their way, how can non-co-operation succeed? We should, therefore, give up all hope of winning swaraj as long as we have not acquired sufficient influence over such elements.

And yet, how can we at all give up hope? When we see people getting the strength to bear flogging and to suffer the hardships of prison, we know that they are bound to get all power. All that is necessary is to cultivate still greater capacity to suffer and to purify our hearts still further. We have to learn to lay equal emphasis on both the terms in the phrase "civil disobedience", learn to disobey and yet remain civil. Disobedience without civility will destroy us, whereas disobedience with civility is completely safe.

As a consequence of the Conference, we have only to suspend mass civil disobedience till January 31 at the furthest. No other activity of ours need be suspended. We should continue to enrol volunteers. The swadeshi movement should not be halted for a moment. The movement for washing away the stain of untouchability should go on. We should keep on trying to wean away drink-addicts. The less the enthusiasm we show in these tasks, the longer will the attainment of swaraj be delayed.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-1-1922

¹ *Vide* "Hooliganism in Madras", 19-1-1922.

225. MISERY IN HAPPINESS

One who has a conscience and thinks cannot easily get bodily happiness. He is oppressed by the misery of others and pines away. He cannot bear to see the suffering round him. Such a pitiable condition is Mahadev Desai's, for, he tries to judge the rightness of every action of his. He was happy as long as he was suffering physically, since he had been all too eager to go to jail in order that he might suffer. But now that he is happy in jail and the jailor is favourably inclined, he suffers inwardly. Others are more or less in the same plight as Mahadev Desai. The discussion which has started in the Agra Central Jail,¹ where all the non-co-operators have been brought together, could not have taken place when these same prisoners were themselves suffering and were even sometimes flogged. At that time, they had a glimpse of the sun of swaraj peeping from behind the mountain of suffering and they used to forget their pain in the warmth of its rays. But now, when they have swaraj in jail, enjoy some freedom, these freebooters in the army of swaraj are fighting among themselves just as robbers fight for a share of the booty. The description of the fight had better be read in Mahadev Desai's own words. I have not reproduced every word of the letter, as I did in the case of the previous letter, but have omitted certain sentences and given only the relevant part. It was written on the 15th.²

There is a lot for us to learn from this letter. Mahadev Desai's letter clearly shows that after we have secured power, we shall not be able to maintain the propriety and the restraint which we have been showing during the struggle.

Let us recognize that there is a great difference between power and swaraj. At present, most of us are fighting merely for power and authority. In this scramble, I see obstacles and impediments in our path. I see violence coming out of it. In the struggle for swaraj, there can be only healthy rivalry. Swaraj means self-rule, rule over oneself. In this struggle, he wins who bends and bears. It requires great self-restraint. In a scramble for power, everyone wants to be the first, so everyone fights against everyone else. Under autocratic rule, the foremost wins; under swaraj, on the contrary, the hindmost wins. Thus,

¹ Whether they should agitate against distinctions of class among political prisoners arrested in connection with the non-co-operation movement

² The letter is not translated here

there is between the two as much difference as there is between an elephant and a horse or, rather, between east and west. If we remember that we are carrying on a fight for swaraj, we shall overcome all obstacles.

If Mahadev Desai's companions recognize this difference and behave accordingly, all will be well, the non-co-operation prisoners will win pure swaraj in jail and its fragrance will spread all over India. Though Mahadev Desai feels apprehensive, I am confident that he and the non-co-operation prisoners who are with him will come to the right decision¹ and, getting up at 4 o'clock, say morning prayers, sing devotional songs in praise of Allah and Krishna and thus sanctify the jail.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-1-1922

226. MY NOTES

“THERE IS ONLY ONE GOVERNMENT”

There is a letter from Sind which contains the news that prisoners in jails are made to say, “There is only one Government”, and the words are shouted from a distance when some official visits the jail and the prisoner is obliged to stand up. News has been received from another place that prisoners are made to shout, “Salutation to the Government”. Jairamdas of Sind, who is in the Sabarmati Jail, was ordered to hold his arms down, palms outwards, and stand up, when any official approached him. He disobeyed the order and hence the permission granted to him to read newspapers has been withdrawn. In some other place, a prisoner is asked to bow down his head, put his hands on the floor and stay in that uncomfortable position.

It has been asked whether a non-co-operator prisoner should obey such orders. Doubts have arisen in people's minds because of the article² on the model prisoner which appeared in *Young India*. The matter is easily decided. It is our principle never to obey any rule

¹ Mahadev Desai had started group prayers in the manner of the Satyagraha Ashram at Ahmedabad and some prisoners had objected to the inclusion of Sanskrit verses.

² *Vide* “A Model Prisoner”, 29-12-1921.

which inflicts humiliation or which is intended to insult our manhood. Certain things can never be permitted in jail. Generally, the prisoners are rough people who are in jail for crimes involving moral turpitude. It is only now that prisons have become a gateway to freedom. The jails, therefore, have certain rules to which lovers of liberty will never submit.

If a statement like "There is only one God", the kind of statement that can be made about God alone, is applied to the Government, no prisoner who really understands dharma or cares for self-respect can ever accept it, so that there is no choice but to disobey a rule of this sort without fear of the consequences. One should not mind if one is severely punished for this in jail, is put in a dark cell, has to suffer hardships or endure flogging or is even made to starve. One may have to bear all this, but one must civilly disobey a rule of the kind described.

I for one welcome this opportunity. The many evils of prison-life will now get automatically reformed. We are discovering to what extent force is employed even in jails. The very basis of this Government is force. Where flattery of the few and oppression of the many is the general policy, we say that the Government follows the methods which prevail in a demon's kingdom.

But what holds good outside [jail] also holds good inside [it]. We need civilized strength even inside jail—civility on the one hand and the utmost strength on the other. Our movement can progress only if we use discretion in everything we do. We should also understand the difficult position in which the jail officials are placed. Since they are always thrown among criminals, they are rough in their methods and occasionally cruel. On coming into contact with cultured prisoners, jail warders and others cannot all at once change their behaviour. Moreover, so long as the jail regulations remain in force, they are bound to follow them. We have, therefore, no option but to put up with certain hardships and hence we should use our judgment and take thought every time we are inclined to resist. For instance, we may not say, "Salutation to the Government", but we should certainly salute the warder, respect him and stand up when he comes. A prisoner is but a prisoner. He should not forget what kind of behaviour is proper in jail and what restraints are necessary there. Ultimately, we have to melt the hearts of even the jail officials and make these people gentle and compassionate.

KATHIAWAR

A friend wants to know whether volunteers should be enrolled in Kathiawar. My advice is, "No." A resident of Kathiawar who is willing to be enrolled as a volunteer should himself sign the pledge in British territory and give his name and address. In Kathiawar, only constructive activities like swadeshi, abolition of untouchability, propaganda against drinking, national education, etc., should be taken up. The same friend says further that they have started producing khadi in several places but that the people have become so comfort-loving that many of them do not like to wear it, with the result that while stocks of khadi have accumulated in many places, the people use mill-made or foreign cloth. This is disquieting news. It is of course like ordering rice from elsewhere, refusing to use *bajra* growing in one's own field. And it is because of this thoughtless attitude that we have become beggars and slaves and, if we do not change it, we shall be impoverished still further. If Kathiawar, which grows cotton, red wheat and *bajra*, has to import cloth or foodgrains, how can it remain prosperous?

"SWARAJ ASHRAM"

Shri Phookan has written a letter from Silchar Jail in Assam in which he has called the jail "Swaraj Ashram". He adds that anyone who wants swaraj will be admitted into this "Swaraj Ashram" and says further that as long as there can be no peace with honour, the prisoners have no desire for peace at all, and that, in jail one can get a very fine idea of what swaraj means.

REFUSAL TO PAY TAXES

In Gujarat, as also in the rest of the country, it is being debated whether the people should withhold payment of land revenue. The more I think about this, the clearer it becomes to me that we are still not fit to do this. Anyone who refuses to pay taxes with a view to saving money is certainly a thief, and we shall not win swaraj with the help of thieves. Such swaraj will be a government of thieves. The swaraj will be of the same quality, as, and will be controlled by, the people with whose help we win it. And hence I have been telling the people that they should not desire swaraj to be secured even by my efforts. Even Gandhi-rule will not be swaraj. Therefore, my only desire is that all should try to copy me—that is, cultivate self-restraint to the extent at least that I have done; be truthful in speech, firm,

determined, self-possessed and fearless. We can thus see that we should hesitate even to seek help. I often caution my co-workers and tell them that, in their impatience, they should not obtain help from all and sundry. They should see that their means are the purest. A surgeon who does not keep his instruments clean and well-sharpened sometimes kills his patient or, at any rate, inflicts on him avoidable pain. From this, we should understand that, so long as the cultivators have not been trained to make sacrifices in a peaceful manner and to work in the national cause, it would be a great sin to turn them towards the path of non-payment of taxes and we ourselves would have to suffer the consequences.

It is my advice, therefore, that individuals may, after full consideration, do what they like, but it will be in the country's interest that all others, save people in Bardoli and Anand, should pay up the taxes. There are many other simple ways of civilly disobeying the laws and these we can adopt without any fear. People who do not wish to pay taxes will be justified in with-holding payment only if they fully observe the conditions laid down for non-co-operators.

WHAT ABOUT PICKETING?

All our activities except mass civil disobedience continue in the intervening period till January 31 and, therefore, we go on with the picketing of liquor shops and schools where we have been doing it. If we stop it at any place for our own reasons, it will be a different matter. Picketing, hartal and civil disobedience will be completely suspended only when there is a round table conference. One does not know when such a conference will be held, if ever. And, moreover, before we stop these activities, all swarajist prisoners should have been released.

HELP FROM AMERICA

Some of our leaders still believe that we should maintain an agency to publicize our activities in England, America and other countries. I am convinced that this will mean mere waste of money; not only that, it will actually do us harm. We shall have to engage some persons [for the work] and we shall in that case lose the independence which we enjoy today. Our present attitude is that we will fight with our own strength and not with any help from abroad.

I believe, moreover, that in the measure that our work here is solid, it will get known by itself. He who wants to magnify a thing

needs to advertise it; but he who is humble, that is to say, he who trusts in God, minimizes whatever he does and values his work modestly. There is sufficient power in every action to publicize it, and that is why it is said that truth will be known. This applies to both good and bad actions. A crime, however much one may try to hide it, will always be discovered. The sun can never be hidden by a wicker basket, and if we could put together thousands of suns and make each of them twice as large as the present sun, the light of truth would be assuredly brighter than their combined light. Why, then, should we seek publicity for our struggle based on truth, which shines with its own light?

We have recently had from America an illustration of this truth. An Indian resident there has collected and sent us Rs. 570; he also informs us, moreover, that the Americans have been taking deep interest in our struggle. Prof. Kosambi, who undertook this effort, writes:¹

HAND-WRITTEN NEWSPAPER

The *Independent* continues to be published as a hand-written paper. Another paper, named *Swaraj*, has also ceased publication in Prayag² as its security has been forfeited. Hence this paper, too, is being now brought out as a hand-written paper. I have before me its first issue. It is published in Hindi and has four pages. The editor lets himself go now; he is free to commit as many nominal crimes as he may wish. I see in it nothing but crimes from the point of view of the bureaucracy. But the paper will certainly continue to appear until all the contributors are arrested. With more help from copyists, its circulation will increase.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-1-1922

¹ The letter is not translated here

² Traditional name for Allahabad

227. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

Sunday [January 22, 1922]¹

CHI. DEVDAS,

I at last got your letter today. The copy of the *Independent* is not clear. It should be such that there should be no difficulty in reading it. It does not matter if you can make fewer copies. Should not your articles also be clear? To bring out such a newspaper is also an art. You should find out how lithographing is done.

Send me the full details of your meeting Joseph in connection with the Modern High School.

Blessing from

BAPU

MASTER DEVDAS GANDHI

ANAND BHAVAN

ALLAHABAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 7809

228. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Sunday [January 22, 1922]²

CHI. MATHURADAS,

If the Bombay Committee has the money earmarked then certainly the amount can and should be given from it. The money so set apart is not meant to be kept. It is only desirable that the Provincial Committee should pay it. Even now I would take it to mean that the money is to be given not for the temple but for the uplift of Harijans. Even then, I see no harm in your arguing the case with the Provincial Committee. I have consulted Bhai Shankerlal.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

¹ From the postmark on the postcard in Gandhiji's hand

² The postmark bears the date January 23, 1922.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

CITIZENS' APPEAL

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

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

Young India, 24-11-1921

APPENDIX II

EXTRACTS FROM SIR SANKARAN NAIR'S LETTER

TO

THE EDITOR, *The Times of India*

SIR,

In view of certain statements which have already appeared in the Press, may I seek the hospitality of your columns for this letter.

We were called to confer together and devise means to come to an honourable settlement. I have come to the conclusion along with many others that any further conference with Mr. Gandhi and his followers is useless, and he will not be a party to what I consider any honourable settlement, or that any settlement will be faithfully carried out.

It is only right that I should give my reasons.

The signatories to the manifesto placed certain proposals before the Conference yesterday. Mr. Gandhi did not accept those resolutions. This morning the

Committee, appointed by the Conference, which at his own request—the reason will be apparent later—did not contain himself or any of his followers, framed, however, in consultation with him, resolutions to meet his wishes as far as possible. They also were not accepted by him. In the two long speeches he delivered he defined his own position so far as any conference with the Viceroy is concerned as follows:

“Penitence” on the part of Government must be shown. In order to create a favourable atmosphere the Government must unconditionally retrace all steps they have recently taken; not only cancel the notifications extending certain provisions of law; release all Congress and Khilafat volunteers arrested and convicted but all others convicted recently under what I shall call the ordinary provisions of the Penal Code and the Procedure Code. This later demand was subsequently modified in one particular. This, Mr. Gandhi said, is not due to any sympathy with them but only to create a favourable atmosphere and to show penitence on the part of Government. . . .

He further expressed his opinion, referring no doubt to the Government: “You dare not declare martial law, however far we go.” Mr. Gandhi’s followers, even those who expressed a mild dissent in some respects, support him in his attitude. . . .

Mr. Gandhi does not want a conference or a settlement except on his own impossible terms

In regard to the Punjab he emphasized the fact that the Congress party would be satisfied with nothing less than carrying out the proposals made in the Congress Sub-Committee report. It includes not only the punishment of the subordinate officials but the practically impossible condition of the deprivations of pensions of Sir Michael O’Dwyer, Dyer, etc.

With reference to the Khilafat matter, Mr. Gandhi said that the French must leave Syria—of course an impossible condition. They want England to leave Egypt. On this it is not necessary to make any comment.

So far as swaraj is concerned, he wants at once in the central and provincial Governments full Dominion status, as may be determined by the duly elected representatives of the people. For the election of representatives the Congress constitution as to franchise, etc., should be accepted.

He emphasized over and over again that these are the minimum demands which must be accepted by the Government and the Round Table Conference. . . .

The release of some of the convicted persons like the volunteers, the constitution of a tribunal to consider the cases of others are made conditions precedent to holding a conference. I do not object to a tribunal for reconsideration if the Government are willing to accept the suggestion, though all the judges are not to be appointed by Government. This observation does not apply to the cases of the Ali Brothers and others in their position whose (*fatwa* prisoners) release is, however, demanded as an essential preliminary to any conference.

The demand however that certain prisoners should be released before we can agree to such a conference must in my opinion be dropped if we want a conference. I

agree that the Government should not interfere with Mr. Gandhi's movement as long as there is no apprehension of any violence. . . .

As regards Messrs Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali and others in that category the Government's position is stronger. It is within the knowledge of Mr. Gandhi and many of us that they do not accept the principle of non-violent agitation. In view of the promise of Mr. Gandhi that he would obtain swaraj within a year if his method of non-violent agitation is followed, they did not press for violence. That year has elapsed, and the Mussulmans feel that the pact with Mr. Gandhi is over the Mussulmans are not under the restraint of the self-imposed obligations of Mr. Gandhi.... they will not hesitate to resort to violence not only against Government but also against others who may not join them in their agitation. Recent occurrences also support this.

All circumstances point to the conclusion that they and their friends will continue the agitation on their release. I do not think it right, therefore, to insist for their unconditional release or make it a condition precedent for the conference with the Government. The only ground of differentiation, the superior obligation to follow the religious injunctions even against the laws of the country, has only to be stated in view of what is happening in Malabar to be discarded. It is on the other hand, a strong argument against unconditional release which would leave them free to follow a line of conduct declared illegal by the courts and which may be attended by disastrous consequences. An additional reason is the fact that Mr. Gandhi and his friends and the accused themselves welcome the arrest and convictions. I trust, therefore, that I shall not be deemed uncharitable if I state that the demand for the release by them is for the humiliation of Government or to preclude a round table conference as suggested. It is possible that the refusal to release these persons might be used as a pretext for civil disobedience, i.e., non-payment of taxes etc. The movement will then stand naked in all its illegality and hideousness. It is a fitting consummation of a policy which had its origin in false promise of attainment of swaraj within a year—a statement calculated and therefore made to mislead the ignorant masses which all its intelligent supporters must have known to be impossible of attainment

Being of opinion that I cannot associate with Mr. Gandhi and his followers in asking for a conference or in any other respect, for reasons some of which are given above, and differing from the Conference on these vital questions, on which the Conference agrees with Mr. Gandhi, I have felt bound to leave the Conference, of which I was the speaker. . . .

C. SANKARAN NAIR

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