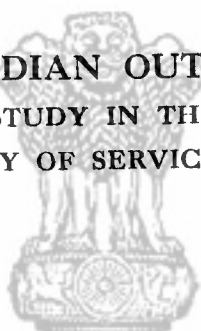


**THE INDIAN OUTLOOK**  
**A STUDY IN THE**  
**WAY OF SERVICE**



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# THE INDIAN OUTLOOK

## A STUDY IN THE WAY OF SERVICE

BY  
W. E. S. HOLLAND

AUTHOR OF  
*The Goal of India, etc.*



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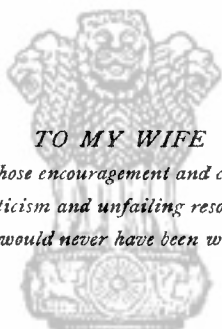
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*TO MY WIFE*

*without whose encouragement and comradeship,  
sure criticism and unfailing resource, this  
book would never have been written.*

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## PREFACE

FIRST, omissions. Moslems constitute nearly one-fifth of the population of India. They occupy an insignificant place in these pages. Women are more than a half of India. Yet in this book very little is said about India's women. The reason in both cases is the same : I had either to take second-hand or to say little. I chose the latter.


Next, acknowledgments. My chief obligation is expressed in the dedication of the book. My second is to Mr Kenneth Maclellan and the Rev. W. Paton, who between them have undertaken the editing of my work. To their skill and sympathy I owe the recasting and, in part, rewriting, of one earlier and two later chapters. I have also to thank Dr J. N. Farquhar, who has given especial help with the chapters which deal with Hinduism, and the Rev. R. L. Pelly for much help on the last three chapters. And then there is my indebtedness to many friends for constant help and criticism : and prayer. My debt to books and writers is for the most part acknowledged in footnotes.

Third, a confession. This book has been written to order. It has in it much more of politics than I would wish, but the times constrain. At certain points it has been difficult to refrain from indignant

comment. For I long that by frank confession of the blemishes that tarnish, my people shall redeem the most glorious pages of British history. But conscience will react more healthily to truthful record of fact than to personal opinions. I have, therefore, sought to reduce comment to a minimum.

Parents are said to love their firstborn best, which is perhaps the reason why I would refer all readers to Chapters II and III of *The Goal of India* for a more satisfying account of Indian religions.

What really matters is that this book may help to call out England's response to India's call for service. Only those can really serve who love. And in the last resort we love because He first loved us. In the twentieth century it still is true that India will be served best by those whose lives have been refashioned by the old, old story of Jesus and His love. If the Son make India free, she shall be free indeed.



W. E. S. H.

ALWAYE, April 1926

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# THE INDIAN OUTLOOK

## CHAPTER I

### THE ESSENTIAL INDIA

#### I

“It is our chief fault that we are incorrigibly religious.” So speaks the greatest of India’s living poets. Nothing else than religion can be the first note of a book that seeks to interpret the heart of India to the modern world.

Stand in the corner bastion of Akbar’s fort at Allahabad on the great day of the Kumbh Mela, a festival that recurs every twelve years. Below you, strips of sand reach down to the meeting of the sister sacred rivers, the Ganges and the Jumna. The English police officer, who by a strange anachronism is master of the ceremonies in this old-world Hindu festival, will tell you that as you gaze over the wide-stretching sands you are looking at a crowd of three million people. They have come, some of them two thousand miles and more, many of them tramping every mile of it on foot, to wash away their sins<sup>1</sup> at the meeting of the sacred rivers. It is not Wembley Exhibitions but religious meetings that draw crowds

<sup>1</sup> Only it must be said that the sins which weigh upon their consciences are for the most part mere breaches of ceremonial law : the touching of an outcaste, or the eating of forbidden food.

in India. And as you thread your way through the devout and courteous masses, in place of merry-go-rounds and shooting galleries you will see holy men who, as a religious discipline, are sitting on beds of spikes or holding their hands above their heads till they shrivel up as stiff as sticks. Or you will be stopped by what forms the climax of the festival, a procession of over a hundred thousand devotees, twenty thousand of them, including a sprinkling of women, destitute of any shred of clothing. These are only a representative few of the two million men and women in India who, as members of ascetic orders, have given themselves to a life of mendicancy and rigour, that they may win salvation.

But religion in India is not a matter for great occasions, or one day in the week, or even for temple services. It is the thread on which a Hindu's daily life is strung. His bath, his meals, his intercourse with wife and friends and servants, are all regulated and sanctified by religious rule. A religious ceremony preceded his conception and accompanies every important occasion or happening thereafter.

Indeed, Hindu religious imagination deifies the entire universe and everything that is in it. It is not only that Indian philosophy, in remorseless monism, affirms that everything that is must be divine. Popular fancy, in a riot of superstitious awe, more fear than reverence, has created lesser deities, numbered by the hundred million—some of them, spiteful and malevolent enough, ready to leap out from wayside tree or stone on the unwary traveller.

There is an all-pervading sense of the divine that

makes one tread gently as one moves about in India. You see it in the fearlessness of beast and bird, their trustful approach to humankind, protected by the reverence for all life which Hinduism teaches. You see it in the big, grave, lustrous eye of the cow that strolls through the front door of the one-roomed cottage to find its home with the family inside. You see it in the bulbul that perches on your bedpost, waiting for the crumb from your morning tray of tea, or the squirrel clambering down the veranda post to the corner of your breakfast table.

This reverence for animal life is probably parent rather than child of the doctrine of Ahimsa (harmlessness), taught with such impassioned fervour by the Buddha. For it is also found in the independent and contemporary sect of Jainism. The distinctively Hindu spirit shrinks sensitively from the taking of animal life. Meat diet is repugnant to a large proportion of Hindus. It would be an interesting study in psychology to trace the history of one particular form of this repugnance: the universal and deep-seated Hindu abhorrence of the killing and eating of the flesh of the cow. Indeed this feeling, along with observance of caste and reverence for Brahmans, is one of the three distinctive marks of Hinduism. It is either cause or symptom of the acutest phase of the Hindu-Moslem schism, which rends India vertically from top to bottom, and makes her political unity so infinitely difficult of realization. There is something to be said for those who hold that this doctrine of Ahimsa, in its inhibition of the taking of life, is one of the greatest specific contributions India has to make

to the progress of humanity. The inexplicable thing about it is its co-existence with a widespread indifference to animal pain.

But the impress of religion goes deeper far than this. (Or is it the effect of climate?) There is a momentous and deeply instinctive divergence in the scale of virtues, East and West. Ask any British public schoolboy what are the two virtues he instinctively admires most. You will practically always get the same answer: truth and courage, straightness and pluck. Speak to him of some one as "a good man with a hot temper" and he will understand. The type will be quite familiar. But speak to him of some one else as "a fine character and a really good man, but a liar whose word cannot be trusted," and he will gape at you in sheer bewilderment. Ask an Indian student what are his two cardinal virtues, and he will at once reply: "Gentleness and patience." With my history class I was finishing the reign of Edward I, and summing up I remarked, as an Englishman would: "I suppose we may say that Edward was a good and devout man, with a hot temper." The class burst into a roar of laughter. They thought I was trying to be amusing. Seeing me grave and surprised, the laugh stopped in an instant, and was succeeded by looks of blank puzzlement. "A good man with a hot temper! What does he mean?" Now both the English and the Indian ideals are excellent, but defective and needing complement. Not that gentleness and patience are by any means universally practised in India. But they are the instinctive admiration of the Indian, and the ideal towards

which character in its upward trend tends to approximate. Out East, one comes to see the sheer power of the gentler virtues—the nobility of gentleness, the strength of patience.

The patience of India is something past all praise. You will see it in any railway station. There is the bewildering mass of individuals, articulated into family or village groups, through which you warily pick your tortuous way lest you should trample on some sleeping form. They are squatting all over the platform, some smoking hookahs and chatting, some playing cards, some asleep. They overflow on to the roads beyond, where by roadside fires you will see them, camped or cooking their evening meal. Others are washing hands and feet and utensils under the platform pump. All are utterly content, prepared to spend one night or two. No bustling impatience, or expressions of tedium. Ignorant of time-tables they turned up at the station when it suited them, to wait till providence should be propitious and send along a train to carry them to their destination. You may spend many years in India, but her patience will be to you each day a source of new wonder.

But there are other grounds for wonder. What is the secret of the evident deference and respect, shown by all he passes, for that grave figure in flowing robe of salmon pink, with his calm smile of other-world serenity? In him you see symbolized (whether he be humbug, or good man and true) India's ideal of holy poverty. He is a sadhu or sannyasi, one of India's two million "holy men." Perhaps in nothing do East and West differ more profoundly than in the

place assigned to wealth. To us it is almost incomprehensible, but it is none the less plain fact, that the amassing of wealth (as distinct from the pressing problem of getting a livelihood and a comfortable competence) simply does not interest the Indian. What his soul worships instinctively, passionately, is poverty. "Not the master of industry with his millions, not the 'Boss of Big Business' has roused India's enthusiasm and thrilled her imagination; this has been done only by the sannyasi, going out from house and home, with no possession but his begging-bowl, to be alone with God."<sup>1</sup> Gandhi's bare feet and single garment are no small part of the hold he has on Indian reverence. The heart of India will draw instinctively to Him who had not where to lay His head.

The average Englishman sometimes finds it difficult really to believe there is anything he needs to learn from India. Let such a one ponder the worth to western civilization of a deep inoculation of India's sheer indifference to wealth, her instinctive admiration of the man whose material wants are small. That way comes freedom and independence and a new dignity of manhood. Then man and things begin to take their proper place. Simplicity and content may lead to a happier and more companionable world than greed and hurry.

Traits of character, now instinctive, do not develop in a day. Hinduism is venerable with an antiquity surpassed only by the faith that had its nursery among Jewish patriarchs. Its power of sheer persistence is sufficient evidence of its vitality. It gave

<sup>1</sup> J. B. Pratt, *India and its Faiths*.

birth to, and then expelled completely from its borders, the great rival faith of Buddhism. It withstood, with losses, it is true, but with vigour unimpaired, the assaults of Islam. No wonder the nationalist of to-day is inclined to regard Hinduism as a sacred heritage to be clung to, apart from all question of its truth or value.

So massive a faith has, of course, left an indelible impress on Indian character. It would be hard to define the seat of authority in Hinduism ; but it is committed to the closed revelation of the Vedas and the immutability of ancient social custom. Islam, hitherto its great competitor in India, is similarly bound by the letter of a verbally inspired scripture, completed and closed twelve hundred years ago. The influence of religion in India is thus all against progress. The dead hand of the past lies heavy on the land. Hinduism and Islam, so far from providing any stimulus to progress, contain no reserve for adjustment to changing conditions and modern life. The authority cannot be altered. It must be obeyed or left behind. Moreover, incurable fatalism dogs both religions. Hinduism affirms that not only all that happens to us, but all we do and are, is inexorably fixed for us by our conduct in previous incarnations. Islam attributes all that is or happens to the inscrutable will of an irresponsible omnipotence personified as God. And Hinduism at least provides no spring of hope to nerve to effort or inspire reform. Its golden age is in the past. It teaches that for us to-day there is no escape from the grinding out of an Age (Kalpa) doomed to steady deterioration till the

crash and final abyss. It is futile to seek to alter or improve.

When such religions are left to work out their influence upon a people enervated by climate and temperamentally indisposed to effort, progress can only be achieved by a force violent enough to neutralize religion. Nationalism might appear to be such a force. But in India it is heavily handicapped. Indeed, nowhere is the all-dominating supremacy of the religious motive in India more clearly demonstrated than in the fact that the one man who has ever established a political leadership throughout the peninsula owes his sway chiefly to the profound spiritual impression created by his character.

There is a further influence of religion to be taken into account when assessing the permanent qualities of Indian character : the divorce between religion and ethics. He is a good Hindu who observes the rules of caste and the dictates of religious ceremonial, be his moral character what it may. No Hindu is ever out-casted for theft or lying. The Musalman who recites the creed, keeps the fast, observes the statutory prayer, gives tithes and goes the pilgrimage, can look the world in the face as an irreproachable Moslem though he may break all the last half of the ten commandments. And when the divine incarnations which Hinduism teaches a man to worship are of more than questionable morals, and when sensual delights figure large in the Moslem paradise, you are confronted by problems as grave and delicate as those which face reformers in any country.

## II

There is truth in the oft-repeated saying about the spiritual East and the material West. But it needs heavy qualification. Poverty has brought it about that among the masses in India there is a squalid absorption in the struggle for existence, which makes not horse-racing and the latest murder case but rupees and pice almost the only topic of conversation you will overhear in town bazaar or along country road. Amongst the educated classes there is a corresponding ignoble and unashamed abandonment of any other vocational aim than to secure the post within reach that has the biggest salary attached. Not long ago, at least before the nationalist idealism of recent years, it would have been true to say that, of a hundred persons in Calcutta or Bombay who were devoting themselves to lives of disinterested and self-denying service, ninety would be men and women (mostly missionaries) hailing from the materialist West. The Principal of an Indian college would be hard put to it to name any Hindu student who had gone out to devote his life to a religious mission. The spiritual East has nothing to set beside the thousands of English graduates who enter the sacred ministry.

There is another most powerful cause making for the passivity of Indian character—climate. And this is a permanent influence that must always be allowed for in any forecasting of the future. Whether it be scorching furnace for half the year in the North Indian plains or Deccan table-land, or hot-house steaminess in Bengal and on the western coast, the result is the

same—lassitude and enervation. And then, always hanging in dread suspense before the village population who are nine-tenths of India, is the possibility of failure of the monsoon and the appalling threat of famine. The grim knowledge that your most careful planning and your utmost industry may be completely unavailing annihilates hope and emasculates effort. Dull listlessness of character is too often the result. The wonder is that, as everywhere, humanity rises superior to its environment and forges new virtues out of its very difficulties. Rabindranath Tagore traces this influence of geography much further. In a striking passage he contrasts what he calls the “walled-cities habit” of the West, where rival cities fight for nature’s scant and hardly-won supplies, with the “jungle habit” of the East, where there is room for all in the luxuriant hospitality of the boundless forest. Strenuous individualism and companionable content are the types of character respectively produced. Some would press the issue to a conclusion. Recently it has been stated, with what authority is not known, that the average Indian blood pressure is some twenty per cent less than that of the European; and it is argued that this stamps the Indian as a permanently inferior race. It depends upon the standard by which we measure. It may be that Indian sun and rain tend to produce less martial restlessness and vigorous masterfulness than the more bracing climates of the West. But are these necessarily the highest qualities in man, or those most needed in a world which has at last discovered to what paralysis and desolation war and competition lead? May that race not claim

some useful superiority which, schooled by climate or religion, can contribute to the common whole those gentler qualities of patience and content which may help to build a more neighbourly and reasonable world? West and East are complementary. Each needs each. Do Britain and India find themselves alongside to serve a larger purpose than the Raj?

An Indian, reading the Sermon on the Mount, turned to his teacher with the comment: "Sir, the meek may inherit the earth, but if you tell an Englishman he is meek, he will feel insulted." The nations give some indication of their ideals by the devices of their standards. Those of Europe are often lions and eagles. But lions and eagles do not inherit the earth. To-day you have to pierce to desert fastnesses to find them, whereas the cow and the sheep are everywhere. The meek inherit the earth. Fighting animals have to be destroyed; fighting races have to be restrained.<sup>1</sup> In the world of to-morrow there will be no room for any but the companionable nations who can co-operate.

### III

Hinduism is more a spirit and an attitude to life than a system of dogma. So bewilderingly diverse, indeed so mutually destructive, are the host of practices and opinions admitted that it is difficult to obtain even a working definition of the religion. You may be a theist, pantheist, polytheist or monotheist, and still be an orthodox Hindu. Yet Hinduism is the one uniting force that binds together with a real

<sup>1</sup> I owe this illustration to the Rev. A. G. Fraser.

community of sentiment and spirit races perhaps more diverse than those that people the continent of Europe. For with all the wide variety of types found in the peninsula there is something as subtle as it is distinctive, that makes them unmistakably one. Hinduism, by its dominance, fixes a cultural type, which it imposes even on Musalman and Parsee, marking off the Indian decisively from every other race. It would be easier far to mistake a Russian for an Englishman than an Indian for a Chinese or Arab.

And yet they are a picturesquely diverse and motley crowd : speaking a dozen major languages and some scores of lesser dialects, with English as their only common medium of communication. You may see them on the railway platform in Delhi or Calcutta or Bombay : rollicking Punjabis, with plus fours of baggy cotton tapering to the ankles ; tall Sikhs with martial whiskers, and uncut hair tucked away in a knot under their turbans ; sturdy Mahrattas, with the front half of the head clean shaven ; emotional Bengalis, with green or blue shawls thrown loosely across their shoulders ; smart Rajputs, with immense pink or yellow pugarees, and white cotton Jodhpur breeches ; fair-skinned, sometimes blue-eyed, graceful Kashmiris ; oval-faced Tamils, with Shiva's trident painted on their foreheads ; intellectual Malayalis, in pure flowing white.

Yes, diversity of race is an immensely important factor to be taken account of when visualizing India. Black Dravidian, white Aryan, yellow Mongol are inextricably mingled in Indian blood. And to-day, Punjabi, Tamil, and Bengali are unmistakably distinct

races, with an immensity of clannish feeling. But the differences can be altogether over-stressed. If the writer may quote from personal experience, having through twenty years of intimacy come pretty close to Hindustani and Bengali in the North, he felt at once entirely at home among the Malayalis in the extremest South. The diversity of India's races is often a good deal over-emphasized.

Hinduism unites. But it also divides by the cruellest bars of iron-exclusiveness ever devised by wit of man.

You are passing along a country road in Travancore, under an avenue of feathery-foliaged palms. On either side stretch fields of emerald green paddy, which covers and conceals the sheets of water in which it grows. A string of labourers in single file—for most of their walking has to be done on the narrow mud ridges that divide the water of the rice fields—approaches from the opposite direction. Suddenly, about a hundred feet away from you, the whole line swings off, making a wide detour, knee-deep, through the water of the paddy fields, and rejoins the road, having completed the semi-circle, about a hundred paces to your rear. They are untouchables, some of the sixty millions of human beings whom the Hindu caste system consigns to unspeakable and irremediable degradation.

Caste splits Hindu society horizontally into "about three thousand hereditary groups, each internally bound together by rules of ceremonial purity, and externally separated by the same rules from all other groups."<sup>1</sup> Passage from one caste to another is for

<sup>1</sup> V. A. Smith, *Oxford History of India*, p. 34.

ever barred. The barriers are diet and marriage, and sometimes touch. You may neither eat with nor marry one of another caste.<sup>1</sup> If your caste is far enough below that of another man, you may not even touch or come within a certain distance of him. Approach may defile. You summon your Pulaya gardener to give him orders. He stands in front of you with hand over his mouth, lest his breath should defile you. The outcaste is denied ordinary human rights. His cattle and his dogs may use the village well and tank, but not himself. He may not even traverse the streets of the Brahman quarter. Hinduism, for political purposes and communal representation, reckons him a Hindu; yet he may enter no Hindu temple, and no Hindu priest may minister to him. And it is a bar in perpetuity. The untouchable knows that every one of his descendants, down to ten thousand years ahead, will be an untouchable like himself. Could hopelessness impose a more crushing load of inhibition on self-help and uplift?

At the other end of the scale stands the proud Brahman, of priest caste, given a position of hereditary prestige and power such as is accorded to no other privileged class in any country. It is significant of the place religion has in India that king and warrior

<sup>1</sup> You have to go to the Malabar coast to find the *reductio ad absurdum* of these rules. In order to prevent the subdivision of property, the younger sons of a Nambudri Brahman are forbidden to marry a girl of their own caste. They must marry in a lower caste; but would suffer defilement and lose caste if they ate with the sons they thus beget! Indeed, they have to purify themselves each time they leave the wife whom their caste rules compel them to marry.

rank second to the priest. With, until recently, a virtual monopoly of knowledge (no Sūdra or low caste man might even read the Vedas or sacred lore) the Brahmans have known well how to adjust themselves to changed conditions so as to consolidate their position in the India of to-day. They occupy a large proportion of subordinate administrative and clerical posts. Only a few follow the priestly calling. This entrenched hereditary aristocracy is one of the most real obstacles to freedom in India of any democratic type.

Caste is indeed the frame of Hinduism. It is fundamentally a social system. It is caste which gives Hinduism its enduring and massive strength, enabling it to combine rigidity of social structure with extreme flexibility of opinion. The peoples of India are not politically minded. Government has seldom been strong. It is caste which has given India its cohesion, its stability, its social ordering, its code of conduct, down the centuries. It serves many of the purposes of a trade union, ensuring the benefits of hereditary skill, apprenticeship and joint action, and avoids many of the evils of competition. It has made a Poor Law system unnecessary in India. Each caste is its own relieving society. It is a most effective organ of public opinion, enforcing its will on all its members with an iron hand.

But if caste is Hinduism's strength, it is also India's weakness. Says Rabindranath Tagore, "The regeneration of the Indian people, to my mind, directly and perhaps solely depends upon the removal of this condition of caste."<sup>1</sup> Caste is destructive of

<sup>1</sup> C. F. Andrews, *The Renaissance in India*, p. 185.

conscience. The rules of conduct it enforces are for the most part superficial and external. Most Hindus would be far more horrified to discover that they had drunk water from the hands of a low caste man than to be detected in a lie or cheating. Instances are on record where a parent has rather had his child die from drowning than have him rescued by an untouchable.

True, the rules of caste are changing. But only in their most superficial application. The rules are often as ridiculous as they are inconvenient. As Warden of a Hostel at Allahabad I had to provide thirty-seven kitchens for a hundred Hindu students! The conditions of modern travel have necessitated the relaxation of the requirements in regard to food, water and touch, and the withdrawal of the ban upon sea voyages. But there is no sign of any breakdown of the restrictions upon marriage. Even Mr Gandhi, while vehemently attacking untouchability, defends caste. And it is these marriage restrictions that give caste its exclusiveness, its divisiveness, its permanence, and its tyranny.

Caste is the colour bar. The very name for caste, *varna*, means colour. It is an outcome of the desperate attempt of the old Aryan invaders (our own first cousins) to keep themselves white and free from contamination by the dark aborigines. It is exactly the colour feeling of the Englishman in regard to the Asiatic, and it shows itself in the same social exclusiveness and bitter repudiation of intermarriage. "Let him that is without sin cast the first stone."

Caste is not class feeling. Classes in the West are

fluid and have no religious sanction. But in India religion reinforces and sanctifies caste. Caste is flat and deliberate denial of the brotherhood of man. It humiliates one-sixth of the people of India in unspeakable degradation. It attributes class differences to a permanent and hereditary difference of soul. Planting its heel on the submerged classes, it says to them : " You shall not rise."

How are unity and the corporate feeling essential to a body politic to come to a nation split into three thousand hereditary watertight compartments ? Can it be right to hand over the submerged sixth to the government of the literary classes, who are chiefly recruited from those same high castes who down the ages have been their oppressors ? These are some of the problems caste raises for the patriotic nationalist.



#### IV

If Hindu caste divides India horizontally into thousands of isolated strata, Islam has caused a vertical division that has rent the entire fabric of society throughout the peninsula into two unequal parts. Entering India through the passes of Afghanistan in a series of invasions covering centuries, first as raiders, then as rulers and colonists, the Muslims have become a permanently settled element in the country. Hardy mountaineers of Arab, Aryan and Mongol origin, they swooped upon the milder Hindu population of the rich Gangetic plain, and by forced conversions, intermarriage, persuasion and

natural propagation, have grown to a community seventy million strong. India is now easily the largest Mohammedan power in the world. No sovereign has so many Musalman subjects as King George. Though largely Indianized by blood, climate and contact, they yet remain an absolutely separate entity. And again, because they are Indian, the call of religion seems louder to them than the call of country. "I am a Moslem first and an Indian afterwards," said Mohammed Ali at the National Congress in 1923. In the realm of sentiment, the Indian Mohammedan has always tended to be more conscious of his kinship with his fellow-Moslems of other lands than with his Hindu fellow-countrymen. It is impossible to exaggerate the seriousness of the Hindu-Moslem cleavage as a permanent factor militating against Indian unity. It is not only alienation in sympathy; it is an hostility bred partly of pride, partly of fear. The Indian Moslem is soaked in the proud traditions of a ruling caste: till the advent of the British Raj, the Musalman had never been in India save as ruler. But now they are in a minority—one-fifth of the whole population. They have lost their military supremacy. Indeed it had already gone, to Mahratta and Sikh, before ever the English came to power. Until recently they have tended to regard the British Raj as their only protection from perpetual servitude under Hindu rule. But of this more anon.

Cleavage apart, the Musalman has left another deep mark on India. For seven centuries now the Hindus have been a subject race. By the Moham-

medans they were conquered. But after the early days of conquest the Musalman dominion ceased to be a case of foreign rule. The rulers freely intermarried with their subjects. By blood and cultural assimilation the Musalmans became so naturalized in the country that their government was rather a case of Indians ruling Indians. None the less it meant political subjection for the Hindus; though the virtual independence of powerful Hindu States, and the increasing participation of Hindu officials in the Mogul administration, was rapidly transforming titular Moslem into actual Hindu rule. The growth of British power meant renewed Hindu subjection. The impact on Indian psychology has not been healthy. It is not good for the virility of any people to be too long in political subjection. "Subjection for a long time to a foreign yoke is one of the most potent causes of national deterioration."<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps nothing so embitters the patriotic Indian as the "slave mentality" of which he is keenly conscious, but which he charges against the domination of his foreign rulers.

## V

But this political self-consciousness has, until quite recently, been confined to that tiny fragment of India's vast population which has been cognizant of and wishful to take its part in public affairs. The essential India is not to be found in towns and schools. It is the three hundred millions, almost, who live in

<sup>1</sup> Seeley, *Expansion of England*, p. 242.

villages. If you would visualize India, remember all the time that eighty-five per cent of her people are field workers, digging, planting, tending, reaping the things that God makes to grow. As you cross from one side of India to the other, whirled by express train for two days and two nights across boundless plains, what you see is not desert. Those vast expanses hum with life and industry. But even each two hundred miles, each six hours' run, does not bring you to a city. It is villages, villages, villages all the way. You watch the bullock-cart creaking along roads of hardened mud; the ploughman, shoulders, arms, legs and feet all brown and bare, driving his shallow wooden blade behind a pair of oxen; another pair of bullocks, ceaselessly, uncomplainingly tramping round and round as they work the Persian wheel that lifts the water from the well below; a string of men and women, knee deep in mud and water, humming some chant in minor key as they bend double over the rice-plants they are thinning out; a boy perched aloft in a tree on a tiny platform under a straw canopy, pipe in mouth, to drive the birds from the surrounding crops; half a dozen ugly buffalo, lazily recumbent in the muddy pool that covers all but nostrils, eyes and horns; imps of five and six, fearless, with stick in hand, in charge of a herd of cattle, goats or pigs, driven with great thuds and whacks in front of them; women with even full-arm stroke pounding and husking rice in solid wooden bins—and you remember that this is the essential India. You throw yourself back in thought to the days of Akbar, and Alexander, and Buddha (and centuries beyond), and you know that

they gazed on the very scenes you see, unchanged. Armies have passed, kings have come and gone, empires have risen and fallen, but village India persists, immutable, illiterate and scarcely aware. It is the patriarchal ages lived before your very eyes in this twentieth Christian century. What is the key to this India ?

Search down the millenniums of India's history for all that is characteristically Indian, whether in achievement or personality, and you will find it to be religious. Religion is the hall-mark of the truly Indian spirit. To India a quarter of the men and women living in the world to-day owe their religion for both Hinduism and Buddhism had their birth in India. It is her glory that she is spiritual mother of one-fourth of the human race. Among the great literatures of the world, Sanskrit is perhaps the most ancient ; and most of it is religious literature. The hymns of the Vedas<sup>1</sup> are the praises of the gods. India's two monumental epics, the Mahabharata and the Ramayana, are the chronicle of the two principal incarnations of the Deity. Intellectually India ranks with Greece, a queen among the nations ; but India's record of intellectual culture stretches unbroken over a period twice as long as that of Greece.

No other country can exhibit such tireless search into the mystery of the universe and the problems of existence. Never has religion been served by more daring metaphysics or more remorseless logic. Still is thought made dizzy as it strives to visualize the bold abstractions of those hermit thinkers in their old-

<sup>1</sup> The sacred scriptures of the Hindus.

world forest retreats, with their twin conceptions of Brahma and maya (illusion). "Brahma is the one without a second," the world soul, the only real existence. Nothing else than Brahma is or ever can be. This world soul is a great colourless IT, a whole without parts, a genus without species, a noun without adjectives; at once smaller than the point of a needle and vaster than all space. It is identical with everything that really is. For all is one and indistinguishable—"Thou art That." Emancipation comes when a man can, with real perception, make the tremendous assertion, "I am Brahma." We (and not only we, but also all the different things about us, with all their rich variety) only "seem" to have any existence as separate entities because we are the victims of a gigantic Fraud or Hallucination. But this Hallucination which causes everything to seem what it seems to be, does not itself exist at all. It is a bad dream never dreamt by any one, a universal delusion which deludes nobody, because the only thing that exists, the almighty IT, can never be deluded.

This philosophy unconsciously pervades all classes in India. Even the countryman is affected by its wistful dreaminess; while any student will split philosophy with you for hours. But remember, all these soaring speculations have a high and practical aim, and that a religious one. The aim is moksha, the salvation of the individual, his merging with the Infinite. Sage, philosopher, poet and teacher, artist and builder, all who down the centuries appear in India's roll of fame, all have been dedicated to religion. India's chief claim to intellectual pre-eminence is as

a philosopher nation; and from start to finish her philosophy is religious—the quest for God.

Essential India! Does that include the tiny English colony which now administers there?

At least the last two hundred years have left so deep an impress on India as must profoundly alter and affect all her future history. Under the British Raj India has grown to an entirely new consciousness of national unity. The ideal and the possibility of national self-realization are Britain's gift to her. English education has introduced her to the whole world of modern culture and scientific achievement. Internal unity has been secured by a network of communications, which have also shown her how to abate and almost neutralize the horrors of recurrent famines. The door has been opened for a larger use of her natural resources, and she is already one of the eight great industrial nations of the world. Vast areas of desert have become a fruitful field for the feeding and employment of her growing millions. She has enjoyed decades of unprecedented justice, peace and order. New ideals have come to her of the uplift of the oppressed, a fuller life for women, and better health for all. Have these come to stay? Are they now part of the essential India?

## CHAPTER II

### SEVEN FATEFUL YEARS

1919-1925

THE most potent forces in the making of a nation's character and destiny are seldom things that can be catalogued in a column of dates. Of no country is this more true than of India. History tends to seem an irrelevance to the student of the changeless East. Life there seems a deep, unmoved by the happenings of a moment or a century. But the fact is that to-day the changeless East is changing at a pace of almost terrifying rapidity. She has been caught midstream in the turmoil of the nations. And it is possible to name the series of events which have rudely awakened India from the sleep of centuries.

The first disturbing influence was the momentous decision announced in Macaulay's Minute of 1835, by which it was decreed that English was to be the medium of India's education. That decree meant the throwing down of the barriers which for ages had separated East and West, and the pouring of western civilization down all the channels of Indian life. It was the birth of a new India.

Upheaval followed. The shock was first felt in religion: Hinduism busily addressed itself to reform. Next came the turn of politics. In a continent still

hardly emerged from patriarchal conditions, the ideas of Burke and Mill, of Gladstone and of Morley, were revolutionary. The cup of constitutional freedom has been put by us to India's lips. She has drunk full draught and has come to share the ideals of her instructress. She demands to take at a single leap the centuries of constitutional progress in Europe. Nothing but her own experience will make her refuse that democracy which is the accepted form of progressive government in the West.

Macaulay nobly conceived the future :

It may be that the public mind of India may expand under our system till it has outgrown our system ; that by good government we may educate our subjects into capacity for better government ; that having become instructed in European knowledge, they may in some future age demand European institutions. Whether such a day will ever come, I know not. But never will I attempt to avert or retard it—whenever it comes it will be the proudest day in England's History.

That day is upon us now.

The second influence is the effect of world happenings beyond England's or India's control. Chief among these—indeed quite alone in its tense world significance—was the defeat of Russia by Japan in 1905. The whole East thrilled. A door of unimaginable hope had opened. Then an Asiatic people could aspire to an equal place in the commonwealth of nations ! Living in India, one felt what was never uttered. It was the birthday of Indian national aspiration.

Rather less than a decade later came the cataclysm of 1914, itself symptom, and in turn immense reinforcement, of the new tide of militant nationalism which threatens to engulf civilization. The reaction of western nationalism is the most powerful force in Indian politics to-day. But we are anticipating.

The third and most immediate influence has been the impact of our own administration: on the one hand, the infection of our British enthusiasm for national independence and democratic institutions, and on the other, a series of critical decisions which have stirred Indian sentiment to its bottom depths.

It is our aim in this chapter to understand the Indian view of those recent events which have so deeply stirred that country and which have unhappily created such a wide chasm between Britain and India. The Bengal partition, the Rowlatt Act, Amritsar, Kenya, and Guru-ka-Bagh are names that have a sinister sound even in British ears. But only as we learn to interpret these things can we understand where the issues between the two peoples really lie. Whether or not we agree with the Indian, unless we clearly apprehend his point of view true co-operation between Britain and India is impossible.

The comfortable and diplomatic thing would be airily to dismiss the bitter controversies which have bitten so deeply into the Indian mind. But the man who does so when trying to explain India to-day is fool or knave, or perhaps only coward. If England is to understand modern India, it is simply essential that she shall know how Indians feel about these things. An Ex-Secretary of State for India writes :

The one characteristically salient and crucial event in modern Indian history was the slaughter at the Jallianwala Bagh at Amritsar. It is idle to protest that this unhappy event ought to be forgotten, and that it is mischievous to be continually stirring up bad blood by recalling it. It was a crucial historic event, because, more than anything else, its particular quality and the manner in which the British nation still appears to Indian opinion to continue to judge of it, has struck the imagination of all India as characteristic.

Anyone who has shared an educated Indian's confidence knows that these are the open sores that embitter and estrange. And the dominating factor confronting British statesmanship to-day in India is nothing else than estrangement and loss of confidence.



## I

This estrangement has its root in a series of events beginning with the partition of Bengal in 1905.

In Bengal Lord Curzon was faced by a problem that had long called for settlement. The province simply had to be divided. A population of eighty million was too impossibly large for sound administration. The unimaginative official mind conceived the simple procedure of drawing a straight line down the middle to divide it into equal parts. Moreover, this would give the neglected and backward Mohammedan community a fair innings in at least one of the two new provinces. But to do so meant to cut in two the most defined, self-conscious and closely knit community in the Indian continent, and by certain readjustments

of boundaries and populations to reduce it to something like political impotence in either province. The whole force of racial feeling in Bengal rebelled against this national dichotomy. For once Lord Curzon of the strong hand forgot imagination, forgot that to override sentiment is never good administration. In the teeth of unprecedented public protest the division was forced through. The Indian felt that an affront had been offered to national sentiment which he could not forget. It was almost as though, on grounds of administrative efficiency, the United Kingdom were redistributed, Yorkshire and Lancashire with the four northern counties being put into Scotland with Edinburgh as their capital. The undoing of the partition a few years later and the creation of three provinces, less convenient but more true to racial boundaries, came too late. The Bengal partition had already given anti-British bitterness to the rising tide of Indian nationalism.

Sedition followed. First, the attempted boycott of British goods. And then a new monster reared its head in India: a conspiracy of assassination, armed with the revolver and bombs of western science. The network of subterranean plottings spread from Bengal throughout Northern India, finding its twin focus among the Mahratta Brahmans of Bombay. The breeding grounds of the new disease were the educated and half-educated middle classes of Bengal: highly strung, emotional, with the pressing economic stimulus of probable unemployment. At first English officials, later Indian subordinates, especially in the Police, were the target for assassination. The student class

throughout India seethed with sedition and murderous conspiracy; and one year later every month or two saw fresh assassinations.

Grave, desperate, appalling—and yet this was all the fungus outgrowth on a healthy spirit of patriotic nationalism that was slowly finding shape. *Swadeshi* (one's own country) was the keyword of the new movement; *Bande Materam* (Hail Motherland) its trysting song. It was in contradistinction to their foreign rulers that the many tribes of India became conscious of their unity, and Indian national sentiment began to form. This rising tide of new patriotism found expression in an artistic and literary renaissance.

Even Britain could hardly fail to feel an instinctive sympathy for that same patriotism in others which she so valued in her own people. The Morley-Minto reforms (1909) were the result, admitting Indians for the first time to the highest executive councils both in England and India. But, partly, they were unsatisfying to India; partly, they came too late. Conspiracy and assassination steadily gained ground.

Then in 1914 came the crash of war. For a moment everything trembled in the balance. Which way would India go? Had she wished, she might have added immeasurably to our difficulties. But anti-British feeling was so far confined to the intelligentsia. The conservatism of the masses, their sense of security under British justice, and the excellence of the allied propaganda, saved the situation. India's conscience was on our side. Moreover, she believed England's might to be invincible and her leaders expected better

things from democratic Britain than from autocratic Germany.

The war lifted Indian political hope and expectation to an immensely higher level. The allied propaganda of "self-determination," "the championship of weaker nations," and "the war for freedom" raised great anticipations. In President Wilson's noble and eloquent idealism, the deep but voiceless sentiments of subject India seemed at last to find articulate expression. British official endorsement of the same wrought expectation to fever pitch.

England responded. The prophet voice of Wilson had helped to recall her to the ideal of her mission in India, which had been outlined for her a century before by some of her ablest servants and to which she was committed by all her own invincible pursuit of freedom, but from which her Indian policy had long been drifting. From his place in the House of Commons on August 20th, 1917, the Secretary of State for India made this solemn declaration :

The policy of His Majesty's Government . . . is that of the increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration, and the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realization of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire.

A Report presented to Parliament in 1918 used brave language. It dared to say :

We take these words to be the most momentous utterance ever made in India's chequered history.

They pledge the British government in clearest terms to the adoption of a new policy towards three hundred millions of people. The policy, so far as Western communities are concerned, is an old and tried one. Englishmen believe in responsible government as the best form of government they know ; and now, in response to requests from India, they have promised to extend it to India under the conditions set out in the announcement.

It is a noble ideal sanely conceived, worthy of the best in all our history. In it the British people set their hands to the most gigantic task ever attempted by any race in history : the lifting of three hundred millions of a medley of subject races into unity and free membership of the world's sisterhood of nations. The most glorious chapter in all our annals opened before us. Difficulties ? Yes, stupendous. Uncertainties ? Yes, grave. But an enterprise to which all our past both challenged and fitted us : a challenge to the greatness that is greater than rule and empire, even the greatness of service.

The war had created an agonizing problem for every devout Musalman in India : the dilemma between religious and political allegiance. Obedience to the call of his sovereign meant war against the head of his religion. The urgency of the dilemma was only in part abated by the pronouncement of the ecclesiastical authorities of Islam in India that this was not a *jihad* (sacred war). Musalman opinion in India became increasingly restive as it was realized that on the battle-fields of Palestine and Mesopotamia the temporal power of the sacred Caliph was being over-

thrown by Indian Musalmans in league with "infidels," whether English or Hindu. Towards the end of the war, when it became imperative to raise additional forces in India, which should liberate British troops in the Near East for the crucial battle-fields of France, Mr Lloyd George on the 5th of January 1918 made a speech in which he said :

Nor are we fighting . . . to deprive Turkey of its capital or of the rich and renowned lands of Asia Minor and Thrace which are predominantly Turkish in race.

And a few weeks later he asserted that these words were part of a considered statement. Fuller knowledge may reveal that in the Allied Conferences Mr Lloyd George fought hard to make good this commitment, but the actual terms of the Treaty of Sèvres turned out to be a flat violation of the Premier's pledge. Rightly or wrongly, Musalman opinion in India felt it had been betrayed.

The war ended with great expectations on the part both of English and Indians in India. On the one hand Englishmen reckoned that an India who had learned the horrors of modern war, and the crushing costliness of the armaments which would be necessary if she were to be self-dependent for her defence by sea and land, would never wish to stand alone outside the protection afforded by the British empire. And on the other hand, India, who had learned how much she counted in the balance of the nations, who had stood true and helpful to Britain

through the mortal agony of the war, who 'had signed the peace treaties as an equal member with the Dominions and with independent nations, expected that she would be splendidly rewarded by an equal place in the councils of the empire as a free and self-governing Dominion. For this she was prepared to wait. She knew it might take time. But she counted on being thenceforth treated with the dignity of an equal and with the free trust her faithfulness throughout the war had merited.



## II

All these high hopes were dissipated by what can only be described as a lack in peace time of that imagination in statesmanship which had served so well during the war. In less than six months after the armistice, in that same trusty Punjab province which, though containing less than one-twelfth of the population of India, had provided us with almost half our Indian army, and had been true to us to the very last day of fighting, there occurred the horror of Amritsar; and the Gandhi who, till November 11, 1918, had been recruiting for the British Army which he regarded as the champion of world liberty, was preaching non-co-operation and heading revolt against what he now described as the "satanic" British government. What had happened in those six months to work so calamitous a revulsion in the Indian mind?

In one word, the Rowlatt Act, passed within three months of the close of the war. And yet that Act was based on the Report of a Commission as judicial,

as temperate, as fair as could be framed. Towards the end of the war, with a view to the extinction of anarchical crime, government had interned, in scattered villages under police surveillance, several hundreds of suspect revolutionaries. The cases of all interned were investigated by special process, without public trial or lawyer's defence, the reason being that terrorism and assassination of witnesses in previous cases had made it impossible to produce in open court evidence against revolutionaries.

The procedure naturally evoked intense public protest, and a special committee was appointed to investigate in the fullest manner all the evidence bearing upon the sedition movement in India. The chairman was Mr Justice Rowlatt, of the Court of King's Bench (who came over specially to India for the purpose), and the other members were an Indian and an English High Court Judge, a well-known Indian lawyer, and a member of the Indian Civil Service. This committee unanimously recommended that the ordinary provisions of the law were unsuitable for a situation such as government had been called to face in India at the beginning of the war. Its views were reinforced by another smaller commission, composed of Mr Justice Beachcroft of the Calcutta High Court and Sir Narayan Chandavarkar, an ex-Judge of the High Court of Bombay, who were appointed to examine in detail each of the cases of internment in Bengal. Eight hundred and six cases were examined, and the committee decided that in all but six cases there was every ground for detention. The remaining six were ordered to be released, on the ground that the orders

against them were in the judgment of the committee not supported by sufficient evidence.

Undoubtedly these two committees, by their reports, afforded solid grounds for the contention that the special powers, taken during the war, had not in fact been abused by the government. Government, moreover, were anxious to secure legislation which should enable them to pass through the difficult time between the cessation of hostilities and the establishment of permanent peace conditions. They therefore framed a Bill making permanently available, in emergency, special powers for internment without trial in districts proclaimed as seditious. The Bill—afterwards known as the Rowlatt Act—was passed, with a practically unanimous India against it. It needs to be remembered that the Act involves power to resort to the suspension of Habeas Corpus in case of emergency, and renders any Indian citizen liable to arrest and confinement at police instance without public trial or legal defence. What might be regarded as defensible in war time needed, to Indian eyes, more justification than it had received if it was to become a permanent part of the system of government of the country.

“Bill No. 1 of 1919” was the official title of the Act. The date and number are ominous. It was disastrously timed. It was Britain’s first concrete act in the year after the war in her dealings with the India who had stood by her throughout the war. To the Indian peoples, looking for a new trust and respect, it seemed an insult. Britain had just made public profession of her desire to rule by India’s

will ; but the Indian mind argued that only an alien government could require the protection of such an Act : it expressed, not confidence in India, but profound distrust.

Though there has been more than one outbreak of murderous conspiracy since, the Rowlatt Act has never once been used. Administratively justifiable, it is now regarded as a capital blunder in statesmanship. But the complexity and uncertainty of the situation that confronted our post-war administrators must always be borne in mind. Imagination, not intention, was at fault.

The effect of the publication of the proposed Act was instant and profound. It was greeted throughout India with indignant protest. Against a storm of popular opposition it was forced through. Educated India fell from eager trustfulness to sullen and resentful bitterness.

Perhaps the Act had no more calamitous result than its psychological effect on Mr Gandhi, of whom there will be more to say anon. At this juncture it is only necessary to refer to his influence upon the events we are considering. Up to the signing of the armistice Mr Gandhi had been a convinced and reasoned supporter of the British Raj, and a recruiter for the army. Three months later he was leading India in a movement of non-violent revolt against the British administration. Study of Mr Gandhi's speeches and writings at this period makes it clear that owing to the framing and the timing of the Rowlatt Act, and the pressing of it through in spite of a practically universal outburst of Indian protest,

he had come to lose all faith in the purposes and sincerity of the British government. He felt that it was impossible for a self-respecting people to submit to such a measure so forced on them, and accordingly he launched a campaign of *Satyagraha*. Literally this means "pursuit of truth"; in practice it means the withdrawal of co-operation by the people with the processes of government, and the refusal of obedience to certain specific laws. The conditions of satyagraha are that no violence must be used, and that the acts of disobedience must cause suffering to no one but oneself. By this method it was hoped to bring irresistible moral pressure to bear upon the administration, and in the last resort, without the use of any violence, to bring the machinery of government to a standstill. The aim was to use peaceful means to force a government, which Mr Gandhi declared had forfeited their respect and trust, to recognize and conform to public opinion. Throughout, Mr Gandhi failed to realize that when you are dealing with masses of unregenerate humanity, civil disobedience on a large scale must end in violence.

Constitutional opposition and the expression of public opinion having both failed, Mr Gandhi called on the people of India to endeavour by this method to procure the recall of the Rowlatt Act. That the Rowlatt Act was by far the most important factor in the outbreaks that followed is indicated by the fact that the Official Commission of Enquiry in their Report upon the causes of the Punjab disturbances devote five pages to the consideration of educated India's political expectations after the war

and the effect of the Rowlatt Act, and less than two to all other causes put together, among which they recognize only as important the Treaty terms with Turkey, and, possibly, the high prices obtaining in the country, and less probably the methods of recruitment followed in the Punjab.

The first method chosen by Mr Gandhi was the proclamation of *hartals*, or the cessation of all work and business, and the closing of all shops as a protest. March 30, 1919, was the first date on which a hartal was held. On that day a crowd of protestors at Delhi proved so unruly that the police fired and eight persons were killed. On April 6th hartals were observed in Delhi, Amritsar and forty other places in the Punjab. But, except for the trouble at Delhi on March 30th, there was no violence anywhere till April 10th, the day after Mr Gandhi's arrest, news of which quickly spread.

On that day there were outbreaks in several places.<sup>1</sup> That at Amritsar has figured most largely in the development of subsequent troubles. It was primarily due to the deportation of two local political leaders. A mob, excited but unarmed, gathered in the city, and attempted to march into the civil station in order to

<sup>1</sup> On so important and controversial a matter the author has preferred to draw exclusively from the signed Report of the Official Commission of Enquiry (Cmd. 681). This Commission comprised five English members (including Lord Hunter of the Edinburgh High Court, and Major-Gen. Sir G. Barrow, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., Commanding the Peshawar Division), and three Indian members. Critical statements are quoted verbatim. It is important to remember that these are taken from the Majority Report, signed by all the five English members. The three Indian members signed a Minority Report, which has nowhere been quoted in the text.

induce the Deputy Commissioner to cancel the order of deportation. "There is on the evidence very slender ground for supposing that this crowd in its initial stages was possessed of any definite common intention save that of angry and obstreperous protest in force before the Deputy Commissioner at his house and for the purpose of overawing him." The police were ordered to stop the crowd and in order to do so had to fire. Three or four of the crowd were killed. The mob "saw red," and poured back into the city vowing vengeance and determined to have the blood of any European they could come across. Three English bank managers, living in the city, were done to death and burned in their premises. A lady missionary, bicycling on her rounds, was struck off her cycle, repeatedly beaten, and left for dead.<sup>1</sup> Guard

<sup>1</sup> It is sometimes sought to justify the measures taken in Amritsar and elsewhere on the score of the danger of outrage to the honour of English ladies. The danger was small. Such outrages seldom occur in India. No single outrage was proved even in the Mutiny, not even at Cawnpore. On this point the statement of Sir William Muir, afterwards Lieutenant-Governor of the U.P., is decisive :

"In connection with the Intelligence Department, at the headquarters of the Government of Agra, my work has brought me during the past six months into contact with messengers and spies from all parts of the country. I gladly add my own testimony . . . that nothing has come to my knowledge which would in the smallest degree support any of the tales of dishonour done to English women current in our public prints. Direct evidence, wherever procurable, has been steadily and consistently against such stories. The people who must know, and had there been any case of outraged honour, would have told us, uniformly deny that any such things were ever perpetrated, or even thought of. Judging from the great accumulation of

Robinson was beaten to death near the railway station. It was an afternoon of appalling outrages, the guilt of which nothing can obliterate. That the excesses were unpremeditated and were mainly the result of the day's events, is indicated by the fact that on the very preceding day a religious procession in the city, accidentally viewed by the Deputy Commissioner, was, he writes, "as a rule very civil, every car in the procession stopped in front of me, and the band played God save the King." Earlier on the actual day of the outbreak, before the firing of the police had taken place, Europeans had mingled with the crowd unmolested. Thereafter the position was ugly and dangerous enough, calling for just that high statesmanship, combining tact and firmness, which British administrators have time and again displayed, and which explains our continued rule in India. An Indian mob was amok. The first step of lawless violence was theirs. With a populace that was "seeing red," stern and even drastic measures were needed. The situation had clearly passed beyond civil control. Martial law was proclaimed. General Dyer, in command of the small garrison, prohibited by proclamation all public meetings, which would be

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negative evidence, supported as it is at many points by positive and direct proof, it may be safely asserted that there are fair grounds for believing that violation before murder was in no case committed.

"W. MUIR, *Dec. 30, 1857.*"

Quoted in *Young India*, Nov. 6, 1924.

The most that could be proved before the Hunter Commission was the publication in one township of a poster inciting to such outrage.

dispersed by force of arms. On April 13th, in defiance of these orders, a large meeting assembled in the Jallianwala Bagh, a large open space, all but closed by buildings, and with but few and narrow exits. Most must have known of the inhibiting order. There were also present, however, "a considerable number of peasants . . . but they were there for other than political reasons."<sup>1</sup> But the majority must have known they were there, in flat violation of military order. Severity was needed, to ensure that there should be no repetition of the disobedience. Firing, and some casualties, were possibly inevitable. Had that been all that happened, the world would have heard little of Amritsar. But the situation was ugly enough to test to the full the judgment even of one who had risen to high rank. The story must be told in the words of the report by the English members of the Hunter Commission.

General Dyer proceeded [to the Bagh] with a special force of twenty-five Gurkhas and twenty-five Baluchis armed with rifles, forty Gurkhas armed only with kukris, and two armoured cars. On arriving at Jallianwala Bagh he entered with this force by a narrow entrance which was not sufficiently wide to allow the cars to pass. They were accordingly left in the street outside. . . . As soon as [he] entered the Bagh he stationed twenty-five troops on one side of the higher ground and twenty-five troops on the other side. Without giving the crowd any warning to disperse, which he considered unnecessary as they were there in breach of his proclamation, he ordered his

<sup>1</sup> Punjab Government Report, Cmd. 534.

troops to fire and the firing was continued for about ten minutes. There is no evidence as to the nature of the address to which the audience was listening. None of them were provided with firearms, although some of them may have been carrying sticks. . . . Approximately three hundred and seventy-nine people were killed. . . . No figure was given for the wounded, but their number may be taken as probably three times as great as the number of killed. . . . General Dyer's action in firing on the crowd is open to criticism in two respects: *first*, that he started firing without giving the people who had assembled a chance to disperse, and *second*, that he continued firing for a substantial period of time after the crowd had commenced to disperse. . . . Notice to disperse would have afforded those assembled in ignorance of the proclamation and other people also an opportunity to leave the Bagh, and should have been given. . . . General Dyer had in view . . . the desire to produce a moral effect in the Punjab. In his report he says :

*"It was no longer a question of merely dispersing the crowd, but one of producing a sufficient moral effect from a military point of view . . . throughout the Punjab. . . ."*

In our view this was unfortunately a mistaken conception of his duty. If necessary a crowd that has assembled contrary to a proclamation issued to prevent or to terminate disorder may have to be fired upon, but continued firing upon that crowd cannot be justified because of the effect such firing may have upon people in other places.

The Commission had before it the unhesitating opinion of the Lieutenant-Governor of the Province, Sir Michael O'Dwyer, that "General Dyer's action

that day was the decisive factor in crushing the rebellion, the seriousness of which is only now being generally realized." None the less, in spite of this weighty opinion, the five English members of the Commission proceed immediately to the unanimous remark :

The action taken by General Dyer has also been described by others as having saved the situation in the Punjab and having averted a rebellion on a scale similar to the Mutiny. *It does not, however, appear to us possible to draw this conclusion, particularly in view of the fact that it is not proved that a conspiracy to overthrow British power had been formed prior to the outbreaks.*

The sentence we have italicized is important. A limited amount of firing, after warning, followed by a score or so of casualties, would have been widely regarded as justified by the conditions. But the only conceivable justification of the absence of warning and the continued firing, would have been that General Dyer knew of, and felt bound to crush, a widespread conspiracy for the overthrow of the British Raj. Informed official opinion is decisive against the existence of any such conspiracy,<sup>1</sup> and is corroborated by the complete absence of any use of firearms. The Punjab Government Report, the Deputy Inspector General of Police, and the Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar (the authorities who on

<sup>1</sup> The salient points of the evidence given on this crucial point by the principal government witnesses may be found in an Appendix (p. 243), and should be studied.

such a matter would be best informed of all), alike deny all knowledge of any widespread conspiracy of violence preceding the events of April 10th. That the news of what had happened at Amritsar cowed unruly mobs elsewhere is certain. But more ordinary measures of firmness and severity might well have accomplished that.

These facts have not been recalled to stir up bitterness. It has been necessary to go thus far into painful detail in order that we may be able to understand the attitude of educated Indians to our rule to-day, and the fierce intensity of feeling roused from one end of India to the other when the facts about Amritsar came to light. It is easy to be wise after the event. Solitary English officials were handling excited mobs, clean out of hand, who in more than one place had tasted blood. Weakness would have been fatal. Stern repression seemed plain duty. But although force may for the moment save the situation, it settles nothing. Most educated Indians one meets would say that if India be indeed a "lost dominion," it was lost at Amritsar.

The Non-co-operation movement gained rapidly in volume and intensity. It is significant of the domination exercised by Mr Gandhi that not even the fierce passions aroused by the happenings at Amritsar could divert organized Indian opposition into paths of violence from the method of peaceful non-co-operation preached by him. Few things are more remarkable than the disappearance of bomb and revolver from Indian political agitation just at the time when Ireland and Russia seemed to be achieving a

large part of their national aims by the use of force and assassination. British opinion has been slow to recognize its obligation to Mr Gandhi in this respect. In his vehement repudiation of violence and assassination, and his passionate advocacy of the methods of peaceful protest and voluntary suffering, he was preaching something deeply congenial to the heart of India. So deep was the conviction produced by this appeal to India's conscience that many years must probably elapse before the advocacy of assassination as a political method can again receive any wide response.

Meantime the Montagu-Chelmsford scheme for the reform of Indian government, in fulfilment of the pledge given in 1917, had been published (1918). Seldom, if ever, has any country conceived a nobler measure of generous statesmanship. In it the British people bent itself to the colossal task of the rapid democratization of an Eastern nation, traditionally monarchic, preponderatingly illiterate, and divided by every cleavage of race, language, religion and iron hierarchy of class. Perhaps never before has one great nation deliberately divested itself of power and dominion in order that another people, older, vaster, but also weaker than itself, might rise to the dignity of free nationhood. The pity of it was the hurry with which, under the imperious pressure of impatient demand, a measure of democracy had to be granted to a nation ill-prepared. The situation lent colour to the charge hurled against the British people that, while they have shown themselves supremely successful in the achievement of political freedom for

themselves, they have signally failed in training and preparing subject nations for the liberty on which they themselves set so high value.

The Reform Scheme<sup>1</sup> marked a great advance in the direction of Indian self-government. It was undoubtedly conceived in good faith and, if worked with goodwill, might yet constitute an invaluable preparation of India for that complete self-government which is now the pledged aim of British policy. But it was born in the black shadow of the Rowlatt Act and the Amritsar tragedy. It was read in the light of that grim twofold commentary on British intentions and was never given a chance. Hostility to Britain, rather than to the actual reforms, declared itself in the refusal of the non-co-operators to have anything to do with the new machinery. It was hoped in this way to bring England to her knees, to secure the withdrawal of the Rowlatt Act, a national confession of penitence for Amritsar, and the concession of Turkey's demands.

### III

For the next act in this unhappy series of events we must go to Africa. The national pride and self-consciousness of India had for long been jealously sensitive in regard to the status of Indian labourers working under systems of indenture in Fiji, South Africa, East Africa, and other British colonies. During the nineteenth century the need for cheap labour

<sup>1</sup> Further details of its scope will be found in Appendix on page 245.

in colonies whose tropical climate rendered rougher manual work too arduous for European settlers, had led to the importation of considerable bodies of Indian labourers who were recruited in India under a system of indentures. The conditions were often open to grave objection alike on humanitarian and political grounds. But it is not these that arouse such bitter resentment in India. The real trouble arises in regard to the treatment and status accorded to the descendants of these labourers (originally recruited by the colony in its own interests), who stay on for reasons exactly similar to those which attract British settlers. Both groups of colonists are alike members of an empire which is constantly seeking to impress on its Indian subjects the dignity of their equal citizenship, the cry that rallied Indian recruits by the hundred thousand to our armies in the war.

Trouble first came to a head in Natal. Government there imposed on Indian settlers (of whom there were about one hundred and thirty-three thousand in the colony) a tax, which Bishop Whitehead estimates as often equivalent to "an income-tax of seven shillings in the pound for families with an income of £50 a year!"<sup>1</sup> But what roused fiercest resentment were lesser acts of petty insult and injustice. The point is well stated by the *Cape Times*, the leading newspaper in South Africa :

Natal presents the curious spectacle of a country entertaining a supreme contempt for the very class of people she can least do without. Imagination can only

<sup>1</sup> Whitehead, *Indian Problems*, p. 232.

picture the commercial paralysis which would inevitably attend the withdrawal of the Indian population from that Colony. And yet the Indian is the most despised of creatures ; he may not ride in the tram-car, nor sit in the same compartment of a railway carriage with the Europeans ; hotel-keepers refuse him food or shelter, and he is denied the privilege of the public bath.<sup>1</sup>

“ It may be added that the Indians could not walk on the public foot-paths without the risk of being insulted, and according to law could not be out after 9 p.m. without a pass.”<sup>2</sup>

But Indians, though deeply resentful of the dishonour done to their fellow-countrymen in South Africa, yet recognized that the British Cabinet was, beyond a point, powerless in the matter and was not responsible for the injustice shown by a self-governing Dominion. But differential treatment also arose in Kenya, a colony directly under the administration of the Colonial Office, and here, to the Indian, was the acid test of British sincerity. The question they asked was, Were British and Indians to receive equal rights as citizens of one empire ?

Kenya offers all the elements for inter-racial trouble and the occasion for scrupulously just and far-sighted statesmanship. The population of the colony comprises roughly two and a half million Africans, twenty-two thousand Indians, ten thousand Europeans and

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in *Indian Problems*, p. 233.

<sup>2</sup> Whitehead, *Indian Problems*, p. 233. See also article by Bishop Fisher in the *National Christian Council Review* (India), January 1926.

eight thousand Arabs. In 1896 the government imported about twenty thousand Indian coolies, along with a number of artisans, traders and clerks, for the building of the railway from the coast to the Victoria Nyanza. If English enterprise has been first in the field, it is yet interesting to remember that it was indeed this railway built by Indian labour which introduced the colony of English settlers; for it opened up to cultivation the only area in Central Africa with a climate suitable for European colonization, the fertile highlands of Kenya. White settlement in Kenya created a demand for labour, and out of this demand arose acute problems with regard to the African native. If the aim of government was African prosperity through the encouragement of agriculture in native farms, then there simply would not be enough African labour for the working of the English plantations. The home government was bound by the principle of "trusteeship" enshrined in the Covenant of the League of Nations, and the white settlers of Kenya, growing restive under the Colonial Office's regard for African interests, pressed for "responsible government." By "responsible government" was meant the conferring of the franchise on six thousand Europeans out of a total population approaching three million.

The demand for responsible self-government at once brought about a conflict of claims with the Indian population. The Indians, out-numbering the English settlers by three to one, and paying a far larger share of the taxation, demanded proportionate representation. They were willing to have the fran-

chise fixed by a high educational standard, provided the same conditions were required of European voters also, and they urged therefore that there was no danger of English settlers being swamped by an illiterate Indian vote.

The controversy was further embittered by the demand of the English settlers that the Indian population should be segregated and confined to certain areas, and that the highlands should be reserved exclusively for Europeans. Now it may at once be conceded that the highlands are pre-eminently suited for white settlement and that the ideas of the East African Indians on sanitation and hygiene leave very much to be desired. For a crucial factor in the whole situation is the fact that recruitment has been made for the most part from the less desirable ranks of Indian society ; a fact of which the Indians have shown themselves to be aware by expressing their willingness to accept a high educational standard for the franchise. But Indian opinion regards it as fundamentally unjust that Indians, who pay the larger share of town taxes, should have no elective representation on municipal councils, while the greater part of the taxes paid by them goes to the improvement of the European quarters. Nor does this seem to them the way to secure a more sanitary Indian quarter. Indians, in moods of candour, will admit that the relationships between English and Indians in Africa have as an almost exact parallel those obtaining between caste men and untouchables in India. But no Englishman would accept that as sufficient justification of his policy.

Controversy grew hot and fierce. In India the treatment of Indians in Kenya became a burning issue. British sincerity and impartiality was on its trial. The national self-respect and dignity of India were at stake. The English colonists threatened to enforce their claims by armed rebellion. The British Cabinet rightly decided that trusteeship for African interests required that the administration of the colony should remain with the Colonial Office. The elective Council must therefore be only advisory; but why then, ask Indians, should they not be represented in this Advisory Council on the same electoral basis as the Europeans? Instead, there was to be a certain proportion of representatives elected by the white settlers, and only a much smaller proportion elected by the Indians. Indian amour-propre was further offended by the decision to continue the restriction of settlement in the highlands to Europeans, which they regarded as an unnecessary provision; for had the matter been left open, very few Indians would have chosen to live on the colder plateau. There was, further, sufficient reason to fear that immigration regulations would be manipulated to restrict Indian immigration, while leaving European immigration unrestricted. "But if the welfare of the Africans is the paramount consideration, the immigration of both Europeans and Indians alike ought to be carefully regulated and restricted."<sup>1</sup>

It cannot but be that British sympathy should go out to the vigorous band of English settlers. None

<sup>1</sup> Whitehead's *Indian Problems*, ch. xvii., to which the author is heavily indebted throughout this section.

the less one would wish that patriotic feeling might lead them to waive some of their narrower interests for the sake of the empire as a whole. In Kenya the principle on which we hold our Indian empire is at stake. Indian opinion is clear that if that empire is to hold together there must be no discrimination against Indians. Mr Gandhi's repeated demand must be conceded, "that there shall be no legal racial inequality between different subjects of the crown."<sup>1</sup> It is on the face of it absurd to expect Indians to be loyal to an empire in which they are treated as an inferior race.



#### IV

Hard in the wake of the Kenya decision followed another serious event. No race in India has been more faithful to the British Raj, or has more bravely fought its battles, than the martial Sikhs of the Punjab. They stood by England in the Mutiny. They have been a steady strength to her ever since. The Punjab government has been faced by a most perplexing issue. A reforming party among the Sikhs, eager to rescue their temples from the corrupt and wholly selfish administration of a priestly hierarchy, have not been content to accept the rather colourless compromise offered them by government legislation. Though by profession a race of warriors, they had been sufficiently

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the declaration of four leading Bombay citizens in answer to the question, "What action can England take that would convince you of the honesty of her intentions?" "Give us fiscal autonomy, a national militia, and equal treatment in the colonies."  
—J. T. Gwynn, *Indian Politics*, p. 8.

influenced by Mr Gandhi's preaching of non-violence to eschew the use of armed force. Instead they simply walked in, and by sheer weight of numbers took possession of temple properties. The extruded Mahants (high priests) appealed to the law, and government stepped in to protect vested interests. Government was faced by no simple problem. Its business is to maintain law and order. The conflict came to a head at a temple-property near Amritsar, called Guru-ka-Bagh. A *jatha* (detachment) of a hundred unarmed Sikhs presented itself each day to take possession. A police cordon barred the way. The front rank of Sikhs said its prayers, advanced, and was laid out by the long weighted sticks which were the police equipment. Sikh ambulance cars drove up, Sikh doctors removed the men and drove away; and the next rank in the *jatha* marched up, and received like treatment. It will hardly be credited, but the same procedure was followed every day for six and a half weeks, until there was scarcely a Sikh village in the Punjab which had not its beaten man; for the whole affair had been most carefully organized. One day's *jatha* consisted exclusively of soldiers with British service medals, some of them without arm or leg. Led by a veteran non-commissioned officer, they protested their readiness again to fight for the King if he required them, and their puzzlement that he had been so misadvised as to interfere in their religion; for duty to religion must come before even duty to King. They were not beaten, but removed to jail. Finally, the impasse was ended by a Hindu banker, who purchased the property and handed it over to the re-

formers.<sup>1</sup> It is significant of the efficiency of press control that the whole story is probably unknown to most Englishmen who were in India at the time. Yet English people are expected to take an intelligent interest in the affairs of the India which they rule!

The result has been that the great majority of the once trusty Sikhs became bitterly and morosely anti-British. Nothing is more eloquent of the deep root taken by Mr Gandhi's doctrines than that martial Sikhs should have come forward by their thousands to receive tamely a beating by the police. The problem before government was bewildering enough. They must strive to be impartial as between Sikh reformers and reactionaries. They must, if need be by force, uphold law and order, and protect the legal holders in their property. But the procedure chosen was surely incredibly stupid. We hold India to-day because as a rule our administrators have discovered better ways than that of dealing with difficult situations. Had a Nicholson or a Lawrence been in charge of some of the issues we have been tracing the result might have been altogether different.

Yet, if mistakes there were, they were mistakes of judgment rather than crimes of intention. Seldom have rulers been faced by graver or more bewildering problems. Fifty years ago politics were parochial, isolated. To-day the whole world listens in. Each local official has become a world administrator.

The future may show that the seemingly isolated

<sup>1</sup> The story, as told by a retired Indian civilian, is given in *Indian Politics*, by J. T. Gwynn, a book to which Lord Meston contributed the preface.

happenings of these seven years have had effects undreamed of by those primarily concerned in them. These same events may yet radically alter the entire fabric of the British empire. At least the East is changing.



सत्यमेव जयते

## CHAPTER III

### A PROPHET

#### I

THERE is no quicker way to understand the heart of India than to study Mr Gandhi. In him is expressed as nearly as may be India's ideal—the type of character she worships. Probably no man in his lifetime has ever commanded the affectionate reverence of so many millions of his fellow-men. He is a politician who yet owes his sway primarily to his religious character.

A small, weak man, with a lean face and tranquil brown eyes, and with spread-out big ears. He wears a white head-dress, a coarse white cloth covers his body, and his feet are bare. His food consists of fruit, rice and water; he sleeps on the floor; he sleeps but for a short while; and he works untiringly. His bodily appearance does not count at all. An expression of great patience and great love is what strikes us at first when we see him.<sup>1</sup>

“It is in the fitness of things,” writes Tagore, “that Mahatma Gandhi, frail in body and devoid of all material resources, should call up the immense powers of the meek.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> R. Rolland, *Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 182.

Few in India appreciated the moral stature of the frail, insignificant, ascetic man, who, after nearly twenty years of absence, landed on her shores in July 1914.

I shall never forget my own first sight of him. A crowd of many thousands had assembled at an open air meeting in Calcutta to do him honour. There were two hours of oratory, and flattery even fulsome, in praise of India and Mr Gandhi. For most of the time he sat on the platform, his head on his hands between his knees, as though in pain. Then he stood up to thank the assemblage for their welcome and the honour done him. The crowd shuffled into comfortable positions on the ground to listen to the great speech of the day. Mr Gandhi faced his audience for a moment or two, and then said very slowly and without preface of any kind (if my memory is to be trusted): "There is only one contribution I feel I can usefully make to this evening's proceedings, and that is to say that, speaking for myself, the deepest lessons of my own life have been learned from one who never set foot in India."<sup>1</sup> And he sat down. For a moment puzzlement reigned. Was it all over, the great man's speech? And what did he mean, and why had he said it? Then quietly and very thoughtfully the assembly dispersed.

I was deeply impressed. I wrote to ask if I might

<sup>1</sup> It is not clear to whom Mr Gandhi referred. The words have commonly been taken to refer to Jesus Christ, but this has been authoritatively denied. The story is quoted here to illustrate Mr Gandhi's singular independence of thought.

go to see him ; or, if that were inconvenient, would he come to see me ? Two days later he came, bare-foot and wearing a single cotton garment. In an instant the news was round the college. It was known that he could only be with us for twenty-five minutes ; but the East can hurry itself when it chooses. In ten minutes a garland had been bought, and an impromptu reception organized in the college hall. A quarter of an hour was left. Two short speeches of welcome, poor enough in quality and unprepared, were followed by the singing of *Bande Materam*, the national song. Then Mr Gandhi rose to reply. This time I had pencil and paper ready. I felt sure he must express his appreciation of his welcome by my students : so entirely spontaneous, and their best. Instead, without preface of any kind, these were his words :

You will bear with me, my brothers, if I tell you how pained I was to notice the tone in which you sang that sacred song just now. It is the praise of our motherland. Not one word of it is true of India to-day. There is only one attitude in which any of you may ever again sing those words : on your knees in prayer to God that He will make our country what the poet paints her to be.

And, with Mrs Gandhi on his arm, he got up to leave. A strange feeling was on us all as he passed out.

So we may come to understand something of the secret of the hold he has on India. Singularly unimpressive in appearance, there is about his presence a transparent sincerity, an utter fearless-

ness, an evident selflessness which, with Indians at least, compel a reverence that almost amounts to awe.

At the outbreak of the war Mr Gandhi was a convinced believer in the righteousness of the British cause. His sufferings at the hand of governments had not soured his judgment. As leader of the Indian movement in South Africa, he had served many sentences in jail. He had come out of jail to take the lead in recruiting armed forces for the Government that had imprisoned him. In 1899, after the outbreak of the Boer War,<sup>1</sup> he had raised an Indian Ambulance Corps nearly a thousand strong. Of Mr Gandhi's work in this connection a European campaigner writes :

After a night's work [on Spion Kop] which had shattered men with much bigger frames, I came across Gandhi in the early morning, sitting by the roadside, eating a regulation army biscuit. Every man in Buller's force was dull and depressed and damnation was heartily evoked on everything. But Gandhi was stoical in his bearing, cheerful and confident in his conversation, and had a kindly eye. He did one good. It was an informal introduction and it led to a friendship. I saw the man and his small undisciplined corps on many a field of battle during the Natal campaign. When succour was to be rendered they were there. Their unassuming dauntlessness cost them many lives, and eventually an order

<sup>1</sup> "On one occasion he had the privilege, which he greatly treasured, of bearing Lord Roberts's only son out of action and carrying him eighteen miles on a stretcher to the base."—C. F. Andrews.

was published forbidding them to go into the firing line.<sup>1</sup>

In 1906 he led a Bearer Corps of Indians for the British Army against the Zulus.<sup>1</sup>

In 1913 there occurred the armed strike of European labour on the South African Rand. Mr Gandhi's passive resistance movement was then at its height. It was his supreme opportunity. He could have exploited the situation to extort almost any terms he chose from an embarrassed government. Instead, he deliberately called off the whole movement, resuming again as soon as government had settled with the strikers. To the very last day of the Great War this man was recruiting for our armies in India. Here is his confession of faith, delivered in Madras in 1915 :

As a passive resister . . . I discovered that the British Empire had certain ideals with which I have fallen in love, and one of those ideals is that every subject of the British Empire has the freest scope for his energies and honour and whatever he thinks is due to his conscience. I think that this is true of the British Empire as it is not true of any other government. I feel, as you perhaps here know, that I am no lover of any government, and I have more than once said that that government is best which governs least. And I have found that it is possible for me to be governed least under the British Empire. Hence my loyalty to the British Empire.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Johannesburg *Illustrated Star*, quoted by Bishop Whitehead in *Indian Problems*.

<sup>2</sup> Gray and Parekh, *Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 37.

To the Viceroy he wrote :

If I could . . . I would make India offer all her able-bodied sons as a sacrifice to the Empire at its critical moment, and I know that India, by this very act, would become the most favoured partner, and racial distinctions would become a thing of the past.<sup>1</sup>

Alas, for the actual event !

Four short months after the armistice, this same Mr Gandhi was determinedly leading a passive rebellion against the British government. What explains so sudden and tragic a transformation ?

## II

Mr Gandhi had looked forward to a new era of free nationhood for his people as the outcome of the war ; when Britain and India as sister nations, on equal terms of dignity and mutual trust, should co-operate for the peace of the world. The Rowlatt Act <sup>2</sup> brought rapid disillusionment. It spoke not of trust but of suspicion. Mr Gandhi said :

I have a right to interpret the coming reforms by the light that the Rowlatt legislation throws upon them. . . . We shall find the reforms to be a whited sepulchre.

The Bill was the entrenchment of a ruling alien race against the machinations of a subject nation.

<sup>1</sup> Gray and Parekh, *Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 38.

<sup>2</sup> See Chap. II. p. 45.

Mr Gandhi watched with dismay the futility of a constitutional opposition and the high-handed disregard of a wellnigh universal national protest against the Bill. Plainly nothing was left but either impotently to accept the Bill or to launch a campaign of passive resistance such as he had led in South Africa.

That decision once reached, the rest was clear. Mr Gandhi was no tyro. The struggle in South Africa had brought him maturity of conviction on certain fundamentals. The love of the poor and the championship of the oppressed had become with him a passion. Religion had been established not only as the personal inspiration of his life, but as his mainstay for a fight against all odds and as his illumination for a clear line through the perplexities of politics. And he was settled beyond possibility of shaking in the conviction that there is only one way of resisting evil that does not lead to greater evils, and that is God's way, the way of the Cross, the way of non-compliance at the cost of one's own suffering. In that way evil is not only overcome: it is annulled. Hostility is transformed into goodwill. To this method he gave the clumsy title of non-violent non-co-operation. The more nebulous Indian name was Satyagraha (Holding on to Truth).<sup>1</sup> This was to

<sup>1</sup> Mr Gandhi's own definition is: "Vindication of Truth, not by infliction of suffering on the opponent, but on one's self."—*Young India*, p. 12.

[*Young India* is a weekly journal edited by Mr Gandhi and largely written by him. Where no date is given the page numbers in footnotes refer to a volume made up of articles collected from this journal within the years 1919-1922.]

be the method of India's new resistance to legislation that seemed to her unjust.

Those willing to follow Mr Gandhi's lead were known as Satyagrahis, and took an oath to disobey certain selected laws until the Rowlatt legislation was withdrawn, but to refrain in so doing from all violence to life, person and property. The 6th of April 1919 was fixed as the day on which the oath was to be taken, and it was to be observed as a *hartal* or day of fast and of abstinence from all business. But Mr Gandhi was to learn that a campaign of opposition to government, no matter how non-violent the methods to be followed, cannot be launched among an ordinary populace without the danger, indeed certainty, of outbreaks of violence.

In Delhi the hartal was held a week too soon, and on March 30th the police had to fire upon a crowd which refused to disperse. The widespread hartals of April 6th passed without violence; but on April 10th, when the news of Mr Gandhi's arrest <sup>1</sup> on the previous day got abroad and when two Amritsar agitators were deported, there occurred the horrible and murderous outbreaks of mob violence at Ahmedabad and Amritsar. At Ahmedabad the personal influence of Mr Gandhi, and the acute distress and humiliation shown by him, sufficed to restore order, and the severe measures of retribution that followed were accepted as due and just.

It was otherwise at Amritsar. There, shame and penitence for the barbarities committed by the Indian

<sup>1</sup> As a matter of fact Mr Gandhi's release followed a few hours after his arrest.

mob were obliterated and swallowed up in the outburst of indignation aroused by the shootings at Jallianwala Bagh. About the same time news reached India of the terms to be imposed on Turkey, in violation of the pledge given by the British premier.<sup>1</sup> Mr Gandhi's disillusionment was now complete. He felt there could be no honourable understanding between a self-respecting India and Great Britain, until the British people had re-vindicated their good faith by a national repudiation of General Dyer's action, by the carrying out of Mr Lloyd George's former declarations regarding Turkey, by the revoking of the Rowlatt Act, and by the granting of self-determination to India.

India, under Mr Gandhi's leadership, was now embarked on the definite and determined quest of *Swaraj* (self-rule). With penetrating insight Mr Gandhi pierced to the four essentials of India's success in such an enterprise. Hindu-Moslem unity must be achieved. An India which was to demand recognition as an equal among the free nations of the world must herself grant human equality to her own depressed classes: therefore the disgrace of untouchability must be removed. The average level of morals must be lifted and personal sincerity be achieved by a disciplinary process of self-denial. And, alike on grounds of principle and policy, there must be a complete eschewing of all violence.

In a short time Mr Gandhi had achieved a personal ascendancy over the masses to which Indian history can show no parallel. It is significant of the new day

<sup>1</sup> See Chap. II. p. 42.

in Indian politics that he has been able to rally to his call not only the literate classes but also the village population. It is this fact which gives pause for thought to English statesmen. Such was his domination that Mr Gandhi was able to impose his will upon the National Congress of 1920, and by a majority of more than two to one a resolution was carried committing Congress :

1. Not to rest content until the Punjab and Khilafat<sup>1</sup> wrongs had been redressed.

2. To insist on the establishment of Swaraj, or self-determination.

3. To seek these ends by the means of progressive non-violent non-co-operation with the British government.

As a means towards the achievement of these ends, Congress stressed the urgency and importance of :

- (1) Hindu-Moslem unity.
- (2) The immediate removal of untouchability.
- (3) The removing of the drink and opium curses.
- (4) The universal practice of spinning and wearing of Indian-made cloth.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Usually " Caliphate " in English.

<sup>2</sup> The original programme of non-co-operation, afterwards abandoned, had included :

- (a) Resignation of all titles and official honours.
- (b) Absence from all government functions.
- (c) Gradual withdrawal of pupils from government schools and the establishment of independent national schools in their stead.
- (d) Gradual boycott of British courts by lawyers and litigants, and the establishment of private arbitration in their place.

## III

First, Hindu-Moslem unity. No problem in Indian nationalist politics comes nearer insolubility than this. To any convinced and thoughtful sympathizer with Indian national aspirations, it continually recurs as the rock on which all schemes split—the bar to every advance. In a recent utterance Mr Gandhi has not hesitated to declare that a peace between the rival religions imposed by British rule is no real peace, and that there will be no solution of this problem till Britain's strong hand has been withdrawn and the two religions come to terms themselves, even though it be by the horrors of a religious war. It is significant that it is in his determined grappling with this dogged issue that Mr Gandhi has seemed to come nearest to sacrificing principle for expediency. From the point of view of Mr Gandhi's programme, Britain's abandonment of her Premier's pledges in regard to Turkey was a singularly fortunate accident. Mr Gandhi—India—needed a common issue which would unite Hindus and Musalmans in the pursuit of national independence. Here it lay ready to hand. If Moslems were hesitant about the merits of the representative government in India demanded by Hindus (for any scheme of representation would leave Musalmans a permanent and small minority) their support could at least be

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(e) Refusal of military, clerical or industrial service in Mesopotamia.

(f) Refusal to vote for or sit in the reformed councils.

(g) Boycott of foreign goods.

secured by Hindu advocacy of Turkey's independence. Accordingly the revision of the Treaty of Sèvres was made a foremost plank in India's political demands.

The policy pursued by Mr Gandhi in this respect has caused grave perplexity to many of his truest friends. To those familiar with the record of Armenian massacres and much else of the kind, it has been difficult to understand how the Mr Gandhi, who found it conscientiously impossible to co-operate with the "satanic" <sup>1</sup> British government, could at the same time press for the most determined support of the Turkish government. Surely there could be little doubt which government was the less "satanic" of the two! <sup>2</sup> And further: if there is one principle more than another which Mr Gandhi claims to hold by deepest personal conviction and to which he is committed by his whole career, it is that of non-violence. Yet he entered on relations of the closest and most intimate co-operation and friendship with the brothers Mohammed Ali and Shaukat Ali, the political leaders of Islam in India, although they made no secret of the fact that they adopted non-violence merely as a matter of expediency, and not at all on the grounds of principle. It is difficult not to feel that Mr Gandhi's action in these two respects was largely influenced by considerations of policy. Absolutely clear on the rightness and duty of Indian

<sup>1</sup> "Satanic" is an epithet once used by Mr Gandhi of the British government, and frequently declared by him to be justifiable.

<sup>2</sup> But Mr Gandhi "has considerable power of disbelieving what he wishes to disbelieve." Gray and Parekh, *Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 61.

unity, and therefore of Hindu-Moslem accord, he saw no other means to this end than that of championship of the cause of the Caliphate and an understanding with Islam's Indian leaders: an understanding which has seemed to many an unholy alliance. The end justified the means.<sup>1</sup>

True, there was beyond doubt room for protest against England's broken pledges in regard to Turkey. And the depth and sincerity of Mr Gandhi's devotion to inter-communal harmony, and to Hindu-Moslem unity in particular, were put for ever beyond question by a twenty-one days' fast which he undertook in the autumn of 1924 as a vicarious penance for India's divisions.

Hardly second to his advocacy of Hindu-Moslem unity stands his insistence on the removal of untouchability.<sup>2</sup> Nowhere is Mr Gandhi more utterly himself than in his crusade for the granting of human rights to India's sixty million outcastes.

If I have to be reborn, I should wish to be born an untouchable, so that I may share their sorrows, sufferings, and the affronts levelled at them, in order that I may endeavour to free myself and them from that miserable condition.<sup>3</sup>

Slaveholders ourselves, we have no business to quarrel with our own slavery if we are not prepared unconditionally to enfranchise our own slaves. We

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Young India*, p. 173.

<sup>2</sup> "Swaraaj is unattainable without the removal of the sin of untouchability, as it is without Hindu-Moslem unity." M. K. Gandhi in *Young India*, p. 467.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 475.

must first cast out the beam of untouchability from our own eyes before we attempt to remove the mote from that of our "masters."<sup>1</sup>

It is a reform not to follow Swaraj, but to precede it.<sup>2</sup>

The removal of untouchability has now become, along with the advocacy of home spinning, the chief aim of Mr Gandhi's efforts. His sincerity is pledged by his adoption of a little untouchable maiden as his own daughter. And he is achieving success. The focus of the struggle has been a place called Vaikam in the Hindu Native State of Travancore. A large and celebrated Hindu temple occupies the central place at the meeting of four cross-roads. Though the four roads are public highways maintained out of the State tax, no one belonging to the "untouchable" classes was allowed to use them. Instead they must make a wide detour so as not to approach within defiling distance of the temple. Encouraged by Mr Gandhi, members of the outcaste classes resolved by non-violent means to press their right to use these roads, and accordingly quietly endeavoured to walk past. The Hindu government, at the instance of the priests, erected four barriers, one across each road, guarded by police. Only non-outcastes were allowed to pass. You drove up. In front of you across the road was a roofed-in fence where stood police, who enquired your caste. If your reply was satisfactory a gate was opened and you drove through. In front of the barrier squatting on the ground were half a

<sup>1</sup> *Young India*, p. 1089.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 470.

dozen outcastes, quietly plying the spinning wheel. They had been there since dawn, when they presented themselves for permission to go through. The same spectacle was to be seen at the other three barriers, and this scene repeated itself every day for a year or more. More remarkable still and all but unbelievable, a few Brahman lawyers abandoned their practice and camped with the untouchables, sharing food and life with them, making themselves thereby outcastes, in order to help them win their battle for human rights. One, describing a beating he had received, remarked how glad he was that he had been able to refrain from any reply except to wish his persecutor well. Another high caste man patiently endured while slaked lime was rubbed into his eyes. These men, Hindu by name, have learned of Christ. Travancore Christians feel they have had an example set them.

And this citadel of Hinduism has at last been breached. Mr Gandhi himself visited Vaikam not long ago.<sup>1</sup> His journey there, as always, was of the nature of a triumphal progress. Everywhere he was attended by reverent crowds. It was striking evidence of his hold upon the public that, though leading a passive rebellion against State authority, he was received by the enlightened Maharanee with all honour as a State guest, and conducted negotiations which have ended in the throwing open of the roads to all of whatever caste.

On nothing is Mr Gandhi more outspoken than on untouchability. For sheer simplicity of fearlessness take this incident. Mr Gandhi was receiving the

<sup>1</sup> In the spring of 1925.

honour of a municipal address of welcome in Western India. Here is his reply :

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

One of the most puzzling items in Mr Gandhi's propaganda, his ceaseless advocacy in and out of season of the spinning wheel, almost to the point of obsession, relates itself to his clear perception that only through an immense moral discipline can India achieve nationhood. No one is less blind to the failings and feeblenesses of his own nation. He sees the need of something which, in addition to its own usefulness, shall involve not only words and sentiment but the doing by every Indian of some definite

bit of service for his country every day; something disciplinary, requiring actual self-denial; some sacramental act that shall signify love of country and bind in one symbol of national service all India's patriotic sons. He finds it in the spinning wheel. But this is no mere useless symbol. It has stern economic warrant. Mr Gandhi's heart is never far from the Indian villager. He regards as one of England's most cruel wrongs to India the crushing out of the almost universal cottage industries of spinning and weaving by the importation of Manchester machine-made cotton. It is the problem of the industrial revolution and of subsidiary industries over again. But no other country is hit quite so hard as India. In India there are over two hundred and fifty millions who live by agriculture. But agriculture is not sufficiently profitable to yield a real livelihood unless eked out by subsidiary cottage industries. Now there are only two possessions that every Indian must have: his cooking utensils and his cotton clothes. The logic is remorseless: four-fifths of India's teeming population must inevitably find their livelihood in agriculture; but they cannot live on agriculture without the support of a cottage industry; and the only available cottage industry is cotton; which in turn is India's universal need, as well as being a natural Indian product.

Moreover, India was in 1920-21 purchasing £102,000,000 worth of foreign cotton goods,<sup>1</sup> every yard of which, Mr Gandhi maintains, might have been made in India. If ever protection is essential,

<sup>1</sup> *Moral and Material Progress of India*, 1921, p. 132.

the protection of Indian cotton would seem a vital necessity. Instead, government imposed an excise duty on all Indian manufactured cotton originally equivalent to the import duty, so that Manchester goods could compete in India on level terms. The excise duty has always been highly unpopular in India. Government has been pledged to withdraw it, and only the state of Indian finances prevented its abolition some time ago. It has now been abolished, and Lancashire's acquiescence in the removal of this ancient wrong was conveyed in terms which suggest a real understanding of the Indian case.

It is Mr Gandhi's contention that protection and patriotic impulse would suffice to enable India to produce all the cotton she requires, and thus make agriculture a prosperous industry, as well as stop the drainage abroad of the vast sums now spent on Lancashire manufactures. But there can be little doubt that the chief reason for Mr Gandhi's almost wearisome insistence on the *charkha* (spinning wheel) is the moral discipline that half an hour's daily work for his country would mean to the often rather flabby Indian citizen. To him it is above all else sacrament and discipline.

If there is one energy more than another that expresses the soul of Mr Gandhi, it is the preaching of non-violence. It is the revelation that came to him in Africa as he drank in the teachings of the Gospels, of Tolstoi, and of his own Gujarati scriptures.

The taking of the steps suggested by me will constitute the peace fullest revolution the world has ever

seen. Once the infallibility of non-co-operation is realized, there is an end to all bloodshed and violence in any shape or form.<sup>1</sup>

The non-violence in which he so passionately believes is no mere feebleness of non-resistance.

It does not mean meek submission to the will of the evil doer, but it means the putting of one's whole soul against the will of the tyrant.<sup>2</sup>

It is the chosen activity of the strong. No one in the world has greater aversion to passivity than this indefatigable fighter against evil. There is nothing Mr Gandhi more loathes than cowardice.

I do believe that where there is only choice between cowardice and violence, I would advise violence. . . . I would rather have India resort to arms in order to defend her honour than that she should in a cowardly manner become or remain a helpless witness to her own dishonour. But I believe that non-violence is infinitely superior to violence, forgiveness is more manly than punishment.<sup>3</sup>

And he is never tired of reiterating that non-violence must extend, not only to word and deed, but to thought and motive. Further, "we must not resort to social boycott of our opponents. It amounts to coercion. We must patiently try to bring round . . . by gentle persuasion."<sup>4</sup> "We do not want to make people virtuous by force."<sup>5</sup> But he recognizes

<sup>1</sup> *Young India*, p. 212.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 262.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 260.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 961.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1130.

that many will embrace the way of non-violence on grounds of policy, not principle :

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.<sup>1</sup>

Englishmen control " all the most dangerous appliances that human ingenuity has ever invented. There is no choice before [Indians] but that of making a supreme effort to neutralize the effect of all those appliances by ceasing to fear them, *i.e.* by non-resistance."<sup>2</sup> He maintains that the doctrine of non-violence is specially congenial to Indian nature; though in the last resort it is universally true of all men that " we live, not by our own physical strength, but by sufferance " <sup>3</sup> [of others].

What Mr Gandhi preaches he seeks sedulously to practise in his relation to the British. Quite recently he wrote :

My attitude towards the English is one of utter friendliness and respect. I claim to be their friend, because it is contrary to my nature to distrust a single human being or to believe that any nation on earth is incapable of redemption. I have respect for Englishmen, because I recognize their bravery, their spirit of sacrifice for what they believe to be good for themselves, their cohesion and their powers of vast organiza-

<sup>1</sup> *Young India*, Appendix, p. 12.      <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 606.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, November 5, 1925.

tion. My hope about them is that they will at no distant date retrace their steps, revise their policy of exploitation of undisciplined and ill-organized races, and give tangible proof that India is an equal friend and partner in the British Commonwealth to come.

But here he walks on a razor edge. Two trains of thought, not always easy to reconcile, have to be distinguished. On the one hand there is the steady appreciation of the value of the British connection, provided it can be so modified as to make room for India's self-determination. On the other, there is the patriot's burning sense of the "slave mentality" which is the inevitable result of too long continued foreign domination. This long continuance of alien rule is a relatively new thing in Indian history. After a few generations even the Mohammedans had ceased to be foreign rulers. While therefore tirelessly arguing the duty of friendliness and help to every individual Englishman, Mr Gandhi yet unsparingly denounces the system of British rule. But it is hard for untutored mobs so finely to discriminate. The vehemence and immoderation of some of Mr Gandhi's denunciations of British rule make it impossible to acquit him of a large share of responsibility for the Moplah rebellion and disturbances elsewhere. "To hate Satanism while loving Satan himself" is a task too hard for ordinary mortals. "He who incites others to action ought to consult not his own heart but the hearts of others."<sup>1</sup>

Not that Mr Gandhi desires severance from the

<sup>1</sup> R. Rolland, *Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 100.

British Empire. On this he is explicit. Writing to the Viceroy on June 22nd, 1920, he says :

The only course open to one like me is either in despair to sever all connection with British rule, or, if I still retain faith in the inherent superiority of the British constitution to all others at present in vogue, to adopt such means as will rectify the wrong done and thus restore confidence. I have not lost faith in such superiority, and I am not without hope that somehow or other justice will yet be rendered, if we show requisite capacity for suffering.<sup>1</sup>

On November 17th, 1921, he writes :

I have repeatedly said 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.<sup>2</sup>

Still more explicitly :

We must make it clear to the British people that, whilst we desire to retain the British connection, if we can rise to our full height with it, we are determined to dispense with, and even to get rid of that connection, if that is necessary for full national development.<sup>3</sup>

He would retain, in any case, only so many British

<sup>1</sup> *Young India*, p. xxxvii. It needs to be remembered that Mr Gandhi's trust in British character fills a large place in his confidence in the success of his method. With all his heart he believes in the innate justice of the Britisher ; and that if in a right cause you stand up and face an Englishman fearlessly, and without flattery, he will admit his fault.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 314.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 835.

officers as " may be needed for our instruction and guidance."

His supreme charge against British rule is that so far it has not enabled Indians to rise to the full stature of their manhood. It is only when we remember that Mr Gandhi sets a higher value on character and manliness than on railways, posts, telegraphs, canals, schools, hospitals and all the other material benefits of British rule—not excluding even order and justice—that we can understand the crushing indictment he brings against our government of India :

The difficulty of Englishmen lies really in believing that their rule is wholly an evil for India, *i.e.* it has made India worse in everything that counts. India is poorer in wealth, in manliness, in godliness and in her sons' power to defend themselves.<sup>1</sup>

On his trial in 1922 he declared :

I hold it a virtue to be disaffected towards a government which in its totality has done more harm to India than any previous system. *India is less manly under the British rule than she has ever been before.*

That is his indictment. They are severe words, strange and unwelcome to British ears, imperturbably convinced by long reiteration of the benefits their rule confers on others. The words are plainly exaggerated. They need balance. They also need

<sup>1</sup> Gray and Parekh, *Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 65.

correction. But they merit thought. And they open a new window of insight into the mind of modern India.

## IV

Government, moved alike by the profound reverence universally felt in India for Mr Gandhi's person and by its own recognition of the integrity and nobility of his character, exhibited the extreme of patience. Already fifteen thousand persons were in prison, having voluntarily gone to jail in what they believed to be the service of their country as peaceful non-co-operators. That the continuance of the British Raj should necessitate the keeping in jail of several thousands of India's more respectable citizens is perhaps the most serious indictment that could be brought against the system. Government was most unwilling publicly to admit that there could be no peace between it and a man of Mr Gandhi's saintly character. Moreover, it was all to the good that Mr Gandhi was substituting peaceful non-co-operation, albeit marred by occasional outbreaks of mass violence, for subterranean conspiracies of violence and assassination. But the equilibrium was clearly unstable. India held its breath. Dared government lay hands upon their prophet?

The next step was not taken by government. Early in February, 1922, there occurred a shocking outrage at a place called Chauri Chaura. A mob, partly of agrarian agitators, partly of ill-instructed non-co-operators, attacked and beat to death twenty-

one policemen and burnt down the station. Appalled and horror-stricken, Mr Gandhi at once called off the entire campaign of civil disobedience and set himself a penance of five days' fasting. This was the third time a campaign had been suspended. (Another had been on the occasion of the Prince of Wales's arrival in Bombay. Mr Gandhi had organized an abstinence of welcome, carefully explained as in no sense personal, but solely as a protest against the government represented in his person. Unfortunately this had broken out in violence, ending in the death of fifty people.) Indian opinion was mystified by these frequent vacillations on the part of Mr Gandhi, these suspensions, followed by resumptions, of the campaign. Confidence in Mr Gandhi's political leadership dropped to a low ebb. Surely never before was a leader so fitted "at once to exalt a people and to endanger the safety of a State."

Then came the thunder clap. Government saw no alternative but to interfere with the leader "who had brought into being forces of unruliness which he was not able to control." On March 10th, 1922, Mr Gandhi was arrested. On the 18th he was tried and sentenced to six years' imprisonment. Many, perhaps most, observers expected that rivers of blood would run from one end of India to the other, now that hands had been laid on the Mahatma.<sup>1</sup> Instead there was a hush, a silence that could be felt. Chiefly this stillness was the result of the deep hold Mr Gandhi's inculcation of non-violence had taken upon the Indian con-

<sup>1</sup> *i.e.* "Great soul," the title ordinarily given to Mr Gandhi—reserved for spiritual persons of semi-divine eminence.

science. But partly it was due to waning trust in Mr Gandhi's statesmanship, partly also to the sense of awe and exaltation left by the narrative of the trial itself.

It was a scene altogether unforgettable. Judge and prisoner were alike worthy. Mr Gandhi at once pleaded guilty. He assumed entire responsibility for all the outrages, though each of them was in flat violation of all his teaching and instructions. He carried the guilt of his disobedient followers :

I wish to endorse all the blame that the learned Advocate-General has thrown on my shoulders in connection with the Bombay occurrences, the Madras occurrences, and the Chauri Chaura occurrences. Thinking over these deeply and sleeping over them night after night, it is impossible for me to dissociate myself from the diabolical crimes of Chauri Chaura or the mad outrages of Bombay. . . . I know that my people have sometimes gone mad. I am deeply sorry for it and I am therefore here to submit not to a light penalty but the highest penalty. I do not ask for mercy. I do not plead any extenuating fact. I am here, therefore, to invite and cheerfully submit to the highest penalty that can be inflicted upon me.

The judge replied :

Mr Gandhi, you have made my task easy in one way by pleading guilty to the charge. Nevertheless, what remains, namely, the determination of a just sentence, is perhaps as difficult a proposition as a judge in this country could have to face. The law is no respecter of persons. Nevertheless, it will be impossible to ignore the fact that you are in a different

category from any person I have ever tried or am likely to have to try. It would be impossible to ignore the fact that, in the eyes of millions of your countrymen, you are a great patriot and a great leader. Even those who differ from you in politics look upon you as a man of high ideals and of notable and of even saintly life. I have to deal with you in one character only. It is not my duty and I do not presume to judge or criticize you in any other character. It is my duty to judge you as a man subject to the law, who by his own admission has broken the law and committed what to an ordinary man must appear to be a grave offence against such law. I do not forget that you have consistently preached against violence and that you have on many occasions, as I am willing to believe, done much to prevent violence. But having regard to the nature of your political teaching and the nature of many of those to whom it was addressed, how you could have continued to believe that violence and anarchy would not be the inevitable consequence, it passes my capacity to understand.

There are probably few people in India who do not sincerely regret that you should have made it impossible for any government to leave you at liberty. But it is so. I am trying to balance what is due to you against what appears to me to be necessary in the interests of the public . . . and I should like to say [in passing sentence of six years' imprisonment] that if the course of events in India should make it possible for government to reduce the period and release you, no one will be better pleased than I.

So ended the great trial. What was it that held India breathless? India was irresistibly reminded of another trial. And she felt that the man who was the

incarnation of her own ideal in character was, at the moment of his supreme self-expression, inspired by the teaching and example of Jesus Christ. At least, since that day there has been a new reverence for Jesus Christ in educated India, and a new interest in the story of Calvary. You have only to announce a lecture on the Cross of Christ, and you will receive rapt attention. Missionaries move in a new atmosphere.

This is not a missionary purple patch. Witness the following from a leading article in the *Indian Social Reformer* :

It is curious that while the prosecution and imprisonment of Mahatma Gandhi has shaken the faith of some people in the efficacy of morality and non-violence as a political method, it has prompted a much larger number, including several who had set themselves for years to counteract the proselytizing work of Christian missions, to turn to the figure of Christ upon the Cross in reverent contemplation. Orthodox Hindus, militant Arya Samajists, devout Mohammedans and, of course, Brahmos have had their minds turned to Calvary in commenting upon that event. It may be said without exaggeration that the Mahatma in jail has achieved in a short while what Christian missions had not in a hundred years with all their resources of men and money—he has turned India's face to Christ upon the Cross.

## V

Quite plainly, the reason of Mr Gandhi's hold on India is his character, and principally this, that he is

the incarnation of a religious ideal, a man utterly dominated by religion. "Through all his speeches flamed the glory of an insistent belief that morality and politics should march hand in hand." "Most religious men I have met," he says, "are politicians in disguise. I, however, who wear the guise of a politician, am at heart a religious man."<sup>1</sup> "We [non-co-operators] are developing quite an irresistible courage which comes only from waiting upon God."<sup>2</sup> Mr Gandhi's words on the eve of the commencement of his twenty-one days' fast are eloquent of a devout and modest spirit :

No act of mine is done without prayer. [But] man is a fallible being. . . . What he may regard as an answer to his prayer for infallible guidance may be an echo of his pride. . . . Have I erred? Have I been impatient? Have I compromised with evil? . . . My penance is the prayer of a bleeding heart, for forgiveness for sins unwittingly committed.<sup>3</sup>

Writing in the spiritual agony of the days after Chauri Chaura he says :

<sup>1</sup> Gray and Parekh, *Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 103. Cf. the comment of a discerning critic on a recent visit of Mr Gandhi: "He was very friendly and very fascinating by reason of his manifest love for the poor and burning keenness to get their conditions improved. . . . The most encouraging sign seemed to be that the enthusiasm he now evokes has almost ceased to be that of a political leader. It is almost entirely that of a preacher of righteousness, who touches men's hearts because they know that his words are the outcome of the love that is in his heart, and that he in his own life acts upon them."

<sup>2</sup> *Young India*, p. 294.

<sup>3</sup> *The Statesman* (India), October 2nd, 1924.

The drastic reversal of practically the whole of the aggressive programme may be politically unsound and unwise, but there is no doubt that it is religiously sound. . . . Confession of error is like a broom that sweeps away dirt and leaves the surface cleaner than before. . . . I must undergo personal cleansing. I must become a fitter instrument. . . . My prayers must have much deeper truth and humility about them than they evidence. And for me there is nothing so helpful and cleansing as a fast accompanied by the necessary mental co-operation. . . . I am in the unhappy position of a surgeon proved unskilled to deal with an admittedly dangerous case. I must either abdicate or acquire greater skill.<sup>1</sup>

Mr Gandhi has been profoundly influenced by Christianity. "There was a time when I was wavering between Hinduism and Christianity."<sup>2</sup> "There have been many times when I did not know which way to turn. But I have gone to the Bible and particularly the New Testament, and have drawn strength from its message."<sup>3</sup> "I am not a biased Hindu, but a humble and impartial student of religion with great leanings towards Christianity."<sup>4</sup> To Bishop Whitehead he said :

I always try to govern my conduct in accordance with the teaching and life of Christ. He had to deal with evil and wickedness just as we have to do. How did He act towards it? Did He use force? No.

<sup>1</sup> *Young India*, pp. 995-9.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 473.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 50.

<sup>4</sup> Gray and Parekh, *Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 104.

He allowed Himself to be crucified. He overcame evil by suffering. That is to my mind the only right way of dealing with it.<sup>1</sup>

"Lead Kindly Light" is one of his favourite hymns; and the first hymn he asked for, on the conclusion of his twenty-one days' fast, was "When I survey the wondrous Cross."

Yet Mr Gandhi always explicitly avows himself a Hindu, though unorthodox. He says that he prefers the *Bhagavad Gita* to the New Testament.

I call myself a Sanatani Hindu because :

1. I believe in the Vedas . . . and Hindu Scriptures. . . . Avataras (incarnations) and rebirth.
2. I believe in caste . . . but not in its present popular and crude sense.
3. I believe in the protection of the cow in a much larger sense than the popular.
4. I do not disbelieve in idol worship.<sup>2</sup>

A severe, if discriminating, judgment has been passed on Mr Gandhi by Bishop Whitehead :

"He struck me as being a man tremendously in earnest, absolutely sincere, inspired by a lofty idealism, grasping firmly one or two great moral principles and prepared to undergo any amount of suffering or brave any amount of unpopularity for what he believed to be right; but at the same time extraordinarily narrow in his outlook, blind to the complexity of human life, almost deliberately shutting his eyes to concrete realities and living in a world of abstractions ;

<sup>1</sup> *Indian Problems*, p. 246.

<sup>2</sup> *Young India*, p. 801.

a splendid prophet of neglected aspects of moral truth, but not a thinker or a statesman." <sup>1</sup>

There can be no doubt that intellectually he suffers from curious limitations. He is essentially a reactionary, an impenitent rebel against twentieth century progress. Very many will sympathize with his aversion to the material side of western civilization and his longing to save India from the ugly horrors of modern industrialism. He would see India a country of self-sufficing districts, living the simple and rustic life. His ideal state excludes mills, machinery, printing presses, railways and even medical science and hospitals. For he maintains that European medicine "only attempts to cure the body of its diseases, but never to extirpate the basic causes of those diseases, which are really the passions and vices of men." <sup>2</sup> He is always apologizing pathetically and humorously for his use of modern appliances and conveniences. "I am not aiming at destroying railways or hospitals, though I would certainly welcome their natural destruction. Neither railways nor hospitals are a test of a high and pure civilization." <sup>3</sup> His economics are crude. It is difficult to justify his bonfires of foreign cloth. And he deliberately proposes the cessation of births, by parental self-control, till India has won her freedom, on the score that every child born now is one more slave!

But the reason of Mr Gandhi's political failure lies deeper.

<sup>1</sup> Whitehead, *Indian Problems*, p. 247.

<sup>2</sup> Rolland, *Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 28.

<sup>3</sup> *Young India*, p. 868.

Nine years ago, speaking of the ardent Indian student and of the pathos of the misguided patriotism that spent itself in conspiracy and assassination, I wrote :

There was no one to show the Indian student any better way. They were sheep without a shepherd. . . . There is the pity of it. There is no Indian whom these boys really trust to stand up and give them a clear lead : to point out the long weary road of education of the masses, of social reform and industrial reconstruction to be covered before the nation is ripe for freedom : to suggest to each that the education and sanitation of his village, or the improvement of municipal conditions, present a call for sacrifice that will make a far bigger demand on character and perseverance and do far truer service to his country than a short and glorious procession to the gallows as a political assassin.<sup>1</sup>

And then, in Mahatma Gandhi, the man of destiny that India needed seemed to have appeared ; the man who could draw the heart of India after him in trust and reverence ; the man to call India from violence and assassination to service and social uplift ; the man who lived the message that he preached.

And he too failed : failed for one lesson that he missed as he read the Gospel story. Mr Gandhi missed—or forgot—the central truth that only regenerate men and women can usher in God's Kingdom. He was in a hurry. Swaraj was to be realized within one year. He forgot—except at moments when vicarious penitence gave true vision—the crudity of

<sup>1</sup> *Goal of India*, pp. 195-6.

the material with which he had to build. He forgot that, before the India of his dreams could come to be, there must be a changed manhood and a changed womanhood right through India's villages.<sup>1</sup>

True, it was the glory of the vision that enamoured him, the sheer self-evident truth of the great ideals he enunciated. The Kingdom of God could come just now, if only all men would at once believe and act upon its precepts! True; but the Master who saw the vision more clearly still, said also: Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God. And the following of that Master remains the only way by which the Kingdom of God that Mr Gandhi seeks can come in India or elsewhere.

The history of Red Russia and Sinn Fein Ireland shows that national independence might come to India another way. The loyalty of the Indian army, on which ultimately depends British ability to force her rule on India, might be undermined. But the

<sup>1</sup> He came very near seeing it sometimes, as, for instance, when he wrote: "We must make sure of the masses exercising self-control whilst they are witnesses to the confiscation of their crops and cattle or forfeiture of their holdings." (*Young India*, p. 948.) To expect such self-restraint of unregenerate ordinary men and women, to expect that denunciations of the British Raj and incitements to disobedience among the still untutored masses of India's population would not result in violent outbreak, argued ignorance of human nature. Mr Gandhi himself makes this confession: "I see as clearly as daylight that the country as a whole has not understood non-violence, and therefore has not understood non-co-operation that was presented to it. I therefore see equally clearly that the keeping up of non-co-operation without its active principle, non-violence, must do harm to the country. In such circumstances non-co-operation, as a national programme, must for the time being be suspended."

Red India so achieved would be something vastly different from the peaceful rustic commonwealth of Mr Gandhi's hopes. And it may be India will have to wade through rivers of blood because her government and her politicians alike rejected Mr Gandhi's way.

Mr Gandhi failed because he believed in the instant transforming power of the great and true idea. India had only to see and understand in order to embrace and follow. But the Kingdom of God is as a mustard seed and leaven. And yet the failure was not so much the failure of Mr Gandhi as of you and me and the rest of ordinary humanity. A prophet is always before his time ; and the great prophets have always been martyrs also. But if Mr Gandhi's hand is no longer on the helm of Indian politics, he still rules the heart of India. It is safe to say that no man living wields so strong an influence upon so many millions of mankind. Now that he has turned from the surface war of politics to the basal issues of social uplift and reform, his greatest victories are yet to come. And already he has won the heart of thinking India from the desert paths of violence.

It has been called a splendid failure. But was it truly failure ? Has he not slain for us the lie that held us cowards and bondsmen, the lie that " force decides " ? We now see more clearly that the only final settlement of anything is by the peaceful persuasion that refuses to be a party to wrongdoing. Immeasurably more costly and more calamitous than Mr Gandhi's failure have been the countless failures of force and militarism with which history lies strewn. Learning from his mistakes, weary humanity will yet



## CHAPTER IV

### TO-DAY

#### I

INDIAN unrest is the resultant of three powerful under-currents of turbulent sentiment which are sweeping Indian history along a channel carved out not by reason but by emotion.

The first is a profound reaction against the West and all its ways, and a return upon the ancient ways and culture of the motherland. We are the spectators, the closely interested spectators, of an intense and passionate Indian renaissance. The movement permeates every sphere of national life—religion, art, industry and education, as well as politics. It is an eager and violent assertion of the superiority of the ancient ways, and of the spiritual supremacy of the East. Sedulously fed for decades by half a dozen independent schools of politico-religionists—Tilak and the Maratha politicians, Mrs Besant and theosophy, the Arya Samaj and the Neo-Vedantic followers of Swami Vivekananda—the flood of reactionary revivalism swept on, the last barriers gone from its path when the vaunted superiority of the West collapsed in the war. There was demonstrated for ever (so India felt) the moral bankruptcy of Christendom.

Back to the old ways of the East ! India had little to learn from Europe.

The reaction is much more a thing of temperament and emotion than rational and intellectual. And it has been fanned and nurtured by indiscriminating unbalanced panegyric of India's ancient culture. Pictures are painted in glowing terms of an India, wealthy, peaceful and happy, which it would be difficult to verify by historical references.

The result has been to give many Indians an extravagant idea of their country's past, and an irrational dislike of the civilization, the culture, the thought, the mode of life, and, above all perhaps, the material prosperity of the West.<sup>1</sup>

Here you get it, hot and bitter, from a political declaimer :

English learning may be good ; English culture may be good ; their philosophy may be good ; their government, their law, everything may be good ; but each one of these but helps to rivet the fetters of our servitude. Therefore I say to the English : " Good as these things may be, take them away ; take them away beyond the seas, far off to your Western home, so that we and our generation may have nothing to do with them—may not be accursed with the contamination either of your goodness or of your evil." <sup>2</sup>

And all the time this wave of reactionism has been daily fed by the constant petty injuries to sensitive

<sup>1</sup> Ronaldshay, *The Heart of Aryavarta*, p. ix.

<sup>2</sup> Jitendralal Banerji, in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* of Jan. 7, 1921. Quoted in *The Heart of Aryavarta*, pp. 58-9.

self-respect which result from intercourse with the masterful foreigner. It had always been difficult for the Indian to like the ruling Englishman. He now finds it less easy to respect him.

It was in the realm of religion that the revolution first came to a head. Hinduism was the one distinctive Indian product, the expression of the nation's soul. It was patriotism to cleave to it at all costs. The question asked in religion was not, is it true, is it morally uplifting? but, is it Indian? Reform movements were started which attempted to graft the moral standards of Christianity upon the Hindu tree; to inspire with the Christian spirit the Hindu body (of polytheism and caste and superstition). Theosophy and the Arya Samaj were the outcome of this trend. But the crest of this wave has already been passed; and the growing distinction in the Indian mind (made clearer by the war), between Christendom and Christianity, together with the Christian tendency of much in Mr Gandhi's teaching and example, have gone far to neutralize the anti-Christian bias of the Indian renaissance.

If in religion the Hindu revival has been largely negative and reactionary, in art it has been a richly creative force. An enthusiastic school of modern Indian art has come to birth, clear in aim, original in conception, and always inspired by a something which is subtly expressive of the spirit of the land. Indian art has always aimed at "the suggestion of things unseen rather than a mere reproduction of things seen."<sup>1</sup> It is this which accounts for the often

<sup>1</sup> Ronaldshay, *The Heart of Aryavarta*, p. 136.

fantastic forms in Indian art: painting, sculpture and architecture alike. The omnipotence of a god must be represented by a hundred hands, the restful calm of a Buddha by the absence of all expression or anatomical detail which could detract from the pervading idea of passionless peace. The same spirit of nationalist reaction against western influence that in politics produces revolution has led the Tagore brothers—cousins of the poet—to make these distinctive qualities of Indian art the inspiration of a school that shall give artistic expression to the ideals of Indian patriotism. They have succeeded in challenging the attention of the West. Only to-day is the insularity of Europe discovering the treasures in architecture and in painting—rich as these are, though governed by canons quite other than those of Greece and Italy—which India can offer for her study and her admiration. To those who want to understand, few things so reveal the soul of India as the spiritual aspiration and the reckless idealism, elusive, wistful, which characterize the modern school of Indian painting.

It is this same revolt against the West, due to disillusionment, which underlies Mr Gandhi's rejection of European industrialization. The best thought in India shrinks with horror from the introduction of the industrial system of the West, with its slums and soul-destroying materialism. Bombay is the most advanced product in India of Western industrialism. The infant mortality is sixty-six per cent for the whole city, and over eighty per cent for the mill area. Beside the horrors of Bombay Mr Gandhi sets a picture of a village India, simple and self-sufficing, an India whose

cottage homes have each their spinning wheel or loom, and where agriculture is the basis of a healthy and contented life. Who can but sympathize ?

A kindred instinct, altogether healthy, is now demanding that education shall be in the language of the people. Not long ago superficial nationalist opinion was disposed to view with suspicion, as an effort to exclude India from the liberating influence of the West, the earnest advocacy by some Englishmen of education through the vernacular. To-day there is an enthusiasm for vernacular literature which is producing a literary renaissance in the different language areas. Reformers realize the significance of the fact that there are more Bengalis than Japanese, and that if Japan has, on the basis of vernacular education, produced a culture which commands the respect of the West, there is no reason why Bengal—or Hindustan or Maharashtra or Tamilnad—should not do the same. Education through the medium of a foreign language wastes labour, exhausts effort, and strangles originality. It dooms the universities of one of the most gifted nations in the world to intellectual sterility. Indian students learn; they do not think. For the language of education is not the language of thought. It is deeply significant that, while a hundred years of education in English have failed to yield a single outstanding name in Philosophy (the field of intellectual activity which is pre-eminently India's own), Natural Science (for which Indian temperament and history might be held to be a disqualification) should have produced, in Sir J. C. Bose and Sir P. C. Roy, two names of European

reputation. The student of Philosophy is exhausted, before he gets at his subject, by the difficulty of the foreign tongue in which he has to do his study and his thinking, while in the case of the scientific student the language barrier is at its minimum.

It is not merely the language which is foreign : the whole curriculum is foreign. The Philosophy course of an Indian university begins, not with the Upanishads and Sutras and Darsanas of the Sanskrit classics, but with Greece and Germany : a block of western philosophy let in slice-wise to be learned by heart, entirely unconnected with the fertile springs of Indian thought. (Could anything be more wasteful, more ridiculous ?) It is altogether healthy and hopeful that many Indian reformers are demanding that, while English shall continue to be thoroughly studied, education in schools and ultimately even in universities shall be through the medium of the vernacular. And the reaction is not negative, but constructive and creative. In every language area in India there is a new enthusiasm for vernacular literature. We are on the verge of a new liberation of Indian intellect.

Already Indian constructive genius and originality are at work in education. In the hardy monastic school of the Arya Samaj, beside the rippling waters of the Ganges at Hardwar ; in the rustic simplicity and peace of the Poet's school and infant university at Bolpur ; in the yoking of modern science with Sastric learning in the Hindu academy of Daulatpur, we have movements far more significant than Mr Gandhi's attempt to empty government schools and colleges.

## II

The second undercurrent that is sweeping Indian life out of its accustomed channels is a thing most sinister, and of grave omen for the future. It is this. Since 1919, Britain has lost—in a lamentable degree—that which has been hitherto the sheet anchor of her hold on India: namely, India's trust and confidence. These are strong words. Up till 1918, living in the midst of conspiracy and assassination, I used to write home: "These things are only on the surface. All is at bottom well. Indians trust John Bull. Beneath all criticism and complaint one always feels, in the Indians one meets, an underlying confidence that if only they get their case home to England, they will receive justice, and even generosity." Returning to India in 1921, I felt a wholly different atmosphere. Trust seemed gone. It would be difficult to-day to find the educated Indian about whom one felt that he really trusted England. As evidence of the fact of the change, it will perhaps be enough to quote from three independent sources, Indian, British, and American.

Says Sir Rabindranath Tagore :

The feeling of humiliation about our position under Anglo-Indian domination had been growing stronger every day for the last fifty years or more ; but the one consolation we had was our faith in the love of justice in your people. . . . *But* the poison has gone further than we expected, and it has attacked the vital organ of your nation, and I feel that our appeal to your

higher nature will meet with less and less response every day.<sup>1</sup>

Compare also these words of Mr Gwynn, a retired member of the Indian Civil Service :

When one travels up and down the country listening to the talk of Indians . . . a hundred different premises are stated, but the conclusion is always the same : " We can't trust foreigners to rule over us any longer." <sup>2</sup>

There is no more sinister aspect of the situation [says Dr Macnicol] than the deep, invincible distrust of the good faith of Great Britain and her representatives in India that possesses the leaders of the people.<sup>3</sup>

An American publicist writes :

There is another and even more fundamental fact for England to face, and that is the loss of her moral prestige among the Indian people. In the past this has been her greatest strength, and when it is gone, she is like Samson shorn of his locks. But gone it is. Formerly the word of an English official was a rock of refuge for the common people of India in the shifting currents of her unstable life. But to-day the masses of India have lost confidence in the integrity of Great Britain. This distrust was formerly confined to the intellectuals, but to-day it has spread through the whole of the population. . . . It is the failure of England to fulfil the promises made in the stress of the war when she needed India's help. . . . The

<sup>1</sup> Tagore, *Letters from Abroad*, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Gwynn, *Indian Politics*, p. 204.

<sup>3</sup> Dr Macnicol, *Making of Modern India*, p. 29.

deeper thing in the moral atmosphere is that which is still poisoning the air in Europe and America, the consciousness of the broken promises of war days.<sup>1</sup>

No one who moves among educated Indians can have any doubt as to the chief cause of the sudden and calamitous disappearance of India's trust in Britain. It dates from 1919. If you press the matter closer in conversation with an Indian, the names that will crop up are the Rowlatt Act, the Caliphate, Kenya, and particularly Amritsar. Not the shooting itself—had English opinion made plain that it viewed that act with horror and regret, as the deplorable and ghastly error of a military officer who had for the moment lost his head, India would have understood. No administration can secure that none of its agents shall ever make mistakes, possibly even shocking mistakes. And the official attitude of England in the matter has been in the main correct. The Commission of Enquiry, composed of soldiers and civilians, English and Indians; the Indian Government, similarly composed; the British Cabinet; the House of Commons: all have disavowed the act. Trouble began with the House of Lords and with the *Morning Post*, which raised twenty-six thousand pounds for General Dyer, and nothing for the families of the hundreds of our Indian fellow subjects killed by his orders. The disastrous thing is that Indians have formed the opinion, from their contact with English people they meet, that most Englishmen approve General Dyer's conduct. The result is that a large

<sup>1</sup> H. F. Ward in the *New York Nation*.

number of educated Indians to-day feel simply this : that their destiny can no longer be safely trusted to Englishmen ; that in any serious issue between Englishmen and Indians, judgment will go against the Indian ; that Indian lives are not safe in the hands of Englishmen ; that at all costs India must take her own future into her own hands. They will welcome England's service and co-operation, but they can no longer accept England's rule : ultimate decision and authority in Indian affairs must lie with Indians. Indian feeling is accentuated by the fact that, while the records of the criminal courts show that many Indians in the past fifty years have been killed by private Englishmen, no Englishman in India has ever yet been hanged for doing an Indian to death. England holds the scale of justice even as between Hindu and Musalman, high and low caste ; but there is no justice, so it is maintained, as between Englishman and Indian. England's pride in the justice she deals out to Indians is dismissed as largely the consequence of detachment, and as the kind of impartiality almost any foreigner might be trusted to show when called in to arbitrate between two members of another race.

Guns are a poor substitute for the trust of India's millions, on which our rule has hitherto been broad-based. No lasting solution is to be found that way. It is no use to reply that the educated classes who agitate against British rule are less than five per cent of the population, and that the villages desire the continuance of British rule. We have to reckon with the fact, sufficiently demonstrated by the near

approach to success of Mr Gandhi's movement three years ago, that what the educated classes think to-day, the villagers will think to-morrow. One of the sanest leaders of Indian moderate opinion in the Legislative Assembly recently stated that he regarded propaganda which should result in raising the village population throughout India in revolt against a recalcitrant Britain, as entirely within the field of feasible politics. We have to carry with us the educated classes, India's real leaders, or we cannot carry India. There remains only the appeal to force: bloody, barren, and impossible. No; it remains true to-day as it has ever been that the basis of Britain's rule in India must be confidence, not force. The question may be asked whether England has indeed ever conquered India. There were less than two thousand British troops at Plassey. What has happened in past history is that Indians fighting for us have defeated Indians fighting against us. A single British division to-day garrisons five of the nine major provinces into which British India is divided. The massing of the British army on the frontier makes plain the true function of that army. It exists not to protect Englishmen against enemies in India; but Indians against enemies outside. Britain never has held and never could hold India by force. The keen insight of Sir John Seeley, decades ago, left him no illusions on this point:

Let us suppose—not even that the native army mutinied but simply that a native army could not any longer be levied. In a moment the impossibility of holding India would be manifest to us . . . for we are

not really conquerors of India and we cannot hold her as conquerors.<sup>1</sup>

Nationalist propaganda to-day could make a mutiny of the Indian army, on which we lean, an actual peril.

### III

A third critical element in the situation with which we have to reckon is the fact that there is for the first time, on one point, an all but unanimous agreement among politically minded Indians; and that is that the fate of India, for good or ill, must henceforth be determined by Indians, not by foreigners.

The thing that to the Indian consciousness is unbearable, that touches pride and self-respect to the quick, is the thought that the destinies of India are dependent on an alien will. . . . Indian opinion in the main does not desire the severing of the British connection, yet to Indians the question is always present how that connection can be maintained consistently with their self-respect. . . . To know from day to day that decisions regarding the affairs of one's country are made by alien rulers . . . to incur social slights which seem to cast a stigma of inferiority . . . such experiences are calculated to arouse the strongest and most intense feelings which the mind can entertain.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Seeley, *Expansion of England*. Cf. Meredith Townsend: "To support the official world and its garrison—both, recollect, smaller than those of Belgium—there is, except Indian opinion, absolutely nothing." *Asia and Europe*, p. 85.

<sup>2</sup> Oldham, *Christianity and the Race Problem*, chapter viii. Indeed the next four paragraphs are little more than an abridgment from this chapter.

"To other nations," writes an Indian Christian, "politics may be a profession or a pastime, but to India at the present juncture it is the corporate effort of a nation to recover its manhood."<sup>1</sup> Not less explicit is the measured statement of the Government of India's official review for the year 1923-4:

There has arisen a fixed determination to be content with nothing less than control over their own destinies; combined with a burning resentment against any conditions which would seem to stamp Indians with inferiority to the free peoples of the world. . . . The time has gone by when any useful purpose will be served by examining the justification of these feelings. We must notice that they not only exist, but are the dominant factor in the mentality of educated India to-day.<sup>2</sup>

These are the facts of which British opinion and British statesmen have to take account. It is futile to talk of England's responsibility for India unless it is at the same time remembered that that responsibility can never be discharged against the will of the Indian people.

Even these sentences do not measure the most dangerous elements in Indian affairs. The trouble is that the passionate longing for freedom, the determination to gain control of one's own destinies, cannot be held in check by cold reason. At any moment exasperated impatience may boil up and blind emotion take control of the situation.

<sup>1</sup> A. C. Cumaraswamy in *The International Review of Missions*, 1924, p. 62.

<sup>2</sup> *Moral and Material Progress of India*, 1923-4, Cmd. 2311, p. 3.

If you take advantage of the present lull to do something which will restore India's confidence in you, then the connection between the two countries may continue. But if you wait till the next storm gathers . . . your last chance will be lost.<sup>1</sup>

To avert this calamity is the task of British statesmanship; no reasons for delay, and for progress by gradual stages, are good enough for a people who have lost confidence in the sincerity and disinterestedness of Britain's ultimate intentions. Impatience, suspicion, and racial sensitiveness may be sorry guides of national policy, but, unless fully allowed for by England's statesmen, they may none the less prove to be the actual and catastrophic determinants of India's immediate fate.

Attention is often drawn to the various parties into which Hindu political opinion is divided. But let there be no mistake on one point. All these parties, without exception, are united by the unanimous determination to achieve Swaraj. A recent mail has brought an Italian cartoon on the situation in China, in which John Bull's ambassador thus addresses China: "Remember that all your generals are at loggerheads." To which China replies: "True, except on one point: they all want to get rid of you." The same is largely true of Indian political parties to-day. It is only stating the same thing in another way to say that it is an essential condition of the final settlement, be it what it may, that it shall originate in India, and not in West-

<sup>1</sup> An Indian leader to Mr Gwynn, *Indian Politics*, p. 148.

minster.<sup>1</sup> Australia and South Africa worked out their own scheme of government, which Britain afterwards approved. So must it be with India. No solution has a chance of success which does not represent India's own will, accepted by Great Britain.

There are hopeful elements in the situation. Violence is steadily discredited. True, there is unmistakable determination that India shall have a national army which shall secure her the dignity of self-defence. This demand suggests that Mr Gandhi's propaganda of non-violence has not completely carried. But on this issue Mr Gandhi has himself confessed to inconsistency, and has admitted that he would rather see India violent than cowardly.<sup>2</sup> Indian opinion is clear that for India to demand self-government while leaving to England the burden of her defence clashes intolerably with self-respect. No political party any longer advocates the policy of assassination. Indian politics are characterized by a growing political sense and sobriety. Take for instance a confession like this from Rabindranath Tagore :

<sup>1</sup> Cf. statements in the *Statesman* (India):

"A common point to which all parties in India and at home are rapidly tending is agreement that the next Government of India Act, before it is introduced into the British Parliament, shall have originated in this country and shall have been accepted by all parties which will be called upon to work it and without whose consent and goodwill it cannot function smoothly."—January 29, 1925.

"The ultimate settlement must be a pact hammered out in India."—April 9, 1925.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 84.

Self-government lies at our very door, waiting for us. No one has tried, nor is it possible for anyone even if he does try, to deprive us of it. We can do everything we like for our villages—for their education, their sanitation, the improvement of their communications, if only we can act in unison.<sup>1</sup>

Nothing is healthier in India to-day than the new attention which political thought is focussing on social uplift. Throughout the progressive sections of Indian life there is being born a new regard for the conditions of the less fortunate classes. Take this declaration from the extremist, Lala Lajpat Rai :

May not the Indian capitalist and the landlord use their freshly acquired powers to keep down the ryot, the small proprietor, the labourer and the untouchable? We are not at all confident that an Indian bureaucracy will be more efficient, or more impartial, or more conscientious than the present British bureaucracy ; but we are confident that, while no amount of public opinion can bend the latter, the former will have to bend to the people's will.<sup>2</sup>

In his paper *Young India* Mr Gandhi does not hesitate to publish the following frank statement by an Englishman of the reasons which lead many of his fellow-countrymen to doubt India's fitness for self-government :

We find that the Indian is inferior to the Englishman as a servant or employee. He is less conscientious, he takes more holidays, he requires to be watched.

<sup>1</sup> Tagore, *Greater India*, pp. 51-2.

<sup>2</sup> *Ideals of Non-Co-operation*, pp. 49, 51.

We find he is inferior to the Englishman as a master or employer, he has less justice and less generosity. We find him inferior as an animal, he succumbs to disease, he (if of higher class) usually shirks exercise, and is very frequently a worn-out old man when he ought to be in his prime. His children die in swarms. Here in Madras, the deaths of children under five frequently are half as numerous as the births. He is inferior as a citizen; very seldom does he resist any pressure towards bribe-giving. He boasts of his humanity, because he will not kill animals, but he lets even cows starve to death, and nowhere in any civilized land are horses and oxen so ill-treated as in India. In order to maintain purity of married life, he has built up the institutions of pre-puberty marriage and perpetual widowhood, and yet venereal disease is even more rampant in India than in England, and in the name of religion little girls are trained up to prostitution. What record can India show of lives devoted to non-Indian humanity like all those British men and women who (to take one example only) are at work in what were enemy countries in the war? If India had obtained complete Swaraj, and were in danger, would five million men out of every forty-five million of population voluntarily enlist in her armies? <sup>1</sup>

The reading of these quotations proves that at least Indian leaders are alive to the dangers of the position. And yet they persist none the less in demanding Swaraj; because foreign rule "saps the moral foundation of the subject people. It unfits them for thinking independently; it destroys their self-respect, and their powers of initiative, it pre-

<sup>1</sup> *Young India*, p. 625.

vents them from expressing themselves freely ; it bars all kinds of effective organization, and fosters habits of dependence. . . . A nation can afford for a time to have an inefficient administration, but a servile state is fatal to healthy growth of life."

#### IV

This demand is an index of the new international dignity that has come to India. India is coming to her own among the peoples. She signed the peace treaties of Versailles and the rest on an equal footing, not only with Canada and Australia, but with Great Britain herself, and France and America and Italy. With these great world powers she takes her seat as an equal in the Assembly of the League of Nations. Already during the war she had been summoned to take her place in the War Council of the Empire. Though her spokesmen still lack the weight and dignity belonging to responsible representatives of self-governing peoples and are often other than she herself would choose, she now debates her national concerns on a level with the other dominions of the British Commonwealth. The same advance is to be noted in the world of economics. India now ranks, on the governing body of the International Labour Office of the League of Nations, as one of the eight leading industrial nations of the world.

These advances in external status have been marked by corresponding changes in her internal government. As ministers or executive councillors, Indians now

form the majority of the Governors' advisers in the provinces. Most of the administrative departments are now under their control. In the Viceroy's Imperial Council they form an important minority. There are now no secrets from Indians, no confidential arrangements conducted behind their backs by their foreign rulers either in India or at home.

On the Legislative Councils (Provincial and Imperial), elected and non-official representatives now constitute a majority. These councils vote the budgets, and to them are responsible the ministers in charge of the majority of the departments of State. The electorate is small—only eight million out of a population of three hundred and nineteen million—but it has real powers. There are thus the beginnings of democratic responsible government. If comparison be made with twenty years ago, India has made gigantic strides.

Further, there is a rapid increase of Indian personnel in all the services of the State. Englishmen will soon everywhere be in a minority, and very many of them will be working under Indian chiefs. And last, but perhaps most significant of all, the Indian army is increasingly to be officered by Indians. It is indeed a changed day in India. Rapidly Indians are coming to govern their own country. All these advances are part of what is now the declared policy of the British Government: "the increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration, and the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realization of respon-

sible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire." <sup>1</sup>

The Englishman—official, soldier, merchant, missionary—landing in Bombay after a three or four years' absence on war service, found himself in a new country. The new India is marked by a more virile dignity. One sees it on the railway right away. Indians take their seats in refreshment rooms or walk into first or second class carriages erect: no more sheepish cringing, or apologetic hesitating entrance. Indians move about in their own country as though it was their own, with natural and unafraid simplicity. And they are (for the most part) treated with a new respect: no longer brushed aside or ordered about with superior hauteur by the condescending or contemptuous sahib. Clearly the new order is making for an added manliness and self-respect that put relationship with the Englishman on a more direct and human footing. If these are the fruits of nationalism, they are good.

सत्यमेव जयते

## V

Against these advances towards India's self-realization as a nation has to be set a development of grave and sinister omen; the growing intensity and frequency of inter-communal animosity and violence. The fact that the introduction of elective representation is largely responsible for a grave increase in

<sup>1</sup> Declaration by Secretary of State for India, House of Commons, August 20, 1917.

inter-religious tension is an indication of the bewildering intricacy which besets India's political progress. Indian Musalmans are unalterably opposed to any straight-ahead system of representative government ; for that dooms them to be a permanent minority under Hindu domination. They demand separate communal representation. But any special representation of Musalmans which would placate and safeguard them must obviously be altogether unfair to Hindus, who almost everywhere constitute a large majority of the population. Mr Gandhi had political sagacity enough to recognize in this cleavage the paralysis that inhibited advance to the goal of Indian nationalism. So long as the gulf remained, it clearly barred the way to Indian hopes. Sedulously he strove to fill the gap with an agitation for the independence of the Turkish Caliphate. This was to be the political glue uniting the Indian nation. Musalmans were to be secured the temporal power of their Pope, and for this price were to back the Hindu programme of representative government. Both sides were to shut their eyes to the certainty that a rehabilitated Islam would make a powerful bid for military rule in India ; or that, in the alternative, Indian Musalmans would lie helpless at the mercy of the Hindu majority. The impious annihilation of the Caliphate by its Turkish guardians simultaneously annihilated the Hindu-Moslem pact. An enfeebled Islam was seized with the panic of Hindu domination. The fissure between Hindu and Moslem now gapes more widely every day. Religious festivals provide the ready pretext for an outbreak. Musalman cow-

killing on the Id,<sup>1</sup> or the playing of idolatrous Hindu music outside a mosque, have scores of times furnished the occasion for a riot of bloodshed and assassination.<sup>2</sup>

It is cold comfort to be told that the vertical cleavage between Hindu and Musalman will ere long be replaced by the horizontal cleavage between capital and labour.<sup>3</sup>

Nor is the divisive effect of the programme of representative government seen only in relation to Musalmans. The Punjab is now rent by the triple schism of Hindu, Musalman, and Sikh, each demanding that the electoral machine shall be so rigged as to secure their own sect in political dominance. It is a sorry tale and may well fill nationalists with despair. And political animosities are fed by the religious proselytism of Islam on the one hand, and on the other by the efforts of Hindus, through the Suddhi ("cleansing") movement, to compass the return of perverts to the Hindu fold. It is to the credit of Indian Christians that their leaders are, on the whole, opposed to separate communal representation for Christians, and that, though a tiny minority that must seemingly depend only on Britain for protection,

<sup>1</sup> The Bakr-Id, the festival which commemorates the offering of Ishmael (in the Mohammedan version) by Abraham.

<sup>2</sup> Very serious riots of this nature have occurred in Calcutta while these pages have been in the press.

<sup>3</sup> Next to the Hindu-Moslem tension, the fact most often adduced as ground for reassurance in regard to the future stability of the British Raj, is the collapse of idealism since Mr Gandhi's imprisonment, and the consequent relapse of India into preoccupation with the selfish and material pursuits of life: a reflection sufficient to occasion profound uneasiness to any decent Englishman.

they are prepared, with patriotic idealism, to throw in their lot as units of the nation.

Mr Gandhi made one more stupendous and tragic effort to heal the growing schism. Frail and emaciated as he was, he set himself in September 1924 a twenty-one days' fast. His penance for his country's schism had its effect. A Unity Conference of the leaders of all religions met in Delhi during the course of the fast. Hindus, Musalmans, Indian Christians, Parsis, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, and English Christians (led by the Bishop of Calcutta and the Editor of the *Statesman*) met and agreed on a programme of mutual toleration, whose lasting influence only time can show. To Westerners it must seem strange that it was the Hindu insistence on the abolition of cow-killing that furnished the anvil on which the issue was hammered out. No result of the conference was more remarkable than its reaction on the European community in India. In a notable leading article, the *Statesman* says :

It is right that we should quietly examine our own hearts and consider what in fact our own attitude towards Hindu-Moslem unity is. Do we, in point of fact, secretly believe in the motto "Divide and Rule"? The word "secretly" is important; for it is certain that few Britons will publicly avow such a policy. That in itself is a sign of grace. We are not saints, and it is only natural that unregenerate men should at times feel a certain *schadenfreude*, a feeling of satisfaction in seeing the proof of their own indispensability, when Hindus and Moslems fight one another and have to call in the British to settle their troubles. That

natural feeling is yet one of which the best are secretly ashamed. It is a wrong feeling, and the idea that Hindu-Moslem dissension has its good points because it brings into relief the necessity for British rule is one that each of us should, in so far as it invades us, seek to be rid of.

Islam in India is now politically disintegrated. Fear of Hindus and distrust of Britain draw it in opposite directions. The Hindus themselves seem on the surface hardly less divided. But only superficially. Articulate Hindu opinion is still unanimous on one point, that henceforward India shall determine her own destiny.

## VI

As to the methods by which this end is to be attained, three principal tendencies may be distinguished. First, there is the large body of sane and moderate men, who seek to attain the goal of a self-governing India by methods of constitutional agitation and advance. They are known as Liberals or Independents. A second tendency is represented by the Radical or Swarajist party. Originally followers of Mr Gandhi, and directed by men who had proved their sincerity as non-co-operators by serving long terms in jail, they forsook his leadership as the barrenness of non-co-operation became more evident. The previous career of the two leaders of the party is suggestive of the high idealism that underlies so much of Indian politics. Pandit Motilal Nehru will perhaps pardon a description of himself as a bon-

vivant, who used always to send his laundry regularly to Paris: one of the wealthiest men in Allahabad, and a recognized leader at the Bar. No Indian was more at home or more welcome at an English dinner party than he. Inspired by the example of his son, who returned from Oxford to live under his father's roof a life of severest simplicity, cooking his own food, Pandit Motilal Nehru abandoned his luxury for an almost ascetic austerity and went to jail for six months at the age of sixty-one as a non-co-operator.<sup>1</sup> Mr C. R. Das<sup>2</sup> was a leading member of the Calcutta Bar, a man of great wealth, who surrendered his practice, and made over his sumptuous house and personal riches for the purposes of the nationalist organization. His speeches burn with quotations from the Bible. At the age of fifty-two he served a sentence of six months as a non-co-operator. At least India's political leaders are not mere agitators, out for what they can get, nor do fifteen thousand men of education go to jail for the fun of it. The mild Hindu has grit to-day. Nationalism has introduced a virile strain of sacrifice into Indian political life. None the less the Swarajist party has displayed no great originality. They have continued the non-co-operation campaign of ceaseless misrepresentation and vilification of British officials and all their doings, which has done so much to anger and alienate even the more sympathetic section of English public opinion in India. The rôle they have set themselves is clearly

<sup>1</sup> For an interesting insight into the joys of this conversion to simplicity, see Appendix on page 246.

<sup>2</sup> Mr C. R. Das has died since these words were written.

modelled on that of Parnell and the Irish Home Rule Party. Like the Parnellists they have come under suspicion of encouraging political assassination. This suspicion is chiefly based on a non-committal resolution condemning political murder but expressing sympathy with the patriotic motives of a certain murderer, and on the fact that some leading members of the party have been interned by the police on a charge of implication in murderous conspiracies. The result has been to draw from Mr C. R. Das, the Swarajist leader, a categorical and often repeated repudiation of violence and murder as a political weapon. He has since gone on to define the terms on which he is prepared to offer the co-operation of his party to the British Government.

The terms, as coming from the leader of the strongest and the most suspect party in Indian politics, deserve quotation :

*Provided some real responsibility is transferred to the people, there is no reason why we should not co-operate with the Government. But to make such co-operation real and effective, two things are necessary : first, there should be a real change of heart in our rulers ; secondly, Swaraj in the fullest sense must be guaranteed to us at once, to come automatically in the near future. . . . I have no hesitation in proclaiming my conviction that our freedom will never be won by revolutionary violence. . . . Then comes the question as to whether this ideal is to be realized within the Empire or outside ? The answer which the Congress has always given is : " Within the Empire if the Empire will recognize our rights," and " outside the Empire if it does not." . . . To me the idea [of membership in the British Commonwealth] is*

specially attractive because of its deep spiritual significance. I believe in world peace, in the ultimate federation of the world: and I think that the great commonwealth of nations called the British Empire—a federation of diverse races, each with its distinct life, distinct civilization, its distinct mental outlook—if properly led with statesmen at the helm, is bound to make lasting contribution to the great problem that awaits the statesmen, the problem of knitting the world into the greatest federation the mind can conceive, the federation of the human race. But only if properly led with statesmen at the helm—for the development of the idea involves apparent sacrifice on the part of the constituent nations, *and it certainly involves the giving up for good the Empire idea with its ugly attribute of domination.*

I think it is for the good of India, for the good of the commonwealth, for the good of the world, that India should strive for freedom within the Commonwealth and so serve the cause of humanity.<sup>1</sup>

The words are full of hope. They appeal to the best in British statesmanship. And they open the way to the generous response. It rests with Englishmen to give the lie to the pessimistic comment of a recent writer: "They ask too much of us. We can change the Constitution but not the heart."<sup>2</sup>

On the fringe of Indian politics stands its black shadow, the third tendency we must notice, the grim spectre of violence and assassination. To this group of desperates belongs of right the title of seditionists. And yet they too are human and need to be understood. They are recruited from two sources. First

<sup>1</sup> Mr C. R. Das at Faridpur, Bengal.

<sup>2</sup> Gwynn, *Indian Politics*, p. 335.

there are the intellectual and moral degenerates, who are nearly always physical degenerates too : men of feeble intellect and puny frame and unstable emotion, bred in the feverish, ill-ventilated cesspools that pass as student lodgings for the more impoverished pupils of school or university. But it is the other class of revolutionary recruits that really matters ; the pupils who cause most anxiety and heartache to the Principal of an Indian college are his very best. The ordinary run of student, out for his bread and butter and the best post he can get, is careful to give sedition a wide berth. It is your idealist, the sportsman prepared to run risks, the eager patriot who knows that his country has been weak for lack of sacrifice, the man who cares enough to spend time in social service—it is these men who furnish the most hopeful breeding-plot for revolutionary propaganda. But these ingredients are seldom enough without another still more powerful. For the production of your Indian revolutionary you must add to misdirected patriotism a melancholy strain of perverted religion.

Here is the confession of a young Bengali revolutionary when under arrest :

From my early life I was of a religious turn of mind and was in the habit of nursing the sick and helping the poor. . . . I began to feel a peculiar despondency and was pondering over my life's mission, which I thought should be towards the amelioration of the condition of the poor and needy, when I met A——. Gradually he began to insert ideas of anarchism into my religiously disposed mind, saying that religion and

politics are inseparable, and that our paramount duty should be to do good to the people of the country.<sup>1</sup>

I was watching a football match on our college playground. A well-known and trusted missionary, in charge of the opposing side, came up to me and pointed out one of the backs in his team—a handsome, lithe, athletic figure, the life and mainstay of his side—as the most attractive person in his hostel. After the match he was introduced to me: a boy of flashing eyes that brimmed with fun and humour. A few weeks later he was arrested for the murder of a policeman, a crime of which he was acquitted, but to which he has since confessed.

But violence and assassination are the unnatural fungus growth in Indian politics. The conscience of India has for the time being begun to assert itself. So much at the least we owe to Mr Gandhi.

The greatest barrier to Indian national aspiration remains the Hindu-Moslem cleavage. A reference to this always reduces Indian politicians to thoughtfulness. There is agreement that Indian communal difficulties will be no nearer solution so long as there is a peace between them superimposed by foreign power. Mr Gandhi, for all his pacifism, fears that even civil war between Hindus and Moslems may have to come before they have found their way to a mutual understanding.<sup>2</sup> The fact that representa-

<sup>1</sup> Ronaldshay, *Heart of Aryavarta*, p. 85.

<sup>2</sup> "Times have changed since the Delhi meeting. Parties are just now better organized for quarrels than for settlement. No doubt they will finally meet. But it seems that they will do so only after they have finished with the arbitrament of the sword.

tive democracy, as generally understood in the West, seems of necessity to lead in India to accentuated inter-communal animosity and strife, has prompted many Indian leaders to seek another way through.

One school of thought finds the solution of the Hindu-Moslem difficulty in the "frank recognition by both parties of the wisdom and necessity of keeping the British element as an integral part of the Indian constitution. . . . Pacts must be triangular, and not dual." <sup>1</sup>

Members of this school suggest the summoning of a round table conference, truly representative of all the varied interests that go to make up modern India. Such a convention would have to include representatives of the Indian princes and of the Legislative Assemblies; of English merchants and administrators; of Brahmans and outcastes; of capital and labour; of Hindus and Moslems; as well as Sikhs and Buddhists. The practical difficulties in the way of such an assemblage are no doubt great; but Parliament could probably accept with considerable confidence proposals for the government of India which after thorough debate had received its approval. In regard to the findings of such a convention an Indian who has occupied one of the highest positions in the State remarked in private conversation :

I believe you would find us to be surprisingly conservative. So long as we are out of power, and with

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I think I know my limitations and believe that I shall serve the cause of peace by remaining away from all intervention in communal disputes." *Young India*, September 24, 1925.

<sup>1</sup> *Statesman*, leading article, October 23, 1924.

no rôle but opposition, we are radicals every man of us ; but when with full responsibility, we come to draw up the system of government for our own country, the government under which we are ourselves to live for years to come, you will find us as cautious and conservative as we now are radical.

Not very dissimilar are proposals made by another school for a new type of democracy, more suited to Oriental conditions, and involving a large measure of devolution and decentralization. They suggest that a starting-point be made with the village community, meeting in democratic fashion, as in ancient days, to settle its own affairs. The villager has a keen enough shrewdness in what concerns his village, and would be quite capable of choosing those whom he trusted to represent the village on the district board. That board again would be dealing with matters well within its competence, and would choose representatives capable of dealing with still larger issues in the divisional council. And so through the provincial assemblies to the central government. At each stage the elected bodies would be competent for the business with which they had to deal, and would constitute an intelligent electoral college for the councils next above them. Moreover, while it would be hard to find a homogeneous province, it would be much easier to group villages in more or less homogeneous districts. If these districts were trusted with large enough decentralized powers, many of the more contentious inter-communal questions would be removed from the political arena. A considerable measure of efficiency might be expected from such bodies.

Provided there were manhood suffrage at the village stage, the depressed classes could guard their own interests. And a Britain which has sloughed off the corruption of Walpole's days need not despair of the birth of a higher morality among India's politicians.

The present stage of Indian politics is constantly reminding one of Campbell-Bannerman's dictum that "good government is no substitute for self-government." It has been admirably said that at the present moment India presents Britain with only three alternatives: British withdrawal from India; reversion to autocratic British rule in India; and co-operation between Britain and India.<sup>1</sup>

The first is not desired by either side.<sup>2</sup> And more. For Britain by retirement to pronounce co-operation between Englishman and Indian impossible would be treason to the cause of humanity. By her great experiment in India she is challenged to the solution of the world's problem of unity, the fellowship of East and West. She dare not withdraw.

The second, autocracy by force, is impossible. Co-operation remains. It is in this direction<sup>3</sup> that the best minds, Indian and English, are turning with increasing hope and purpose. Nobly has the call of

<sup>1</sup> Oldham, *Christianity and the Race Problem*, chap. viii.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. J. H. Oldham: "There was hardly one who really wanted the British to leave India and scarcely one for whom, at any rate in certain moods, it did not seem intolerable that they should stay." *Christianity and the Race Problem*, p. 115.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Lord Meston, at the Liverpool Reform Club: "Those who seek to combat this position put forward two policies—the strong arm on the one hand, and the doctrine of scuttle on the other. Those are views which shed no light on the future."

the situation to-day to patriotic Englishmen been expressed by one who has just retired from the government of two Indian provinces :

I honestly believe that if the whole attitude of the white races to coloured races could be entirely altered, if the white man would always act in the spirit of giving equality of opportunity to those who are coloured, what appears to be the aggressive and unreasonable attitude of coloured races would entirely change, and they would be found to be ready to discuss these important matters in a fair spirit, and with a due sense of all the difficulties surrounding them.

The white man has to meet upon terms of absolute equality those whom he previously regarded as his inferiors. I am convinced that it is only by so doing that he can help them and discharge towards them the obligations which Providence has placed upon him.

There is only one way of doing this : in a word, by always carrying into our relations with the coloured races the principles and teachings of our Christian faith.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lord Willingdon, at the Church Congress, Eastbourne, 1925.

## CHAPTER V

### SHOPKEEPERS OR PHILANTHROPISTS ?

#### I

It was not commerce, but Christianity, that supplied the first link between England and India. More than a thousand years ago, King Alfred, in discharge of a vow made when he was ill, sent alms to the poor Christians of India, living on the coast of Malabar. Then the curtain fell, and was not lifted till British merchants, following in the wake of Vasco da Gama, began to find their way round by the Cape to that same Malabar coast of distant India. The motives of the early venturers were frankly selfish and commercial. They came to sell their wares and still more to purchase what India alone could supply for the West. The enterprise was looked on with disfavour by English public opinion ; for it tended to keep much of England's shipping (and potential navy) in distant waters ; and, as imports from India far exceeded exports to India, it involved a constant flow of bullion out of the island, and therefore was regarded by the political economists of the time as " bad " trade.

Only very gradually did the East India Company reconcile itself to any interference in India's political affairs. The business of the Company's officials in

India was trade, not politics, and they were enjoined to confine themselves to such minimum of interference with state affairs as might be absolutely essential to secure the safety and development of commerce.

It is important to bear this in mind if we are to understand the aspect our rule in India bears in the eyes of instructed Indian opinion to-day. We are regarded as a "nation of shopkeepers" who are in India for our own interests first of all. Educated Indians often find it very difficult to allow to us any measure of disinterested concern for India's good. Our most beneficent measures are put down to far-sighted statesmanship, which prudently seeks to secure a peaceful, prosperous and contented India, in the interests of the expansion of British commerce and wealth. A prosperous India, from this angle, means an India able to buy as much as possible of British goods. "When," I have been asked by Indian colleagues, "has the English nation ever done a generous or beneficent thing that was not at the same time in her own interests?"<sup>1</sup>

Doubtless it is true that the great majority of Englishmen (and in this connection Scotsmen are not excluded!) who come to India, have come there for a career or to make money. And yet there is a very different side to the story of the Raj in India, and one which will always make an Englishman's blood tingle with honourable pride.

<sup>1</sup> For a frank statement by a responsible English-edited newspaper of British purpose in India, see Appendix, p. 248.

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There stands by the roadside at Jabalpur a cross with this inscription :

TO THE MEMORY  
OF THE  
OFFICERS OF THE CENTRAL PROVINCES  
WHO SACRIFICED THEIR LIVES TO THEIR  
DUTY IN THE STRUGGLE TO SAVE LIFE DURING  
THE GREAT FAMINE OF 1896-1897.

On the reverse side are the names of five members of the Indian Civil Service,<sup>1</sup> one executive engineer, one police officer, and two lieutenants of the Indian Army : nine Englishmen who came out to India for a career, but stayed to give their lives for the people they were serving. The thing was typical. Only last month an English railway guard, doubtless in India for what would be termed selfish ends, in a successful effort to save the life of an Indian passenger who was falling from the train, slipped himself, and was cut in two by the train which passed over him. No V.C. was ever won by simpler gallantry. There is a grave at Lucknow bearing the inscription

HERE LIES  
HENRY LAWRENCE  
WHO TRIED TO DO HIS DUTY

That too is typical. These things are the secrets of our rule in India. Alongside and underneath the ordinary selfish motives that prompt men everywhere, there seems to be in the average Englishman some

<sup>1</sup> The Commissioner of the Division, three Deputy Commissioners, one Assistant Commissioner.

inherited gift which tempers these motives and tends to make him put responsibility to those he serves above private gain. Whether this is a British or a European or a Christian, or simply a human, trait need not be here discussed.

The point is, it is there, and it profoundly modifies the character of what would otherwise be a purely selfish rule. India is dotted with the graves of English men and women who, whether in the service of the State, or as missionaries, or in the ordinary avocations of life, unobtrusively and unsparingly, and without hope of tangible reward, often in loneliness and ill-health, have devoted the best years of their lives to the service of an alien people in order that India might profit by all the best they had to offer. They sought to build into the India of the future something of good that might endure. Nowhere has the ideal which has inspired the lives of countless Englishmen in India found nobler expression than in a moving utterance of Lord Curzon. The words have the ring of autobiography :

सत्यमेव जयते

To fight for the right, to abhor the imperfect, the unjust or the mean, to swerve neither to the right hand nor to the left, to care nothing for flattery or applause or odium or abuse—it is so easy to have any of them in India—never to let your enthusiasm be soured or your courage grow dim, but to remember that the Almighty has placed your hand on the greatest of His ploughs, in whose furrow the nations of the future are germinating and taking shape ; to drive the blade a little forward in your time and to feel that somewhere among these millions you have left a little justice or

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happiness or prosperity, a sense of manliness or moral dignity, a spring of patriotism, a dawn of intellectual enlightenment, or a stirring of duty, where it did not exist—that is enough, that is the Englishman's justification in India.

It is worth while to develop for a moment some of the implications of this unselfish side of empire. It is a significant, if an unconscious, tribute to the Christianity India expects of Britain, that it should even be thought possible for Britain to have any other aim in India than the serving of British interests. It is none the less a perfectly legitimate expectation and demand. For it supplies the only possible justification of empire, of any empire that is not slavery or exploitation. And to say that India expects Britain to be Christian is just to say that she expects her to be good.

There is an acid test that, wittingly or unwittingly, every Indian applies to every Englishman he meets: "Is this man in our country for his own interests or for ours? When Britain's and India's interests seem to clash, whose interests is he going to serve as long as he remains in India?" On the answer to that question turns the Indian's desire for the continued presence or for the departure of any Englishman. The issue is ultimately an unreal one; for at bottom the true interests of no two countries ever clash. But the superficial divergence reaches sufficiently deep below the surface to supply a very salutary test in self-examination.

What have been the achievements of this imperial

service, and what the solid gain to India? They defy enumeration. There have been law and order and internal peace; a holding of the scales even as between sect and sect, between rich and poor; a refuge of justice to which the oppressed could fly; a knitting of India into one, through a common language and a centralized administration, through roads and railways, posts and telegraphs; millions of acres redeemed for the production of human food by irrigation, and the development of natural resources of all kinds; schools, and the flooding of India with the light of modern science and knowledge; hospitals, and the sharing with India of all the health-giving and pain-reducing discoveries of medicine. But most of all there has been the imparting, by daily contact with simple English men and women, of new standards of integrity and duty, of public service and philanthropy.

But alongside this record educated Indians, when they are forming their appraisal of English character, set another and darker narrative. Our imperialist text-books, belauding all things British in the past, do not give educated people in England as accurate a knowledge of the shadier side of our empire as Indian students pick up from their history books. There can be no more eloquent testimony to the integrity of the lives of the countless Englishmen who have built up the reputation for honour and straight dealing which the English name connotes to-day in India, than the contrast afforded by the sordid story of earlier times. Here is an extract, with which not all Englishmen are as familiar as most

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educated Indians, from Mr V. A. Smith's *Oxford History of India*, admittedly an authority of high value. After Plassey, he writes :

Mir Jafer received the reward of his treason and was formally installed as Nawab by Clive. . . . The new ruler was made to pay well for his promotion. . . . Clive received the gigantic sum of £234,000, and Members of Council from £50,000 to £80,000 each. A little later Clive also obtained from the Nawab an assignment of revenue on the lands south of Calcutta, which was known as "Clive's Jagir," and which brought in nearly £30,000 a year.<sup>1</sup>

The story of Clive's forged treaty<sup>2</sup> is perhaps better known. The study of such passages serves at least one useful purpose. It not only enables us to understand our Indian fellow-citizens when they pass less sympathetic estimates on English character and the Raj than we would relish ; it supplies a tonic for the drooping spirits of those who despair of the integrity of Indian public life ever rising above its present level.

And there have been dark deeds that cannot but evoke fierce anger in the Indian breast, deeds such as those against which Disraeli protested in a noble speech in the days when vengeance was being taken for the Mutiny :

I for one protest against taking Nana Sahib as a model for the conduct of the British soldier. I protest against meeting atrocities by atrocities. I have heard things said and seen things written of late which

V. A. Smith, *Oxford History of India*, p. 494.

*Ibid.*, p. 492.

would make me almost suppose that the religious opinions of the people of England had undergone some sudden change, and that, instead of bowing before the name of Jesus, we were preparing to revive the worship of Moloch.<sup>1</sup>

A thoughtful Indian shrewdly, if somewhat caustically, remarked the other day: "It is one of our misfortunes that we Indians are ruled by a race which is characterized by a vein of idealism. So cordially does the average Englishman admire certain moral and political ideals that it never occurs to him to doubt whether he is himself living by them." We find it difficult to believe that we can be lacking in practical sympathy with another nation in its aspirations after those free institutions we so highly value for ourselves. Yet it is only the hard hammering in of clamorous demand that has opened the eyes of many Englishmen in India to the naturalness and legitimacy of Indian desire for free nationhood. Hard facts have compelled hard thinking, and there has been of late years a very remarkable movement in the direction of sympathy and understanding of Indian nationalism amongst Englishmen in India. It has affected all classes of Englishmen, official and un-

<sup>1</sup> At Newport Pagnell, September 30, 1857. Cf. Lord Canning to Queen Victoria: "There is a rabid and indiscriminate vindictiveness abroad, even among many who ought to set a better example, which it is impossible to contemplate without a feeling of shame for one's own countrymen. Not one man in ten seems to think that the hanging and shooting of 40,000 or 50,000 men can be otherwise than practicable and right." Mr Edward Thompson in his book, *The Other Side of the Medal*, has now given ample recognition to these facts.

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official, and not least the merchant. Witness a recent utterance of the chairman of the European Association at Karachi :

We are in principle committed to the gradual realization of self-government in this country, and I venture to believe that it would really clear the air if our Diehards would recognize this fact, and, instead of maligning those who have created this situation, would assist in shaping European public opinion as to how this principle is to be carried out in practice. . . . Practically every educated Indian wants to take a more prominent part in the government of his hearth and home. No one can deny that this is a very legitimate aspiration. . . . There will, however, still remain the British commercial community. On them will fall the burden of maintaining, in co-operation and partnership with Indians, the good government which we have enjoyed in the past and of maintaining law and order, justice and equity, in which all are mutually interested and which is essential to the stability of a commercial community.

We are a shrewd and politically minded people, and the new attitude of respect for Indian opinion and claims observable everywhere in European society reveals a rapid adjustment of English sentiment to the facts of the changed situation.

There can, however, be no doubt that a great bar to advance in the direction of inter-racial co-operation in India lies in that sense of colour prejudice which seems to be in a peculiar degree characteristic of the Anglo-Saxon peoples. This feeling is often singularly absent in the griffin (the Englishman just out from

home); but it tends to develop rather quickly after a few months' residence in the country, being easily caught in the infectious atmosphere of a "station club," and it soon shows itself in an ill-disguised attitude of contempt as of an inferior race. There is nothing more galling or irritating to the ruled. It is extraordinarily widespread and all the more dangerous because generally unconscious. 'It is nowhere more likely to escape detection and to be indignantly denied than in missionary circles, and among those whom self-devotion and genuine philanthropy blind to the existence in themselves of a paternal condescendingness that blights all their most strenuous service. Of the wide spread of this taint one example (than which many more sensational might be cited) may be sufficient evidence.

Not so very many years ago I was travelling from Lucknow to Allahabad by the night train. I had booked my second-class sleeping berth. On my arrival at the office to enquire, the stationmaster took me out on to the platform to ask of his inspector what arrangements had been made. The inspector, an Englishman of the retired non-commissioned officer stamp, was standing with his back to a second-class carriage, and behind him was a neat and respectable looking Indian gentleman. To the stationmaster's question, "What have you arranged for Mr Holland?" the inspector replied: "Well, sir, I can give him an upper berth anywhere, but the only lower berth vacant is in this carriage, and he won't like travelling with a native." No explanation, no courtesy, could ever obliterate that utterance from the Indian's memory.

He knew now exactly what the ordinary Englishman really felt.

An American on board a steamer bound for India, observing the aloofness of the English passengers from their Indian fellow-travellers, remarked to me : " You English are the strangest people. If you really want to hold India, why do you not take more pains to make Indians like you ? "

Race feeling is generally treated as something instinctive and inbred. Its supreme authentication is taken to be the revulsion which perhaps most Englishmen would experience if sister or daughter were to be married to an Indian. It may, however, be questioned whether this widespread revulsion from mixed marriage is really at all a case of colour instinct. The revulsion may be due, not to colour instinct, but to a sense of social incongruity and to the conviction that a large field of common interests and outlook is essential to any happy marriage. Any father would react against the marriage of his daughter even to a man of his own race, if that man were drawn from a social stratum of very different tastes and upbringing : especially if he knew that the offspring of the marriage would labour under grave disadvantages, educational as well as social.

But if the colour bar can be thus resolved into a particular, though acute, case of those class cleavages and social barriers of which modern life is full, we at least need not despair of a way through. These are the very problems to the solution of which Christian fellowship is setting itself with a determination as hopeful as it is clear-sighted.

## II

In an India whose future is to be based on the close co-operation of the Indian and the English peoples, what is to be the distinctive contribution of the English nation? It has sometimes been suggested that that contribution might lie in the imparting of new standards of integrity and duty. The suggestion does honour to the English race. But it is not what would have been expected of a "nation of shopkeepers"; and it is not the line generally taken by the apologists for British rule in India. More often one is treated to an enumeration of the material benefits conferred on India by British rule, and to a catalogue of railways and irrigation, of schools and hospitals, of jute and tea and coal and shipping industries. This line of defence, if not very inspiring, is at least natural and familiar. But here again we quickly run into difficulties. For it is precisely on a supposed neglect by Britain of India's material development that the latest and sharpest criticism of British administration has fastened. For example, we are told that India's grievances against Britain are economical, not political. We are thus at once challenged on what we had always taken to be an impregnable justification of our rule. "The one outstanding fact," our critics state, "which dominates the whole Indian problem is the grinding, hopeless poverty and degradation of the greater part of the population."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> An American writer in the *Round Table*, September 1924, p. 744.

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There is little unrest in Dutch and French colonies, where economic advancement has always been the first consideration: much in the Philippines and India, where the reverse order has been followed. Probably the masses in India do not greatly care who rules them, if only they are fed and prosperous. There is much to be said on the other side, much which goes to suggest that Indian unrest is fundamentally emotional, and that its chief factors are wounded sensitiveness and a sense of national humiliation. Admittedly the movement has not been upwards, originating with the poverty stricken masses, but downwards, starting with the intelligentsia. But equally undeniable, the weapons with which these same educated classes have been able to move and inflame the placid and long-suffering villager have been drawn from the armoury of economics, and have chiefly consisted in the attribution of all the ryot's poverty and sufferings to British misrule.

The threat that Indian politicians brandish at the Englishman to-day is this: that if he fails to grant self-government, they will foment an agrarian rising from one end of India to the other, a rising which will sweep the Raj into the sea. Mr Gandhi's attempt at a peaceful revolution has proved that the threat is not an empty one. Those at the head of affairs in 1921 will testify that, with the masses at his back, he came within an ace of succeeding. There can be little doubt that a materially prosperous India would rid England of much of her Asiatic problem.

But how much truth is there in this reiteration of India's poverty, and the charge that Britain has

neglected India's material advancement? In regard to India's poverty,

there seems to be very little difference of opinion about the facts. Few persons who have lived in India deny that conditions are appalling. They may even be the worst in the world, taking everything into consideration.<sup>1</sup>

It is matter of common knowledge that the present income of the country, even if it were equitably distributed, would not suffice to provide the population with even the most indispensable elements of a reasonable life.<sup>2</sup>

It is not really the insufficiency of the total food so much as the fact that certain classes of the population are too poor to buy all the food they require.<sup>3</sup>

Their difficulty is not to live *human* lives—lives up to the level of their poor standard of comfort—but to live at all, and not die.<sup>4</sup>

Single rooms house ninety-seven per cent of the working-class families in Bombay with an average of over four inmates to each room. In London the average is 1.78. It is not surprising, therefore, that the infant mortality of Bombay has risen as high as sixty-six per cent of registered births. The annual death-rate in India exceeds thirty per thousand. In Great Britain it is under twelve per thousand. Poverty is the immediate and most powerful factor

<sup>1</sup> An American writer in the *Round Table*, September 1924, p. 745.

<sup>2</sup> W. H. Moreland, in the *Quarterly Review*, April 1917.

<sup>3</sup> Indian Fiscal Commission.

<sup>4</sup> W. S. Lilly, *India and its Problems*, p. 285.

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in producing these shocking figures. The average income per head of the people of India is reckoned at about five pounds a year, or two shillings a week. There is little margin here, be prices never so low.

How far are the causes that have produced such widespread and abject poverty remediable by government action? In part India's poverty is due to a listlessness induced by climate and a helpless fatalism nurtured by religion ; in part also to an unprecedented growth of population in recent years. In 1872 the population of India was two hundred and six millions, in 1921 it was three hundred and eighteen millions, an increase of fifty-four per cent in fifty years. This fact is in itself a great testimony to the improved conditions under British rule, though it is part of the charge against the British government that it has not helped so to improve the methods of agriculture as to secure a corresponding rise in the production of food and raw materials.<sup>1</sup> (Always remember the central fact of Indian economics, that agriculture is the occupation of over seventy per cent of her population.) More potent still in causing poverty are certain Indian social customs, which nothing but a changed public opinion can alter. Foremost is the early age at which Hinduism forces marriage and motherhood on India's women. Indian girls are often mothers at fourteen. The result is enfeebled mothers, puny and sickly infants, and the distress and waste of an appalling child mortality.

<sup>1</sup> The average yield of wheat in India is only 12 bushels per acre, as compared with 32 in Britain and 26 in Egypt.

Another cause is the denial of human rights to sixty millions of India's people whom the caste system crushes into a nameless degradation. The laws of succession, by which at death landed property is divided among the male heirs, are a hardly less powerful agent in producing poverty. Their result is frequently a subdivision of agricultural land into fragmentary holdings which can never maintain a family. Another factor is the immobility of the caste system, preventing any change of antiquated methods, *e.g.* the inhibition of the handling of animal and bone manure except by outcastes. And even more important is the tendency of the joint family system to produce drones and laggards who are unashamedly content to depend on the exertions of other members of their family for maintenance.

Some of these customs call for more detailed notice. The joint family is an institution at the heart of Hinduism, which has to be appreciated if India is to be understood. In India a man when he marries does not set up a home of his own. He brings his wife to the paternal (or, quite as often, the grandfatherly) roof, where the families of brothers and cousins live together side by side under the rule of the old man at the head, who receives the earnings of all, distributes to the needs of all, and settles the work and careers of all—an autocracy only limited by the authority of the old lady at his side. "It is an association that guarantees the minimum of subsistence to every member, which supports the old and infirm, which is responsible . . . for the cripples, the widows and the orphans." It teaches

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respect, patience, co-operation. But these gains may be too dearly purchased, if their price is the depression of individual personality and the loss of sturdy independence.

Hardly less disastrous in their incidence upon the village home (and that means ninety per cent of Indian homes) are the customs connected with marriage. It is a disgrace, so deep that it hardly ever occurs, for a daughter of the house to be left unmarried when she has reached the age of fourteen. And rigorous custom fixes the scale of dowry and wedding festivities. There are few villagers who will not spend on the wedding of a daughter the net income of many years. All over the world the precarious nature of their calling makes debt an unescapable incident in the life of farmers. But these risks and uncertainties are incomparably greater in a country like India, where the failure of a monsoon means not only the disappearance of an entire crop, but the death of all live stock. The resultant of marriage customs and seasonal failures combined is a crushing burden of debt which grinds the agricultural masses of India into a poverty that means at best little more than a starvation existence.<sup>1</sup> And, be it remembered, thirty per cent is a common rate of interest charged by money-lenders, and much higher rates are not uncommon.

Poverty so abject must be a primary concern of any decent government. What has Britain to her

There are in fact only three ways by which the impoverishing over-pressure of population on India's arable land can be relieved. One is by the creation of alternative industries, another is by the

credit in this respect after an occupation covering more than a century? First and foremost this, that she has banished beyond the bounds of reasonable probability the worst horrors of famine—the spectre that always haunts the Indian agriculturist. By a network of railways that can pour in supplies to any famine-stricken area and by relief organization perfected by the codified experience of the past, she has brought it about that famine now need seldom mean starvation. More recently, by the institution of co-operative banks, government has brought the lifting of the burden of debt from the back of the agriculturist within the bounds of reasonable possibility. British engineers, by immense systems of irrigation, have transformed millions of acres of sandy desert into waving fields of corn: thus greatly adding to the food supplies, and bringing profitable and healthful employment to thousands of needy peasants. The enterprise of British pioneers has retrieved the waste

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successful exclusion of foreign cotton (Mr Gandhi's way—if indeed it be a possible way); the third is by an immense increase of agricultural productivity through improved methods, and the bringing into use of the forty per cent of cultivable land which government estimates to be still unused. The obstacle in the path of this third line of advance is no longer the conservatism, but the poverty, of the peasant. "It is now recognized that the Indian cultivator is as ready to take advantage of improved methods of cultivation as anyone else." The Research Institute at Pusa has shown the way to immense improvements in choice of seeds and provision of manures, the only limit to whose use is poverty. "The Indian ryot has proved himself susceptible to the lure of increased return, and the problem now before the Department is not how to get into touch with him, but of find him necessary means to finance improvement." *Review of Agricultural Operations in India*, 1921-2, p. 69.

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of millenniums, and cleared of primeval forests thousands of square miles, which are now the trim tea gardens or rubber plantations of thriving industries. British manufacturers have provided a market which has tempted half a province to exchange rice harvests for more profitable jute. British capital has created railways and steamship lines, and has begun the exploitation of India's vast mineral resources. Under British direction India has come to rank in the League of Nations organization at Geneva as one of the first eight industrial countries of the world.

Here is a solid contribution to India's material betterment which may make Englishmen justly proud. But there are other aspects of the situation of which we in England are seldom allowed to hear. What Indian discontent and criticism chiefly fasten on is the catalogue of things left undone. It is maintained that some at least of the factors that make for Indian poverty lie within the sphere of government influence. It is a reflection that, in spite of the growing appreciation in the West of the importance of the education of the people, ninety per cent of India is still illiterate after more than a century of our rule. Yet only the spread of education can effect the changes in social custom and industrial method on which the national welfare and prosperity depend. Here is neglect of a primary factor of improvement which it is difficult to excuse. Of course the fault does not lie only with government. Pressure of economic need makes the ryot unwilling to spare his child from the field to go to school, and it may fairly be said that the educated classes have until recent

years been deficient in that missionary spirit which would have done as much for popular education as any government could do. Nevertheless, the failure to deal adequately with national education cannot but be laid at the door of authority, and it is a failure which prejudicially affects the entire agricultural classes—that is, almost three-fourths of India's population.

But its disastrous incidence is heaviest on those depressed masses trodden underfoot by Hindu tyranny, whom we have proudly regarded as our special charge, whose championship we supposed to be the sufficient justification of our rule in India. True, we have assured them of justice in open court. We have protected them time and again against oppression. We have rescued them from the worst horrors of famine. But few facts are more humiliating than that at the end of a hundred years of British rule there is hardly any appreciable improvement in the economic condition of India's sixty million outcastes. We have had them in our hands for several generations. But we have failed to give them the education through which alone self-help can become a practical proposition. Political India now asks to be allowed to have its turn.

Again, it is pointed out that, in the debates in March 1925 on a bill for the raising of the "age of consent" from twelve to fourteen, English official members combined with the ultra-orthodox Hindu wing to throw the bill out,<sup>1</sup> though a majority of

<sup>1</sup> A bill has since been passed, officially sponsored, which raises the age of consent to thirteen in marriage and fourteen outside marriage.

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elected Indians supported it in the Assembly. Fear of "moving too fast" is felt by reforming Indians to have atrophied the social sympathies of a government that in earlier days did not scruple to deal with sati and infanticide.

Lastly, it is urged that government ought long ago to have taken the initiative in such a modification of the succession laws as would prevent the subdivision of property beyond a certain figure.

It is true that government departments are now vigorously engaged in agricultural and industrial research, and in the fostering of Indian enterprise. But India has had to wait until the twentieth century for the creation of these departments so vital to her national well-being. Nor is it easy for government to disclaim all responsibility for the deforestation which makes the peasant use as fuel the cow dung which should go to the land as manure; and for failure to improve India's wretched live stock by control of breeding, though here the Hindu refusal to kill cows, resulting in the maintenance of an enormous surplus of cattle which are not killed but can hardly be said to live, must bear a major part of the blame. A more serious fact is that India has only of quite recent years been granted autonomy in the levying of customs and import duties. Till now India's economic expansion has been severely limited by consideration for British interests. Agriculture and industry have been so developed as to secure that India shall supply Britain with the maximum of food and raw material, and receive in return the maximum of British manufactured products. Indian patriots argue

that conditions would have been vastly different had India for the past century possessed a government which had devoted itself singly to the development of Indian prosperity and welfare as its first aim, sternly requiring that British interests should always—in India—stand second to those of India.

Here is a situation the essential facts of which are sufficiently plain. "Nature has marked out India as a politically independent and an economically self-sufficing country."<sup>1</sup> Her immense exports of grain are sufficient indication that at any rate she raises enough agricultural produce to satisfy the demands of her total population. She is amply supplied with coal and iron, more than sufficient for all her own needs. Probably no country in the world possesses such enormous reserves of water-power. She has a virtual monopoly of the world's jute, and could herself meet more than the world's entire demand for tea and rubber. She is rich in copra and oil-seeds, she conducts a very large export trade in hides, and she contains one of the world's largest oil-fields. There are very few of India's needs that could not be met from her own resources, were her industries properly developed.

Therein lies the gravamen of her charge against her British rulers: that India has been developed principally as a feeder for English markets and a market for English manufacturers. The creation of a national and self-contained prosperity has far too little and too intermittently been the conscious and determined aim of government. England's pros-

<sup>1</sup> P. A. Wadia and G. N. Joshi, *Wealth of India*, p. 15.

perity, and India's as a means to that, has in practice been the ruling consideration.<sup>1</sup> But to treat another nation as a means of your own greatness establishes a relationship which comes perilously near the slave relation—the slave whose good the wise master sought in his own interest. It is this that embitters.

The crucial example is the cotton trade. Cotton is marked out by history and circumstance as India's staple and essential industry, after agriculture. It is the one industry whose safeguarding and development should have been a chief care to any Indian government. Except his food and cooking utensils, there is only one thing that every Indian must have : his cotton clothing. Cotton is a natural Indian product. For centuries India was the home of cotton manufacture. The very name calico tracks it to Calicut as the port of distribution. Until the eighteenth century it was India that supplied Europe with all the cotton that she used. Spinning and

<sup>1</sup> How deeply this poison has eaten into England's political conscience is illustrated by a recent utterance of a British Cabinet Minister :

" We did not conquer India for the benefit of the Indians. I know it is said at missionary meetings that we conquered India to raise the level of the Indians. That is cant. We conquered India as the outlet for the goods of Great Britain. We conquered India by the sword, and by the sword we should hold it. (*Shame.*) Call shame if you like. I am stating facts. I am interested in missionary work in India and have done much work of that kind, but I am not such a hypocrite as to say we hold India for the Indians. We hold it as the finest outlet for British goods in general, and for Lancashire cotton goods in particular." (Sir W. JOYNSON-HICKS, *Home Secretary*. Quoted in *The Indian Social Reformer*, November 28th, 1925, a weekly paper edited by a Hindu.)

weaving were the subsidiary cottage industries on which Indian agriculture thrived: just as was the case with wool in England. It was in a country so conditioned that the competition of Lancashire machine-made cotton was allowed to kill India's cottage industry. No great imagination is required to picture the mass of suffering and poverty which followed. For, unlike England, agriculture had to continue to be the livelihood of the great majority of India's population: only an agriculture which, robbed of its subsidiary industries, could never again offer more than a bare subsistence. And, again unlike England, there is no new factory industry to receive the displaced workers and reduce the pressure of population on the fields. Had the British government, taught by Britain's own experience in previous decades, taken care to see that the destruction of Indian cottage industries was accompanied by the development of an Indian factory system, the transition from cottage-made to machine-made cotton would not have affected India so disastrously. Millions of Indian factory workers would then have found employment in the milling of Indian cotton. The suggestion may seem to postulate an impossible unselfishness in politics. But for a government of India to have any other aim than India's welfare, or to be deflected by the competing interests of the ruling race, is to be guilty of treason against the nation committed to its trust. Instead, the British government allowed, and even seemed to welcome, the passing of this vital Indian industry into the hands of Lancashire.

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That the competition of distant Lancashire need not necessarily have been fatal to the Indian cotton industry is suggested by the fact that the English government held it necessary to protect Lancashire cotton as against the Indian product by imposing an excise tax of five per cent on all Indian-made cotton.<sup>1</sup> Either the tax was unnecessary, or without it Indian cotton would have held its own. At least the Indian government need not have assisted in the killing of India's principal industry. Having said this, one finds pleasure in recording the fact that the cotton excise duty has now been finally abolished. It was suspended in December 1925, and its final removal announced in the Budget of the present year. The immediate effect was the cessation of a great cotton strike, but the profounder results of the removal of an ancient grievance are already seen in the tones in which the Indian press has welcomed the new policy.

### III

In regard to the possibilities of India's industrial advance, it has to be remembered that there are certain marked advantages which India possesses over English industry. England has to depend on foreign countries both for the supply of raw material for her manufactures, and for markets for the sale of the finished product. India on the other hand finds within her own borders almost all the raw

<sup>1</sup> This was to balance the import duty of five per cent paid on all imported goods, and thus enable Lancashire to compete successfully with Indian cotton.

material for her industries, as well as a vast market for the sale of the manufactured articles. Few countries offer such a field for immense independent and self-contained industries. India can produce what she consumes and consume what she produces. A wealth of employment and new prosperity would have been created had pains been taken to develop coal and iron alongside jute and cotton.

What can be accomplished in the way of creating Indian industry is strikingly exemplified by the history of the Tata steel corporation. The story of Jamshedpur reads like a fairy tale. The city, not yet twenty years old, with almost a hundred thousand inhabitants, stands in the centre of rich coal and iron fields, where in 1908 was barren jungle. Admirably planned, and with a network of affiliated industries, its population may soon reach a quarter of a million. The conception, the directorate, the capital, the labour, all are Indian; the management and supervision to-day are chiefly American and English. It is believed that it will take twenty-five years to train Indians to replace the European supervisors. The whole enterprise is a parable of the true place of Britain in the India that is to be: not the ruling of India, but the helping of Indians in the ruling and development of their own country.

Indian capital is becoming increasingly available for such enterprises: witness the mill industries in Bombay. And, as the development of internally-held concerns brings into Indian hands those profits and savings out of which only new capital can be created, Indian commercial capital will steadily ex-

pand. But for a long time to come British capital will continue to find in India a lucrative and growing field for use.

Grave dangers, of course, beset the dependence of a country on foreign capital. Said a Dundee jute-merchant to the Governor of Bengal not long ago : " It's a grand countree. It's an awfu' pity thae natives is in it." During the closing years of the war, there were not many jute concerns that were not making over a hundred per cent, some of them many hundreds. Yet the jute-grower—the man who lived on growing it—and that means almost half Bengal's forty-seven millions—was getting the pre-war price ! It was hard to answer a charge of British exploitation.

The mischief eats deeper still. A few years ago an Indian leader, afterwards a member of the Indian Council in England, met me on the Senate of Calcutta University. He said to me : " Mr Montagu is coming out and wants us to give him proposals for Indian self-gòvernment. There is not one of us that is capable of working out a constructive scheme. It is not our fault. You have never allowed us any experience or responsibility. We have had nothing to do but mere destruction : to sit in opposition and criticize. Can you bring together half a dozen sahibs, men who sufficiently share our point of view for us not to have to argue on fundamentals, who will help us to knock together a scheme that will at least be an ' Aunt Sally ' for Mr Montagu's pot-shots ? " I tried, and got together three English officials, men who were at the head of the departments of educa-

tion, justice, and administration. I wanted to secure the help of one or two non-official Englishmen, and arranged to meet three of Calcutta's leading merchants. After dinner one of them set the ball rolling. "If we have babu government, they will want to take their extra money out of us. Capital is shy. Look at what we are doing for the country. 'All the tea, all the jute, all the coal, all the steamships, all the railways, are run by British capital. If British capital takes alarm and withdraws, Bengal will relapse into its native rice-swamps. We are here for the good of the country.'" I replied: "Take that position, that you are here for the good of the country, and there will be no collision. Ask the hugest salaries you can name, half what the Viceroy gets, and say that, given them, you will for the rest work for the development of the natural resources of the country; and they will give you any figure you like to ask." There was a silence, broken at last by the remark: "We are not philanthropists." Had those same men, the best product of our English universities, entered the Civil Service or any other of the public services in India, they would, for a fixed salary, have given India their very best, and in plague or famine time would have laid down their lives for the people under their charge. But caught in the meshes of our commercial system, they had lost their ideals. So long as British policy in India is largely dictated by the requirements of British trade and capital, Indians cannot feel that the political determination of their country's economic future can safely be left in foreign hands.

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I once asked Mr Ramsay MacDonald how he reconciled the Labour Party's backing both of the White Australia party, and of the Indian National Congress. He replied at once : " Perfectly simple. Every nation with complete rights in its own country. A white Australia, and (if I may be pardoned the expression) a brown India." The two policies surely stand or fall together. If it is right to protect the Australian against unfair Asiatic competition, it is surely equally right to protect the Indian merchant or industrialist from unfair European competition.

On the other hand, it cannot be denied that what has held back the development of Indian industry even more than the lack of capital is the inefficiency of Indian labour. An industrial class can hardly be said to exist. Agriculture remains the substantive employment of the floating population which supplies the workers in an Indian factory. At the back of all lies the joint family system. Under the pressure of debt or a bad harvest, or the steady strain of agricultural poverty, or the expenses of a marriage, a member of the family will go up to Bombay or to a coal-field for a few months, to collect his little pile and send it back to his country home. For the time at least he eases the burden at home. But the call of the land and of his family drags him back. No Indian can be content without his share, however small, in landed rights. An exceptionally well-managed mill reports that the entire factory staff changes once in eighteen months. In most mills the average period of service must be much shorter.

With so unstable a body of workers no high standard of efficiency is possible.

The instability of industrial labour is aggravated by the deplorable conditions under which the employees live and work. Housing conditions in Bombay, where even the improved "model" dwellings consist of one-roomed tenements with no through ventilation, are so appalling as to make life there a misery. Fresh from the sociableness of his village, weakened of independence by the habit of reliance upon caste, the countryman in Bombay finds himself insupportably alone. There is no one to advise him. A dozen different languages are spoken in his factory, and there is never-ending trouble, leading often to dismissal, because neither his English manager nor his Indian foreman can properly understand him, or he them. There are few amenities in the factory which constitutes the worker's home for most of the waking hours of the day. (The jute-mills of Bengal are an honourable exception.) It does not offend the English manager to see his workers come carrying their wretched bundles of stale food to be eaten in the din and dirt of the workshop, or exposed to sun or rain outside. There is generally little in the way of lavatories; still less of ambulance or medical aids. Drinking water is by law provided, but effort is seldom made to keep it cool. The humane as well as the economic value of furnishing healthy and pleasing environment has hardly begun to be recognized even now. Yet on the provision of reasonably attractive conditions turns that advance to stability of labour and industrial efficiency

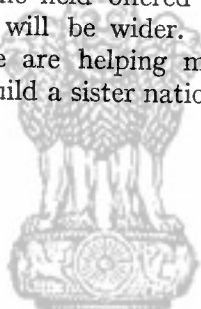
upon which India's economic future and prosperity depend.

And yet—before one surrenders oneself to the creation of an industrial India, with the drabness and the squalor that only the most determined foresight can keep out—how wistfully one turns back to reconsider the Utopian vision of Mr Gandhi's simple rustic India living its contented and self-sufficient village life! We can understand the appeal that it makes to the heart of a large part of thinking India. But that way lies crushing poverty—unless India can be completely isolated alike from the competition and the economic advance of the modern world.

Legislative help is slow and scanty. Not till 1881 was child labour under seven years old prohibited. In 1891 the hours of work for women were limited to eleven in the day; in 1911 the hours for men were fixed at twelve and in 1922 at eleven. Not till 1922 was women's labour confined to the hours of daylight, and one day's rest a week prescribed. Eleven hours in the day remains the working limit, but the total must not exceed sixty in the week. Inspectors are few and it is to be feared that the laws, though now in advance of those obtaining in other tropical countries, are only partially observed.

The assistance that might be forthcoming from trade unions is still slower. With so shifting a population a stable union with funds and cohesion is all but impossible. And the leadership has almost all to be supplied by amateurs from outside. Strikes fail because there is no labour solidarity nor authoritative body that can negotiate.

India's economic development must lack both health and vigour so long as she is politically dependent on an alien race. We seem to be entering on a new era in which that dependence will be superseded by free and mutually respecting industrial co-operation between the two races. It may be that the stream of administrators from English public schools will be succeeded by a larger stream of English merchants and industrialists coming out to direct and supervise the expansion of Indian industry under Indian control. The field offered to English enterprise, if different, will be wider. And it will have this glory that we are helping more effectually, if more humbly, to build a sister nation.



सत्यमेव जयते

## CHAPTER VI

### AN AGE-LONG QUEST FOR GOD

THE world-old cleavage between prophet and priest, radical and conservative, runs in India very deep. And the priest seems to have it. The social reformer, the political revolutionary, are pouring into India their new wine. But the wine-skins do not seem to burst. Hinduism, with its *vis inertiae* and its amazing capacity for combining opposites, seems able to contain the new wine. But the corrosive ferment is eating deep into the skin. Every fibre is left tense to snapping point. We are witnessing the greatest battle in history between religious conservatism and the forces of human progress. And the issue is not yet.

Nowhere is the dominance of religion in India more clearly seen than in these two facts, that it is the religious chasm between Hinduism and Islam which is the despair of every nationalist, and that it is to the religious motive that every political reformer makes his appeal. Political movements tend to appear as new religious sects. The Arya Samaj, Mrs Besant's blend of Hinduism and theosophy, and the Ramakrishna Mission through which Swami Vivekananda's teaching finds its propaganda, though at heart religious movements receive much help from the strong nationalist passion of to-day. The text-

books of anarchical conspiracy and crime reek with the odour of religion. Mr Gandhi's hold on India (to which it would be difficult to find a parallel in history) has been palpably due to the appeal he makes to the deeper religious instincts of the Hindu. Hardly a social or political reformer but has had at each step forward to tie round his feet the clog of a fresh compromise with Hinduism.

What is this arch-power in the land, so venerable, so persistent? Hinduism is incapable of definition. There is no description that can make it easy. Sixteen years ago, when the introduction of the methods of representative democracy made it plain that in the future political issues were going to be settled by the counting of heads, Mohammedans set to work to whittle away the Hindu majority by challenging the right of Hinduism in the approaching census to reckon as Hindus the sixty million outcastes, who may enter no Hindu temple, to whom no Brahman priest may minister, and whose touch defiles any Hindu. One result was a symposium conducted by a leading Hindu journal on the question, "What makes a man a Hindu?" Of sixty replies only three agreed. Their answer was: He is a Hindu who was born of Hindu parents, and has not publicly renounced Hinduism. That anything so vague should prove itself so tenacious is one of the conundrums of social psychology. One answer is that Hinduism is not a religion but a social system: that caste is Hinduism. Yet he who has once sensed Hinduism knows that it is as much a spirit, an atmosphere, an attitude to life, as a stratified system of society.

Perhaps the simplest method will be briefly to indicate the two chief rivers that have fed Hinduism. The diverse watersheds it has drained have left entirely unharmonized deposits. A man to-day may be a monotheist, a polytheist, a pantheist, or an atheist, and still be an orthodox Hindu. Hinduism is more medley than blend. There is in it so much of good, and so much also of evil. Here lies the weakness. It waits for a fan that will separate the wheat from the chaff.

The first river traces from the Aryan invaders, our own fair cousins who, through caste rules, have ever since been engaged in the hopeless endeavour to keep their blood white and uncontaminated. They were light-hearted nomad nature-worshippers, offering their sacrifices and singing their jubilant hymns to Sun (Surya) and Rain (Indra) and Sky (Varuna) and Storm (Rudra) in hope that they might win from the gods the cherished boons of family or flocks. But in time most of these gods themselves have perished and are mere names to-day. Only the hymns remain, collected as the Vedas, in a language (Vedic or Sanskrit) inaccessible to the people. The stream broadened out into schools of philosophical reflection, whose text-books are known as the Upanishads. To them may be traced some of the fundamental ideas which give Hinduism its distinctive flavour. Their soaring idealism, their tireless questioning of the universe till it shall yield its secret, uplift as well as stimulate. Some later writings, such as the Bhagavad Gita, are among the world's spiritual classics. The master minds of

Indian philosophy—Sankara, Ramanuja, Madhva, each founder of a separate school of thought—are still names to conjure by. Nobly has India sought down all the ages. When is seeking to bring finding?

Hindu philosophy is always search with an object, not abstract enquiry into truth for its own sake. It is always the effort to discover the way of release from further existence. It is prompted by a profound pessimism. Existence is so bad that the only thing to do is to get rid of it. It is this utter pessimism about the material world which in part explains the exalted value India sets upon the spiritual. Till this is understood it is surprising that a country so spiritual in its values as India should have been so harassed and obsessed by the problem of material suffering. But behind this enquiry there lay also a noble insistence that the universe must at its heart be just, and therefore that all suffering must be deserved. The experiences of life led straight to a belief in previous—and also in succeeding—existences. The babe born blind must have been a grievous sinner in a previous life. And sins committed in this life will receive an adequate penalty in a future birth to pain, whether as rat, tree, man, or what not. All that happens to me is caused by previous deeds of mine, and my present deeds need a future birth in which I can receive their exact reward and consequences. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he reap." Life thus becomes an endless chain of cause and effect, of deeds and rewards. Only, to reap the consequences I have to live a life of further deeds, which in turn involve further existences for

the reaping of their reward. Life is thus a clock that winds itself up as quickly as it runs down: never ending, and leading nowhere. Existence is regarded as an aimless and weary round; and the only hope is to find some way of breaking the iron chain and ceasing to exist. The justice of the universe is vindicated. But at what a price!

This is in brief the Hindu doctrine of *karma* and rebirth. Release comes when you have recognized the unreality of the whole material universe. Only spirit (Brahma) really exists. The visible world and all its happenings are an illusion (*maya*); or else they are a sport (*lila*), created by the gods in a moment of freakishness. In so far as you and I truly exist, we are identical with that spirit. Our sense of separateness is the height of the illusion. Once illumination has been reached, and you can make the supreme affirmation, "I am Brahma," the chain of cause and effect is broken, and you are free. You have merged in the infinite, as a drop in the ocean. This is salvation.

But this cold intellectualism could never satisfy the warm and eager heart of India. Teachers began to insist that there were other ways to salvation besides knowledge (*jñāna*) or austere practices (*tapas*). Hinduism has never lacked its theistic prophets, teaching *bhakti*, the way of passionate devotion to a deity. They are the saving line of Hinduism, carrying on the torch, one from the other, through the centuries: Ramanuja, the philosopher; Ramananda, the preacher; Kabir, his Mohammedan convert; Guru Nanak, founder of the Sikhs; Tulsi Das,

one of the greatest of India's poets, and the sweet singer Tukaram. Selecting one or other of the leading gods of popular mythology, they elevated him (or her) into a position of sole supremacy, the sun round which the other gods of the pantheon revolved. The choice of the reformers generally fell on two of the three gods of the Hindu trinity: Brahma, the Creator; Siva, the Destroyer; and Vishnu, the Preserver. Sometimes it was Siva, but most often they selected Vishnu, and sang of his repeated incarnations. For "whenever godliness decays and ungodliness gains ground," Vishnu appears on earth in some new form "for the protection of the good and the destruction of sinners."

Siva and his spouse, Kali, supply a large percentage of India's idols. Others are shapeless stones or stumps of trees daubed with vermilion. Idolatry is defended as helpful imagery or symbolism. But if the idol is only a symbol, why is it fed and bathed and cooled by fans? Why the ceremony of "quicken-ing," by which the god is induced to take up his abode within it? Why is the image of a god in one place more likely to grant male offspring than another image of the same god somewhere else? And what of helpful suggestiveness as to the nature of the unseen God can come from a hideous image or a shapeless stone? What conception of the loving Father will a villager derive from the image of Kali drinking blood and with the skulls of her victims hanging in a chain about her neck? Indian idol-worship can do little to uplift or purify a Hindu's thought of God.

Vishnu's two principal incarnations are as Rama and as Krishna, the themes of the two great epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. Rama is a noble warrior prince, and his wife Sita the chaste ideal of Indian womanhood. Krishna, as he appears in the Mahabharata, and still more in that section of it known as the Bhagavad Gita, has many attractive features. Such names take their place in the world's great story-book among the heroes which it will never wish to forget. Unfortunately, it is on the far less wholesome figure of Sri Krishna as he appears in the Puranas that Indian devotion has fastened for the outpouring of its rapture and for the nursery tales on which childhood is nurtured. Krishnaite fervour reaches its climax in the ecstatic celebration of the god's illicit amours with Radha and her train of milk-maids. "To the pure all things are pure" and doubtless cultured minds, and simple folk as well, can find in these tales a relatively harmless allegory; but for the common run they remain none the less an unhealthy poison. What moves to despair is that to find the worst in India you have to go to its religion and its temples; there to find a sensual and unspiritual priesthood, children gazing at foul carvings, which have to be protected from prosecution for indecency by a special clause of the Indian Penal Code, and temple prostitutes dedicated in their infant innocence to this life of shame.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Govinda Das, a Hindu reformer, on the orgies of a large sect in Bengal: "Nothing but nervous breakdowns and bestiality of character can result from such foul depravity masquerading as religion." *Hinduism and India*, p. 127.

Each year's residence in the country casts on one more deeply the spell of India's loveliness ; but—or perhaps for that very reason—these ghastly outrages on India's childhood, supinely tolerated for centuries without protest, make one boil with indignation. Even the great Ramanuja complacently tolerated the disgusting sculptures and the dancing girls of his own temple in Trichinopoli. Mr Gandhi has begun a protest. Will he see it through ?

There is vice enough in the West and to spare. But you do not go to the New Testament to find it. The protest of the majestic Figure in the Gospels is constant, uncompromising, crystal-clear. The sins, the shame, of Western Christendom are in spite of, not because of, its religion.

The baffling paradox of Hinduism is that side by side with so much that is morally depressing, it contains elements which are for the permanent enrichment of the race. It is an arresting tribute to India's genius for religion that she can produce such pearls as this :

I long to see thy face,  
But ah, in me hath holiness no place.

By thy strength succour me,  
So only, only I thy feet may see !

Though Sadhu's robes I've worn,  
Within I'm all unshaven and unshorn.

Lost, lost, O God, am I,  
Unless thou help me, Tuka,—me who cry !<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Tukaram, a famous Maratha poet of the seventeenth century. Quoted from *Psalms of Maratha Saints*, edited by Nicol Macnicol.

or this by Tirunavukkarasu Swami, a Tamil Saivite poet who lived in the seventh century :

As the vina's pure sound, as the moonlight at ev'n,  
As the south wind's soft breath, as the spring's growing heat,  
As the pool hovered over by whispering bees,  
So sweet is the shade at our Father-Lord's feet ;<sup>1</sup>

or this poem of self-surrender by an Indian poetess of the fifteenth century :

Kanh<sup>2</sup> have I bought ; the price he asked I paid :  
Some cry, " Too great " while others jeer, " 'Twas small " :  
I paid in full, weighed to the utmost grain,  
My love, my life, my self, my soul, my all.<sup>3</sup>

Verses such as these help to reveal some of those veins of gold in Hinduism which explain both the power of the religion and the qualities of Hindu piety that so attract : its worship of the omnipresent divine in life, its preference for spiritual over material values ; the honour paid to simplicity and poverty ; the dignity and patience of the Hindu, his gentleness and courtesy ; his open-handed hospitality and his love of children. These, and songs like them, play a large part in the family religion of Hindu homes : and that term covers not only the educated classes, but also that solid block of perhaps a hundred and fifty million Hindu agriculturists who are the backbone of Indian society, a block as yet almost unreachd by Christian missions. The Sudras, or members of the lower Hindu castes, constitute a

<sup>1</sup> *Hymns of the Tamil Saivite Saints*, edited by F. Kingsbury and G. E. Phillips.

<sup>2</sup> A colloquial corruption of the name Krishna.

<sup>3</sup> *Poems by Indian Women*, edited by Margaret Macnicol.

kind of peasant aristocracy, proudly aloof from the untouchables or outcaste serfs. The religion they share with the higher castes is, on its ritual side, unedifying, superstitious and degrading enough, the worship of bloody Kali or pot-bellied Ganesh, or hideous Hanuman, or sensual Krishna. The religious precepts are not moral commands, but a mass of petty inhibitions connected with unlucky dates and omens and astrology. Yet, when contrasted with the animism of the outcastes, their cult appears eminently respectable, and is accompanied by an evident sincerity and reverence. A family or caste priest, often quite illiterate, and mostly greedy of gain, is the guru (religious guide) of the household, whose rare visits are the occasion of payments and instructions and ceremonies. In some dark shelf or corner are the family idols, before which the women, and less often the men, perform their daily rites, with offerings of flowers and grain and water. Hymns and stories of the gods take the place of religious education. The great occasions in religious life are a marriage or a funeral anniversary; while the family expedition to some distant place of pilgrimage marks an epoch. Festivals and pilgrimages supply colour and excitement, but little of moral dynamic or inspiration, and nothing that can ever satisfy the human spirit's yearning after God.

But it is time to turn to the other river that has fed Hinduism, a river whose muddy waters are largely responsible for the befouling of its earlier hope. We have spoken of Hinduism when more properly we might have said Brahmanism. The picture drawn

has been of the religion of the Hindu castes. Below and outside caste, spreading upwards an infection that has permeated right through the Hindu castes as well, is the outcaste population whose native religion is animism.

Enter the squalid and insanitary huts that form the fringe of most South Indian villages. There, crouching in the dark and smoke, you will see a family puny in physique, nearly black in skin, and with faces often very irregular in feature. For months of the year, when their labour is not wanted in the fields, they hover on the verge of actual starvation. Drink is their only alleviation. They feed on offal and on carrion. They may not use the village well. Their habits are indescribably filthy. Eight of the ten children born in the family will have died in infancy.

And their religion, the one ray of light that might bring comfort to such dark homes? It is an unrelieved mass of fear and superstition. Their worship is of devils, or at its best, of ghosts. The unseen world for them is peopled by myriads of malicious, vengeful demons, ready to leap out at them from every wayside tree or stone. The universe is unfriendly; its spiritual inhabitants are only moved by spite and hate. You are lucky if by some stratagem or ceremony you can outwit them. The wizard is your only friend, and your weapons of defence his meaningless mutterings and incantations. For defend yourself you must; and so there has been evolved a mass of superstitions which absolutely rule your life. There are thousands and thousands of

them, covering every circumstance and happening. Your only safety lies in knowing as many of them as possible by heart, and scrupulously following them, even when they are contradictory. And so life becomes one long slavery of fear, the kaleidoscope of each day disclosing some new grouping of your demon foes.

Here are some prescriptions. When starting on a journey, it is inauspicious to see a jackal cross the road from the right, a crow on a dead tree, or a dog shake his head so as to flap his ears, to meet a one-eyed oil-man (unless he laughs he should be beaten !), to see a cat crossing a road, or meet a barren woman early in the morning. If a man reach a village at dusk, or after nightfall, and hear a woman crying, he must go back home at once, or at least go as far as another village to rest for the night, and then go home, or he may sit down and smoke and then go on.<sup>1</sup> If a woman want a son, she should feed ants daily with a mixture of sugar and flour, fish with balls of flour, and water a pipal tree daily for a year. There are other devices for other ends. A hoot owl which has been carefully kept for a year is furnished with an image of a tiger on which to ride, and is made drunk with liquor. If a man takes the ashes secured by burning this owl's eyes and rubs them into his own eyes, he obtains magical power which puts under his control any woman upon whom he looks !<sup>2</sup>

We need constantly to remind ourselves that all

<sup>1</sup> George W. Briggs, *The Chamars*, pp. 159, 160.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 120.

this, and not attractive extracts from Sanskrit books, or the cultured practices of the higher castes, is the kind of thing religion actually means for millions of our neediest fellow citizens in India : a thing of terror and torment, a bondage that robs life of any reason and the world of any meaning. Here is a dead weight to be lifted before social and political reform can get seriously to work with scores of millions at the bottom of the ladder. Contamination with this aftermath of aboriginal religion is the price Brahmanism has paid for its continued hold upon the people.

Indeed, religion supplies all the more serious obstacles that bar the way of the nationalist reformer. Hinduism is more socially depressing than any other known religion. Not only does it deny human rights to the helot population, and plant its heel firmly on the necks of those who would rise ; the degradation of woman is a social calamity more disastrous even than untouchability. Woman belongs to an inferior order ; the fate to which she is born is the consequence of evil deeds in a previous existence. She is married in childhood. (This marriage is more of a solemn betrothal than a marriage, for no girl may live with her husband, by law, until the age of thirteen.) The family system by which all the sons bring their wives to live in the family home prevails. The bride is thus just one more addition to the women's part of the house, and is in complete subjection to her mother-in-law. Frequently she is a mother within a year of puberty ; though among more educated and enlightened Hindus the age at

which girls are married is steadily rising. A woman's sons are hers only until they are seven years old. True, these are the all-important years; but then the boy goes to live in the man's part of the house, and thereafter his mother sees less of him. Early marriage deprives an Indian girl of that which is, perhaps, the happiest of all times for English girls, the period between childhood and adult womanhood. The child, with no transition period, becomes all at once a woman with a woman's responsibilities. Through early marriage health is often impaired.<sup>1</sup>

Every political reformer knows that such motherhood dooms Indian manhood to racial inferiority. But he has the leaders of religious orthodoxy against him at every step. Year by year the Hindu Mahasabha<sup>2</sup> passes pious platitudes in favour of widow re-marriage, the removal of untouchability, and the rest, but prudently defers action to a future date.

But the saddest of all India's women are her widows. The last census enumerated three hundred and thirty-five thousand widows of less than fifteen years, and

<sup>1</sup> Mrs Annie Besant in a lecture to Indians some time ago spoke as follows:

"I had a letter the other day from a friend of mine. A girl relative of his had been married at twelve. She became a mother next year at thirteen. When childbirth was upon her, she lay for four days in agony with the unborn child, in an agony none know save those who have gone through the gateway of motherhood. At last it became so intolerable to those who watched her that they put her under chloroform; for ten hours she lay under chloroform, then the child was born dead; the mother died. A girl of thirteen was sent through that agony."

<sup>2</sup> The annual congress of Hindu leaders.

eighteen thousand of less than five years old. No widow may re-marry. She is forced to shave her head and become the dishonoured drudge of the family. Her widowhood is richly deserved, for surely it is the penalty for former sin. What despair! Calcutta has more prostitutes for its population than any European city; and they are mainly recruited from the widows. These widow-prostitutes are to be found in every larger Bengal village. From such a fate the agony of sati was for many a merciful escape. Sati, however, was a mark, not only of the sanctity of marriage, but also of women's inferiority. No faithful Hindu husband ever leapt upon his wife's funeral pyre.

Among the upper classes in the greater part of India women are still confined to the inner courtyard of the house as their whole world. They may never go out into the fields or streets except under a heavy veil. And how can they fill the long days? Only eleven out of a thousand of India's women can even read.

Hardly less serious than the position of women is the heavy handicap set on progress by the reflex influences of some of the cardinal Hindu tenets. It is not only that caste is divisive, rending India horizontally into a thousand watertight compartments, nor that Hinduism is radically and incurably conservative and opposed to change of any kind: but it induces a lethargic and unprogressive type of character. The denial of value or reality to the material world, and the exclusive exaltation of the spiritual, indisposes you to any serious effort to better

things around you. And the central doctrine of karma, teaching that all you are and do is the necessary and inevitable result of the deeds of a past incarnation, makes straight for fatalism of the most depressing type. It necessarily discourages from any effort after the social uplift of the less fortunate members of society. Why seek to relieve pain or misery? The sufferer is only meeting with his deserts. Help him, and you only postpone his day of retribution. Such a religion, with its indifference and hopeless fatalism, superimposed on a people climatically indisposed to effort and discouraged by their helpless dependence upon uncertain seasons, makes advance and progress an uphill task that deters all but the most dauntless spirits.

But the most grievous disservice rendered by Hinduism is its divorce of morals from religion. If national advance is in the first instance a matter of morale, if the greatness of a nation depends finally on the character of its citizens, then a religion which fails to relate orthodoxy with morality must reduce a patriot to despair. What moral uplift or regenerating power can there be about a religion which attributes to its deities indulgences which no decent Hindu would permit himself? With many an Indian schoolboy, tales of the deities, instead of encouraging him to fight upwards, must push him gently down the slippery slope of self-indulgence. And what light is the struggler after better things likely to receive from a system which makes disrespect to a Brahman a graver matter than adultery, and imposes its severest penalties, not on deceit or lying, but on the

crime of drinking water from the hands of a low-caste man? <sup>1</sup>

In this respect the wave of new nationalism has not helped matters as much as might have been expected. Its enthusiasm for social service and reform has been handicapped by a revulsion from western religion and a strong reaction in favour of all things Indian. A small army of apologists and champions of Hinduism has appeared. Mrs Besant, Swami Vivekananda and Dayananda Sarasvati, the founder of the Arya Samaj, were, in their different ways, the first to give coherent expression to this tendency and to make Indians feel that to deny Hinduism was not an essential sign of culture. Instead, it became the mark of a patriot to champion Hinduism, blemishes and all, as the most distinctive product of India's venerable antiquity. To abjure Hinduism for the foreigner's religion was treason to your country. Immense impetus has been given to this tendency by growing acquaintance with

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *The Student Movement*, January 1926, p. 74. "The defect of Hinduism is not accidental but essential. Hinduism is wrong at the very centre, and not merely in its circumference. . . . By the impersonal character, and lack of moral responsibility, in its conception of Brahma, the Supreme Being, conjoined with a pantheistic philosophy, Hinduism cuts the nerve of moral responsibility in man. Thus at best it has a defective conception of sin. Its ethic is in effect an arbitrary legalism consisting largely in ceremonial and caste rules. The belief that the human individual is an emanation or temporary manifestation of the Impersonal Supreme leaves no permanent worth or moral ideal to the individual. And the belief in the illusory character (*maya*) of the world produces a pessimism that must result in acquiescence in evil. These things are fundamental to Hinduism."

the pagan materialism of English business life, the hideous squalor of British slums, and the shame of Piccadilly, and still more by the impotence of Christianity to avert the débacle of the war. "Surely in the sphere of religion at least India has nothing to learn from Europe."

A healthier manifestation of this tendency has been the appearance of two reforming sects in Hinduism, the Brahmo Samaj and the Arya Samaj.

The Brahmo Samaj was the first reaction of Hinduism under Christian stimulus. Early in the nineteenth century Raja Rammohan Roy, a Hindu of high family and noble character, founded a religious society, which, shaking itself free from the corruptions and superstitions of idolatrous Hinduism, was to form an international theistic Church, drawing its inspiration alike from Jesus Christ and all enlightened spiritual teachers. Under the fervent leadership in later days of Keshab Chandra Sen, it became the spiritual home of the progressive and devout in the more cultured circles of Bengal society. Its most notable adherents are the famous Tagore family. Latterly, nationalist and political impulses have tended to depress the primarily religious motive of the Samaj.

Markedly nationalist from the first has been the virile and aggressive Arya Samaj with its home in the hardy Punjab. There can be no doubt that the rugged personality of its founder, Dayananda Sarasvati, was powerfully moved by anti-western bias and reaction. The aim of the Samaj has not been the unfettered search for truth, but such a minimum

purging and reformation of Hinduism as shall enable the old national religion to hold its own against the inroads of the West. It takes its stand on the verbal inspiration and authority of the Hindu sacred scriptures, though interpreted by canons as arbitrary and untenable as were ever forced into the service of religious obscurantism. But nationalism can furnish religion with a most robust and vigorous motive; and, freed from some of the more obvious abuses of their creed, the disciples of the Arya Samaj are making Hinduism a missionary religion. At present the principal activities of the Samaj are directed against Islam in India, and are a most provocative factor in the recent recrudescence of inter-communal bitterness and hate.

In other directions the same motive may be detected in the frankly reactionary movement of theosophy,<sup>1</sup> and even in the Ramakrishna Mission, though the latter is chiefly known for its quite admirable emphasis on social service.

Nothing is more hopeful in the new India than the place given to social service. In the forefront stand the Servants of India, a remarkable society of men who, with almost monastic simplicity and self-denial, have devoted themselves to public work of every kind. Their founder was Mr Gokhale, the greatest

<sup>1</sup> It is important to bear in mind that under Mrs Besant's leadership, theosophy is in India as definitely Hindu and anti-Christian as in England it professes to be Christian. It has a murky and unwholesome atmosphere, revealed in the records of the Madras High Court and the publications of the Madras Christian College. See the excellent summary in Farquhar's *Modern Religious Movements in India*, pp. 267-291.

statesman modern India has so far produced. Living in a community on a bare subsistence allowance; bound by rule to years of rigorous study before they take part in public life; they are at their country's call wherever they are needed, either for political information and advice, based on scholarly and thorough study, or for practical relief and humble service in time of flood or famine, or disaster of any kind. Trusted for their integrity by the public and by government, they took a prominent share in many of the measures taken to repair the havoc of the Moplah rebellion.

But of recent years it has come true that almost any Indian college will have its night school for the depressed classes, or its band of volunteers, eager at once to serve in any time of calamity or distress. Not once or twice have I personally watched the students of a college taking to boats in flood time to rescue hundreds of lives, and for days and weeks afterwards keeping up relays of workers to distribute food and clothing to the homeless and starving. In Bengal to-day it is hardly necessary for government to do more than co-ordinate and give right of way, on the occasion of a flood or famine, to the organized bands of voluntary workers who at once are on the spot, ready with their services.

This is a new thing in Hinduism. It is due, a Christian may not unfairly claim, to the infection of Christian teaching and example, powerfully reinforced by the patriotic appeal of Indian nationalism. The Principal of any college recognizes with joy that to-day he has a new motive to which he can con-

fidently appeal in his effort to train and inspire his students for disinterested public service. The love of country is moving men who twenty years ago were sluggish and impervious to any motive other than that of a good post, and the getting of their bread and butter. Up and down the country may be found individual Brahmans and men of high caste who are working for the removal of untouchability and who will publicly sit down to eat with outcastes. Mr Gandhi has had to urge caution on over-zealous reformers, eager to tackle the problem of prostitution in Bengal. Time was when reformers had to look to government for a lead in any matter of practical reform. The abolition of sati is a sufficient illustration of what is meant. To-day responsible Indian opinion is ahead of government in its demand for primary education, and for the prohibition of early marriage. It is government which, on the plea of discretion, applies the brake. The record of the last session of the Legislative Assembly at Delhi is significant. A resolution was passed by a large majority in the teeth of official opposition, asking government to accept, as its ultimate policy, total prohibition of the manufacture, import and sale of alcoholic liquors, except for medicinal and scientific purposes. A resolution for female suffrage was passed unanimously. And laws were passed for the legalization of inter-caste marriages; and for the suppression of the traffic in minor girls destined, under the title of *devadasis* (servants of God), for a life of prostitution in Hindu temples.

It is in education that the new nationalism is

bearing some of its most healthy fruit. There is Santiniketan, the "home of peace," at Bolpur in Bengal, where a poet's dream from some Utopia has materialized as a school and university. There are no classrooms. Each teacher sits under his tree and his class squat on the grass all round him. When it rains they take refuge in the simple dormitories built of bamboo and grass. You are awakened at dawn by the school choir, bare-footed and white-robed, which makes the circuit of the dormitories outside, singing a morning hymn. Later you will see the meadows dotted by white figures, each on his own mat, for his devotions. Punishments are rare. The disapproval of public opinion, expressed in a boycott for a specified term, is normally sufficient for the purpose. At intervals through the day, groups meet for religious teaching at the feet of the poet whose dream has come to earth, Dr Rabindranath Tagore. Englishmen, Frenchmen, Germans are among the savants who have gathered there as the nucleus of what is to be an international university, just as, long ago, scholars from Lombardy and Constantinople and anywhere settled on the banks of the Isis to study and share their learning with poor English lads attracted thither by their presence. Bolpur has a fragrance difficult to describe.

A sterner, hardier life is lived by the pupils in the seminary of the Arya Samaj, by the clear mountain waters of the Ganges, near Hardwar. The boys live by quasi-monastic rule based on the old traditions of the Hindu scriptures (Shastras). They come at the age of seven or eight for a term of seventeen

years, during which they may return home but seldom. It has yet to be proved that this drastic sexual segregation is healthy. The life is hard and simple. There is a virility about the place which is most attractive, although the atmosphere strikes one as somewhat narrow and reactionary. The education is, nominally, based on Sanskrit, but the curriculum has a distinctly western flavour. If beauty and poetry are the inspiration of Bolpur, nationalism is the driving force at the Kangri Gurukula.

From it go out the Arya missionaries who are seeking to reclaim the Hindu perverts lost to Islam and Christianity. The theological weapons which they use are antiquated, drawn from the armoury of Tom Paine and Bradlaugh, and fall powerless before any intelligent presentation of the Christian message to-day. For their bellicose methods of attack, which lack any effort to appreciate, the earlier methods of Christian propaganda are perhaps largely to blame. But, stimulated by the religious rivalry which is the necessary result of a democratic counting of heads in a country where the several religions constitute the chief political parties, the Arya Samaj is responsible for a serious aggravation of Hindu-Moslem tension. The Suddhi (purification) movement, which aims at the reclamation of Hindus who have been converted to Islam and Christianity, is arousing the fierce antagonism of Moslems in the Punjab.

The latest reactions of nationalism upon Islam are interesting. Mohammedans in India, equally disliking alien rule and a system of representative democracy which must leave them a permanent minority

under Hindu rule, have of recent years inclined more and more to the Pan-Islamic movement, which tends to make them find their *patria* not in India but in the community of Moslem peoples. "We Moslems are proud of our international outlook," said Sir Abdur Rahim the other day.<sup>1</sup> There can be no doubt that Indian Moslems have been much more deeply stirred by the imperilling of the Caliphate and the sacred places than by the fortunes of the Swaraj movement or the Indian National Congress. Indian Moslems were much more closely touched by the fortunes of Turkey against Italy in Tripoli, and by the whole course of the Græco-Turkish war, than by the feats of the Indian army on the side of Britain. Turkey's victories were Islam's triumph, and every Indian Moslem flushed and thrilled with pride. The bond of Islam has established an undeniable inter-racial brotherhood amongst the faithful; so strong that within Islam at least religion seems a closer tie than blood. Ten years ago the Moslem was dreaming of an inter-racial alliance of the faithful, stretching from Morocco through Egypt, Persia and India into China, in unbroken line, with its political centre and religious capital upon the Bosphorus. But Pan-Islamism has been sorely wounded in the house of its friends.

First, the Sherif of Mecca by his revolt against the Turks in 1916, and then the impieties of Kemal Pasha, split Islam and knocked the bottom out of the Pan-Islamic movement against Britain. Britain was the protagonist of Europe, the enemy threatening the dignity

<sup>1</sup> *The Statesman*, December 31, 1925.

and independence of the Caliph (the Commander of the Faithful) ; Kemal was the champion of the sacred Caliphate. But, lo ! this Kemal it was who exiled the Sultan and abolished the temporal power of his office. The next issue was the sacred places—principally, Mecca and Medina. Anything was better than that the custodianship of the sacred places should be in the hands of the King of the Hedjaz, Britain's puppet—for all the blue blood of his Arab stock. Ibn-Saud, the Wahabi leader, must supplant Britain's protégé. But, again—so report has it—this same Ibn-Saud, of all atrocities, bombards the Prophet's tomb !

Indian Islam is sorely put to it, between British and Hindu sovereignty. Islam is not really an Indian religion : which is why it has had so little treatment in this volume. And yet India is the largest Moham-medan power in the world. King George rules over more Moslem subjects than are to be found in any other country. Where is Indian Islam to find a real patriotism ?

One question remains : the bearing of the new nationalism on India's attitude to Christianity. There has been the powerful revulsion among the educated classes in favour of Hinduism as the supreme patriotic asset. But it is only at intervals, and under the sway of particular leaders, that the villages have yet felt the influence of this nationalism. The village population is still as open as ever to receive the Christian message. The outcaste peoples are still crowding into the Church, which stretches out to them the hand of human brotherhood. Indeed the tendency

of the depressed classes to embrace Christianity wholesale, often chiefly with a view to simple human betterment, is one powerful incentive now moving the high castes to extend to them human rights. For politics have introduced the fear of any numerical loss to Hinduism.

But the revulsion amongst the intelligentsia against westernism in religion has had one compensation of incomparable importance. India is challenging the right of Europe, which is so hesitating and half-hearted in its following of Christ, to be any longer the exponent of His teaching. There is an increasing appreciation of the fact that Christianity is in origin an Eastern religion. While there is a growing revulsion against European Christianity, educated India is each day more and more powerfully attracted by the figure of the Christ. His irresistible spell is already upon India. It is a most rare thing to-day for the missionary working amongst the educated classes to come across any opposition to the person or claims of Jesus Christ. His way is open as never before to the heart of thinking India. But this belongs to another chapter.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE CHURCH IN INDIA

It is a new India that to-day confronts the missionary whose contacts happen to be chiefly with the upper strata of her society, an India of incalculable opportunity for any disciple in whom men can see the living likeness of his Master. Religious thought among the educated to-day is dominated by the personality of Christ. One is met constantly by serious expressions of modern Indian thought in which pre-eminence, explicit or implicit, is accorded to Him in the religious sphere. Among educated Hindus hostility to Jesus Christ is a thing all but unknown. For an educational missionary to urge on his class the claims of Christ to their respectful study would be a waste of time. He will most rapidly establish touch by assuming that Christ's supremacy as teacher and example is admitted and unchallenged. To the Christian teacher it is a new experience, a thing full both of awe and inspiration, to stand before his class of Hindu students, and know that between him and them reverence for Christ is common ground. The public press of India to-day teems with manifestations of this changed attitude. Here are a few excerpts culled from utterances of the past few years :

The solution of the problems of the day depends upon the application of the spirit and mind of Jesus

to those problems. (From the *Indian Social Reformer*, an influential political weekly paper, with a Hindu editor.)

It is incumbent on us to come to terms with Christ. We want Him and we cannot do without Him. (A Hindu lecturer addressing his own students.)<sup>1</sup>

There is no one else seriously bidding for the heart of the world except Jesus Christ. There is no one else in the field. (Written by a Brahmo Samajist.)<sup>1</sup>

If there were formed a society of men who want to follow Jesus and who are left free to decide for themselves by what method to follow, we should join by our thousands. (A Hindu student speaking to the Principal of his college.)

It is a new experience. This disappearance of animosity and bitterness amongst educated Hindus does not date back much more than five or six years. It is the more remarkable because of the antagonism to Western Christianity which Nationalism has at times tended to display. In part it is due to a growing differentiation between Christ and the practices of Western Christendom, and to the disentanglement of His personality from Europeanism which was effected by the war. In part it is due to the fact that so much of the spirit and methods of Mahatma Gandhi, the religious ideal of modern India, is plainly derived from and inspired by the character and teaching of Jesus Christ. But chiefly it is the fruit of a hundred years of faithful missionary labours. We are at last seeing the effect of the wide dissemination of the Bible and the printed page over many decades. Said an English

<sup>1</sup> From a paper by Dr Stanley Jones.

official, a District Magistrate in Bengal, to me some years ago, "My district will be a Christian country before so very long. There is hardly an educated Hindu home in which the Bible is not an honoured and often-studied book." The Barrows lecturer in India last year was urged to give as the title of his series of addresses the one word "Jesus." Everywhere he had crowded Indian audiences.

I was reading St Luke's Gospel with a Brahman student. When we came to the Magnificat his pace quickened. I noticed, and intended to enquire further, but my attention was distracted, and it passed. Next day we read the Nunc Dimittis. Again the same quickening of pace. This time I paused. "You know these words?" "Yes, sir." "But you told me you had never read the Bible." "No, sir." "Were they in your school-readers?" "I don't think so." "Then how do you know them?" "Sir, are they in your Christian prayers?" "Yes, they occur in our daily evening prayer." "Oh! then that is how I got to know them. My old grandfather, when he was too old to see, used to make me read your Christian prayers to him every night before he went to sleep." Daily Evensong in a Hindu home!

Missionaries have sometimes expressed a nervousness lest this new receptivity towards the Gospel may be only the opening of a door to absorb Jesus as the latest addition to the Indian Pantheon: a half-way house which may deter from further progress to full Christian truth. Only little faith that knows not the might of the living Jesus can thus fear. He is no

passive recipient of worship. He is alive, regnant. His is new wine that will burst the wineskins. "The idols He shall utterly abolish. The Lord alone shall be exalted in that day."

We are watching the slow ripening of the harvest of a century of Christian missions, working through school and hospital, wayside preaching, and printing press.

## I

Let the respectable pew-holder who has visualized foreign missions in a solitary black-coated figure standing under a palm-tree, transport himself in imagination to a mission compound in a great North Indian city. The picture is in part imaginary, and the compound is not altogether "typical"; modern missionary work in India is so varied that it would be hard to say what is truly typical. We will choose a place where an unusually large number of different pieces of work are carried on by a single mission. It should, however, be remembered that most single mission stations are more restricted in scope, and that differences in method and organization, due to differences in Church tradition, must be allowed for, if what is written here is to be related to the work of different societies. With this proviso let us to our compound.

By the gate as you enter is the mission house, where you will find the brotherhood of university men, English and Indian, with the chapel in which three times a day they kneel together for inspiration and

for prayer. Across the road behind you is the sisters' house where the women's community lives. In the centre of the compound stands the church. It is early morning, and if you visited the mission on a Sunday you would watch the crowded congregation of white-robed men and women, boys and girls, disperse; their place to be taken by a much smaller congregation of English men and women. For the brothers minister also to the little community of merchants and officials whose business has brought them to make their temporary home amid the heat and dust of this Indian Birmingham.

On one side of the compound lie the imposing buildings of the college, where three of the brothers, aided by a staff of university lecturers, are busy in classrooms with hundreds of Hindu and Mohammedan students, aspirants for the B.A. or B.Sc. degree. They are lecturing on Shakespeare or electricity or Aristotle. But the education they are giving their non-Christian pupils finds its focus and dynamic in the daily Bible class, where it is the missionary's privilege to seek to share with listeners, often wistfully eager, the secret of life in Christ. It needs to be remembered that spiritual freshness is at least no easier to maintain in India than in England, and that even the Scripture class can become dead and monotonous alike to teacher and taught. Beyond are the college hostels where the brothers live, like tutors in an English college, with their students, Christian and non-Christian. Across from the church lies the boys' high school, of which another brother is head master. In his boarding houses he has got his pupils, hundreds of them,

at an earlier age, and through staff and prefects is seeking to build character upon the foundation of Jesus Christ. For these boarding houses, each in charge of a Christian master, and the playing fields beyond, are an even more powerful influence than the classrooms. In the mission house are living one or two older Indian students being prepared for Holy Orders; and behind is the boys' orphanage, in charge of yet another brother. Down the road is the printing press, the iron foundry, and the carpenter's shop, where these same orphan lads are being trained to earn their livelihood. Opposite the workshops is the women's hospital, with eighty beds, and hundreds of out-patients. Daily in each ward and in crowded out-patients' hall the simple story is told of Him who loved and healed the sick. But quite as powerful a sermon is the skilled and loving service of nurse and doctor, in whom the love of God is again incarnate. If the Church is His Body, those hands may be the very hands of Christ.

You have finished your round and are turning back for luncheon to the mission house, where you are joined by a couple of brothers, one Indian and one English, tired and hot and dusty, but keen to tell you of a morning spent at the preaching hall in the crowded bazaar. First came the address, followed by question and answer, and then an hour or two of talk with a little ring of interested enquirers, who have purchased each a penny Gospel and will come again to find out more. At lunch you meet the head of the mission. He has just come back from a municipal meeting, at which he has been called in by both sides to

mediate in a communal disturbance between Hindus and Musalmans.

After lunch you cross over to the women missionaries' house. Here you find a girls' school under a Newnham graduate; and an orphanage with a lace school attached. Farther on are the cottages of the rescue home, where Indian women are being lovingly lifted to new life in Christ. Surely none tread more closely in the footsteps of the Master than the sisters in charge of this home of hope for those whom Hinduism left helpless in the mire to be trampled under foot: helpless because their life of shame was unescapable recompense of faults committed in a previous birth.

You meet again the workers from the hospital, and also two of the sisters preparing for an afternoon round of house-to-house visitation. If you are a woman perhaps they will take you with them on their round. When you reach the first house on the list you walk straight through the open door into the courtyard, and you ask of anyone you may see, "Where is the mother?" You are perhaps directed upstairs, and you call as you ascend, "O Mother of Rama, where are you?" Whatever she may be doing, whether cooking or sleeping, your hostess will always give you a welcome. You are never made to feel that you have come at an inopportune time, even though the mother of Rama may be taking her much-needed midday sleep. In most houses in India the women rise before the dawn and work at household tasks; they sleep or rest in the middle of the day, and cooking or other domestic business will usually

keep them occupied until about midnight. Mrs Urquhart tells a story of how on one occasion her visit disturbed a widow at her cooking. She was about to break a ceremonial fast which had lasted for forty-eight hours. The visitor begged her to finish her cooking and to eat her meal, but she said cheerfully, "What is eating? It is better to talk with you."<sup>1</sup> You sit down on a chair if the house boasts such an article of furniture; otherwise you will sit tailor-fashion on the low string *charpoy* (bed) or on the floor. Then the sister will talk to the women and perhaps give two of them a reading lesson, using one of the Gospels as a text-book; and so after an hour you pass on to the next house on the list where a similar scene will be enacted. Maybe that afternoon you are privileged to watch new life and hope dawn in the eyes of some woman whose life till to-day had been a dreary round of hopeless drudgery. As the missionary talks (or the women read) of One who is ready and waiting to be their Friend, who loves them (that is what is often so strange and new—that *anyone* should love them!) and gave His life for them, you will see joy born in a joyless life: the joy that no man can take away.

And so we begin to understand how it is that to-day there is in India a widespread conviction of the moral power of the Christian Gospel.

## II

Christ is Lord of Indian thought to-day, but not yet of India's life, which means that the vital, the

<sup>1</sup> See *The Goal of India*, chapter iv.

revolutionizing step is still to come. Why? In the realm of religion He is admitted by all to be majestic, by many to be solitary, supreme. But that may only mean that even Christianity, like every other religion, is a thing visionary and impracticable, not suitable for everyday life. For clearly Christian nations do not attempt to apply His teaching in politics and business. "Sir, we would *see* Jesus," is what I seem to hear my students saying all the time. The Sermon on the Mount is a thing beautiful, peerless among religious classics; but plainly inapplicable in a workaday world like ours. "We have had enough of preaching. We all have Bibles. We only want to know one thing—Is it practical? Can it be done?" "Sir, we would *see* Jesus." They will turn to us and say: "You English are a profoundly practical people. You have had Christianity among you for a thousand years. And your common sense has given it its real value. It is excellent for Sundays and church services and the emotions of private piety. But you are far too shrewd and clear-sighted to dream of making it the basis of your political and business life." Thoughtful Indian patriots want to know whether Christianity is practical as well as beautiful. For all their disillusionment they are looking West, to the experience of Christian nations, before they venture on the experiment of making it the basis of their own new nationhood.

"I long to follow Jesus Christ," said an earnest Hindu student to me in my hostel one day, "but when I look at the lives of Christians, I think I shall do better to remain a Hindu. . . . I love Christ, but

I do hate Christians." And then, at the bottom of the stairs, as he turned to bid me good-night : " Sir, you know, if it were not for the Christians, we should all be Christian."

It is probably true that this attitude of wistfully disappointed responsiveness is characteristic only of the devouter sort, and will seldom be found outside the ranks of the intelligentsia. None the less it is common enough to make missionaries in India walk about with a new humility. How we felt it in the first months of agony after the outbreak of the war ! The shame of the Church's failure, after two millenniums, to control the international situation ! Plainly there was something radically amiss with Christianity in the West, with all the best Christianity we knew. Instinctively I got off the platform from which I did my lecturing and stood down on the floor among my students for the religious period. " The so-called Christian nations have failed. I've failed, we've all failed—miserably. Quite evidently the West has not found out yet what the following of Christ really means. But you and I both want to follow Christ. Cannot we find out together how to follow Him properly ? " There was at once a note of new responsiveness.

It is not easy for the missionary to keep the learner attitude, on which the winsomeness of his work so largely turns. He has come to teach, and to teach those who do not know. It is hard to avoid a certain superiority of attitude and tone, a cocksureness, an " I am right and you are wrong " spirit, which spoils relationships. It is trebly difficult for the missionary

who conceives that his principal work is the preaching of certain doctrines rather than the living of a certain kind of life. The propagandism of doctrine breeds controversy and a hardness that repels : and a closedness of one's own mind that makes it difficult to ask for open-mindedness in one's hearers. It immensely helps if, instead of teaching down to them, we can take our place beside them as those who also have very much to learn. Then we shall find many of our hearers eager to join with us in the common endeavour to live like Jesus and to discover how to build society upon His principles.<sup>1</sup> There need be no pride of self-assertion then, but a humility that is completely genuine. The war in some ways made the learner attitude more easy for us ; and it led us to put the living of a certain life rather than the believing of certain doctrines in the front of the missionary aim. Of course for the living of that life the pre-requisite condition is the surrender of the heart to the lordship of Jesus. It is here that the Hindu hesitates. And he is not going to be led very far towards that surrender by authoritative doctrine.

The first demand of the religiously-minded in new India is to see Christ, rather than to hear of Him. Is it not strange that we unsentimental and practical Britons, who believe in deeds rather than words, have in our missionary methods given such an exaggerated place to preaching ? And in India of all places,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. K. T. Paul in *Young Men of India*. The missionary " proposes to present Christ so far as he has apprehended Him, and he further proposes to join with India in a further exploration of the mind of Jesus."

where words are so cheap ; where words have often been not so much a vehicle of truth as a screen of defence for a disarmed nation against their rulers.

That was not God's way when He wished to speak to men so that they should listen and understand. "The Word of God became incarnate," and went about doing good. First, deeds that made men think, then words that explained their meaning. The healing of men's bodies went hand in hand with the preaching to their souls. For what men needed to learn then, and what they need to learn in India to-day, is that God is Love.

Yet too often we send out our catechists to preach morning and evening in the open air. For the remainder of the day they may rest and prepare for next day's preaching. Too often still they have not been taught that friendship, love, service is their first business : to be the handy man of the village, welcome in every home, the friend of all the children, there to nurse the sick or give sage advice about crops or illness, and to help to make the village school a centre of community uplift. And therefore few have listened to their preaching, and fewer still have been impressed.

Nor are we left to negative or theoretic argument. There can be little question that no bit of missionary activity has so profoundly impressed Indian opinion as the work of the Church in the uplift of India's outcastes—the untouchable sixty million whom Hinduism consigns to an hereditary bondage and degradation from which down all the ages there can be no release. You have only to pass from a village of

Christian pariahs to a neighbouring animist village to have a palpable demonstration of the uplifting power of the Gospel. Clean clothes, clean bodies, decent cottages and streets, self-respecting men and women, children bright and trustful on their way to school: these are so many tangible arguments for Christianity which thrust themselves upon the attention of Hindu observers, and which simply refuse to be ignored. Externals are not always superficial. There is always an internal of which they are the expression. And so far as externals go, these are folk of whom it is self-evidently true that "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creation." Ten thousand years hence the scavenger's descendant can still only be a scavenger. For uplift and the grant of equal human rights the submerged sixth of India can look nowhere but to the Christian Church.

True, reforming and progressive Indian patriots are to-day giving themselves with undeniable sincerity and earnestness to the removal of untouchability and some of the more inhuman prohibitions of caste tyranny. But even this beneficent movement is in part motivated by political apprehension lest by conversion to the Christian Church the depressed classes be lost to the Hindu electorate. And though there may come an amelioration of inter-caste relationships, caste itself must remain, dividing India horizontally into hundreds of water-tight compartments, in perpetuity. For Hinduism, as an organized system, is simply caste, and only by abolishing itself can Hinduism abolish caste. Even Mahatma Gandhi, with all his ardour for the removal of untouchability, advocates

the maintenance of the principle of caste. Despite all the advance of democratic sentiment under the impulse of the new nationalism, it still stands true to-day that in the last resort the hope of the outcastes rests upon the Christian Church.

### III

The new nationalism has yet a further meaning for the Christian Church. The day of the English missionary as controller and director is passing rapidly. Only a Church that is truly Indian can draw India to the feet of Jesus. It remains then to ask—How far is there an Indian Church to-day, an Indian body with which the Holy Spirit can clothe Himself so that India may see and worship Christ, God manifest in the flesh: a living brotherhood within whose fellowship there shall be neither caste nor colour bar?

You stand under the shade of a graceful forest of waving coco-nut palms on a strip of sand over a hundred miles long and nowhere more than two miles broad, and gaze out over the great ocean the other side of which washes the shores of Africa and Arabia. Behind you stretch the placid waterways of Travancore and Malabar, now widening out into broad palm-lined lagoons, now winding in narrow channels of dense jungle back to the foot of the hills where the red slopes of laterite rock and soil shine through the vivid green of luxuriant vegetation. It is the land of spices, ginger and cardamom and pepper, of tea and

coffee, of rice and coco-nut and tapioca. The jungle up the mountain slopes behind is the haunt of bison and elephant, of stag and leopard. On hill top, or peering out from under palms in a clearing by the edge of the lagoon, are white-washed churches, suggesting that here in India you are in a Christian land. A land of bishops too! You will find eight or nine rival bishops claiming jurisdiction in a single centre, each of them looking like Moses or Aaron from a picture Bible, venerable with mitre and flowing beard and robes of gorgeous crimson or purple.

For the Syrian Church was planted here before the times of Aidan and Augustine. Christian preachers, sailing over the seas with merchantmen to this same coast, or tramping with dusty caravans across the scorching desert sands of Persia and Baluchistan, came here with Cross and Gospel in the fourth or even perhaps the first Christian century, just as, long before, the white sails of the fleet of Solomon and Hiram had come here for peacocks and precious stones and spices. Here you will find a sixth of the entire Church of India, relatively affluent and cultured, an hereditary aristocracy; a community which has produced three of the five first classes won by Indians at Oxford. The Church is indigenous, self-governing, with splendour of ritual, and its own stately liturgy; a Church which at least is Asiatic, for its base has been Antioch, not London or New York; a Church with the fragrance but also the mustiness of antiquity.

Surely here is a natural foundation of the Church in India. Yet this Church, planted in India more than a millennium ago and endowed with a piety of rare

attractiveness, is rent by schism, and its life-blood is drained by caste. For it is deeply tainted by the infection of its Hindu environment. The Syrians are to-day a caste almost as close and self-centred as any caste in Hinduism. You could wellnigh count on two hands the Syrian Christians who have married outside their caste. It would be hard to find even the Syrian priest who would tolerate a pulaya (untouchable) within his house as a domestic servant. Pulayas petition foreign mission boards in London not to leave them to come again under the rule of Syrians who for centuries have oppressed and exploited them. And the Syrian Church has been till recent years entirely non-missionary. There is not on the face of the globe anywhere a single church that owes its Christianity to Travancore. Barren because paralysed by the selfishness of caste, this ancient Syrian Church can only become spiritual mother to India when a flood-tide of new sacrifice and missionary zeal bursts the bonds of caste and pours itself out over the thirsty plains of India.

#### IV

For the rest, the Church of India (Romans excepted) is the fruit of modern missions—British, Continental, and American. A church of rapid growth, it is increasing by thirty-three per cent each decade. They are coming in by adult baptism at the rate of about three thousand every week ; drawn almost exclusively from the bottom stratum of Hindu society, the untouchables to whom Hinduism has for centuries denied even

ordinary human rights. A magnificent monument of Christian charity, splendid in possibilities of future uplift, the adhesion of these masses of illiterate and raw recruits seems at first to import as much of weakness as of strength into the Christian Church. They at once drag down the average level of education in the Christian community. With them "the missionary's task is one of rebuilding life and society practically from bedrock foundations."<sup>1</sup> Their history has been, not the transformation of personal character by an individual conversion, but a movement in mass, prompted often by material, or at least mixed, motives. For in Hinduism the individual is only a cog in the caste wheel. It is the society, the caste that acts, not the individual. In the origin of the movement conscience (the conscience of the leaders of the caste) made a clear pronouncement: Christianity touched the untouchable. Can you feel the thrill of the untouchable, when for the first time a kindly hand was laid upon his shoulder, and a brotherly voice bade him stand up and be free? Judged by its fruits, Christianity seemed clearly better than Hinduism. The shackles were off. The path lay open to upward progress. And so the whole caste moved and was baptized. Is it so very different from the kind of thing that happened, for example, by some Northumbrian burn, when a Paulinus would on a single day baptize the chief and several hundreds of his followers? Is not Europe to-day a mass of baptized paganism, whose Christianization is the business of the twentieth century Church? Baptism in this case is not the seal

<sup>1</sup> K. T. Paul in *Young Men of India*.

upon a complete individual conversion, but a ceremony of initiation, by which the convert is, as it were, admitted to the Christian school. Thenceforward the work of the Church is the transformation of its baptized members into personal Christians.

And then some of these babes in Christ, eager and untutored, go off to the neighbouring cantonment or civil station to take service in a Christian house. Are they going to learn there how to become real Christians? They watch the life of their English master, some young army officer or government official, and mark the place prayer and Bible study and Sunday worship have with him, and still more closely note his character and habits, and shape their own accordingly. And then that same master, with centuries of Christian heredity behind him, turns round in the club and abuses Christian servants because they are not better Christians than himself!

The pressure on the missionary of masses of these outcastes clamouring for teachers and for baptism at times passes all endurance. Several deputations are on your veranda before dawn, waiting to press their claims.

“Sahib, we want you to send teachers to our village.”

“I am sorry, but I have none to send.”

“But, Sahib, we want to learn all about Christianity.”

“I know, but it is impossible.”

“But, Sahib, we want to become Christians.”

“I am very sorry, but you cannot.”

“ Sahib, cannot we become Christians ? ”

“ No, go away, go away.”

And the missionary drives them from his veranda, angry, indignant with the apathy of the Church that has placed him in such an impossible position.

Heavier, if less urgent, is the weight of another anxiety upon the missionary : the care and education of the members who have been admitted to Christian baptism by his orders, because he dared no longer refuse them. One mission reports : “ Between 1896 and 1916 we added barely one thousand Christian boys to our schools while the Christian community increased by 260,000.” And what matters almost most of all is the kind of education that is to be given them. At present these humble field workers are often given a merely literary education, better fitted to prepare clerks for Government offices. “ Babu, we are poor, we must cultivate our bread. We dare not send our boys to school. Education makes boys hate to plough. If our children get educated, they will not work with us in the fields. Then we shall certainly cease to live.” So spoke a villager to a college student of mine, eager for social service, who was urging on his tenants the opening of a village school.

But here missions are breaking fresh ground. At several places in India, and most notably at Moga in the Punjab, a new type of school is being developed, and a new type of teacher trained for the work of the village school. These schools are based on the belief that the school ought to be the centre of the life of the village, and that it ought to provide, not a way

whereby the clever boy may escape from his rural home but a way for the ordinary boy to serve and help it. The Moga institution consists of a middle and primary school together with a class for the training of teachers; the buildings are good but simple, and there is plenty of land for both wet and dry farming. Moga, however, has become notable mainly as the place where the "project method," known to educationists in the West, has been most completely related to Indian conditions and to the life and experience of the Indian village boy. This is not the place for the exposition of pedagogical methods, and it must suffice to give the barest outline of a type of work which is being very closely studied by educators, both official and private, all over India. The central idea is to use the natural interests and purposes of the child, and so to direct them that problems present themselves which need for their solution knowledge that the child has not in his possession, so that he becomes keenly anxious to acquire it. One sees, for instance, a class busy with the building of a model (a big model) of a village house; or concerned with a "project" of a village farm; or of the village post office. To count, to measure, to write, to read, are all things that the child speedily finds he has to learn if he is to get on with his self-imposed task. Here again the use of methods familiar in the schools of the West, but all too rare in India, ensures that reading and writing and the rest are acquired without that appalling waste of time which is so common in the Indian village school. It is a matter for reflection that by the

consent of most of those who have studied them nothing has yet been found which fits so intimately into the life of the village boy as these methods born of the teaching enthusiasm of men and women thousands of miles away from India.

It is a long way from a few experimental bits of work to the accomplishment of the gigantic task of education outlined above. The first thing, however, is to find out what methods hold out hope of success ; the next is to apply them as widely as possible. So far, it has to be admitted that the leadership in these new methods of village education is foreign, but already this is ceasing to be so. Against the antipathy which conservative Indian Christians feel to what (quite wrongly) is thought to be a plan for keeping boys from getting the chance of literary education, must be put the enthusiasm for the new scheme of those Indians who have entered into it most fully, and who are seeing the vision of the village renewed in its life by the school, with its night classes for adults, and by the co-operative bank and perhaps agricultural museum worked in touch with it.

## V

We are facing the question of whether there is indeed an Indian Church which can reveal Christ in His power and beauty to young nationalist India asking to see Christ lived ; a Church, too, which shall set the outcaste free. If we hesitate before giving an affirmative answer, let us ask whether

perchance our church building in India has departed in any crucial point from the Apostolic model.

In the New Testament we do not read of "the Church of Asia Minor" or "the Church of Greece" but of "the Church of Philippi," "the Church of Corinth," the "Churches of Asia" or "all the churches of Christ." Each city had its own church: independent and self-governing. It had its own ministry, the elders or natural leaders of the community having been ordained and left in spiritual charge. Each church was able to propagate itself, and could at any moment found a daughter church elsewhere, which like itself should be complete and independent, with its own ministry from the first. Contact there was with the mother churches—Jerusalem, Antioch—but though Paul and Barnabas went out with a commission from the parent church, they imposed or provided no foreign ministry, and for rules only the simplest and most fundamental principles. Names and facts make it plain that the ministers were often, not Jews, but newly baptized Gentiles. The work of missionary propagation was spontaneous, unofficial, uncontrolled: as friend shared with friend the new joy he had found. And it was amazingly vigorous and successful.

Plainly the early history of mission churches in India has in some respects followed different methods. Very rarely has the missionary felt able at once to ordain the natural leaders of a convert community and to leave them in spiritual charge. Often he has himself stayed on to minister to them; or he has put someone from outside in charge, either an ordained pastor or even a lay teacher trained at headquarters.

The reason has been an altogether understandable fear lest strange doctrine should creep in. It has not always been remembered that in the past heresies have mostly sprung, not from the enthusiasm and ignorance of illiterate men, but from the speculations of learned men. The regrettable, entirely unintended, result of the imposition of a stranger in spiritual charge, a man neither chosen nor maintained by the local church, has been that the community loses at once its sense of independence and responsibility. Without an autonomous ministry of its own it has not the power of founding daughter churches elsewhere ; and it soon loses even the desire to do so. Clearly the duty of propagating the Gospel and founding infant churches belongs not to it, but to the superintending mission authority ! And so we have had little or no experience of the spontaneous expansion of our convert churches. The loss of initiative has meant the sterilizing of the infant church.

Doubtless it would be unwise to press parallels too hard. But the reason for the failure to secure that the average Indian church shall be self-propagating and equipped with such simple local ministry as will suffice it for pastoral oversight, discipline and worship, must be sought deep down. The situation is not likely to be improved by tinkering with methods. It is a time when new ways may be tried. Why should not a test be made with the natural leaders of little Christian communities, ordaining them to a local ministry for pastoral oversight, the leading of worship, the administration of sacraments and the enforcement of discipline ? The need for better equipped teachers

could be met in other ways : for instance, by the often-discussed method of a ministry of travelling preachers. The essential need is for the immediate self-expression in spiritual work and service of those who have become Christians, and the risk of some doctrinal aberrations is less serious than that of religious stagnation and parasitism. What converts men is more often personal witness to Christ than correct theological doctrine, and it is conceivable that an India spread over with the uninstructed witness of new converts might be nearer to Christ than one guarded from theological error by our present system. The independence which is essential to life means risks ; but it means just such risks as God takes when He leaves men free.<sup>1</sup>

On another regrettable feature of our present method there is wellnigh unanimous agreement. Through the payment by the foreign mission board of ministers and teachers, the Indian Church has come to be financially dependent on the foreign body. It has been "far from the thought of missionaries and boards to make their money a means of retaining control, but it is as futile in Asia as it is everywhere else to imagine that real independence is compatible with financial dependence."<sup>2</sup> It is, of course, true that the degree to which the Indian Church supports its own ministries increases every year, and the amount of money given by Indian Christians for Christian work has been known to evoke the admiring comment of Hindu observers. What is

<sup>1</sup> Throughout this section I am under deep obligation to an unpublished work by Mr Roland Allen.

<sup>2</sup> Dr A. J. Brown, *International Review of Missions*, 1921, p. 489.

perhaps more important than the immediate dependence on foreign missions is the question which is forcing itself on many minds—whether the whole system built up by the foreign missionary is not somewhat too expensive for Indians ever to maintain wholly for themselves. The Indian, it is said, can afford to be a Hindu or a Musalman; he needs foreign help to be a Christian. Moreover, the difficulties inherent in “mass movements” have been intensified by the fact that the message has come to the outcaste not from his poor and unsupported outcaste brother but from the (apparently, and comparatively,) wealthy and influential foreign missionary.

The result has been that the Indian Church to-day is in a measure crippled in its task of providing a welcome and a fellowship for the outcaste millions of India; and to the educated man it bears a foreign aspect which makes it hard for him to believe that the Christian Church can be meant to be the spiritual mother of his people.

Worse still: we are perpetuating in India all our Western schisms. If in Britain the reason that determines a man's religious denomination is more often heredity than personal temperament or conviction, in India it is almost exclusively geography. An Indian is a Baptist or an Anglican or a Presbyterian or a Roman Catholic simply because he was born in a district where the local mission belonged to that particular denomination. Converts from Hinduism, eager nationalists perhaps, who should be brothers in Christ, find themselves split again into exclusive groups, out of communion with one another because

of Queen Elizabeth's Act of Uniformity or the decisions of the Savoy conference. Could absurdity or tragedy go further? Indeed, viewed from any angle, the Church in India is still disappointingly foreign. The property is foreign owned; buildings, hymns, services are of Western pattern; almost everywhere Indians still work under foreign leadership and control; nine-tenths of the money comes from abroad; names, dress, methods, theology are the thinnest translations from the West; the final decisions in Indian Church matters still frequently rest not with ecclesiastical courts in India but with mission committees in London or New York. The foreign garb such a system wears is by no means its most disastrous consequence. The deadly thing is that a church so exotic in character and expression can have little of creative life or expansive energy.

We are not wiser than our fathers. We should probably have acted much as they did under their conditions. But we have their experience and mistakes from which to learn. More, we have perhaps a greater opportunity to know or to guess at what will be the distinctive fruits of Indian Christianity. Insight makes prophets, and there are those who tell us what some of those fruits will be. A reckless absorption in God which is more concerned with what He is than with what He gives; a passionate praise that loses itself in rapt absorption in the Deity; a serene indifference to money and comfort and the material good of life; a simplicity of fellowship that lavishly shares its all; an unhurrying sense of the Eternal and the Omnipresent that gives dignity and

poise ; a firm hold on the honourableness of poverty, the strength of patience, the beauty of gentleness : these are some of the things a Christian India will have to teach the West.

But it is not always recognized that Hinduism is itself cause of the unnatural foreignness which Indian patriots deplore. Hinduism is as remarkable for social intolerance as for theological hospitality. Yes ! you may be atheist, monotheist, pantheist or polytheist, and still be orthodox Hindu. But once you have acted in loyalty to an all-inclusive human brotherhood which bursts and floods out all cramping barriers of caste, Hinduism turns and flings you out with hate and contempt, an outcaste to find perhaps your only fellowship amongst the little group of foreign missionaries. Elsewhere a foreign Church may be due entirely to a mistake in missionary policy ; but in India, with these forces at work, what could happen but the institution of a "foreign" Church ?

In a new way Christianity is up against a religion in which the unit of action is not the individual but a social group. Does this mean that perhaps, under the Spirit's guidance, India's evangelization is going to proceed along new lines ? Is the method going to be the detachment of individuals one by one from their social group, and their constitution into an Indian Church ; or is it to be the permeation of the group by Christian influences, until at last there occurs the landslide and the Church that is to be is born in a day ? Take a kindred question. Is baptism a testimony directed primarily to the non-Christian world or to the Christian Church ? Is it

a challenge to the outsider or a ceremony of admission to the brotherhood, perhaps administered in the secrecy of a catacomb? Possibly a Roman master would not ever know which of his slaves were Christian. Would it in part disarm opposition if, when refusing to participate in some idolatrous rite, the neophyte were to say, not "I have abjured Hinduism and been baptized," but "I am trying to follow Jesus Christ"? Is the Christian convert intended to live a life of quiet witness in the home, by simple consistency winning first respect and then adherence; or is there to be at once the gash, the violent expulsion, so that from the first Christian witness is only to tell on the family from outside? Which way does it work in England? How does son win parents, or sister brothers? Sometimes it seems as if each baptism were the removal of leaven from the lump, the extraction from Hinduism of what might be its saving salt. It is possible to quote Scripture on both sides; and admittedly the blame lies on caste exclusiveness. But has the Church perchance to readapt its methods to a new environment? <sup>1</sup>

At least we have to beware of militarism in our Christian propaganda.<sup>2</sup> We have to make it plain

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the following from an article on Narayan Vaman Tilak, by Nicol Macnicol, *International Review of Missions*, July 1924, p. 381: "The final method of evangelism which, shortly before Tilak's death, took form to his ever-eager mind was that of what he called 'God's Durbar,' a brotherhood of the baptized and unbaptized disciples of Christ which should become 'a real universal family, to be known as real friends of men and real patriots through whom the world gains once more a vision of the Lord Jesus Christ.'"

<sup>2</sup> There is another subtle danger against which the missionary has to guard. Like imperialism in politics, missionary propaganda

that, if we hate the evil in Hinduism, we love Hindus. Indians have to recognize in missionaries, not an attacking army, but a company of friends. Our fight is with evil, but our weapons are love, not controversy; and we take hands, even if we are older pupils, as fellow-learners at the feet of Christ.

Meantime there are practical steps to be taken. There is general agreement that if we are to have a genuinely Indian Church which can be the instrument of India's evangelization, there must be as speedily as possible transfer of authority from the foreign mission to the Indian Church. Schemes of "devolution" are not exciting, but it is nevertheless a source of great encouragement to see the divers ways in which missionary bodies in all parts of India are facing this question, and how steadily the area of the responsibility of the Indian Church is increasing. Perplexity arises sometimes over steps and stages. The bulk of the money is still foreign, and there are those who claim that "he who pays the piper calls the tune."<sup>1</sup> It is, however, plain from the actual course of events that this view is no longer very influential; for many missions are committing large amounts of "foreign" money to bodies in India on which there are not only

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may be a veil disguising desire for the triumph of one's own people or party or opinions. Indeed the two taints are often found together. In their attitude to Indian nationalism, missionaries are sometimes Englishmen first and Christians second. This is a tendency to which educated Indian sentiment is acutely sensitive. An honest and cordial sympathy with legitimate Indian aspirations (most of all when they seem to clash with Britain's!) is probably an essential qualification for the missionary to-day.

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps the piper knows best what tune he can best play!

Indian representatives but large Indian majorities. An indication of this trend is to be seen in the transformation of the National Missionary Council of India (a body representative of missionary societies, with a sprinkling of co-opted Indians) into the National Christian Council of India, with a membership at least half of which must be Indian, representing the Indian Church.<sup>1</sup> If a London committee can be trusted with the administration of missionary contributions raised in Lancashire, why not an Indian Church committee with funds raised in England? Indians (like other people) may be willing to spend freely whatever charitable doles may come their way; but once an important fund is theirs absolutely and unconditionally, an Indian finance committee will be at least as shrewd and careful as any board of Englishmen. And yet to all senior missionaries there come times when our heart fails as we look forward to the day when final control shall have been handed over to the Indian Church. I was confessing to an influential member of one of the old autonomous Syrian churches my misgivings in regard to what seemed to me the rather irresponsible proceedings of one of our

<sup>1</sup> The existence of the Council is perhaps the most notable proof of the growing determination of Christians in India—both Indians and missionaries—to work together. It enables common thought and work to be given to such vital Indian problems as rural and higher education, the production of Christian literature, and the study of evangelism; and affords a means whereby the Christian forces may apply themselves to public questions such as industrialism, the use of drink and drugs, etc. Information about this work can be gained from its monthly organ, *The National Christian Council Review* (Edinburgh House Press, 5s. 6d. per annum).

Indian diocesan committees. My friend at once replied: "Oh, but that is because the property and responsibility are not yet really theirs. Once the painter with England is cut, and it is their own Church and their own future that they make or mar, you will see quite a new responsibility and statesmanship. I know the anxious days and sleepless nights we all spend over the affairs of our own Church, because it is our own."

But the real difficulties lie deeper. While the English missionaries come to the infant Indian Church with so rich an heredity of skill and character, is it natural or healthful that they should be ruled in council by men less able and less experienced? But again, it has to be asked, is forcefulness really strength, and may it not make for the real efficiency of missions if they are directed by men who, however lacking in rapidity and administrative gifts, have the incomparable advantage of understanding by native and incommunicable instinct how best to approach their fellow-countrymen? It may be wisest policy for the foreigner to sit still and learn. What is done may be done far more slowly, but it may be far more sure.

After all, there is a strange similarity between the problems that at this juncture confront a foreign missionary society in India, and those which in the political sphere confront a foreign government. Is it to be domination, withdrawal, or co-operation? We reject domination, not because it is becoming oppressive or intolerable to the ruled (though it is all that) but because the way of domination, even if it were not inherently unchristian, is the way of certain failure. A Church that is foreign by imposition from

above can never be the tree, rooted in Indian soil, whose branches are to fill the land.

Equally impossible is the way of withdrawal. If the Catholic faith needs for its fulness the Indian contribution, equally will India for many decades to come need the service of Western Christianity. It cannot be the purpose of God that the churches of Europe are to stand aside and take no further part in what is the biggest task facing the Catholic Church—the winning of Asia to Christian discipleship. All are needed everywhere if the world is to become indeed the Kingdom of God and of His Christ. The Catholic Church at least means fellowship.

As in politics, so in religion—we are left with co-operation as the only way. “Not that we lord it over your faith—No, we co-operate for your joy.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 2 Corinthians i. 24—Moffatt's translation.



## CHAPTER VIII

### THE CALL OF INDIA

SEVEN years ago there appeared in one of the weekly papers a picture that set many of us thinking. It was the picture of an open door. Through on the other side of the door you could see representatives of the nations—Indian, Chinese, African and the rest—now almost consciously crying out for Christ: helpless, and half aware that, but for Him, there is no way out. On this side of the door stands a Figure, and a glance is enough to tell you who He is. But you are startled and bewildered, for His hands and feet are shackled, and He stands powerless to move, powerless to pass through the door to the other side, where stand the nations perishing for lack of Him. Does the picture depict fact, or is it wild exaggeration?

It is plain, appalling fact. There must be countless places all over the limitless expanse of India's scorching plains where Christ stands to-day yearning in love over men and women for whom He died, and hindered in His access to them for want of the witness of those who know Him. Normally, at least, it may be said that Christ has no lips, no hands, no feet other than those men give Him. That is why the Church is called His Body. The metaphor is not idly used. Whether it be through spoken word or printed

page or act of loving service, the Church is that by which God's Spirit ordinarily works. It is organic to His purpose. To-day in India, in countless villages and before the hearts of countless men and women, Christ stands waiting : waiting for someone through whom to do His will, to say and do the things He wishes.

That is the vision that impels the missionary to go where Christ is still unknown, and keeps him there ; the great ambition to set Christ free.

We have talked of the Church in India. But the hard fact is that in most of India (for God's India is an India of people, not square miles), the Church does not exist at all. The dominating fact in India to-day is that nine-tenths of her three hundred million sons and daughters simply do not even know of Christ. There are scores of millions of India's people to whom the word Christian, if it means anything at all, suggests little more than a hat and trousers, and the English language.

This book means nothing if it has not made plain that only an Indian Church can make Jesus Lord of India's life. The characteristic work of the missionary is the founding of the Church. Once that has been well and truly done, the foreigner's work is the serving of that Church with any gifts he has. But so long as there is an area or a community where the Church has not yet been effectively planted, so long the pioneer missionary has his function and his obligation.

Now it seems as though it would be an easy task to take a map of India and paint it red wherever the

Church exists, and black everywhere else. But at once a question arises. Here in this country town is a church with thirty members. How many miles outside the town may you carry your red patch? How many thousands of people will a little church, or a missionary, effectively evangelize? How many scores (or hundreds) of people have you yourself been able really to influence at one time? Suppose there is a church or mission in the town which is the Government headquarters of a district of a million people. Towards the outside of the district can the Church really be said to be "there" at all? Your answer to these questions will probably be that two hundred and fifty million out of India's three hundred and twenty million may at once be painted in black upon your map. Think of it: still two hundred and fifty million in India among whom the Church has not yet been planted!

But you are not at the end of the puzzle even yet. In India the Church is confronted by a situation of which she has had no previous experience. In addition to all the ordinary barriers imposed by distances and geography, India is split by caste into a thousand water-tight compartments. The proclamation of the Gospel once over each square mile of territory will be of extraordinarily little significance in India: if, indeed, it counts for very much anywhere. We will suppose there is a flourishing church among the leather-workers in a city. But for all its influence on Brahmans or the higher castes, it might be a hundred miles away. True, the landlord will be impressed by the change Christianity effects among his outcaste

tenants, but such influences are for the most part slow and indirect. It was very different two thousand years ago in a Roman household, where culture, education, or female charm might obliterate the barriers between Greek slave and Roman master. The barriers between caste are rigid and all but impervious to social influences. Caste counts for far more than locality. You may have the Church planted all over the map, but until it is within each caste grouping, you are not very much further on. The great mass of caste Hindu agriculturists—half India's entire population—are as yet almost wholly unreachd by the Church of Christ.

Obviously then, there still remains immensely much of pioneer work to be done in India—*missionary* work, to be initiated from outside. The question is, by whom is it to be done—by the Indian Church or by the foreigner? The answer probably is—by both together. The Indian Church is still too small, too unevenly distributed among the castes, too scanty in resources, cultural, economic and, alas! spiritual also, to be able to plant out the great host of Christian witnesses needed if all the unreachd communities are to be effectively evangelized. There is still urgent need and ample occupation to strain to the uttermost the missionary possibilities of Christian Europe and America. The day is still far distant when the Church of the West will feel there is no more missionary work for her to do.

But the missionaries of the future must learn well the lessons of the past. The new churches which they start must be independent from the first, with their

own ministry, capable of propagation and spontaneous expansion. There must be no dependence on or ruling by the foreign missionary. Still less must he enter on the paymaster relationship. So soon as the Church is planted he becomes, not its ruler, but its servant and helper. Never from to-day, if possible, must the missionary stand in any other relation to the Indian Church. Wherever the Church exists, his function is to serve and help Indian effort. And how eager (and how happy) is the acceptance of such service whenever offered!

There is in South India a Christian college, the only college started and maintained by Indian Christians. Principal, Vice-Principal, and all but one of the governing body, are Christian Indians. Four English people, three men and one woman, occupy subordinate positions as lecturers on the staff, alongside eight Syrian Christians and four Brahman colleagues. The visitor sees at once that it is an amazingly happy fellowship. In part, its infectious comradeship is explained by the special character and history of the college. A group of young Syrian Christian graduates, all lecturers in Government colleges or the Madras Christian College, resigned their posts, their pensions, their security, in order to embark on a great adventure. Oppressed by the divisions of the Syrian Churches, and their selfish deafness to the missionary call, they conceived the vision of a teaching fellowship of men drawn from the different Churches, who in the unity of Christ should set about a common Christian enterprise: a college which should lead the Syrian Churches at last to give

themselves for India's evangelization. No church, no society was behind them. Finding themselves thus singularly free from rules, authority, traditions, ruts, a yet higher ambition seized them. Often have individuals sought to place their lives entirely at God's disposal. Might they perhaps offer to God a *community* which should be completely under His control, plastic, free for whatever He might want? Accordingly it is their custom to settle all important matters by agreement in God's presence. We of the less patient West would settle most things by a majority vote in one-tenth of the time, in order "to get something done." But it seems that by this other method not "something," but the will of God gets done. And though everything has to be settled from the very beginning, without the simplicity of one-man-rule, in a surrounding atmosphere of litigation, new schisms and bitter controversy, the happiness of the fellowship has never yet known the strain of personal rub or friction. Poverty is the rule. The staff, with no endowment, and incurring the hostility of the Hindu State, have nothing but their students' fees out of which to pay their salaries. One year they voted themselves no December salary in order to balance their accounts. Indian fruit is ripening here. And in that little fellowship where West serves East, some people have seen an exemplar of the way through some of India's greatest problems.

Not very dissimilar, and in some ways more Indian still, is a Christian Ashram (Retreat), also in South India. Two doctors, one Indian and one Scottish, have founded a brotherhood on Indian lines. Abjur-

ing servants and comforts of all kinds, in simplicity of service they wait on one another and on any guests or wanderers, and give of their medical skill to the sick and suffering. They have all things in common. There is an entirely Oriental absence of formality and routine. Free from all cares, they give themselves to the service of the moment. We get a vision of the ascetic simplicity and unworldliness of India concentrated and transfigured by the motive of unselfish service.

Such things happen when the West is willing to serve and help the East. In the two examples given the inspiration and initiative have been Indian. More often the Englishman alongside the Indian Church will find himself at first in charge. What then? Quite clearly he is as quickly as possible to exchange leadership for service. His function is to teach and to inspire, not to direct; to persuade, not to order; to serve, not to rule.

This is not unproved theory. One man at least has done the thing, and has, by the path of lowly service, achieved such a position of reverence and leadership as has seldom been attained by any foreigner in any country. Twenty years ago C. F. Andrews made the great renunciation. He became an Indian that he might win Indians. Wearing Indian dress, eating Indian food, ready to discharge any act of even menial service for any Indian, living as a guest in Indian homes, Andrews is to-day a loved and honoured leader whom any Indian will follow. Time and again he has been the chosen mouthpiece of Indian opinion. When taking the step, he maintained that before we

can preach with acceptance to an Indian audience, we must first win unquestioned recognition as friends of India. "After years of prayerfully seeking the best method of the Christian life, I decided that I must simply be a servant to the Indian people, and my purpose is only to serve them and not to direct them." By his generous and fearless assertion of India's rights to nationhood, Andrews blazed with drops of martyr-blood, amid the contumely of his fellow countrymen, the path in which to-day we tread easily. It was the loneliness that was worst of all. To-day, when Andrews speaks of Christ, India listens. And "it is an amazing thing," writes Dr Macnicol, "that the most intimate friend of the two most famous living Indians (Gandhi and Tagore) should be an Englishman and a Christian."

Service, teaching, inspiration. The more one reflects, the more those three words seem to sum up the function of the foreign missionary in India to-day. But how?

Immeasurably more by life than by work. Not by things done, but by the spirit shown. Within a week of landing, an older missionary said to me: "Your missionary work will not be to carry through your daily programme, but to take your interruptions in a Christian way." That is the window through which the interrupter—and the onlooker too—will catch his glimpse of Christ; and will believe. We prevail more by what we suffer than by what we do.

The Englishman's ideal is efficiency, by which he means getting things done. But the new world of sister nations, some weak, some strong (as the phrasing

goes), draws its ideals from education rather than from imperialism. And in education the aim is to train another to do things as well as, or better than, yourself. Only that missionary is efficient who has made himself superfluous. It is the educational ideal that gives its enthralling zest to missionary work. There is scarcely a human science for which the mission field does not supply an incomparable laboratory. Medicine, economics, philosophy, history, and theology stand out as obvious examples among many others. The missionary call has been inadequately presented if it does not thrill the home student with the romance and interest of unparalleled opportunity for self-expression.

But there is much else besides romance that goes to make up a missionary's day. Someone has to keep accounts and someone has to run the mess and someone has to manage servants. Weary miles have to be tramped under a blazing sun before you reach the village where you are going to preach; and toilsome hours ground through in the preparation of lectures and the dreary monotony of exercise correction. And there are mosquitoes (that supreme test of a missionary vocation) and stifling nights, and the humiliation of being unable to make any servant understand an order. And there is always the sheer grind of a language to be learned. People are not necessarily easier to get on with because you are living in the tropics, nor colleagues more congenial because they are chosen for you by other people and sent out to share your home life. In four out of five mission compounds the real problem will, on investi-

gation, turn out to be just personal relationships. And then the things that matter more than these, things that rack a missionary's faith : years when you wear your soul out and never a convert ; or worse still, converts who prove to be moral putty and whose end is shame and tears ; fellow-workers and subordinates who let you down ; and the spiritual dryness that comes through isolation from Christian fellowship and means of grace. To some will come the arch-tests of shattered health and desolating bereavement. A missionary needs to add to his zeal a love that never fails. .

Our mission stations are for the most part busy hives of unceasing industry. The number of missionaries allotted them is the minimum needed to get through the work. Some of the missions that seem most rapidly accomplishing their aim of the foundation of self-propagating churches are those where the primary stress is laid on life, not work ; where the aim is the living in fellowship of an unhurried Christian life ; where prayer is the chief activity of the day ; where God's house was built before the missionary's. There is a fragrance about such places that opens the Indian heart to Christ. Until our present Christian forces are enlarged there is little doubt that what we need is fewer stations and a brighter light in each. Many a missionary has been humbled by the fact of his own perplexity as to where he could send an enquirer, or a weak and often stumbling penitent, and be sure of an atmosphere that was Christian enough to save. But every mission station ought to supply just that.

With what earnestness, bred of patience and failure,

any veteran missionary, unbuckling his armour at the end of his day's work, would say to the recruit : "Before you come to India, learn to pray." Early hours of work in the cool of the morning, and the publicity of an Indian bungalow, seem leagued to rob the missionary of his time for prayer. How many a life of eager missionary devotion loses its bloom, and the fresh graciousness that alone attracts, through the gradual and unconscious dropping of the prayer habit ! And if the missionary would lead his people to share with him the secret of a life that is lived by the help of God, it is not enough for him to preach on prayer. It was when they saw Him praying that His disciples came to Jesus and said : "Lord, teach us to pray." Example is more powerful than precept : above all in India, where words are cheap.

We Westerners are strangely slow to practise our own proverb that what tells is not the quantity of the work we do, but its quality : that and that alone. Only the Christian influence that is profound enough to lead others into actual discipleship to Jesus will avail for the growth of the Church. All diffusive missionary activity that falls short of this fails to arrive.

Missionary opinion is beginning to question the actual Christian impact on its pupils of a school where the head master is a Christian but the rest of the staff are Hindu or Moslem. Might not more happen if nine such schools were to be closed down and the Christian staff concentrated in the tenth ? What converts and makes character is not the lesson but the man behind it. The experience of schools in

England is evidence enough that there is nothing magical even about the Scripture class.

The passing of Indian education under Hindu control is going to make it luminously plain that quality is the only thing that counts. No mission school or college is going to survive that is not in demand for the sheer excellence of its work. We shall have to lift our educational standards till they are worthy of the name of Christian. And no Bible teacher is going to have any class at all unless his pupils are drawn there by spiritual hunger or the force of an attractive personality. It has always been true that the teacher who could not assemble his Bible class without compulsion would not do much with them when he had got them there. And many Christians have found it difficult to picture the Master consenting to speak of the things of God to an audience mustered by compulsion. But it is probable that the "conscience clause," already in force in one form or another in four provinces of India and in Ceylon, will be extended ultimately to all. Almost all missions have accepted it where it has been imposed, and some have gone so far as to impose it on themselves voluntarily. None who have worked under the "voluntary" system have found that it has injured, and many have found that it has improved, the religious value of their work. And the experience in missionary history of every form of opposition has demonstrated for all time that the disciple of Jesus, who loves and serves, will never lack an audience when he speaks of his Master.

Of all forms of educational work none is more impor-

tant than that among girls and women. The emancipation of India's women is coming on apace. Last year for the first time the President of the National Congress was an Indian woman. Last year a woman was called to the throne of the large state of Travancore, and is ruling with refreshing fearlessness and vigour. Last year in the same Hindu State an Indian Christian woman was made head of the State's medical services. In Madras University last year there were sixty women graduates. All signs of the times.

Missionary work among India's women came comparatively late. Yet nowhere more than in India does the mother (or more often the grandmother) rule the home. It is women who are making the next generation of India's men. And yet the number of missionary schools in India for girls is far less than the number of boys' schools; although the standard of teaching and the Christian atmosphere in the girls' schools are frequently superior.

And nowhere are the results of the gospel so evident to the eye as amongst Indian women.<sup>1</sup> That woman walking along the path, purposeful and erect, and with simple unconcern—it is nine chances out of ten she is a Christian. You may know India's Christian women almost anywhere by their gladness and their poise. When Mr Gandhi wrote the narrative of his visit to Travancore, his first sentence was a tribute of admiration for the Syrian Christian women he had

<sup>1</sup> On re-reading, I find I have made almost the same statement in regard to work among the outcastes! I leave it at that. Logic must stand second to the evident truth of both passages.

seen everywhere he went. It is the first thing that strikes every visitor from the North.

India stands wide open to the man or woman who wishes to live a life of service. Not only to missionaries comes her call for the best help that the West can give. Here is a great nation in the making, which, in the expansion of her commerce and her industry, in the development of her natural resources, in the wide diffusion of sanitation and of medical aid, in the rapid extension of irrigation and of facilities for transport, in the provision of progressive agriculture and of healthful and inspiring education, as well as in administration, cries out for our assistance. Eager is the welcome India will give the man who comes to serve her. Only it must be service, not rule or exploitation. The question she silently asks of every man who lands upon her shores is this: Are you here for your own sake or for ours? And she is a shrewd observer. The day of domination is setting fast. India may be "lost" as a "dominion" but she offers grateful fellowship to the nation whose princely motto is *Ich dien*. सत्यमेव जयते

Merchant or mechanic, doctor or engineer, teacher or farmer, are you going to force your way into a livelihood at home, and almost always be in competition with another man about as good as you? You may come out East and almost anywhere lie down at the end of a tired day, thanking God you are where you are because you are wanted.

It is the motive that settles everything: that settles between service and self-seeking; that determines the welcome you will get in India.

Do you say, a Christian England first? You cannot get that Christian England without a Christian India. The world is a single front. You can never get rid of the slums of Birmingham so long as there are slums left in Bombay. The cheap stuff will find its way round somehow, and drag down the levels of human life at home. When the nations meet together to consider a universal eight-hour day, they find that they cannot forget India and Japan. Labour is international.

It works in another way too: an England that is exploiting more backward races, making them serf nations for the development of her own material prosperity, can never be a Christian people. The man, the human stuff in our dependencies, must count before his products every time. The League of Nations summons Britain to trusteeship instead of exploitation. A greatness is looking our England in the face to-day, a greater greatness than has confronted any other nation, the greatness not of rule, but of service. Can we rise to the new challenge? A Christian India and a Christian England—both together. Neither without the other. Not all can come abroad. But you who are compelled to stay at home can have your part in missionary work. "Sir, we would see Jesus." That is India's wistful cry. Are you going to make it possible for us to say to the Indian enquirer: Go to London, Manchester, Glasgow. There you will see Christ lived. There you will see commerce and politics governed and permeated by the Christian spirit.

The world is a single whole. Only a few years ago

there was a large part of stay-at-home Britain that found itself, found a new dignity and unselfishness, in living, not for itself, but as a base for a war in France. The Church in Britain will find salvation when it becomes a base for world-wide missions. Of churches as of individuals it is true: "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for My sake and the Gospel's, the same shall save it."

After all, whether at home or abroad, the missionary motive is extraordinarily simple. It does not depend on any particular views as to the future of the heathen. What is it sends a missionary abroad? What is it keeps him there, only more radiant, more hopeful though the battle is so uphill, and the years seem to yield so little of evident fruit? It is just this: he has Christ, and they have not. It is the knowledge that Christ came to him, wiped out the barrier of fear and guilt that kept him far away from God, lifted him from sin's mastery and made him conqueror, carried him in His arms when sorrow would have overwhelmed him. It is the daily experience of a help that comes from the Unseen, of prayer answered and guidance given, of the fresh welling up of hope each day, of a power not his own that (down the years, as he watches in humble wonder) is making him more like Jesus. Christ has changed all life for him, is to him more than all the world beside. It is this that makes it the passion of his life to share Christ with those who otherwise could never know of Him.

Think of all Christ means to you. State it cautiously in minimum terms. It means at least this—and how much more that can never be expressed

in words, of peace and joy and help and a divine companionship, but this at least—that the universe is friendly and that the ultimate decisions are made by love; that the Omnipotent has a heart like Jesus Christ's; that there can always be recovery and that the ultimate triumph of goodness is assured; that death is not the end, but the gate to an endless fellowship with a Father-God. Think of all of hope and light that Christ has brought to you; and then sit down and try to visualize what it must mean to a whole continent of peoples to have to face life's struggles and calamities, its perplexity and loneliness, without that light, that hope.

Is there any other way through for India than discipleship to Jesus Christ? Hinduism at least contains within itself no hope of better things. The record of four millenniums in a relatively secluded peninsula tells us what manner of fruit we may expect of Hinduism. What help can come of a religion which has nurtured and tolerated the hopelessness and oppressions of the caste system; the tyrannous cruelty of untouchability; the heartless horrors of child marriage; the confusion of gods who can be numbered by the million and hardly one of them with a moral character that can be trusted; the terrors of a universe peopled by spiteful fiends and demons? Under Hinduism men have come to think of life as a meaningless existence, stretching through millions of rebirths and ending full circle exactly where it started; of love and comradeship as a beautiful dream which death for ever terminates.

India contains within herself no new secret that can

rebuild her life. Her patriots are at work to-day on the making of a new nation. Have we any higher word to say to them than, "Make Jesus King." "I am the Way"?

Think once again of India's age-long search for God. Think of all that is lovable in her. Think of all the gifts she has to offer to God and to mankind, and say if your life must not be given to do all that in you lies, whether here or whether there, to make Jesus India's King and so to render her the highest service in your power.



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## APPENDIX I

### AMRITSAR—EVIDENCE GIVEN BY GOVERNMENT WITNESSES (*see page 53*)

The Punjab government's case, as presented to the Commission states :

The movement against the Act, working up to the general demonstration of the 6th, was not of itself of an exceptional character. There was not, as far as can be ascertained, any general intention of carrying it beyond political agitation and passive resistance.

For the disturbances that ensued we must look mainly to local causes.

It needs to be remembered that the Commission, whose narrative we are following, examined few besides official witnesses. It will be granted that the persons most likely to know of the existence of conspiracy in any district would be the senior civil official and the police. Mr Tomkins, Deputy Inspector General of Police, Punjab, came to the conclusion "that behind and beneath the disturbances there was no organization such as could not be seen by any one following political developments in India during the last few years."

Mr Miles Irving, the Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar, in his evidence to the Commission stated :

"I cannot point to any fact existing before the 10th

of April to suggest that in the beginning of April there was any plot on the part of any stratum of society in Amritsar to encourage violence against Europeans or upset the Local Government by violence."

*Question :*

"Would it be consistent with the facts as you know them, to regard the outbreak of the 10th of April as the case of protest against the deportation of Drs Satyapal and Kitchlew, which spontaneously developed into mob violence marked by murder and incendiarism ? "

*Answer :*

"I think that is a very good account. It spontaneously developed. It flared up in a moment. I do not think people went out with that design."

This is the evidence of the two Officials who in the nature of the case would know most, and who, if any, were there to state the government's case.

Similarly Mr Guider, who was deputed to conduct investigations into the Ahmedabad disorders, said that he could find no organization behind those disturbances, and that there was no connection between the Ahmedabad disturbances and the disturbances in other places. And in Delhi, throughout repeated disturbances between March 30th and April 17th "there was never any attempt to damage government buildings or any attack on Europeans as such." "In no place were the mobs provided with any fire-arms or swords or other weapons of that character." "At no time was any attempt made by the crowds to

obtain arms by raiding the houses of licence-holders or the ammunition shops."

Simultaneity of trouble was due quite simply to the *hartals* proclaimed in connection with Mr Gandhi's non-co-operation movement.

The evidence from which the above selections have been made is quoted at greater length in the Minority Report of the Commission (pages 92-97).

## APPENDIX II

### *Re THE MONTAGU-CHELMSFORD REFORM SCHEME* (see page 56)

THE measure provides for an elective non-official majority of Indians in all the Provincial Legislative Councils. About half the administrative departments (known as the "transferred departments") were placed under the charge of Indian ministers responsible to the Councils; the remaining departments (known as the "reserved departments") continued to be administered by persons who in practice are either Indian laymen or officials of the Civil Service, appointed by and responsible to the Governor. The heads of both the transferred and the reserved departments sit together as the Governor's Executive Council, which thus has an Indian majority. The budget in respect of the transferred departments is voted by the Legislative Councils with their Indian majorities. The budget in respect of the "reserved" departments is not votable by the Councils. The

Governor has the power of veto, and may on his own motion enact such measures, financial or legislative, as he deems necessary, even if they have been rejected by the Council. The regulations in regard to the general government are similar, though somewhat less democratic, the Viceroy's Executive Council being solely responsible to himself.

The resultant scheme is known as Dyarchy, from the twin systems of responsibility working side by side, and is confessedly transitional, and designed to give India experimental training in the working of responsible government as a stage on the way to complete self-government. Its weakest point is the smallness of the electorate, which comprises only eight million out of a total population of three hundred and nineteen million. Even so, a large part of the electorate is illiterate. But this is a defect inherent in the existing conditions of India's development.



### APPENDIX III

EXTRACT FROM LETTER WRITTEN BY PANDIT MOTILAL  
NEHRU (*see page 126*)

“ You will be interested to know the kind of life I am leading here. In the good (?) old days, two kitchen establishments—one English and the other Indian—accompanied me in the hills. After Chota Hazri in camp, we would start off for the jungle with a full equipment of rifles, shot guns and ammunition, and on occasions with quite a little army of beaters,

and killed such innocent creatures as came in our way till late in the afternoon—lunch and tea being served in the jungle with as much punctilious care as at home. A hearty dinner awaited our return to camp, and after doing full justice to it we slept the sleep of the just! There was nothing to disturb the even tenor of life, except occasional annoyance at a stupid miss which saved the life of some poor beast.

“And now—the brass cooker (purchased in Delhi when we were all there for the opening of the Tibbi College) has taken the place of the two kitchens, a solitary servant not over intelligent, that of the old routine, three small bags containing rice, dal and masalo that of the mule loads of provisions; (I shall never excuse Kamla for making these bags of Bideshi cloth instead of Khadi); one square meal of rice, dal, vegetables, sometimes khir (milk and rice cooked together) in the middle of the day, that of breakfast, lunch and dinner *à la Anglaise*—lots of fruit with morning and afternoon tea and an occasional egg or two when available. The Shikar has given place to long walks and the rifles and guns to books, magazines and newspapers (the favourite book being Edwin Arnold's *Song Celestial*, which is now undergoing a third reading). When it rains hard, as it is doing now, there is nothing but to write silly letters like this. ‘What a fall, my countrymen!’ But really I have never enjoyed life better. Only the rice has given out, and I have applied Brahman-like for a dole from the ministerial stores of Jagatnarayan who happens to be near. 21st July 1921.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This letter appears in *Young India*, p. 687.

## APPENDIX IV

*Re* STATEMENT OF BRITISH PURPOSE IN INDIA

(see page 136)

“ We came as traders and adventurers, spurred on by our desires and wishing to make money. We were, against our will, drawn into politics and wars, and found ourselves appealed to on every side in the excitements and emergencies of turbulent times. In the end we found ourselves rulers of the country, and realized that we had been used for a higher purpose than our own. We then began to talk about our moral mission, and there is no doubt that we ended by thoroughly boring our audience. Nothing so infuriates the average Indian as the self-complacent Englishman’s talk about his moral mission. That, however, does not alter the fact that we have been used to render services to India.” [*Statesman* (India), leading article, April 9, 1925.]

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