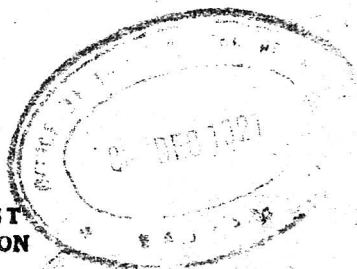


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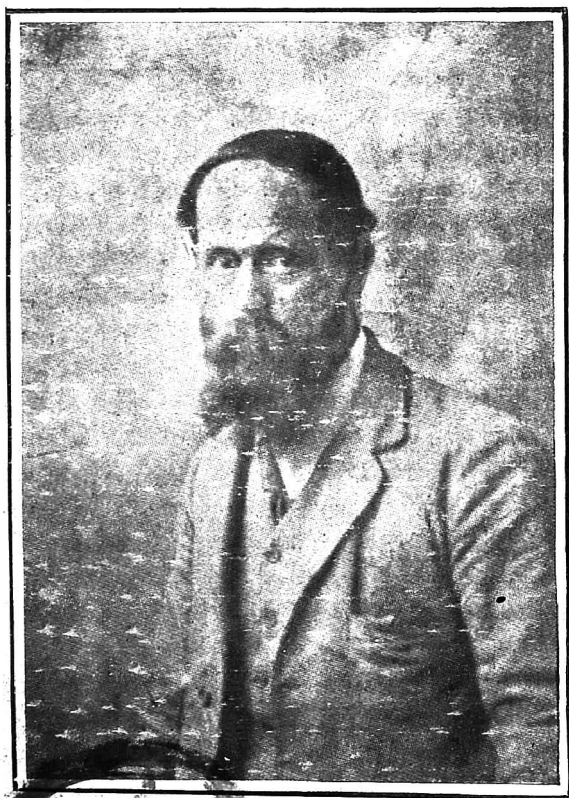


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CONTENTS.

| | | |
|-----------------------------|-----|-----|
| Indian Independence | ... | I |
| India and the Empire | ... | 20 |
| Letters on Non-Co-operation | ... | 69 |
| The Swadeshi Movement | ... | 104 |
| National Education | ... | 108 |
| The Drink Evil | ... | 117 |
| The Opium Trade of India | ... | 122 |



C. F. Andrews.





Indian Independence.

—:o:—

I

WE are living in strenuous days, wherein we are being taught more and more, through sacrifice and suffering, to face realities, and not to acquiesce in that which destroys manhood and self-respect.

We do not want pleasant things said to us: we need the truth. It is in the sense of the awakening of these days and of the need of facing unflinchingly the facts, that I shall try to write, at a time when writing is very difficult on account of ill-health. I wish to go down to foundations, to ask ultimate questions. Why are we seeking suddenly to-day independence, with such desperately earnest haste? Why do we feel to-day, as we never felt before, that other things may be postponed, but this struggle for freedom cannot be postponed even for one single hour?

There are many answers which I might give to these questions; but I shall give one answer, which has forcibly appealed to me for many years and has shaped my intellectual thinking about India. It appears to me to go to the root of the whole problem.

There is a book called 'The Expansion of England,' by Sir John Seeley which, if possible, every Indian student should read for himself. First of all,

notice the title,—‘The Expansion of England.’ The book records the expansion of England; and yet more than half the book is about India. That fact itself should make us pause and think. To Sir John Seeley, India during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is regarded as an instrument in the expansion of England. India is the passive, pliable material by means of which England was able to stretch out her Empire over the rest of the world! What a fate! What a destiny! What a lasting indignity for three hundred million souls, to be made an appendage to the expansion of a small island called England, seven thousand miles away in the North Sea!

This book of Sir John Seeley’s is a blunt and plain-spoken book. Otherwise I should not trouble about it, or wish Indians to read it. Here is one of the things he says. It is a very famous passage. I will quote it in full. Remember he is writing in 1882,—nearly forty years ago. He had not witnessed the world-shaking events of the twentieth century. He says:—

“There is, then, no Indian nationality, though there are some germs out of which we can conceive an Indian nationality developing itself. It is this fact, and not some enormous superiority on the part of the English race, that makes our Empire in India possible. If there would arise in India a nationality movement similar to that which we witnessed in Italy, the English power could not even make the resistance that was made in Italy by Austria, but must succumb at once. For what means can England have, which is not a military state, of resisting the rebellion of two hundred and fifty millions of subjects? Do you say, as we conquered them before, we could conquer them again? But I explained that we did not conquer them. I showed you that of the army which won our

victories, four-fifths consisted of native troops. That we were able to hire these native troops for service in India, was due to the fact that the feeling of nationality had no existence there."

So far Sir John Seeley has made clear the point (which has often been emphasised since) that England did not *conquer* India, but only holds sway in India on account of India's acquiescence. Mark, then, very carefully what follows. Sir John Seeley continues:

"Now if the feeling of a common nationality began to exist there only feebly, if, without inspiring any active desire to drive out the foreigner, it only created a notion that it was shameful to assist him in maintaining his dominion, from that day almost our Empire would cease to exist. For of the army by which it is garrisoned, two-thirds consist of native soldiers. Imagine what an easy task the Italian patriots would have had before them, if the Austrian Government which they desired to expel had depended not upon Austria but upon Italian soldiers! 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 become manifest to us. For it is a condition of our Indian Empire that it should be held without any great effort. As it was acquired without much effort on the part of the English state, it must be retained in the same way. We are not prepared to bury millions on army upon army in defending our acquisition. The moment India began really to show herself what we so idly imagine her to be, a conquered nation, that moment we should recognise perforce the impossibility of retaining her."

I shall leave this passage to speak for itself. Does it not explain the psychology of the present movement? For what have we seen, on every side, as Mahatma Gandhi has gone from place to place and province to province? Have we not seen just that very "feeling of a common nationality," on which Sir John Seeley lays so much stress? Have we not seen the "notion created," as Seeley says, "that it was shameful to assist the foreigner in maintaining

his dominion?" Have we not begun to realise, in our humiliation, that we *are* regarded as a *conquered nation*? Surely, all these things have come to pass. May we not then hope that the end is not far distant; that Swaraj may be even now knocking at our very door, seeking to enter, and that it is we ourselves, and not the British, who are shutting it out?

I shall take one other passage in conclusion, which has become almost equally famous. Sir John Seeley has been discussing the well-known historical maxim, that revolutions do not occur when people are at the lowest depth of misery, but only when they are looking up and recovering hope. He then goes on as follows:—

"But if India does begin to breathe as a single national whole—and our own rule is perhaps doing more than ever was done by former governments to make this possible—then no such explosion of despair, even if there was cause for it, would be needed. For in that case the feeling would gain ground in the native army, and on the native army ultimately we depend. We could subdue the Mutiny of 1857, formidable as it was, because it was spread through only a part of the army, because the people did not actively sympathise with it, and because it was possible to find native Indian races who would fight on our side. But the moment a mutiny is but threatened which shall be no mere mutiny, but the expression of a universal feeling of nationality, at that moment all hope is at an end, as all desire ought to be at an end, of preserving our Empire. For we are not really conquerors of India, and we cannot rule her as conquerors; if we undertake to do so, it is not necessary to inquire whether we could succeed, for we should assuredly be ruined financially by the mere attempt."

I leave these two remarkable passages to be carefully thought over by every student. One thing, I believe, will come out, namely, that the attainment of Indian Independence must essentially be based, not on any appeal to arms, nor on any violence, but on

a complete realisation by the people as a whole of Indian nationality.

In the light of this fact, cannot we understand what a God-given blessing it has been to India, at such a time as the present, to have Mahatma Gandhi in our midst? In the next chapter I shall try to show still further from Sir John Seeley's book "the immediate need for independence."

II

I now come to the two historical maxims put forward by Sir John Seeley concerning Indian independence, which long ago attracted my attention. These have seemed to me, the more often I have thought of them, to be profoundly disturbing. They have forced me to see how deep the evil of *dependence* lies, and how hard it is to eradicate it.

The first maxim may be quoted in Sir John Seeley's own words, as follows:—

"Subjection for a long time to a foreign yoke is one of the most potent causes of national deterioration."

I wish every word of this sentence to be very carefully noted. Not every subjection, but subjection *for a long time* is one of the most potent causes of national deterioration. One hundred and sixty years have now passed away, during which India has come more and more in subjection to the yoke of the British Empire. Such a period is surely 'a long time.' Therefore, if Seeley's maxim is true, every year that India remains in subjection to England in the future will only drive the national deterioration deeper and deeper. How much *longer*, then, is India to go on in

this state of dependence? Is not every year that passess only adding to national deterioration?

There then is one terrible fact of history to be faced. Any further remaining in a state of dependence within the British Empire would appear to mean an increasing measure of national deterioration. We must, therefore, at once awake and shake ourselves free.

The second of the two historical maxims presented by Sir John Seeley forces Indians into a dilemma from which there appears to be no escape. He faces the ultimate question of the withdrawal of the British Government from India. With regard to such a withdrawal, he uses the following sentence, which has been one of the most often quoted from his book:—

"To withdraw" he says, "the British Government from a country like India, which is dependent on it, and *which we have made incapable of depending on anything else*, would be the most inexcusable of all conceivable crimes, and might possibly cause the most stupendous of all conceivable calamities."

This sentence, which I have italicised, can only have one meaning. It implies that India has no way out of her difficulties. The historian can look forward to no period when India will be able to depend upon herself alone for protection. The rule of the British in India is regarded as a parallel to that of the Romans in Britain in ancient times. When the Romans left the shores of Britain, the wretched inhabitants, we are told, gazed longingly after them as the Roman ships departed, being themselves too weakened by foreign government to have any powers

of self-defence left. Even so, Sir John Seeley appears to think, the people of India have so lost the powers of self-government and self-defence, that it would be a crime to leave them to themselves. This standpoint is taken again and again throughout the book ; and it cannot be lightly treated as though it was of no historical importance. I will give one other passage :—

"India," says Sir John Seeley, "is, of all countries, that which is least capable of evolving out of itself a stable government. And it is to be feared that the British rule may have diminished whatever little power of this sort India may have originally possessed."

What a confession is this for an English historian to make ! What an impossible prospect for India herself ! It seems inevitably to imply perpetual dependence and subjection.

Thus we have come to an impasse, in following out Sir John Seeley's closely reasoned argument. The situation is as follows : If dependence and subjection to the foreign rule of the British Empire continue, then national deterioration of India is likely to increase. Yet, along with this, withdrawal of India from the British Empire is becoming more and more difficult because the dependence of Indians on the British Empire for support and protection is becoming more and more necessary.

Here we are involved in a vicious circle. Which-ever way we turn, the circle hems us in. I have thought over this problem, night and day, for many years ; and I confess I could find no solution.

But quite lately there has appeared to me to be one pathway opened, leading out of this terrible dilemma. It is this. If India could be granted, before it is too late, some God-given genius, who could stir up, not in one province only, but throughout the whole country, the spirit of independence, then there might be hope. If India could produce, out of her own resources, such an inspiring and unifying personality, then all might yet be well.

And surely this is what is happening before our very eyes to-day. At this most critical moment in Indian history, when subjection and dependence were becoming unbearable and insupportable, we have been given one who has roughly shaken our age-long conventions and has uttered the *Mantram*,—"Be free: be slaves no longer!"

It is true that, with such a volcanic force as the personality of Mahatma Gandhi, there will be much destruction. Much pulling down will be witnessed before the building up can be seen. But the essential factor after all is the new atmosphere, the new spirit, the new life-urge from beneath which has forced its way to the surface. This, in the end, will be creative, not destructive. And the creation will go forward, when the new course has been taken, until the whole people is at last awakened to full national consciousness.

Whilst I myself find ground for hope and encouragement in the prospect which I have thus outlined, I can understand the attraction which the picture of

gradual development still has for many of the most thoughtful and patriotic Indian minds. I have had, myself, in the past, the strongest leaning towards this conservative and gradual ideal of progress.

But I would ask those who hold it,—How can you face the historical facts of an ever-increasing deterioration, if the British Imperial rule continues? How can you face these terrible sentences of Sir John Seeley which have been quoted above? Granted that the Reform Act has brought a certain measure of responsibility, does not the old fatal *dependence* on England still lurk beneath it? Is there any way of getting rid of the spirit of subjection, except by standing out unmistakably on the side of freedom? Can doles of Home Rule, meticulously meted out at the will of the rulers, create a new inner vital force? Even the British historian can hardly look forward to such a prospect.

This would be my own inner questioning of the conservative process, and the doubt in my own mind has been so great, that I have most gladly turned to the other prospect. There, in Mahatma Gandhi, we have a volcanic personality, a moral genius of the first order, who has revealed to us all the hidden power of a living freedom from within, who has taught us to depend, not on any external resources, but on ourselves. My whole heart goes out to his appeal, and I have a great hope that, along this path, independence will be reached at last.

III

I wish to repeat, in a somewhat different form, the argument which I have already brought forward. I shall not be afraid of going over the same ground again, because the subject is one of life or death to the nation.

Sir John Seeley has really told us the plain, unvarnished truth: "Subjection," he says, "for a long time to a foreign yoke is one of the most potent causes of national deterioration."

This sentence ought to be written on the heart of every Indian, with all the humiliation it implies. Until the humiliation is more deeply felt there appears no hope of remedy. As my friend, who has been the greatest help to my thinking all these years, Babu Ramananda Chatterji, has well expressed it: —

"A nation-wide movement can be produced only by a nation-wide disgrace, disability, indignity and wrong." What is this most humiliating common factor in our lives which can and ought to bring together men and women, the literate and the illiterate, rich and poor, prince and peasant, Hindu, Moslem, Christian, Buddhist, Jain, Sikh, Jew and Parsi, capitalist and labourer, Brahmin and non-Brahmin, "touchable" and "untouchable," "high caste" and "low-caste"? It is foreign rule and foreign exploitation. Whatever our grievances and wrongs and want of opportunity, foreign rule is a common disgrace which we must all feel.

The period of 160 years, since the battle of Plassey, is far too long a time to be in subjection to a band of foreign rulers, who have come from an island 7,000 miles away in the North of Europe. Such subjection, if Seeley's historical maxim is true, cannot but lead to national deterioration. This is why the need for independence is so immediate. This is why it cannot be postponed indefinitely, while other important things are being undertaken. God knows, there has been national deterioration enough! The last thing that we should wish is that it should go on any longer. We cannot sit down at ease, while this root-malady strikes down still deeper in the vitality of the nation.

The other terrible sentence of Sir John Seeley, which must act like a goad in spurring on every Indian, who loves his country, to take action, is contained in the paragraph where the historian declares that India has reached the stage of helplessness, when it would be a cruelty for England to withdraw.

"To withdraw," he says, "the British Government from India would be the most inexcusable of all conceivable crimes." Why? Because—these are his words—"we (*i.e.*, the British) have made India incapable of depending on anything else." And again, "It is to be feared that the British rule may have diminished whatever little power of this sort India may have originally possessed."

I have quoted these blunt, harsh and unpalatable sentences, again and again, because I want to drive

home to the mind the degradation which India has reached by tamely submitting to a foreign rule all these years, without making any united effort to throw off the yoke of subjection. Sir John Seeley, the historian, was looking at the problem from a detached and scientific point of view, as a curiously interesting phenomenon in history. But to Indians themselves, his words about national defencelessness ought to burn like fire. The inevitable result of the present state of things, according to Seeley, is that India is becoming every year more and more helpless, more and more unable to defend herself, more and more unable to evolve out of her own resources a stable form of government, more and more incapable of depending on anything else except the British power. I remember vividly even to-day how I went to my friend, Mr. Humphreys, the Deputy Commissioner of Delhi, in 1907, at the time of Lala Lajpat Rai's arrest, and protested that this arrest was the very way to drive Indians to despair. He used at that time, in the very kindest way, the argument of Seeley. Indians were defenceless and they must be protected even against themselves. The one thing needed was the Pax Britannica. Anything else could only end in the Pathans and Afridis and Afghans coming over the frontier. I remember the despair in which I went away after the conversation.

And, in very truth, though in many directions progress has been made since Sir John Seeley's days, and even since the year 1907, yet in one direction no.

improvement whatever has taken place. *National* India is as defenceless as ever she was before. And, I am afraid, an impartial historian would have to relate that national deterioration has been going on apace, in spite of Indian awakening and in spite of Indian progress in certain directions. I, for one, have come to believe that the state of the peasantry in India, under the crushing burden of military expenditure, is growing steadily worse. The Esher Report, which is already being acted upon in important details, shows the limit of Indian helplessness. A military budget which exhausts nearly half the national income in a country so desperately poor as India, reveals still further the deadlock reached in Indian affairs.

I have confessed that, for very many years, I had still kept fast, as an anchor to my mental thinking, the belief in a purely normal and gradual process of development,—a belief which might be taken as coinciding with that of the Indian National Liberals to-day. I have had sympathy with those thoughtful and patriotic Indian leaders, whose courage and integrity I had learnt deeply to respect,—men like Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Mr. Paranjpye, Mr. Sastri, Mr. Jinnah and Dr. Sapru, to mention a few names only,—who maintained the belief that regeneration could come slowly to India step by step, chiefly by appeals to England and at the hands of the English people. But now, at last, experience itself has taught me that

this way of thinking suffers from one fatal defect. There is no inner strength in it, no inner resource, by appeal to which India may be brought out of the vicious circle that Seeley so terribly depicts. Desperate diseases demand desperate remedies, not poultices and bandaging. Even if the dependence on England became more and more attenuated as year after year went slowly by, even if the Reforms gave certain privileges which had not been given before, these things would be a *gift*, a boon, an act of patronising condescension, and thus a weakness, not a strength; all the while the *spirit* of dependence would remain. And, if Seeley's diagnosis of the malady which afflicted India was true, then we had no time to wait. For while doles of Home Rule were being niggardly meted out with the one hand, independence itself was being undermined, and the fatal habit of looking to England, in a defenceless sort of way, was continuing. The disease within was still active.

Thus I came to realise, by the force of sheer practical experience, that the process of passive acceptance of gifts from England could not be relied on. Such an evolutionary process did not evolve, it only wandered round and round in a vicious circle, from which there was no escape. It therefore appeared to me more and more certain that the only way of self-recovering was through some vital upheaval from within. The explosive force needed for such an upheaval must be generated within the Soul of India itself. It could not come through loans and gifts and grants.

and concessions and proclamations from without. It must come from within.

Therefore, it was with the intense joy of mental and spiritual deliverance from an intolerable burden, that I watched the actual outbreak of such an inner explosive force, as that which actually occurred when Mahatma Gandhi spoke to the heart of India the *Mantram*,—"Be free! Be slaves no more!" and the heart of India responded. In a sudden moment her fetters began to be loosened, and the pathway of freedom was opened.

I have to enter on some personal details in my own life, in order to make my own position absolutely clear. I had felt, with an ever-growing conviction since I came out to India and was brought under the influence of Indian religious thought, the need of following quite literally Christ's words concerning non-violence, and about loving even one's enemies. During the later years, this inner conviction was put to the hardest test of all, because I had to determine whether I would take up arms in defence of my own country. After long months of doubt and questioning I decided that, even though my own home in England were attacked, I must not defend it by any act of counter violence. It was this inner conviction in my own life,—a conviction, which has now become to me the very soul and centre of religion, —that prevented me from regarding with approval the attempted armed revolutionary movement in Bengal which followed the

Swadeshi movement; although the courage of those who threw away their lives so fearlessly for the sake of their country won my unstinted admiration. It must be obvious from what I have said that I could not personally countenance any violent revolution, even though it led directly to Indian independence. I have never swerved for one moment from this principle of non-violence in later years. I have made it as clear as possible to Maulana Shaukat Ali to-day, and he fully understands my position.

But the more deeply I studied the history of India, and went to impartial historians, like Seeley, for my information, the more I found out that a violent revolution was not needed. India had not been conquered by British arras, but by the employment of Indian mercenary troops under British direction. Therefore, the complete reversal of this process of conquest did not need an appeal to military violence. It demanded simply a psychological revolt in the minds of the Indian people. To repeat the passage from Sir John Seeley:—

“If the feeling of a common nationality began to exist in India only feebly; if, without any active desire to drive out the foreigner, it only created a notion that it was shameful to assist the foreigner in maintaining his domination, from that day almost our Empire would cease to exist.”

There is another passage written by an Englishman, whose name I have failed to discover, which expresses the same sentiment in a different form. “Indians,” he says, “have only to refuse to work for Europeans, and the whole White Empire would be brought to an end within a month.”

Thus the verdict of the most sober English historians is this, that India, without a single hand being lifted to strike a single blow, can determine her own destiny. The sheer weight of numbers,—three hundred and twenty millions against a few thousands—is so great that if these numbers could once speak with one mind, their will must be carried out.

Thus one of my own earlier difficulties in taking an active part in the struggle for Indian freedom was automatically removed. And in these later days, I have known that Mahatma Gandhi's religious convictions concerning non-violence are even more deep and fundamental than my own. It was not, then, a question of violent revolutionary propaganda as contrasted with a non-violent programme. Non-violence is the underlying principle which has been put forward by Mahatma Gandhi in the clearest possible manner and with the clearest possible conviction. It is the very essence, the very centre of the whole movement.

But how to create a psychological revolution? How to bring about an entire reversal of Indian sentiment from dependence to independence? How to get rid of the inveterate fear of the Englishman among the common people? How to create among the masses "the notion that it was shameful to assist the foreigner in maintaining his domination?"—These were the questions that haunted me for years, after I had once for all realised how deep the iron

of subjection had entered into the soul of India. I hoped against hope, year after year, that the mentality of India would change, but until a short time ago I confess that there was little to give me confidence.

I disliked from the very first the pretentious and bombastic pronouncement of August, 1917, which arrogated to the British Parliament the right to judge the time and manner of each advance towards full responsible government. This pronouncement was vitiated again by the fact that India was permanently to remain an integral part of the British Empire. As the President of the Nagpur Congress rightly observed, "this kind of thing is nothing short of a pretension to a divine right to absolute rule over India". So then, I felt that there was but little hope of India's independence of soul being built up on this governmental basis.

Further more, the camouflage of equal seats for India, along with Australia, etc., on the Imperial Conference, and on the League of Nations, was too thin to deceive anybody. The one instance of Sir Arthur Hirtzel, of the India Office, signing the preliminary draft of the Treaty of Sevres, on behalf of the Indian Nation, is sufficient to show the depth of humiliation to which India has sunk under British rule owing to such hypocrisies.

Again, in spite of Australian 'white race' policies, South African Indian ghettos, and every other Indian racial degradation within the British Empire,

according to this governmental theory of progress Indians are forced to remain in the Empire as an integral part of the Empire, whether they wish it or not.

So then, in the atmosphere of August Proclamations, Reform Councils, Imperial Conferences and Esher Reports, I have had none of my doubts answered. These things only appear to me to prolong indefinitely the dependence of India upon Great Britain. Indeed, they seem deliberately intended to do so. No. No. Along this path, which has been tried, generation after generation, along this pathway of Reform Councils,—which is strewn with Proclamations and promises unfulfilled,—there appears to me to be but little hope of final deliverance. Independence will be undermined as often as it is built up.

On the other hand, I come back from this method of doubtful evolution to the more incisive method of Mahatma Gandhi. I can see that he cuts at the very root of the disease. He is like a surgeon performing an operation, rather than a physician administering soothing drugs. And, as his surgeon's knife cuts deep, we can see at once the recovery of the patient beginning to take place—the recovery of self-respect and manhood and independence. Seeley's own words are coming true at last. It is being realised by the Indian people, that "it is shameful to assist the foreigner in maintaining his domination."

India and the Empire.

I

AFTER many varied experiences in the British Colonies, while attempting to claim equality of status for Indians and to represent the Indian position of racial equality before my own countrymen, I have been carried forward almost imperceptibly, step by step, to the conclusion, that the goal of Indian freedom lies outside the British Empire. To arrive at such a conclusion has been no easy thing for me. It has represented the complete transformation of the thoughts and hopes of my early days,—the hopes, with which I came out to India itself, nearly eighteen years ago.

No one could have set out from England with higher expectations than I did. My inherited tradition with regard to the British Rule was a high one. My father belonged to the old conservative school in politics, which regarded the British Empire established abroad as almost divine in its foundation, and as likely to lead, through righteous administration, to the relief of the miseries and evils of the world. The unity of the British Empire was a sovereign thought with him : he would have died for it. British Rule in India was regarded by him as a sacred trust given to England by God Himself. He used to tell me with glowing enthusiasm how nobly England had

fulfilled that trust, and what benefits had been conferred thereby on India itself. Therefore, although I came out to India originally as a missionary, yet, at the same time, there was always the idea present at the back of my mind, that India was, as my father had taught me, a sacred trust committed into the hands of Englishmen, and that by the fulfilment of that trust Great Britain would stand or fall. I know that there seems something patronising and even Pharisaical about such a position. I can feel it now acutely. But I can assure my readers that my father was no Pharisee. His heart was full of love for all mankind. He inherited a tradition in these matters,—just as I did originally myself. Even at this later date, I would say frankly, that I am thankful for my father's teaching which remains still deep in my mind and heart. But I now read it in the terms of Indian Independence.

While this was my actual upbringing, my own experience since during many long and arduous journeys has convinced me that the Colonial Empire of Great Britain is entirely different from that which my father imagined it to be. It believes strongly in 'White' race domination. Such a dominance of one race over all others is by no means a sacred trust from God: it is rather a sordid commercial conquest and exploitation, in which process the 'White' race prejudice forms an important and integral part. Again and again, I have been buoyed up with ardent hopes that this lower side was a passing phase: that it would die out, as the higher culture came in. But I

have watched, at close quarters, the rigid determination of Englishmen to create at all costs, a 'White' dominion, from which coloured races shall be, as far as possible, excluded. I have seen how this determined effort has been based on the law of self-preservation, and how it has become inseparably mingled with the clamorous demand for the protection of the 'White' women. I have watched how this sentiment has gone far beyond the Colonial Empire of Great Britain, and has led to the increasing brutality of Negro persecution in the United States of America. This 'White' race religion, as I have often called it, has thus appeared to me, during my travels, to have become an incorrigible passion of the lower Anglo-Saxon mind, having all the fanaticism of a baser cult. I have seen it spreading its infection like some poisonous disease or some noxious weed.

Now, I know for certain, that the British Colonial will not allow the Indian to be near him on terms of racial equality, except where the Indians are so few in their numbers that for all practical purposes, they do not count at all. To show how overwhelmingly strong this fixed determination of 'White' race domination is, I will make an acknowledgment. I have found myself again and again, when in despair of the argument of justice and equality, pleading with my own fellow-countrymen on the ground of mere expediency. "You have stopped all immigration" I have said to them, "you can not possibly be swamped by India's coming in. Can you not

treat decently the small number of domiciled Indians, who will remain in your country?" To such low levels of appeal have I found myself reduced in those parts of the British Empire which have stopped all Indian immigration. No other arguments were possible.

This has happened so many times, that I have become sick and tired at heart, and now at last, since the conviction of the futility of the British Empire, as it now exists, has been brought home to me; since I can see no prospects within it except that of greater and greater exploitation of other races by the Anglo-Saxon; since it appears to me that this accumulation of racial arrogance must someday explode in a world-wide, terrible disaster—I have felt that the time has fully come and indeed is overdue, when it is necessary to stand out against this trend of events altogether. I do not wish, for one moment longer, either by word or deed, or even by silence, to be a participator in a 'White' race supremacy, which from the bottom of my heart I detest.

I am aware that the idea of complete Indian Independence is still regarded with suspicion, even by Indians themselves. The outlook is too adventurous for them: it takes their breath away, just as a boy, who is a weak swimmer, stands shivering on the bank before plunging in. Also there is a certain almost physical fear about 'sedition.' The fact is not realised, that the Great European War has altered the meaning of the word 'sedition' in almost every

country in the world. It is wholly legitimate to-day to regard the foreign sovereignty of the United States over the Philippine Islands as temporary and the British Protectorate over Egypt as temporary. What logical distinction is there between these instances and that of India ?

To me, personally, it has been almost an inexplicable phenomenon to find in India so deeply rooted this obsession of the mind, that, whatever may be happening in other countries, the British Rule in India is permanent. I have found it among devoted Indian patriots, and I deeply respect it where I find it; but I confess I cannot understand it.

It is quite true that 'Independence' is no new word or new idea. It was set forward, with the utmost bravery, in Bengal, many years ago. A band of revolutionary enthusiasts went joyfully even to death, confident that some day their dream of Indian independence would be realised. Their methods were often those of violence and the movement was suppressed. It was followed afterwards by a lesser and weaker claim for Home Rule under the protecting shield of the British Empire. This lesser claim for a long time held the field in politics. But it was never satisfactory. The truth is that even though, in outward speech, this final act of severance from the British Empire has not been prominently mentioned, the future is altogether on its side. If the present trend of events continues, it is likely to meet, sooner or later, with an almost universal acceptance just as

the same claim for independence in the Phillippines and in Egypt has now such a stronghold of the popular imagination in those countries, that it has the whole body of Philippines and Egyptians behind it. The world forces are moving that way. It is impossible for India herself to lag behind.

The immediate practical reason for my publishing these articles is, that I am about to take another journey abroad to the British Colonies ; * and I do not wish to set out under false Colours. But far deeper than this is the reason I have already mentioned. I wish to stand out, with all my might and main, against this detestable religion of the supremacy of the ' White ' race to which I referred above.

In spite of all the smooth and pleasing speeches at the Imperial Conference in London, last July, this frank rejection of racial equality, this ' White ' race dominion, is being sedulously preached in nearly every part of the British Colonial Empire. The newspapers from New Zealand, South Africa, East Africa reach me regularly. It has been a bitter commentary on Imperial affairs at London to find that, even at the very same moment that complimentary speeches about India were being made by the Colonial Premiers at Oxford, Glasgow and Manchester and other parts of the United Kingdom, even at the very time also that General Smuts was attempting to settle the Irish question on the basis of racial equality, at that moment the absolute domin-

* Mr. Andrews left for East Africa early in October 1921.

ation* of the White race was being insisted on at unanimous public meetings in East Africa, and a new Immigration Act of the most humiliating character was being put into force in New Zealand, as the result of anti-Asiatic campaign, on account of the arrival of a few more Indians than had been expected.

For the sake of clearness, I would here repeat in a somewhat different form the facts I have already given, for they cannot be too well known and understood. The experiences, which I have gathered at first-hand in the Colonies and Dominions, have convinced me that sooner or later the very presence of Indians is objected to by the Colonials themselves. The two exceptions are (1) where Indians come in such small numbers as not to be noticed; (2) where Indians are brought over under some degrading form of indenture as a supply of cheap and conveniently docile labour.

There is, up to the present, absolutely no thought of equality. The very idea is resented by the average Colonial. In practically every Colony and Dominion, the principle of the ruling White race prevails. It is a phrase which is constantly heard on the lips, and its spirit is in men's hearts. That is the naked truth.

I feel quite certain that, in after years, we shall all look back with wonder and ask ourselves in all bewildered manner such questions as these:—
“How could we have ever any other thought in our mind about India but that of independence? How could we have trifled with the idea of Home Rule as a permanent goal and end? How could we ever

have regarded the British Empire as our real home? How could we ever have considered it a worthy aim to continue for all time as an integral part of the Anglo-Saxon dominion?"

In the days that are rapidly approaching, we shall be surprised and shocked that we could have acquiesced so long in the absurdly fanciful idea, that a people in Southern Asia with a cultured past of its own and an ancient civilisation, whose numbers were nearly 320,000,000 souls, could ever by its own choice be permanently bound to an island in the North Sea for its protection. Historians, at some future date, may possibly tell my story how leading Indians, in their despair of conditions at home, were actually hugging the chains that fastened them to the British Empire; how they took pride in the fact that they were British subjects and 'British citizens'. Historians will state truthfully that these things were happening at that very time when Indians were being treated like helots and out-castes in South Africa; when the last shreds of self-respect were being stripped off from domiciled Indians in Natal; when Europeans in East Africa were using threats of violence to prevent Indians from retaining land rights in the highlands of Kenya Colony. It will surely appear inconceivable to such historians that Indians would have sunk so low in character as to boast, even in such ways as these, of the fact that they were 'British.'

Now, at last, however late in the day, this strange hypnotic spell has been broken. The sense

of dignity of the Indian name, which had almost been lost under the British dominion, has been recovered. The immediate response to the call, which Mahatma Gandhi has made to the masses of the people of India, has been remarkable. It has shown how deep the latent feeling was in the heart of the people, if only the heart could be touched.

The political steps by which independence may be reached are not in my province to discuss. The spiritual issues are uppermost in my own mind, and with these I shall deal at length. My object will be to show clearly, that, for the fulness of Indian personality, independence is the only goal. My aim will be to convince my readers that to remain permanently tied to Great Britain is contrary to the true nature of Indian culture, however valuable a temporary connection may have been.

What I am now giving to the Press is no hastily formed judgment, due to the excitement of the times in which we live. Every one of the conclusions, which follow, was formed many years ago and this manuscript has been kept for nearly a year before publication in order to give ample time for revision. It is my great hope that there will be no single word that will arouse racial bitterness, for the appeal will be to reason and to reason alone.

II

I would wish to make it plain to my readers once more that it is not the political, but the moral and spiritual side of this great issue of Indian

independence which interests me most deeply. There is no programme I can offer as to the method by which Independence may be reached. The practical difficulties will not come under discussion. The conclusion which I wish to make absolutely clear is that Independence is the ultimate goal and none other. The reasons put forward may seem, here and there, to be sentimental rather than practical: but they go down to clear fundamental differences, which I shall endeavour to explain.

All my life through, I have been a scholar and thinker and a reader of books, eager indeed at every turn to put thought to the test of action, but constitutionally unwilling and unable to take a lead in such action except on very rare occasions. Whenever such occasions have arisen, I have instinctively shrunk back as quickly as possible, because I have felt the political life to be something apart from my own. It has seemed to me necessary to make this personal explanation at the outset in order to forestall the question which immediately arises as to whether Indian Independence is really practical. This issue, I leave to the men of action to settle. The only question, which will be brought forward in these papers is whether independence is, or is not, the true goal. I am convinced that it is the true goal,—the only satisfying goal. The irresistible logic of events had driven me to this conclusion. It involves, for me, the greater issue still, an issue as wide as humanity, the breaking down of 'White' race supremacy, which

I hold to be the greatest menace on earth to-day and the most potent incentive, if not checked in time. It will be understood, therefore, at this early state of the discussion, that the question is not one of politics, but of humanity.

On whichever side I look to-day, in considering the Indian future, on the side of trade and commerce; on the side of industry and labour; on the side of social reforms, religious readjustment, domestic reconstruction; on the side of literature, art and music; on whichever side I look, I can foresee the creative impulse more sustained, and the inward energy of the soul of the people more responsive, if independence could be postulated as the goal in front of us, rather than Home Rule.

To say this, does not necessarily imply that the British connection with India in the past has been an altogether unmixed evil, though I can conceive of no more shameful beginning to any rule than the organised plunder of India by the East India Company in the Eighteenth Century. Yet, in spite of these evil beginnings of British Rule and its failure over large areas of the life of Indian people to impress itself with any moral energy, I believe, with the late Mr. Gokhale, that this British connection has had its place in Indian history in the inscrutable divine Providence.

Just as, in the healing of some chronically diseased or infirm person, there is often the need of some drastic surgical operation, of some powerful shock, in

order to restore a failing vitality, even so, it appears to me, it may have been necessary for India to receive the surgery of a foreign conduct and the shock of a foreign culture before she could hope to be cured of her disease or infirmity.

To take a striking parallel from European history which will bring home my meaning, the shock of the Islamic conquest and civilisation which broke upon Western Europe, like a thunder storm, at the time of the Dark Ages of barbarism and ignorance, awakening a strong reaction, this shock was undoubtedly painful to Christendom, but salutary. Yet we note that Europe as a whole went back to its own learning after the shock was over, even in those lands which had been physically conquered for many centuries by the Arabs and the Moors. Europe has been richer, not poorer, on the one hand for the shock received, and on the other hand for the subsequent independence.

In a parallel way, the shock of the Anglo-Saxon civilisation came upon India in what may be called, in general terms, India's Dark Ages of the Eighteenth Century, amid the decay of the Moghul power and the internal anarchy which followed. Even though this shock came, accompanied by all the evils of foreign exploitation, yet it may, in the end, have been salutary in its ultimate effect, if the reaction follows.

Certainly Bengal, with its one supremely great figure of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, standing on the very

threshold of the change, did react in a remarkable degree to the stimulus of the foreigner. It aroused itself thereby from torpor and decay. Historians of modern India have not been wrong in attributing this renaissance in Bengal, in the first instance, to this tremendous impact from the West. One may heartily agree with all that I have stated and call it, along with Mr. Gokhale, providential; but to prolong the shock by endeavouring to keep India permanently within the British Empire, or to hypnotise the Indian people with smooth words against the idea of independence may be altogether harmful. For, to be an integral part and parcel of that Empire, bound up with it, cramped up within its boundaries, ever more and more assimilated to it, ever losing the energy of independent life, this fate will not be providential at all, but unnatural to the last degree. What would have been the European verdict, if it had been said that Spain and Portugal under the Moors, might have received in the past Home Rule, but not independence? Would Home Rule within the Moorish Empire have been sufficient freedom? Would the blessings of Arab civilisation, great as they were, have been sufficient compensation for Spain and Portugal's own indigenous culture? We admire, it is true, the Moorish architecture, which has survived, but the world would be poorer without the immortal "Don Quixote".

☞ In the European Middle Ages there was a striking phrase, describing anything which brought stag-

nation upon the future,—it was called the “mortmain”, the dead hand. I have already seen the dead hand of an essentially foreign rule, such as the British rule in India must always be, laid upon many things in Indian life that were vitally precious. Art, music, poetry, architecture may, for a time, it is true, be quickened into activity by the impact of a foreign culture; but the ‘dead hand’ inevitably creeps forward, if the impact is prolonged. This is really what has happened on an immensely extended scale with education in India—that education which often goes by the name of Anglo-Vernacular. The name itself is revealing.

The same effect may be seen, as I hope to show later, upon the agricultural life of the villages of India. Changes which brought the shock of novelty have also brought the shock of destruction; and again, in this instance, we can see the deadening touch of that interference, it pained me intensely to see the deadening touch of that interference, interference which is essentially foreign and unmeaning upon many beautiful and natural village customs, without anything good being given to replace that which has been taken away.

To bring this illustration to a close, I am eagerly longing to see this ‘dead hand’ removed from India altogether and the country once more entirely free and independent. I long to see India’s own healthy and vigorous and normal life begin again, without any further stimulus or shock. I am quite certain

that 'surgical operations, performed by the rough instrument of foreign British rule, are no longer necessary. The new current of indigenous life in India is running strong. It has its own direction. To apply surgery, or medicines, or electric shocks from the outside, would be altogether unwholesome, and even dangerous. It would only lead to disaster.

Now, the freedom must be absolute, the independence must be complete. There should be no merely half-way house; no remaining indolently in that intermediate state, in which all great issues become confused and the currents of life grow sluggish. The spell of weak dependence and languid indifference must be cast off. Freedom rests ultimately in the mind. No less a goal than independence can give freedom to the heart of India which she so passionately desires.

III

What first rivetted my attention, as a student, when I came to India and studied the educational problem, the ultimate inconceivability, in abstract thought, of a rapidly increasing multitude of people, which now numbers 320,000,000 souls, and has already an advanced civilisation of its own, ever becoming finally and completely assimilated to the thoughts and temperament of a much smaller group of people in the North Sea, who differed from Indians in climate, language, race, religion, culture, and domestic life. India which is in itself a sub-continent, self-contained and self-complete, could not possibly be

treated merely as an appendage of an Anglo-Saxon Empire.

To put this thought in other words, Indian civilisation, which has been almost continuously productive and fertile in men of religious genius, men of intellectual vision, men of artistic creative power, could never, by any stretch of imagination, be accommodated permanently to meet the ways and means and ends of Anglo-Saxon expansion. India must pursue a path, a destiny of her own. Anglo-Saxon advance might be salutary in the vast, vacant spaces of Australia, South Africa and North America. But it would be far from salutary, if it penetrated indefinitely the densely crowded regions of Southern and Eastern Asia. The time had come to say to this Anglo-Saxon land-hunger, "Hands off!"

No! The more this thought became tenant of my mind while I lived and worked in India, the more it settled there and would not leave me. All the time that I was wrestling with this problem, the fact was indisputable to me that 'within the Empire' must mean some kind of subordination to the central ideal of the Empire. It meant a permanent outlook towards British ends and a tendency to sacrifice the ideals of India herself, to British aims. However much the prospect of the future might be camouflaged, in order to tone down too harsh a perspective, the ultimate goal, when the words 'within the British Empire' were kept, would be a British goal, not an Indian goal.

Even though responsibility in self-government might be given in full to Indians themselves, there would always remain this residuum of dependence, this outlook towards British ideals and British ends. Australia, Canada, New Zealand, might not feel this residuum of dependence as 'integral parts of the British Empire', because the people of those countries were kith and kin of the British people. But Indians were nothing of the kind. They were foreigners, and must always remain foreigners, in the midst of an Empire of kinsmen. If 'Blood is thicker than water' then it would follow that the blood relations would combine against the outsider, the foreigner. Indian Self-Government, on a Dominion basis, would not mean the same for India as it would mean for Australia and Canada. India would be outvoted on almost every vital issue.

There was another fact which brought home to me this truth. The Dominions could truly call Great Britain their 'Mother Country'. They could all claim to be daughters in the Mother's house. They could expect to be welcomed with home affection into the one family circle. But when these terms began to be applied to India, they were seen at once to be absurdly unreal and impossible.

For India herself has been the Mother of civilisations. India in her age-long wisdom, has been a spiritual 'Mother' among the nations. India could never be regarded by Great Britain as a 'daughter'. The idea was too ludicrously absurd!

An Empire, if it is to have a natural, human structure, and not to be artificial and mechanical, must be an organic whole, like a body with its own living members, or a family with its own children. It cannot have an extra limb grafted on from the outside: it cannot have a stranger in the house on the same footing as the children who are related to one another by blood.

But I could find no such organic relation, no such intimate vital connection between India and England. Their histories were poles apart, and it had been an act of brute conquest, merely, which had brought them originally together. I could believe that this act of conquest was providential, if it were temporary and for a special providential purpose, but I could not believe that it could ever force India to become an integral part of an Empire, which must always remain peculiarly and centrally British.

Even in the mere matter of numbers, the odds were against any such permanent relation; for the Indian population was enormously greater than the British. According to Euclid, the greater may always contain the less. But here (so the thought presented itself to me) we were all engaged in trying to make the less include the greater. We were making the centre of one-fifth of the whole population of the world permanently fixed at London.

A very important illustration came to my mind from the United States of America, where the Federal states, which now compose the United States,

were closely akin to one another by blood and tradition, those were each in turn incorporated and became integral parts of the American Republic. Thus California, Texas, and other new state formed with New York and Pennsylvania and the older state, one integrally united Republic. Each state on incorporation, sent its representative to the Central Council or Senate. But when an entirely foreign country, like the Philippines, came under the jurisdiction of the United States, the rulers of the Republic very wisely took no steps to make it an integral part of the United States Dominion. They regarded the conquest as temporary only and endeavoured to give it back its independence as soon as possible. India forms an almost exact analogy to the Philippines with regard to the British Commonwealth system. It ought to be given back its independence at the earliest possible moment. It should not be asked in the meantime to send delegates to the Imperial Cabinet in London, because it is, and must always remain a foreigner in relation to the British Commonwealth.

I can well remember the very acute distress which I felt one day in Delhi, soon after my arrival in India, when I heard for the first time an English educated Indian saying to me, with an air of contempt for his own native country, "The place is a beastly hole. I wish I were going home!" By 'home' he meant England. This very able young Indian had ~~be~~ become inured to English dress, even in India itself, that he was wearing, when I saw him, laven-

der-coloured gloves and a high starched collar in the hot climate of Delhi in April. Denationalisation could not have gone further.

My whole soul revolted from the picture of such a denationalised existence. At first I felt a certain contempt. But, in a moment, my contempt had turned into pity. For how inwardly wretched he was! What an outcaste! What a pariah!

And the pity of it all lay just there that he had cut himself off from his own kith and kin. He was like a tree plucked up by the roots. He had no soil in which to grow. He could never really make England 'home', and he knew it and felt it.

Only a few moments had passed by in my presence, when he flamed forth with burning indignation at some bitter wrong he had received at the hands of Europeans. Yes, it was pity rather than contempt that he needed! The whole thing was a tragedy; it was worse than physical death, with its few short moments of physical pain to be endured. For here was spiritual death,—the lifelong agony of a tortured soul.

Often and often, since then, I have pictured in my mind that tragic figure, with his lavender gloves and high starched collar in the heat of mid-April in Delhi. I have said to myself, "This is false. It is an outrage on humanity! There is no truth in it. The sooner it is done away with and a healthy self-respecting, natural Indian life substituted for it, the better!"

Yet if India remains permanently incorporated within the British Empire, is there really any escape from such tragedies being multiplied as time goes on, a thousandfold?

IV

Up to this point, I have tried to make clear that the immense area and population of India with its history and tradition so different from England, make the thought of India ever becoming in reality "an integral part of the British Empire" almost inconceivable. Furthermore, while Canada and Australia and other dominions can truly look back to England as their own national home, it is quite impossible for India to do so. The retention, therefore, of India within the British Empire, permanently and integrally, cannot possibly be for India's own sake. It must be for the selfish aggrandisement of the English race. This has really been the meaning of that phrase (which I have even heard Indians themselves quoting, as if with pride) that India was "the brightest jewel in the British Crown." This constantly repeated expression ought to bring a blush of shame to Indians instead of pride. For, in reality, while the Philippines are likely to obtain their independence after less than thirty years of a foreign rule by the United States, more than 160 years have passed since the Battle of Plassey, and yet the goal of Independence is not even welcomed with any enthusiasm by a large number of Indians themselves. They would almost shiver at the thought.

We have seen that, if India with its 320,000,000 people were to remain within the British Empire on terms of perfect racial equality, then it would so out-balance every other portion of that Empire by its sheer weight of numbers that the Empire itself would have to become predominantly Indian in its character, rather than a British Empire. Its centre would, in course of time, gravitate to Calcutta, or some other Indian capital, rather than remain in London. But the British themselves would never for a moment consent to an 'Indianising' of their Empire. As soon as ever such an 'Indianising' was likely to happen, the theory of racial equality would be given up, or at least be cloaked over with all kinds of different disguises and subterfuges. Colonel Wedgwood may write about the Indo-British Commonwealth, adding the title 'Indian' to the old word 'British' but it is not the name that matters: it is a question of facts.

We are seeing the crude facts illustrated at the present time in East Africa. The one simple reason why the British and Dutch in East Africa will never allow racial equality in that country,—just as they have never allowed it in South Africa,—is because they are in the position of an aristocracy, which insists on keeping its power. India is only six days' journey from Mombasa; England is twenty days distant. Every year the number of Indian settlers is increasing. Therefore, the 'White' settlers are crying out for a 'White' East Africa, as they feel themselves outnumbered. There can be little

doubt that they will have full sympathy from the other provinces in Africa where the English rule. The 'White' settlers would rather leave the country altogether than submit to live side by side on equal terms with Indians whom they despise.

It is sometimes asserted that this 'White' race supremacy has become less arrogant and insistent since the Great European War. I wish I could see signs of this. What I have observed with my own eyes is exactly the reverse. In Africa, at least, the spirit of 'White' race has grown more arrogant, not less. There is no lesson of the War, which has been more neglected and despised by the Anglo-Saxon race, than that of respect for the non-European races of mankind. Wherever I have travelled, I have noticed what I can only call a stiffening and hardening of the barriers which separate the 'White' race from all other races. An even more striking illustration of this may be given from parts which I have not visited. For the most sober papers in the United States continually regret the recrudescence of lynch law, and fanaticism against the coloured people since the time of the Great War.

While I have been trying to work out this problem of racial arrogance, and to find some solution, I have studied the history of other countries, which have suffered the same fate as India, and have lost for a time their freedom. The picture, which history gives, is not a bright one. It shows, unmistakably, what a moral and spiritual thing political freedom is.

Even the Roman Empire, which gave full citizenship at last to non-Romans, could not prevent the decline and decay of the conquered countries. The "Roman Peace" led directly to stagnation.

Many years ago in Delhi, soon after I had come out to India, I was startled by the following sentence in Seeley's "Expansion of England":—"Subjection for a long time to a foreign yoke is one of the most potent causes of national deterioration." At first, I tried hard to find exceptions. But the more I thought over the historical facts, the more true I found the statement. I believe, that it was true, in India, concerning the Moghal Empire just as to-day it is proving true about the British Empire.

I would again point out, that this does not mean that foreign conquest is always immediately a disaster. The reign of Akbar was an untold blessing to India. The rule of the United States in the Philippines has been unquestionably a blessing in modern times. But, to prolong a foreign rule appears invariably to lead to disaster. And the whole controversy with England and the present time is, that its rule in India has lasted too long.

I need not dwell upon the different evils that are certain to arise, when subjection has eaten into the soul of the people. They are only too well-known. There is a slow undermining of the very foundations of truth and honesty and fearlessness of character. This is caused by the fear, implanted by the foreign rule and its arbitrary punishments and

rewards. Everything is to be gained by facile accommodation and flattery. Perhaps it would be true to say that all educated Indians have felt deep down in their own characters these vicious effects of foreign rule upon the truthfulness of their own lives. No material benefits can compensate for such losses in the inward life. Even the somewhat exaggerated expression of courage and plain speaking, that is now so often met with in the younger generation, has something strained about it. It is hardly yet the simple natural courage of the man, who has been free from his very birth and has known nothing else but freedom.

The more I studied Sir John Seeley's sentence, and then recapitulated to myself the facts of my own experience in India and the Colonies, the more clearly I saw that foreign rule does actually lead to the subservient mind, and only the very few, who are able to rise above outward circumstances by the inner power of the Spirit, can remain untarnished by its evils. This is a final fact of experience. It is true of the average man.

However much, therefore, "Home Rule within the British Empire" might be substituted for the present despotic power of the Viceroy and Council, I was quite certain, as an Englishman,—knowing my countrymen as no Indian could possibly understand them,—that there would always be some residuum of subjection in India's position; some remaining mark of dependence; some patronage from the Imperial

centre ; something wholly foreign, and not Indian at all. And such dependence and patronage, however disguised and kept out of sight, would perpetually lead to that national deterioration, which Seeley has described.

I could not bear the thought of this. Often and often, in the silence of the night, I have pondered deeply over Christ's words : " Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do unto them ; for this is the Law of the Prophets".

While I have meditated, I have said to myself again and again, in silence,—“How can you, an Englishman, who love your own freedom and independence, as an Englishman, refuse to allow the very same freedom and the very same independence to every Indian ?”

I had no answer to that question, except to acknowledge the truth it contained. If this independence, which is every Englishman's birthright, had made my own life free and fearless, what right had I to enslave others ? No ! By every sacred precept of my own Christian religion, I was bound to strive ardently for the removal of every hindrance, which should stand in the way of those Indians among whom I was living, my friends and companions and brothers. I ought to prevent them from being deprived of that precious gift of freedom and fearlessness, which I myself had enjoyed as my own second nature and age-long inheritance as an Englishman.

Thus in times of quiet thought, when all was still and silent around me, the iron of India's subjection,—a subjection which did not begin with British domination, I thought it had become accentuated thereby,—entered into my own soul, and I longed to receive strength never to add to it by any act of my own, but rather, night and day, to strive to remove it.

It was in very early days, while these thoughts were present with me, that there came one of those sudden revelations of the truth, which are given like a flash from time to time. There had been, in the year 1907 at Aligarh, a dispute between the students and the European staff. This had led to extreme bitterness. Then, a sudden action on the part of the European Principal had provoked a college strike. The students refused to go back until their wrongs were righted. Early one morning at Delhi, Maulvi Nazir Ahmed and Muntshi Zaka Ullah, whom I revered most deeply for their singular beauty of character, came to me, with tears in their eyes, to tell me that the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh, which was the one darling treasure of their hearts in their old age, was on the point of ruin. They asked me to come with them to Aligarh itself. We went together and I could feel, without a word being said, the outraged spirit of the students, their resentment, their sense of humiliation, their feelings of injustice. During that very night when we were present at Aligarh, it flamed forth in a literal deed. For the insulted students burnt their college furniture,

their beds and mattresses, their tables and books. The flames mounted to the skies. They were a symbol of the students' own flaming indignation. After the strike was all over, and the students had gone back, and the disturbance was at an end, I asked from Maulvi Nazir Ahmed, what words of advice he had spoken to the students. He told me, that he had said to them as follows : —

“You are slaves. What can slaves do? Get back to your books and work. You are not free men, but slaves.”

These terrible words of the Maulvi Sahib, whom I passionately loved, haunted me like an evil dream. Was that all the counsel he was able to give these young men at the very opening of their lives? Was that in very truth these students' true position? Were they slaves? The more I thought over it, the more I found that the words of the Maulvi Sahib had truth in them. This foreign subjection was a servitude of the soul, more insidious perhaps than any outward slavery, and none the less literally true. However much it might be disguised by a pleasing exterior, the true fact remained. If anyone of these brilliant young students went to other parts of the British Empire, they would not be allowed to land. And even here in India, they must flatter and fawn and beg for favours if they would get office.

I went over and over again in mind Sir John Seeley's maxim which I had just discovered “Subjection for a long time to a foreign yoke is one of the

most potent causes of national deterioration." The words "for a long time" stuck in my own mind. I said to myself, "This clearly must not go on any longer. For already, the period since the English came, as foreign rulers, is far too long a time for a country like India to be subject to a foreign power. Added to that, there have also been centuries of foreign subjection before the British advent. This period of subjection must be ended." It was not long after this, that the central thought of Indian Independence became firmly established in my mind. I have tested it since by a hundred experiences abroad but it has stood the test.

It is true, that, since the days when the Maulvi Sahib gave his advice to those Aligarh students, great strides have been taken in the direction of the Indian Home Rule. Events, that no one at that time believed to be possible, have happened in a single year. But the fact remains, nevertheless, that over a large area of the Indian population, the subservient mind continues. For my own part, I can see no practical end to it, as long as India remains merely that, which the August Proclamation of 1917 declares it to be, namely, "an integral part of the British Empire".

V

I have given in my last article a story relating an event, which happened in my own life, and brought home to me with terrible force the true facts concerning India's yoke under a foreign rule. An-

other event happened shortly afterwards which drove still deeper into my heart the iron wound of this subjection and made me understand its meaning, even more unmistakably than I had done hitherto. I was at Allahabad, in the year 1908, and I had already made there many friends among leading barristers and pleaders. Late one evening, we were seated talking together about the condition of the country. When it was past midnight, and the talk had gone forward with the utmost freedom, one of my friends (who is now dead) said to me; "All of us here are obliged to meet every day, officially, the Government officers who are Englishmen. We cannot speak to them openly. We have to say one thing to them, and another thing among ourselves." I was startled and shocked at his statement and said to him, "Do you mean to say this goes on all day long?" He replied, "Yes, all day long and every day of our lives." The rest of those who were present corroborated his words. They told me that such a double life was inevitable, under foreign rule, unless a man was a saint, or a "mahatma".

One further instance, of a different kind, occurred not long after, which opened my eyes still further. I was coming one day through the Kashmere Gate, when one of our College professors, who was a brave and good man, met me in a state of great indignation at a cruel wrong he had just witnessed. On the College cricket ground, which was close at hand, a brutal policeman had assaulted a sweet-meat seller,

and when this Professor had protested the policeman had summoned two other policemen to his aid, who happened to be passing by, and the three of them together had kicked with their heavy boots the sweet-meat seller, while he was lying on the ground. They had also assaulted my friend himself. I asked my friend who was still in a white heat of indignation, to come with me at once to the Deputy Commissioner and report the matter. But he refused. The police, he said, were part of the foreign system, and they were also a close corporation protected by the foreign Government. He might be able, with my help, to get justice in this case, but he would be a marked man in the future. And as sure as night followed day, some charge would be brought up against them, in order to take revenge; and the foreign Government would never throw over their own underlings by means of whom they kept their power and control.

"Mr. Andrews," he said to me, "you may think me a coward, but you, as an Englishman, have no idea what this police system under a foreign Government means to Indians. The police loot the people right and left with absolute impunity. They take to themselves all the power, which is in the hands of the English, and then abuse it. And every subordinate Government official, under this rule, does the same."

My next line of thought, in this matter of a permanent remaining within the British Empire, was in a different direction. I began to see, as a foreigner, in a foreign country, what a predominant part geography and climate play in fashioning national life. While I firmly believe that human nature is the

same all the world over, and that isolated individuals by spiritual conquest, can acclimatise themselves to any surroundings, I can also see that this unnatural effort is not required by God from whole peoples. They can best fulfil their own place in the divine Providence and order of the world by remaining true to their highest nature in their own climatic surroundings, eliminating more and more the passions of the brute. They are not called upon to go outside their nature. They are meant by God to correspond naturally and simply to the climate and soil from whence they sprang, just as a flower grows best in its own congenial soil.

Yet, if India were indefinitely within the British Empire, as an integral part of its structure, the result inevitably would be, that the whole system and climate (as it were) of life, which was temperamentally suited to the Briton in his cold, sunless Northern Islands, would be imposed, in a greater or lesser degree, upon the Indian, who lives for his whole life within the belt of the world's greatest heat and under its most powerful sunshine. This would surely lead more and more to a distinct warping and distorting of both the Indian character itself, and also of the Indian system and manners of life.

We can easily see, even to-day, how restless and dissatisfied modern educated Indians have often become on account of English acclimatisations in their case; however, there is reason for this, because, with those who enter the larger world of men and

things a certain amount of accommodation may be necessary. But it would be fatally unnatural if this artificially acquired temperament of accommodation penetrated the masses of the Indian population, who never have any need to change their habits to meet changes of environment. For the very beauty of their village lives, as they are lived at present, lies in the fact that they are so intimately close to Nature and in harmony with their surroundings. Their life has found its unity. It would be fatally useless for them to adopt all kinds of strange western habits, utterly unsuited to the environment, merely because of the facile imitation of a subservient race, which tries to copy its rulers even in things that are injurious.

Thus, it will be seen, from what I have written very briefly and imperfectly, how this question of climate and environment made me feel more and more clearly everyday the unnaturalness of the British rule if it would be regarded as a permanent factor in Indian life. The first stimulating effect of contact with a new civilisation would soon pass away and the inevitable reaction would be sure to follow, if the same shock from outside were still further applied. Indian life would be, more and more, forced into artificial ways. Just as a man is utterly uncomfortable if he has to be dressed up in hot, unsuitable, tied and badly fitting clothes; just as he then finds himself perspiring and longing to throw off the tied dress and to clothe himself in simple garments, even so the people of India are restless and uncom-

fortable by adopting new foreign habits, and the situation would at last become intolerable.

I can give an example of this from my own experience. While living among the boys at Shantiniketan, it has been a great comfort to me to wear the simple loose Indian dress which is exactly suited to the climate. I have got so used to this that it has become a second nature to me to wear it. I can highly describe the discomfort of being obliged to change this dress, and to put on the tight-fitting English dress when I go to visit Europeans in Calcutta who would be shocked if I appear before them in an Indian dress.

The truth is that the whole British system with its cast-iron method has been imposed upon India in the world of politics. This pressure of foreign habits goes much further than the sphere of government with such a people as the Indian people, who are so easily moved by external forces. Every market shows the useless foreign articles offered for sale. One can see it also in the houses themselves where hideous oleographs of vulgar European art often bedeck the walls. In the mansions of the great in India the taste is even more glaringly distasteful. Furniture of an utterly useless type crowds the rooms, covered perpetually in baize cloth and making the whole house stuffy and full of dust. The sense of coolness which comes from a room where furniture is reduced to a minimum, is altogether lost. It is impossible to describe the utter waste of money in such houses, and

also the miserable vulgarity of the effect. I have said to myself, again and again, that this foreign rule has become like the old man in the Arabian Nights, clinging round Sindbad the Sailor's neck and dragging him down to destruction. There is still time to throw off the evil. But the need for independence has become day by day more pressing and imperative.

The question of environment and climate leads on, by an obvious sequence of thought, to the far more fundamental question of the education of the young. This has been my own special interest both in England and in India. Coming out from England nearly eighteen years ago where education and environment had become in a great measure one organic whole, especially in the older public schools and in universities,—it was an almost intolerable burden to me to find out by painful experience what an utterly unassimilated thing the foreign 'English' education in India was, and how the foreign rule itself was using the sacred cause of education as a propaganda of the glories and excellencies of British Rule. My own experience in St. Stephen's College, Delhi, revealed to me the fact that a foreign government, such as the British Government in India, cares very little indeed for education itself, as a search for truth, as a training of inner character, as an end rather than as a means. The foreign government inevitably gravitates towards making the education of the young a tool and an instrument for advancing its own politics even at the expense of truth.

Soon after my arrival in India, when once my radical views had become known, an amusing experience of Government intervention in strictly educational matters for its own political ends occurred to me. I will relate it in order to illustrate my point. While I was engaged in teaching in the Punjab University, the Vice-Chancellor expressed to me his great desire that I should become a member of the Syndicate. I had some knowledge of the method of conducting "Honours" courses, while teaching at Cambridge, before coming out to the Punjab; the Vice-Chancellor, therefore, wished me to help him in starting "Honours" courses for the B. A., in the Punjab University. Nevertheless, though he put my name forward again and again, the Lieutenant-Governor always refused to nominate me as a Fellow because of my radical opinions; yet I could not be elected to the Syndicate, until I had been made a Fellow. Therefore, I could do no useful work such as the Vice-Chancellor desired, until the Lieutenant-Governor changed his mind and made me a Fellow. It is interesting to note also that I could become a Fellow in no other way than by the Lieutenant-Governor's nomination.

Then, one day, in an idle moment, while Mr. Ramsay Mac Donald was staying with me at Delhi, I related to him the story of the Lieutenant-Governor's refusal on political grounds to appoint me.

He was naturally indignant at an abuse of power which could never have happened in free England.

Without telling me anything about it, he related the incident in his book "The Awakening of India". The result was that something happened at the India Office, where Lord Morley was Secretary. The Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab hurriedly appointed me a Fellow and I was duly elected on the Syndicate. This is only a slight and somewhat humorous example of what is happening everyday. The matter may be put in a simple phrase—education under a foreign government is used for political ends. But there is something far worse than this political use of education by Government officials. In India, as I have heard time after time from the very best students, the suspicion has been created far and wide among them that some of their fellow students are spies in the pay of the C. I. D. This suspicion is founded on an imposing array of facts and I have no doubt in my own mind that it is true. For this reason the whole atmosphere of education is tainted with hypocrisy and lies. I know no other country, (except possibly that of Russia under the Czar) in which education has been so tainted with fear and suspicion as that of India, through the agencies of the students themselves, as tools of the police. It has meant the prostitution of true education to serve the foreign government. It has shown unmistakably that the government is foreign through and through and cannot trust the people. It rather trusts its own paid agents, who have sold their conscience and have taken up the profession of spies.

But the evil goes deeper and a political bias is given in the schools and colleges even to the subjects taught and to the character of the curriculum itself. The teachers, who have their own private political ideas not unfrequently of an extreme 'national character, are expected to teach history with a view to upholding and supporting the British Raj. They are, therefore, to teach lip-loyalty. Hypocrisies of every kind are carried on. The double life of the teacher is imparted to the pupils. For the pupils quickly learn from their teachers to give lip service to Government on special occasions. They begin, from their earlier days, to repeat 'loyal' phrases which do not come from the hearts and are not sincerely believed, either by teacher or taught.

I have in mind a contrast between two schools which came under my own notice in Shantiniketan, where now I have the privilege of teaching, the atmosphere of education is as free as the air we breathe and as the light of heaven which gives us gladness.

There is confidence and fearlessness and trust. Whatever is in the heart comes out in speech. I went from Shantiniketan to give away the prizes at a neighbouring school, on their annual prize day. Here from first to last, I felt the pressure amounting almost to compulsion, brought to bear by Inspectors and others, upon the poor, weak men who were teachers, to lead a double life in order to please Government and to get an increase in Government grants. It

was a pitiable mockery to see two little children, with their hands straight down to their sides and their faces blankly unintelligent, reciting in English, which they could not understand) "God save our gracious King." I am sure the last person in the world who would wish to be so doubtfully honoured would be King George himself.

I have maintained in times past and would still maintain, that the wide-spread teaching of English was of great benefit in the past to the higher education of India and to the progress of the country. It has been one of the most potent means of giving that shock, or stimulus, which India needed at one time in her history to rouse her out of sleep. It has given ideals of political freedom and of national unity, which have been invaluable. But while I say this with all my heart I cannot help but see what dangers now lie ahead of India owing to the dislocation and unnaturalness of life itself, and the divorce between the English-educated men (who are forming a class by themselves) and the agricultural and town labourers. I paid a visit to Japan some years ago, and studied higher education there. I am quite certain, that the progress which Japan has made is in a very great measure due to the fact that the medium of instruction has been from a very early date the mother-tongue of the country and not English. This has kept the Japanese life vigorous at its centre. But it is only fair to add that Japan started its modern career with a much smaller

population than India and with only one mother-tongue for all her people. Its language problem was simpler.

I could not blame the foreign Government for what has been done any more than I would blame the people of India. The teaching of children through the medium of English was probably inevitable, so long as the Government of the country was in the hands of foreigners. There has also been hitherto (as far as I am able to judge) a strange balance of advantages and disadvantages. It is useless, therefore, to cry over what has already been done. But the future of India, now that the shock and stimulus has been given, demands a return at all points to the mother-tongue of each great province and the teaching of all subjects (except English itself) through the mother-tongue. Nevertheless, though this is the educational requirement, it is almost inconceivable in the present circumstances that such a vital change as this can take place unless India, more and more, ceases to be an integral part of the British Empire.

I have sketched, in a very imperfect manner, the mere outline of a vast subject. Far more deeply than any need of political or of economic freedom, India is feeling the need of educational freedom to-day. It is not sufficient to substitute Indian officials for Europeans in the Education Department. That alone can accomplish very little. The mentality of the people themselves has to be changed; for

they have come to believe that in the knowledge of English lies the one pathway of material advancement. It is for this reason that villagers will starve themselves, and the other members of the family, in order that one son, at least, may get the very doubtful advantage of an "English" education.

When law courts, Government offices, business-firms, post, telegraph, etc., etc., all use the mother-tongue, as is invariably the case in Japan, then and then only this unwealthy craving for English will cease.

But, as I have said before, this change can never whole-heartedly be effected, so long as the ultimate goal in view is that India should remain "an integral part of the British Empire." That goal itself must be altered. Just as in the case of the Philippines even so in India, Independence, and nothing short of Independence must be the final aim.

VI

I am fully aware that my discussion of the problem of educational freedom in my last article was inadequate even as an outline. The subject is so complex that it would require to be considered at far greater length to do justice to it. I turn back again and again in my mind to the many years which I passed at St. Stephen's College, Delhi, with high hopes and ardent educational ideals. But since I have come out of that work to an institution where educational freedom is the very breath of life, I can understand, even if I cannot briefly explain, the

difference between a purely indigenous and independent development and a dependence on a foreign outlook at every point in educational matters.

The one form of dependence which we still feel in Shantiniketan, along with the rest of India, is this:—Our boys have to earn their living as soon as they go from school; and this means, in a vast proportion of instances, the necessity to go into Government service for the purpose of supporting their families. Even if these services are made Indian through and through, I still wonder and doubt if the foreign outlook can be eliminated, so long as India remains an “integral part of the British Empire.”

I had a still further experience in India, while the years passed one by one and as I travelled in different parts of the vast Indian continent. The poverty of India came over my whole life, more and more, like a heavy cloud which covers the sky and obscures the sunlight from the eyes. I went from time to time into famine-stricken districts and also I visited constantly the homes of the outcastes. There I often watched the hollow faces of those who have never had enough even to eat. Only very slowly the whole picture dawned upon me,—what it means, the hunger, the squalour, the fear of man for his fellow-man, the servile and semi-servile condition. It came home to me that this was the lot of fifty to sixty millions of my own brothers and sisters. There came to my knowledge, at the same time, how this

very poverty was being ruthlessly exploited. On the one hand it was exploited by Indians themselves, and on the other hand by the rich and powerful profiteers of the West. I could see the new standards of luxury and comfort, which were set up by the British occupation. As these were adopted and imitated by the upper surface of Indian society they were bound to drive the poverty of India still deeper. It is bad enough to be exploited by one's own countrymen, to be oppressed by one's own neighbours, and the millions of the 'untouchables' of India tell that tale in a language of misery, that he who runs may read, but to be exploited again and again on the top of this by powerful foreigners was altogether intolerable. It was to add misery to misery. I could not satisfy, in any slightest degree, that this agelong poverty and misery of India was decreasing under the British domination. There were a thousand things which told me the very opposite story. And there was one thing concerning which there could be, sadly enough, no open question. The British rulers of India had brought with them an expensive standard of living. This new economic standard had pervaded the country districts. It had upset the whole economic basis of life. On this account the pain of Indian poverty had been increased in proportion as the number of human wants had been multiplied. The foreign economic invasion, which was ever growing and expanding, was in reality nothing more nor less than exploitation of the weak

by the strong. If India remained within the British Empire as an integral part of that Empire, this foreign economic invasion and exploitation would never cease. It would become perpetual. The drain of wealth out of India would never end. The effect of this upon the helpless and disorganised and semi-servile peasantry would be to fix deeper the poverty and misery and debt, while at the same time increasing enormously the standard of living. All the evils of the old factory system in England (which preyed upon the helpless and the weak) would be repeated in India on a far vaster scale.

An example of what might always happen, whenever a 'ring', or 'corner' could be made by powerful capitalists working hand in hand together, has only recently come to my knowledge in Bengal. Though this special incident came later in my experience, I will repeat it here; for it is typical of what is constantly occurring. A jute mill, which I shall not name, was started by foreign capitalists in 1904. Up till the beginning of the War, the shares rose from 100 to 145, and the profits reached between 15 p. c. and 20 p. c. after considerable sums had been placed to 'reserves'. Just before the War, the ryot, who grew the jute under excessively hard conditions of labour in malaria-stricken districts, obtained thirteen to fourteen rupees per maund for this jute. During last year, however, although the cost of living for the cultivator had enormously increased, the price of jute has been driven down to five to six

rupees per maund while the shares of this jute mill have gone steadily up from 145 before the war to 160; and the profits (after setting aside reserves of every kind) have been declared at 160 p. c. It is no wonder, under such conditions, that the influx of foreign capital and the permanence of a foreign suzerainty are not welcomed.

But the evil does not stop, even with the introduction of such British exploiting firms from the West. The Western methods of gambling and speculating on the Stock Exchange, of 'rings' and 'corners' and 'monopolies' and 'trusts' which have assumed such sinister proportions in modern Western business, have been imported bodily into India itself; and the clever mechanical brains of many Indians of the merchant classes have enabled them to pursue these practices to the extreme limit of anti-social selfishness. I heard, for instance, of a Marwari in Calcutta, who had actually bought up as a speculation, all the bricks for building round Calcutta, and had raised the price of building material by 200 p. c. The figures given to me may be exaggerated; but the story made me wonder with a despairing anxiety and fear, whether all the extreme evils of modern capitalism were to be introduced in the train of British rule, and how long this system, which had before been foreign to India on so large a scale, was to go on, ever widening and increasing disruption of Indian life and culture.

Amid all these varied arguments which have now been put forward, the final position, which I

have been obliged to take, has come not from theory, but from the hard logic of facts. Above all, the truth of the evil of foreign subjection has been brought home to me, from a most bitter and painful personal experience of what the words 'within the British Empire' really imply to the majority of Indians abroad. I have seen now, in every part of the world, what these conditions of life abroad are; what they imply to an Indian, simply because he is an Indian and not a European. I have tried my utmost to retain a favourable impression, whenever facts would in anyway support it. But the conclusion that has been forced upon me is this:—India can never, as things are at present, have an honoured seat and place of welcome within the Colonies of the British Empire. The anti-Asiatic sentiment is against it. That sentiment is growing stronger year by year. It is hardening its surface of exclusiveness, with all the fanaticism of an irrational superstition. There can be no effective compromise with it from the Indian side and no appeal to reason. It must run its course, as other irrational superstitions and base human passions have done; perhaps it is the greatest anti-social menace of the present age. To think of an equal status for Indian in such a British Empire is a hallucination. It is an hallucination which is pathetic in its fundamental fallacy. The dream about it is growing more and more fantastic every year. The shock of awakening must soon come to every Indian, it has only come to me before it has come

to others, because I have travelled so many journeys and have met so many people in the British Colonies themselves. If all thinking Indians had had my own personal experience I can hardly imagine them remaining unconvinced of the hard realism of my position, that India has no vital place within the Colonies of the British Empire on those terms which alone are thinkable, *viz.*, the terms of perfect equality of status.

My own mind has been fascinated for a long time with the idea, that the British Empire might lead on directly to the 'Parliament of Man.' But I have seen with my own eyes, in real life, that it is leading on to nothing of the kind. I have found out by an experience (which has been almost tragically painful in its disillusionment) that the Parliament of Man cannot come about by means of 'Empires' at all. The last Great War, with its world convulsion, has really brought to an end this outworn theory of 'Empires.' The British 'Empire' is not going to be the only exception. Empires must perish to-day as they have perished in the past in order that free peoples may survive and realise their freedom.

We have a signal instance of the fallacy of the 'imperial idea in Italy and Austria. Last century, the subjection of Italy to Austria in one Empire made spiritual unity impossible. The Austrian Empire, with its Italian appendage, was a monstrosity. But now the relations between Italy and Austria have changed, Italy has come nobly to the help of Austria

in the hour of her greatest distress ; and a spiritual unity is being found to-day, which is obliterating centuries of hate. The truth is, that the British Empire, with its Indian appendage, is a monstrosity also. If the present unnatural relation between England and India continues, it can only lead, as it had done at such a rapid pace already, to a continually increasing bitterness on both sides. But if the band of subjection is finally and ultimately unloosed then mutual respect may succeed to mutual hate.

I have received many letters recently from Indians in Europe who have lived both in England and France. All, without exception, told me that friendly relations with the French people are easy and natural and simple, because there is no question of "Empire" looming up on every occasion between Indians and Frenchmen. But, in England, relations are becoming everyday more strained and unnatural, because of the perpetual factor of British Imperialism, which taints at the very source the fine spring of friendship.

I have stated in these articles, some of the reasons which have led me, an Englishman, so completely to change my original view as to the relation of the British Empire towards India. I am confident in my own mind that my own countrymen will ultimately reach the same standpoint. It is of great interest to notice, how one group of solid thinkers, who so ably edit the *Round Table* quarterly and maintain in each number such a high standard of intellectual

honesty of thought, have, from the first, been non-plussed by the position of India within the Empire. They appear to be able to find no solution to the Indian problem. Whenever the subject of India has been brought forward, its incongruity with the self-governing dominions has become more and more obvious. I believe that the irresistible logic of facts is drawing these writers even against their will to something very nearly corresponding to the position which I myself have been compelled to take up.

There remains a small group in India, of advanced social thinkers, who are conscious of the past benefit to India of the British connexion, in breaking down hard social conventions and agelong religious superstitions. They have also a high humanitarian ideal of the federation of all races. They detest the common cant of 'nationalism'. I need hardly state, at this point, that I have every possible sympathy with these, and value their judgment in this matter, far more than that of any other. But as I have already said, I believe that more and more it will be made evident, that the facts of history are against the 'Empire' theory of human advance. I believe also that the treatment of Indians in the British Colonies will finally convince them, that Indians can have no honourable place, consistent with true self-respect, in an Empire, where such treatment of Indians is not only unrebuked and unpunished, but has become the normal aspect of life and the incorrigible attitude of widespread fanatical religion.

Letters on Non-Co-operation.

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[The following four letters have been written to a friend in England concerning Non-Co-operation. It appeared to me that they would be of interest to Indian readers, and I am venturing to communicate them to the Press.—C. F. Andrews.]

I

My dear—

You have asked me, from your home in England, to explain to you the meaning of this new and very ugly word that is being used in India—Non-Co-operation. You criticise it at first sight, and you have every reason to do so from your distant view of the situation. I grant you at once, that the word has an ugly sound. It seems to imply the very opposite of what every Christian has been taught to aim at, namely, to be a fellow-worker and a fellow-helper. You are right also in saying that there is nothing that the world needs so much to-day as brotherhood. Humanity is crying out for co-operation to heal the wounds of the War. I need hardly tell you, that I have weighed well, over and over again, the force of all this argument. And yet, it has not convinced me. I have lain awake, night after night, brooding over the problem. And yet I am in principle to-day a strong believer in Non-Co-operation. Need I say to you, my

dear man, who are a Christian, that I am a Christian also, a believer in love, as the final remedy for all the evils of the world. We are, both of us, taught by Christ to love even our enemies. We are taught that the whole commandment of life is contained in two words,—to love God with all our heart, and our neighbour as our own self. We have, both of us, learnt the golden rule of Christ, “Whatsoever would that men should do unto you even so do unto them : for this is the law of the prophets.”

And yet,—and yet,—I am resolutely going to defend this principle of Non-Co-operation. I would add one word further. I would say, that Christ himself was the example, for all time, of the principle involved in it. For he unflinchingly refused to compromise with evil. He declared, that it profited a man nothing, if he gained the whole world and lost his own soul. I have seen times without number men who have come out and joined this movement ; and they have told me with their own lips, that it had saved their own individual Indian characters. They had to sacrifice everything, but they gained their souls. And there is something far greater still, India has at last gained *her* own soul, through this movement. For the soul of India was being lost in mechanical civilisation of the modern world which has invaded both East and West alike. But now she has been called by a prophetic voice of one of her noblest children to a pathway of self-purification. India was rapidly losing her own individuality. She

was forfeiting that supremely delicate and beautiful nature and character, which had been God's handiwork in her history all down the centuries. She was rapidly taking in its stead without true assimilation the barren nature of a foreign culture. Now she is realising that to go forward any further along that course, is to follow the path of suicide and destruction. Therefore, she is definitely making the Great Refusal, which is called Non-Co-operation. Even if England offer her wealth, plenty, peace, protection, prosperity within the spacious British Empire, and as the price of it thus compromise with her own inner nature, India will refuse. She will refuse to co-operate on such a basis. She knows, in her heart of hearts, that she has compromised far too long, and now that she has an inspiring personality to give her unity and spiritual strength, she is determined to compromise no longer.

We, Englishmen, have gradually got into the way of thinking, that every country can be made, at one and the same time, more profitable to ourselves, and more happy in its own internal life, by coming under our protection. I happen to have been, during my travels, to all kinds of places, and nothing has impressed me so much as the discontent which is now existing among these indigenous peoples, who are being moulded into new shapes and forms by this protection of the British Government. The legend is kept up in England (for home-consumption) that every one is happy and contented under such protec-

tion. But this is not the truth. Whether it is a younger generation in Burma, or in South Africa, in Uganda or in Fiji I have had heart to heart talks with the young leaders in all these countries, and I can only say that the discontent is profound. If I had gone to Egypt or Mesopotamia or Palestine, or Ireland, it would have been the same story. My dear man, let us who are Christians, put to ourselves a plain and simple question. Would we like to be continually ruled by foreigners for our own so-called benefit? Don't you think it would make us perfectly miserable? Then, if that is the case, why do we not apply the rule of Christ, and love the Indian, the Burmese, the Egyptian, the Irish, as our own self?

Why do we not do to others, that, which we should wish them to do to us? If we would not like to be ruled by foreigners, why do we insist on keeping up a foreign rule? If we ourselves wish to be independent, why do we not wish them to be independent? As a Christian, it seems to me, there is no other way to meet that interrogation, except to desire earnestly and to strive all we can for the independence of every foreign part of what is called the British Empire. Don't you think that this follows from Christ's teaching?

I know full well that there is no greater need in the whole world to-day than a full mutual understanding between the East and the West. The future of the human race depends on such a mutual under-

standing being reached. But the very first requisite for such a mutual understanding is mutual respect. The respect of the wolf for the lamb, in Aesop's fable, is not a model for humanity to follow in the twentieth century. Yet the past treatment of Asia and Africa by Europe has been of the same predatory nature, and these predatory habits are not unlearned in a single day. I have seen a map of Africa in 1880 before the great plunder began. After a few years the whole map of Africa was cut up into pieces, each of which denoted the extent of the loot. Then after that Asia was being gradually divided up in the same way. Before the Great War, as you know, China and Persia only by a narrow margin escaped the fate of Africa. I am sure that you, who came into the Great War as a volunteer, in order to prevent the spoliation of Belgium, are not one of those who can look on the spoliation of the East with equanimity. Would you not rather, in principle, stand up on behalf of every country that has already been subjected, and claim that it shall be set free? Does not the thought of a 'Declaration of Independence' for India or for Egypt, or for Korea, or for China stir your heart as the Independence of Belgium did? You, who fought for Belgian freedom, cannot you fight, in spirit and principle, for India's freedom? We are not asking for a battle of violence and bloodshed. Rather, we are asking for a battle of suffering and endurance, a battle of the Cross.

Does not that thought move you, as a Christian? I will tell you one thing, which I witnessed with my own eyes. It was the sight of twelve delicate Hindu ladies coming out of the prison in South Africa, where they had suffered more than words can relate. Yet their faces were full of joy. They spoke gently of their persecutors. They told me all the kind things they could about their jailors. They had gone to prison not for any wrong-doing (they were incapable of wrong) but to uphold their country's honour and freedom. That war of passive resistance in South Africa was won without striking a blow. Believe me, it was one of the most Christian things I ever saw in my life. I cannot possibly forget it.

This Non-Co-operation movement in India is really being worked out on the same principles by Mahatma Gandhi, as those which I saw practised in South Africa. It is only called by another name. In its essence, it implies the resistance of evil, by forbearance, not by violence; by endurance, not by force; by suffering, not by slaughter. It regards the domination and subjection of India by a foreign country, such as England, with abhorrence, as an evil thing. It is determined not to co-operate with the evil and make it permanent.

If you say to me in reply, "We, the English are not dominating and subjecting India by force. As fast as we can, we are actually giving India freedom within our British Empire."—Well, I shall deal with that last clause "within our British Empire"

later. At this point, my answer to your assertion, "we are actually giving freedom to India," would be in a rhyming couplet—

Freedom is not a mendicant's dole
To be thrown in a beggar's begging bowl.

Freedom is a gift of the soul, to be won by self-purification and self-sacrifice. If England really wishes India to be free, then she must stand aside: she must not insist that India shall have the dole of their so-called freedom, which England herself is patronisingly prepared to concede. This is the whole crux of the Egyptian and the Irish struggle, not merely of the Indian struggle for liberty. We are told by Christ, I have said, to love our neighbour as ourselves; to do to others what we should wish them to do to us. Should we, English people, like to be bound hand and foot by conditions at the very time freedom was being offered us? Should we be satisfied with all sorts of stipulation? Should we not do what our forefathers did in America,—make a Declaration of Independence? Or again, I ask you, should we, Englishmen, be satisfied with mere boons and patronising dole of 'freedom'? Read Wordsworth's sonnets; read Milton's *Areopagitica*; read Shakespeare's description of England in *King Henry IV*; read Burke on *American Independence*. My dear man, English literature, from one end to the other, is crammed full of answers to the contrary. Then why not follow Christ, and do to others what we should wish them to do us? For if England insists on giving

India what English politicians to-day are pleased to call 'freedom' in English politicians' own way, at the English politicians' own time, and at the English politicians' own discretion, then all I can say is that it is no *freedom* at all !

II

My dear—,

You see, the trouble after all is this. Our British people at home have been dragged into a stupid satisfaction with the comfortable thought, that a sub-continent, such as India, with three hundred and twenty million people, and all sorts of Rajahs and Maharajahs, can be marked red on the map as a British Possession, and can be quoted in history and geography lessons to every British child as an example of what the British Empire can accomplish in its rule in the East. The British are a kindly sentimental folk, on ordinary occasions, and they are prepared to go a long way in passing patronising legislation of a good-natured type, as long as the ultimate, solid, material fact of India, as a 'British Possession,' does not elude their grasp. But when you come to think it over, this attitude of 'Possession' is quite hopelessly out of keeping with any true, frank and sincere friendship. How can you be a *friend* of the man who insists on always keeping you in a semi-inferior position? You may flatter such a man; you may pretend to be very devoted to him; you may fawn upon him for favours; but you cannot be his friend.

I know, at once, what you are eagerly seeking to answer. "Yes," you would say to me, "I grant all that, but times have changed. We are in a different age altogether. The great Reform Act of December, 1919, has been passed. Now, such vital subjects as Education, Sanitation, etc., are in the hands of Indians themselves. We have read all about it in the House of Commons' Debates. Only such necessary public affairs, as Revenue and Police and the Army, are reserved subjects."

THE TRAVESTY OF REFORMS.

If that is your real answer, it is a poor one. In the West, it is a recognised principle of all true Government, that there should be no taxation without representation; that the man who pays the piper has a right to call the tune. But here, in the East, the very reverse has happened. The non-official Indians' Minister of Health, or Education, is faced with bankruptcy at once, if he tries any new schemes in his Department. The reserved subjects, which are not under popular control, have the first demand upon the national income. The Military Expenditure alone runs away with half the revenue. Then comes the Civil Expenditure, which provides for ever increasing official salaries. Then follows the Police Expenditure. These are all continually augmenting their budget demands. Only after their needs are satisfied, can any funds be granted for Education, Sanitation etc., which are popular subjects.

Let me give you an interesting example, which shows that extraordinary little vital change has been made even in the Provincial Governments. I have just seen through a most painful experience at Chandpur in East Bengal. Some thousands of poor, famished refugee labourers, from the tea gardens of Assam, had fled from the gardens, and had become crowded in a congested area, on the river bank, where the railway meets the steamer. Cholera had broken out among them in a virulent form. At such a time two things were done by the Administration which excited great public indignation. First of all, Gurkha soldiers were turned out, in the middle of the night, in order to drive these miserable people from the third-class passenger-shed at the railway station, where they had taken refuge. These weak and famished refugees were forced by blows to remove themselves to a bare shelterless football ground, with the monsoon rains already threatening. The attack was made upon them with the butt-ends of rifles. Numbers were wounded, among whom were feeble women and little children, too weak and ill to escape the Gurkha's blows. I was on the spot and saw those wounded people almost immediately after the occurrence. The sight would have made your blood boil as it did mine. Yet the whole disgraceful incident was glozed over in the usual official manner without any apology; and the limit was reached when Mr. Montagu got up in the House of Commons and declared that the Govern-

ment of Bengal had acted with "great humanity" in the matter.

The second chapter of this story was even more significant. At the instigation of the Planters' Association, (whose representative suddenly appeared on the scene at Chandpur) it was decided by the Bengal Government to do nothing to help forward these people out of the cholera-stricken town, for fear of a further exodus from the gardens. There was a deadlock and the people were furious. At this point I was asked to come in and act if possible as a mediator. My proposal was a very simple one. If Government would provide a subscription of five thousand rupees, as a mark of sympathy, then the charitably disposed public would subscribe the rest. But the Government (which was strongly under the influence of the Tea Planters at this time and living in the Planters' stronghold at Darjeeling) refused to give anything at all to help the refugees forward. I went up personally to Darjeeling in order to meet the Government authorities. And whom do you think I was asked to see? Not the Minister but the Chief Secretary. We discussed the whole matter at length; I had come direct from the scene of action and spoke hot words. The officials were as cold as ice. Believe me, in spite of Reform Councils, the autocracy is as wooden, as impervious, as obstinate as ever it was before. It is incapable of change.

That very day in Darjeeling I met some of the Indian Councillors. They told me in words as

burning as my own, how furious they were at the Gurkha outrage. But at the Legislative Council, all they have been able to do in their helplessness has been to ask a few conventional questions, receive official answers and to pass a very timid resolution. And Mr. Montagu's statement in the House of Commons remains unchallenged. "The Government of Bengal," he said, "has acted with great humanity in the matter."

Just think of it! Just picture it to yourself! Only picture it! To turn Gurkha soldiers out at dead of night on poor, helpless, utterly miserable and emaciated men, women and children! To drive these wretched human beings, who were sickening with cholera, on to a bare shelterless football ground, hitting men and women over the heads with the butt-ends of their rifles! Picture it, man! Do picture it! Why, we shouldn't treat cattle like that in England! I saw on my arrival a little girl, with her cheek cut and bruised by a savage blow, which only just missed the eye-ball itself. And yet Mr. Montagu is primed up with official despatches to say in the House of Commons, that the Government of Bengal has acted with great humanity in the matter!

BRUTE FORCE AND RACIALISM.

Pardon me, if I have become bitter and cynical. The Duke of Connaught came out all the way from England and asked us to forget and to forgive Amritsar. No sooner has he gone away, than the

same weapon of brute force is employed over again on helpless people, with all the old wicked callousness and inhumanity. Once more, the public sentiment is outraged. Once more the people of India from one end to the other have cried shame upon the cowardly act. But the Government of Bengal on the mountain top at Darjeeling takes no notice. Just as in the case of the Punjab and Amritsar, it assumes on its own side the gesture of Non-co-operation. It says, in so many words—"We will not bend to the will of the people." Do you wonder at all, if the people take up the challenge and say, in return—"You absolutely refuse to co-operate with us. You do not regard our opinion in the least. You hold icily aloof. The only course left open to us is to cease to co-operate with you. We shall go our own way. You can go yours. We don't seek either your money, or your favour." Here is one of the main causes underlying the Non-Co-operation movement—the utter aloofness of the Government from the people. Can't you understand it?

Do you remember sometime ago, what an outcry there was in England about a certain troop train from Karachi, wherein through gross mismanagement some British soldiers died of heat—apoplexy? Do you remember, also, the Mesopotamian scandal? These caused a sensation in England, because Englishmen were involved. But the same gross mismanagement is going on everywhere among Indians themselves, because Government is so completely aloof and occupied

night and day with its files, and out of touch with the people: and Government agents, of the subordinate type, are all the while taking advantage of that aloofness, to serve their own ends. The truth is, the Government is not a people's government at all.

You have to understand how sick at heart the very sanest and most sober-minded Indians are about these perpetual and grandiloquent promises of "Reform", which end in empty words. It is now sixty-three years since the Queen's Proclamation of 1858, promised racial equality in India. Yet we all know (except it would appear our new Viceroy) that racial inequality is still rampant. It would be as easy as possible to give you a dozen glaring instances from my own experience; and Indians themselves, who naturally know far more than I do where the shoe pinches, could give hundreds.

I remember so well Lord Morley's Reforms, in 1908-09. We were told that at last Indians were to have a full share in their own Administration. Again, there was utter discontent and disappointment. The autocracy of Government was not shaken.

A BIBLICAL PARALLEL.

Now we have before us additional "Reforms". We have a Dyarchy, which no one believes in. The best that can be said of it is that it is so bad and unworkable that it must be changed. It is impossible to go back. So things will have to go forward. That is its sole recommendation put before me by a Government official. I think you will see, from what

I have told you, that all the glowing accounts you are receiving in England about "Parliamentary" Government in India must be taken with a grain of salt. I doubt if any real and solid power has escaped from the hands of the bureaucracy even now. At least what has escaped has been made up in other ways.

Do you remember, in Christ's times, how the Scribes and Pharisees were prepared for outward changes and outward embellishments of their own system, so long as these did not touch their heart. The Scribes and Pharisees, so Christ said, made clean the outside of the cup and plater. They did outward homage to noble sentiments, they talked unctuous platitudes in order to show that they were on the side of the good and the great, but they clung to power, all the same, with a tenacity that never relaxed its hold. Christ said of them, with terrible irony,—'Ye build the tombs of the Prophets, and garnish to the sepulchres of the righteous!'

I do not imply that the present Government of India is consciously hypocritical. The Scribes and Pharisees were good religious men according to the standard of their times. And the Government of India is perhaps the most hard-working and conscientious in the world. But the system of Government, as I have said, has almost utterly lost touch with the sentiments and ideals of the people. It has appallingly misjudged the vital movements of the times; and in nearly every instance set itself in opposition to

them,—just as it is doing to-day, in an almost panic-stricken manner, with regard to Non-Co-operation.

There is another picture, which Christ gives, that is perhaps more appropriate for what I am wishing to bring home to you in England. Christ spoke, in his own generation, of the uselessness of patch-work reforms. "Men do not," he said, "put new wine into old bottles.....Neither do men put a new piece of cloth on an old garment because the new piece teareth away the old cloth, and the rent is made worse. But new wine must be put into new bottles."

The new wine to-day in India is this new religious, social and political movement, whose fountain-head is Mahatma Gandhi. This movement has spread throughout the length and breadth of the land. Politically it has become known in England by that ugly name, which you criticise,—Non-Co-operation.

In my mind, as I have seen events developing on the spot, it would have been altogether useless to have put this new wine into the old bottles of these patch-work Reform Councils. The rent would only have been made worse. The popular verdict—the verdict of the unsophisticated common people—is the final verdict after all. They have recognised in Mahatma Gandhi a true deliverer from oppression. They have seen in him a true healer of India's festering wounds. And they have been quite clear in their determination to stand apart from the present unpopular Government, to work out their own salvation.

Cannot you, then, understand a little more clearly, from this second letter, the meaning in India of the word Non-Co-operation? Cannot you see that there comes a time when, if the Government persistently refuses to co-operate with the people, the people in their turn will refuse to co-operate with the Government? This, it appears to me, is what has happened in India to-day.

III

My Dear—,

We, who are the members of the Anglo-Saxon race, have gradually dropped into the perverse way of thinking, that we are the world's policemen. Here is one of our mistakes in India. We have got a false impression of our duty of protecting India from all possible dangers, internal and external; and in consequence we cannot leave things alone or let any new movements of independence develop. They appear to us to be contrary to our British sovereign right of interference and control.

It goes without saying, that we do not undertake all these protective duties for nothing. Though no tax is levied directly, the indirect gain to England from Indian trade is great. There is a well-known British maxim, which says that "Trade follows the flag." And England has not been very slow to take commercial advantage of Imperial conquest in India, as well as in other countries. We are, what Napoleon called us, a nation of shop-keepers, after all. I think it may be also said of the Anglo-Saxon people

that there is in them the one saving grace of an uneasy moral conscience. We don't like being caught out doing an act, which is sordid, or mean, or base, and we try desperately to defend ourselves against these imputations,—not always with success.

The result is that in our dealings with others, we, Englishmen, are frequently double-minded. We strive to serve God and Mammon. We have an uncomfortable feeling while doing so, that this is contrary to the Sermon on the Mount. But we dismiss the Sermon on the Mount as unpractical. Yet even when we have dismissed it we are not satisfied. We have a vague suspicion that Christ may be right after all. It was Gardiner, the historian, who said that Cromwell and not Shakespeare was the typical Englishman,—Cromwell who was commercial and sentimental, practical and idealist, religious and material-minded, at one and the same time. Was it Cromwell, or some one later, who uttered that typically English sentence: "Soldiers, trust in God, but keep your powder dry"?

The truth is, this word 'practical' has become a kind of fetish with the British people. We, Englishmen, do not ask first, if a thing is true, but whether it is practical. And so in this British Empire, where it has been built up by conquest, there has been framed a wholly illogical, but solidly practical theory that every added Subject Country was twice blessed,—blessed in the trade profits it gives to Great

Britain and blessed also in the protection it takes at a high market value. I fancy that, even in our school days, this seemed to us too much like a slim deal or a hard bargain. And as we have grown older, we have both of us learnt what an altogether sordid thing Imperialism by conquest really is—base in its origin, and also in its development as a system. If you had not already reached this point of view, I should not be writing these letters. No! we both agree, do we not, that it is difficult, if not impossible, to be Imperialists and Christians at the same time. The words of Christ are really true, however much we may try to get round them,—“Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.”

All that I have just written has direct reference to the situation in India. The disturbing conviction is constantly present, that our own conquest had no moral justification. As Sir Frank Beaman has put it very bluntly,—“We stole India.” In our heart of hearts, we all know that this is true; and we have had, what I have called an ‘uneasy moral conscience’ ever since. This has left its mark upon all our British administration. It has continually had to justify itself for its original theft by exercising a peculiarly paternal protection. I would almost call it, if the word were permissible, ‘grand-paternal.’ For, such a grandmotherly government has rarely been seen on this planet before. No weapon of violence has been allowed in the average citizen’s hands,—not, of course, lest they should use

them against us (that would be too shocking even to think of)—but lest they should injure one another! Every Department had to be entrusted to an Englishman: for nothing must be allowed to go wrong under British patronage! If, in spite of every precaution, anything did go wrong, then an English official must come in at once to the rescue. All initiative had to proceed from Englishmen. Education must be given through an English medium and by means of English books. Indians were to be treated year after year, as though they did not know the needs of their own country as well as their beneficent English rulers.

I knew what you are burning to answer at this point of my argument, and I can say it for you. You want to say again to me "But all that has changed!" *Has it?* It seems to me that, in these two words, which I have underlined, we are brought up dead against the ultimate issue. Personally I have tried to show you by examples, how sceptical I am about the change. I have seen indeed outward changes in abundance, but not yet an inward change of heart. Dyarchy, with its fundamental refusal to entrust into Indian hands such subjects as the Police seems to me even more patronising and more paternal, and perhaps in the long run more grandmotherly than what has gone before. It looks like one of those cautious half-and-half moves forward, which are sometimes worse than no change at all. I may be mistaken, but as far as I can see at present this Dyarchy will not give to Indians the opportunity they need of doing things entirely by

themselves or of themselves entirely in their own ways. Believe me, in this matter it may not be true, that "half a loaf is better than no bread." For half a loaf means still the fatal policy of distrust.

Let me give you two very interesting examples, which will show you on what grounds my impressions are based. Sometime ago now, I was present at a committee meeting that was being held up-country about a vital Indian question with which Englishmen were remotely and indirectly concerned. There was a little group of Englishmen there, and the rest were Indians. The great majority of the Indians said nothing at all, because the Chairman and the Englishmen conducted the whole meeting in English. There was one Indian gentleman, who knew far more about the subject than almost anyone else in the room. He spoke English fluently, but happened to be what I might call, for want of a better name, 'vernacular-minded.' That is to say, he thought with his own Indian mind, in an original manner, and not always with an English tendency. There were there, on the committee, also two or three Indians, who were 'English minded.' I mean, they had dropped to a great extent their Indian mode of life and Indian way of thinking, and had become so cut off from their own people as to think on these Indian questions in an English manner. The bulk of this committee were almost entirely ignored because they did not speak English. Only now and then certain points were translated to them. It was quite

noticeable, how it was possible for the Englishmen present to co-operate with the 'English-minded' Indians. But they could not 'co-operate' with the 'Vernacular-minded' Indians, who spoke English, because they could not follow his train of thought. Nay, something further happened, try as we would to prevent it, the discussion always drifted back into the hands of the little group of the Englishmen and in the end we decided everything.

Why?—Why, of course, because the only medium was English. We Englishmen, to all intents and purposes were non-co-operating with our Indian colleagues, who had not made themselves into Englishmen. We are trying to force them to come over to our side. We were not ready to come to theirs. If we had agreed that the conversation should be only in the vernacular then how very quickly we, Englishmen, would have fallen into our proper places: as guests in India, not masters; as helpers, not tyrants; as people who had come to India for service; not for domination!

One more incident, that was typical. In the cholera camp, at Chandpur, about which I have already written, we had succeeded, with the greatest difficulty, in getting the young national volunteers to co-operate with the Government medical officers, for the sake of the cholera patients. But every hour of the day, the national volunteers would be blaming the Government officials; and every hour of the day, the Government officials would be blaming the nation-

al volunteers. To attempt to mix these two parties together was like putting new wine into old bottles with a vengeance! The bottles were cracked to bursting.

A rupture took place. From what I saw of it all, I blamed the Government officials most. They were so wooden, so obstinate. They insisted on ruling. They were not ready to serve. On the volunteers' side, there were the natural faults of impatience and hot blood. But when another person, on high position, came down to work among them,—the Bishop of Assam,—and was ready to serve, not to rule, they worked with him happily up to the very end. But he was in his proper place,—a servant of the public, not a lord and master. I saw illustrated there, the very words of Christ,—“The king of the Gentiles exercised lordship over them, and they that exercise lordship are called ‘benefactors.’ But ye shall not be so, but he that is greatest among you let him be as the younger, and he that is chief, as he that does serve.”

What was the result, do you ask? Did the national volunteers all go to pieces when Government officials were withdrawn? Not a bit of it. They did uncommonly well, and the work went on better, because with less friction. I learnt from the lips of this Government official himself, in an unguarded moment, the actual truth,—which is as true for the whole of India to-day as it was for the cholera camp at Chandpur. “This Dyarchy,” he said, “is impossible.”

Let me, in concluding this letter, give you a simple and homely analogy. Suppose someone is desirous of learning to swim. But an officious pedagogue, of the policeman type, insists on holding him back. This goes on for some time. At last, the youth, who is eager to swim grows desperate. He 'non-co-operates.' He frees himself from the pedagogue who would hinder him. He jumps into deep water. He struggles with all his might to keep up afloat, using his arms and legs. And he succeeds. He swims.

There, in that picture is the analogy I wanted for Indian non-co-operation with Government at the present time. We in England fully appreciate that spirit ourselves. Independence runs in our very blood. We encourage our own children from babyhood to be self-reliant, courageous, manly, hardy, enduring,—to do things for themselves. But we here, in India, we, Englishmen, have got independence almost to dread that spirit in Indians. As I have said, a fatal habit of mind has made us act like glorified policemen, bent always upon the custodian's duty. We are quite certain, that Indians cannot and will not manage their own affairs and that we must manage everything for them. And so the old habits of patronage, on the one hand and servility on the other linger. No half-way house of Dyarchy will cure them.

There is just one word further that has to be written, though you in England may resent it; for

you believe intensely that England's trusteeship in India has been well performed; and I would not shake your faith, for on the whole I believe it is not misplaced. In certain ways the British rule has succeeded; otherwise, it would never have lasted for over 160 years.

But as I have said, there is another side of Anglo-Saxon character, which is by no means so pleasing. If we had been entirely disinterested and single-minded in our rule, we should have welcomed this new national movement of Mahatma Gandhi's with open arms,—or rather it would have taken an entirely different form. But this lower side of English nature—the material, commercial and profiteering side—came in and tempted us with monetary advantages. It is on that account that the conflict has taken place. We can only meet the movement fairly and squarely by our own self-purification. We must be prepared to give up our ill-gotten gains. We must cease to serve God and Mammon.

IV

My dear,—

As you know very well, the greater part of my own time has been given up to the study of educational and labour problems. I have never been what is called a 'politician' and I have always profoundly distrusted 'politics' because of the incessant opportunism involved and the juggling with human lives. At the same time, I am perfectly aware that we can

never shut ourselves up in water-tight compartments and eschew politics altogether, especially in this modern civilisation of ours, which is three parts mechanical, and only one part human. What I do hate so much is the way politicians exploit the poor and the weak and the defenceless for their own ends and I think that the time has come when all who love humanity should make a determined stand against this.

It is because Mahatma Gandhi is essentially not a politician (in this narrow technical sense of the word) that I have faith in the movement which he has founded. He would never, for a moment, make the poor a pawn in the game. His whole soul would revolt at even the suggestion of such a thing. Rather would he always make the poor and the helpless the very heart and centre of all his thoughts and purposes before whose interest every other consideration must give way, because they are in a very special manner, God's friends, God's chosen, God's beloved. Ever since the great change came over his life when he was in Johannesburg in South Africa, earning a large income and keeping open house for rich and poor alike—ever since the time, when he renounced all his wealth and accepted Poverty as his bride, in a truly Franciscan manner, he has been out and out on the side of the poor, living as a poor man among the poor, suffering with their sufferings and never sparing himself in the very least. The fact that he has had this most intimate experience of poverty in all its

phases has made his ideas concerning the welfare of the poor extraordinarily stimulating. He is so original, because he has emptied himself of conventions and sophistications about the poor owing to his first-hand experience. Certain books in English have struck his attention more than others,—such as Thoreau, Tolstoy, Ruskin, Edward Carpenter. But by far the greatest influence in his life from his English reading has been the Sermon on the Mount. It would not be too much to say that this has been with him throughout his life one of his most cherished sacred scriptures. He has found it truly to be in conformity with the scriptures of the East that he was taught when a boy,—with the great ideals of Jainism, Buddhism, and Vaishnava Hinduism which he has deeply explored. Like Rousseau, before the French Revolution (though with a strength of moral character that Rousseau himself did not possess) he has turned away from the modern tyranny of civilisation to the freedom of a life lived close to Nature. The picture of the past in India has always been to him the picture of a time in human history when the pure in heart saw God. They lived in their forest Ashramas simply and serenely; therefore, their lives were beautiful and healthy and good. But modern civilisation, he would say, is neither simple nor serene. It is impure in heart. Therefore, man cannot see God to-day. So we must go back to the simplicity of Nature, and live a life as far as possible apart from modern civilisation, if we would see God. We must again attempt to be simple

and serene in our lives and pure in heart. We must no longer attempt to serve both God and Mammon.

I have tried very crudely to put down some of his ideas. I can hardly tell you what power they have been in fashioning my own life, as they have come to me, tinged with his own personality. My mind always reacts to them with a shock of surprise and often of opposition. At every turn, I find, he hits me harder, and my own conventions crumble. But there is a pure joy in it all,—first the joy of conflict; and then the greater joy of being defeated seeing where the mistake was all the time. Do you remember those young sophists who used to come to Socrates—how Socrates used to knock them down so tenderly, but unerringly, with some searching question, and then pick them up again and show them exactly where they went wrong? I often find myself like one of them. There comes one sudden question from this Socrates of ours in the East,—and my house of cards goes tumbling down to the ground. Furthermore, shall I say it with all reverence—sometimes the thought goes far beyond and far deeper than Socrates. It reminds me of the thoughts of Christ.

Let me give you one single illustration, which is as vivid to me, as if it had only happened yesterday. We had walked out together to a distant place, outside Pretoria, where the Municipality had built, what they were pleased to call, a 'Kaffir location.' On the way back we sat in the shade of an overhanging tree

beside a brook and talked together about many things. I had, for sometime past, adopted vegetarianism as a diet; but I had done so, rather out of a regard for other people's feelings than from any conviction of my own. The subject turned to the question of meat-eating, and I somewhat perversely argued with Mahatma Gandhi, that, in Nature herself the lower life was sacrificed to the higher, and on that ground the taking of animal life for food by human beings was justifiable. In a moment, his eyes were aflame; and then he said to me in that quiet, restrained voice of his,—“You are a Christian, and yet you use an argument like that! I thought your Bible taught you that Christ was divine, and that just because he was divine, he sacrificed himself for such a sinful creature as man. That teaching I can understand but what you have just said I cannot understand at all. I should love to imagine the whole Universe sacrificing itself to save the life of one single worm. That would be beautiful. But your argument is not beautiful at all. No Hindu would ever use it for a moment. The whole Jaina religion would revolt against it. Buddhism would utterly repudiate it. And it is not Christian, either!”

I have mentioned this simple instance not merely to show his quiet sudden surprises in argument but because it contains in a small compass his own fundamental teaching concerning the poor. In contrast with this, it was seriously argued at a recent meeting in Calcutta by a group of ardent nationalists who

were present, that the fate of the few thousand refugees in the cholera camp at Chandpur, whom I mentioned in my second letter, ought not to stand in the way of a general railway and steamship strike, if it could be brought to pass. A few thousand coolies might be sacrificed if India's 320,000,000 could obtain *Swarajya*. Remembering Mahatma Gandhi's argument outside Pretoria, I told the story of it to the meeting. So long, I said, as the whole of India was ready to sacrifice itself for a few thousand poor people, the act was glorious. But if this doctrine were reversed, than the high spiritual standard of Mahatma Gandhi would be left behind, and there would be nothing glorious at all. The audience at once responded to this ideal. They could not resist its power.

This brings me to the final point of these long letters. The main indictment, which the Non-Cooperation movement is bringing against the system of administration now predominant in India is this—the system more and more terribly oppresses the poor. It crushes the poor. It tyrannises over the poor. The burden of the oppression is growing more and more immense and the system is too hard and wooden and impervious for any vital change to take place in it as it now stands.

There was a time when the Government of India was truly called the Protector of the Poor. It was the noblest title it could bear,—far greater than that of Kaiser-i-Hind, or any such pomposity. But

this noblest title of all has been lost. The poor on every hand are crying out under oppression.

This is a terrible indictment. And though I have struggled for many years to disbelieve it, I am daily becoming more certain that it is not to be cast aside as untrue. Let me give one single example from an 'Open Letter to the Viceroy' by Mr. S. B. Stokes of Kotgarh. It relates to things happening among the villagers on the Hindustan-Tibet Road within fourteen miles of the Viceregal Lodge of Simla. It refers to one of the greatest of all oppressions which the Government of India have gone on tacitly conniving at, year after year knowing well what was happening to the poor people. Mr. Stokes writes to the Viceroy : " I left the Viceregal Lodge inspired by a hope that a matter so near to Simla would soon receive your attention, and returned to my house at Kotgarh to spend some weeks on my back in bed by the doctor's orders. But I was aroused from this feeling of security, to find that repressive measures were being taken against my comrades at the very first stage on the road from Simla. Some had been arrested, for attempting to educate public opinion against the oppression and injustice, which had turned them into slaves. Others were being fined heavily; others were being brow-beaten and terrorised. I came to Fagu, in spite of my ill-health, to find the stage full of the Simla Police; the people cowed; their leaders hand-cuffed. Munshi Kapur Singh had been arrested, because he was engaged in getting the people to sign

a representation, in which they stated their refusal in future to give certain forms of forced labour, so unjust in their nature that a description of them should have aroused the hot indignation of every true Englishman. I can see now but one path of honour. *We must refuse co-operation, until justice has been done.*" (The Italics are mine).

Mr. Stokes is an American, who naturalised himself as a British subject during the War, in order that he might help Great Britain in her hour of danger. He served with distinction by recruiting soldiers for the army from these very hills. His instincts, from the very first, have been on the side of co-operation, and he has struggled long to co-operate. But he has been driven, by the oppression of the poor which he has seen, to declare at last: "*We must refuse to co-operate, until justice has been done.*"

Even if, in this one case, a tardy justice is accomplished owing to Mr. Stokes's own persistence and his immediate nearness to the Viceroy of India,—even then, there are still literally hundreds of thousands of instances among the 320,000,000 of Indians, where justice is not done: where these same things go on, not only unpunished, but actually countenanced (yes! and even instigated) by subordinate Government officials. A statement by Mahatma Gandhi, the importance of which can hardly be over-rated, has recently appeared. He is speaking about the liquor traffic in India, which in the cause of the sorely

tempted poor people, he is doing his very utmost to stop. With regard to this and other methods of helping the poor to recover from their present miserable condition, he writes :—

“ I see nothing wrong in inviting the Moderates and the Government to co-operate with us in all that we are doing. I see nothing wrong in appealing to the Moderates, or even to the Government through their authorised channels, to help us, in the Khilafat, or in the Punjab matters, or to shut up all the liquor shops, or to fill every one of their schools with spinning wheels and to prohibit by legislation the import of foreign cloth. For if they succeed in doing these things, I would cease to think evil of the institution they adore or administer. In making my appeal to them I have shown a way to partial reinstatement in public estimation, and have furnished myself and the country with a further effective cause, in the event of the failure of the appeal, to demonstrate the wooden nature of the system.”

Judge for yourself ! Are these the words of a mere fanatic ? Do they seem to you to be the speech of a purely negative and destructive worker ? Are these the sentences of one who is merely a politician ? Surely no politician would give to his opponents such an opening as that. But greatly as I would wish that the Government would take the opening thus offered and co-operate with one who thus shows them the way to do so, yet, my own experience tells me, the probabilities are, that in these matters which affect

the very existence of the countless millions of the poor, the administration will insist upon carrying out its own wooden policy, and will not bend to the desire of the common people as they have been so clearly and unmistakeably expressed by Mahatma Gandhi.

P. S.—I have just read the words of one of the very ablest and most cautious of Indian political thinkers, the Editor of the *Indian Social Reformer*. He has not adopted the Non-Co-operation platform. His words are therefore all the more significant—

“At one time” he writes, “it looked as if the British connection would prove to be the greatest formative influence in India’s long history. That was when English administrators like Munro conceived their purpose here to be to help India to help herself. This type of administrator has disappeared since the early seventies, and the last quarter of a century has seen the progressive increase of the kind of Imperialism whose purpose is to help itself by making India helpless against its exploiting tendencies.The degeneration to exploiting Imperialism deprives it of its moral authority and it has had to resort increasingly to repressive laws and communal preferences. But these treacherous weapons have broken in its hands. The policy of utilising Indian Muhammadans as a sort of Pretorian guard to defend the bureaucracy against the political aspirations of the educated classes, has recoiled on its inventors with an impact which they will not soon forget. The

Repressive Acts have to go because they have not only repressed, but have added fuel to the fire of discontent.....Whatever chances the hybrid Reform Scheme, conferring a semblance of power on Indian Ministers might have had, have been actually obliterated by the fiscal operations of recent years illustrative of exploitation as its work. Is it possible for Britain in India to purge herself of the exploiting spirit and to revert to the pure altruism of her early Empire-builders?"

Would you compare this most carefully written sentence of a strong co-operator with Mahatma Gandhi's statement which I have just quoted? It should explain to you the universal dissatisfaction in India to-day, so utterly different from the pictures given in the English Press.

The Swadeshi Movement *

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SINCE the Swadeshi movement started, it has often been recognized in Magazines and Reviews, that even the material object, the purchase of Indian goods, will not be accomplished unless the whole movement is inspired with a spiritual purpose. True Swadeshi is a spirit and there are many of us who hope that this spiritual purpose, namely, the achievement of national self-consciousness, will become the fuller meaning, of the word in future and that a man will not only be regarded as a true Swadeshi, who purchases Indian goods but also the man who breaks through denationalizing caste prejudices, who forsakes customs which separate Indian from Indian, who meets with and treats with his fellow-countrymen on equal and brotherly terms.

India at the present time has reached a crisis on an infinitely larger scale. She needs the help of each one of her children to rescue her from her present dangerous position. She needs self-devotion and self-sacrifice on the lines of brotherhood and humanity, whereby every Indian of whatever race or creed is regarded always as fellow-countryman, never as a pariah and an outcast. In the forefront of all endeavours after Nationalism should be placed the principles

* Reprint from Messrs Natesan's *The Swadeshi Movement ; Views of Eminent Indians and Europeans.*

that unite and endear and attract Indian and Indian, man to man. The appeal should be made to these motives realizing their irresistible powers when once shown forth in action. In the long run slowly and silently, great principles work their way and make their effect felt. They carry with them also this immense advantage—the progress may be slow, but it is permanent, things have not to be undone and there is not the heart-breaking experience as the movement proceeds, that a new crop of evils is merely taking the place of the old and that no real deliverance has been wrought upon the earth.

Let me explain in detail the last sentence I have written. We long to see India a self-governing nation and we appeal to every Indian to help us. We may base our appeal on many grounds. There are selfish motives and we may appeal to them. For instance there is the most terrible and powerful appeal to race-hatred, a hatred which can easily be awakened. But with what result? Suppose the impossible, suppose that national, self-government were achieved by such an appeal, would it not carry with it such a crop of evils that the last state would be worse than the first? The very strength of race-hatred which achieved success would afterwards work ruin. The foreigner being removed, race-hatred would work inward and all the old inter-racial disputes between Hindu and Mussalman, Pathan and Sikh, and the like would begin over again until at last, some other foreign power would intervene and put an end to

them. The appeal to a selfish motive always leaves a legacy of selfishness.

But there are motives, on the other hand, which are altogether subtle and unselfish and which achieves altogether permanent results. "There shall never be one last good" is not a mere fancy of the poet Browning, but a scientific fact. The good which will never be lost in national life is genuine brotherhood and sympathy—the actual love of our fellowmen showing itself in deeds of social service. If the great primary motive in the struggle for material life be the constructive power of love and brotherhood, instead of the destructive power of race-hatred, if it be the genuine desire to uplift the whole people of India of every caste and creed; if it be the genuine longing to see submerged and depressed classes of the community upraised; if it be the genuine effort to develop the highest and the best in India for the benefit of mankind, then Swadeshi becomes a spiritual principle which God Himself will bless, for it will be in the line of the divine order of the progress of the world. The greatest of all patriots have had this primary motive as a passion of the soul. It rings true in very line that Mazzini has written. Such men with such motives have wrought deliverance in the earth, a deliverance which has not fallen back again to decay but has remained an inalienable heritage of mankind.

It is true that in a very large movement there will be much, very much, that will not reach this high standard, there will be much dross mixed with the

pure gold. But I am writing to the more earnest, especially to the younger generation of the educated classes, who are now forming their ideals, and I long to see the clearest recognition of the primary motive of true nation-building—the motive not of prejudice and racial dislike, however great the provocation, the motive not of the elevation of one section of the community at the expense of others, but the supreme motive of India as a whole and of every Indian as a fellow-countryman—the motive of making all human life in this fair motherland healthier, happier, nobler, sweeter, purer. Here is the goal of Swadeshi. Every effort made on these lines and with this motive *must* prevail, because it is in the line of the divine order of the progress of the world.

National Education*

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I wish to come before you as a fellow student, not as a teacher and preceptor. I desire to find out, with your help, something of what National Education in India really implies.

More and more, thoughtful men and women in India have become aware that the system of Government and Government-aided schools and colleges, which has held the field for more than fifty years, has failed,—grievously, lamentably, failed.

I have had my own bitter experience, within that system, as a learner and a teacher. For a long time, I tried to write and to speak all I could in favour of that system, and as a believer in that system; for I started with a strong belief in its efficacy. But little by little, I came to understand that, while it did much, in certain directions, to unify India and set free the mind from superstition, yet politically it led to a new form of dependence upon the foreign ruling power and also to the growth of foreign, not of indigenous, culture. Little by little, I came to realise, how deadening that atmosphere of political subservience was to the soul. I saw students, with bright intelligent faces, becoming more and more life-

* From a speech delivered at the Bombay Students' Convention.

less and inert, appearing more and more lacking in initiative and self-reliance.

It is, indeed, a shame to me to have to confess to you that, among the hundreds of pupils who have come under my care in the ten years that I was working in Delhi, there are very few indeed to-day who have fully learnt the qualities which make education a living power to transform character and which send men out on high adventurous quests. Very few have acted out in their lives the things that they were taught from their books. Very few, alas! as far as I can gather, have not sunk back into routine work with little initiative behind it.

Let me give one instance, out of a thousand, to show in what political bondage we have been held in India. When Lala Lajpat Rai was suddenly deported, in the year 1907, under an entirely defunct Ordinance of 1818, I expressed very strongly indeed to my own senior students in St. Stephen's College, Delhi, what indignation I felt at such high-handed acts. This conduct of mine was reported in the newspapers, and great exception was taken to it by the Punjab Government. On Lala Lajpat Rai's release, in November of the same year, I heartily encouraged the students' own desire to illuminate the College, and we had a brilliant festival of lamps. For acting in this manner, I was definitely told that the Government seriously contemplated withdrawing their grant from the College. The warning was given to me, again and again, that such things were

impossible in India. I replied, "How on earth, then, can the students live? How on earth can the students breathe?" The reply to these questions was as definitely as possible officially declared in the notorious Risley Circular, which insisted that teachers should not be permitted to discuss current politics with their own pupils. In what I have just said, and am about to say, I do not wish to imply that Government-aided colleges are an unmixed evil. There is much that is noble in them and much that is good. But the *political* subjection and the craving after Government service, as the one end of all education, remain unbroken in their monotonously enervating effect.

I remember how, one year, there was a strike at M. A. O. College, at Aligarh, on account of the conduct of some of the European professors. The whole College was in a state of suppressed mutiny and revolt. One morning, two of the noblest friends I have ever had in my life,—Maulvi Nazir Ahmed and Munshi Zakaullah,—came to me and asked me, with tears in their eyes, to go down with them to Aligarh in order to help to save the M. A. O. College from utter disaster. I went down with them. Soon after my arrival, a College meeting was held: One of the English Professors implored me to stay in his own bungalow, while he was away at the meeting. I could not quite understand his meaning but while I was seated reading a copy of the *Punch* in an armchair, I heard the tramp of

armed men and found that about fifty military police, armed with rifles and bayonets, had surrounded the bungalow. This English Professor had called them in, because he had been in fear, that his house would be attacked in his absence by his own students! Could there possibly be a more demoralising situation for a teacher than that? It was equivalent in my own mind to a disbelief in the very education which was being imparted. In the days of Mr. Beck, there had been a truly noble atmosphere of sympathy and mutual trust, and a growth of spiritual and intellectual freedom in the students' minds, but the state of things that I saw on that day was intolerable.

When we were departing to Delhi, I asked the Maulvi Sahib what advice he had been able to give to the students, who had been so incensed that they had burnt all their furniture and books. He had said to me,—“I told them that they were not free men, but slaves. If they were free men, they might act as free men; but now, as things were, the only thing was for them to go back into their slavery.” I said “Maulvi Sahib, that is a terrible advice.” He said bitterly,—“Yes, but it is true.”

In after years, I came to know how much truer than I supposed at the time, the advice of the Maulvi Sahib was. I came to discover in my own mind the seeds of political acquiescence and *laissez faire* beginning to grow up. With all my might, I tried to tear them out by the roots. I tried to speak and to act as a free man. But all this only drove me more and

more, every day, out of the Government system of education.

I will give one more example in order to show what I mean by the political subjection from which education has suffered in India, and is still suffering. The Vice-Chancellor of the Punjab University particularly wished for my help on the University Syndicate for the preparation of Honours courses. But I had not yet been nominated as a Fellow. He sent my name up more than once, but for political reasons the Lieutenant-Governor, who was also the Chancellor, refused to nominate me at the request of the Vice-Chancellor. He prostituted his educational position, as Chancellor, in order to effect a political object. This degradation of education has gone on throughout the length and breadth of India, and as long as Government grants are taken it will continue.

At last after many struggles in my own mind and many breakings of ties of old friendship and associations, I determined to be free. I felt that true education could only proceed in an atmosphere of pure and joyous freedom, which would give creative energy to the mind and spirit. I came to Bolpur, and I have been at Shantiniketan for nearly seven years, unrestricted by any Government restraints and unhampered by Government doles and grants. The only nuisance, which I cannot get rid of, is the ubiquitous and perpetual espionage of the C. I. D. ! I have found these light-fingered gentry prying into my private correspondence when at Delhi; I have found

them even suborning and bribing our own students to spy upon me and upon their fellow undergraduates.

Even the peace of Shantiniketan is sometimes disturbed by their presence. And when I go abroad, I am still often shadowed like a common thief or pick-pocket. But this price is small and insignificant to pay in return for the precious heritage of freedom itself, which I have found at Bolpur, in such an overflowing measure.

I cannot tell you, therefore, with what joy I have welcomed the new National movement on its constructive side, when it came boldly up to these colleges in bondage and said to them "Be free!". I am not a politician, and I have never taken active part in any National Congress, but, as an ardent educationist, I can wish "God speed" with all my heart to this new constructive enthusiasm which is already raising up new schools and colleges, making them self-dependent, self-governing and entirely free from all Government control. "God speed" be with every such endeavour! Such is my heart-felt prayer.

I turn to one further aspect of national education in India. It is on this and this alone, that I shall have time to dwell now. For I can only touch one other side of a many-sided subject. The true education of ancient India, in the time of her highest aspirations, was not given amid the paraphernalia of great ugly buildings and cumbersome furniture, costing fabulous sums of money, but in the natural school

rooms of the forest ashrams underneath the shady trees and in thatched mud cottages. Outwardly, there was every sign of poverty. But inwardly, there were reached, in those very forest schools, some of the highest flights of human thought to which mankind has ever attained. The ideal of the Brahmachari Ashram, the ideal of the forest hermitage, is not a dead ideal of the past. It is the very secret, so I fervently believe, of India's true national greatness in education. It is the secret which must be learnt afresh in the days of freedom which are now dawning.

We must revive this ideal of simplicity which has been snatched away from us. The West has brought in the place a vulgar ideal,—the ideal of bigness, the ideal of power. That is not the ancient ideal, either of India, or China, or Japan. Believe me,—I speak as a convert in this, who has been converted from this false religion of material Europe, this worship of bigness and power. Believe me, Europe herself and America also, will each in turn have to bow their heads and become humble as little children, if they desire to enter into the kingdom of Heaven of Learning in all its beauty and truth.

If you have followed the course of history, if you have traced the beginnings of each and all of those religious movements which have left their mark upon Indian history, one by one, in turn, you will find this striking fact. It was in the ages of deepest poverty and sacrifice and renunciation, that the torch

of learning burnt brightest through the night of human darkness.

It was in the pure simple renunciation of the forest life, that the eternal truths of the Upanishads were given to mankind, Later on, it was in those Buddhist monasteries of Nalanda and Takshasila and countless other places, that the priceless ethical wisdom of Ancient India was lived and studied and taught.

It we come later down the stream of history to Islam, we find again the same thing. What period in Islam is more glorious, in its living truth, than the days of the Prophet himself and of Abu Bakr, and the earliest Mussalman believers, when they were living as one brotherhood of love amid the barest outward poverty of the Arabian desert!

Again,—to turn for one moment to the West,—the Dark Ages of Europe themselves were illuminated by the learned saintly monks of the Benedictine and Cistercian Orders, who worked and studied and prayed, in utter poverty and renunciation. And this same truth was made manifest in the Franciscan Movement. St. Francis of Assisi took Poverty as his bride, following the example of Jesus of Nazareth, who was the poorest of the poor and had not where to lay his head. Out of this movement of religious poverty sprang one of the greatest revivals of learning that the world has ever seen. I myself owe all the education I have received to a Franciscan college, at Cambridge, whose first walls were made of mud

and wattle, and whose first teachers were twelve disciples of Francis of Assisi, the saint who followed Christ in the spirit of utter poverty.

The lesson is true to-day,—true in the very midst of “big business,” mammoth industries, millionaire capitalism, which flaunt themselves unashamedly side by side with sweated misery and vice and crime,—the lesson is true to-day that in simplicity alone, can national education, in India, be truly founded. The Brahmachari Ashram, in its ideal of poverty and renunciation, must be restored if our learning to-day in India is to be worthy of the source from whence it sprang.

These then are some of the lessons I have been learning, as a student, at Shantiniketan. These are things that I have been finding out through my own personal experience. It is these lessons of pure freedom, pure simplicity, pure renunciation, which I long, with all of you, my fellow-students, to see once more restored to the Motherland.

Bande Mataram !

The Drink Evil.

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I have just come across this most apposite statement, quoted by the *Indian Witness* of Lucknow from the speech of Lord Chesterfield in the House of Lords, in 1743, against the British Excise and License Revenue derived from intoxicating drink. It reads as follows:—

“Luxury, my lords, is to be taxed, but vice must be prohibited. Let the difficulties in executing the law be what they will. Will you lay a tax on the breach of the Commandments? Would not such a tax be wicked and scandalous, because it would imply an indulgence to all those who would pay the tax? This Bill (to license liquor shops for the sake of revenue) contains the conditions on which the people are to be allowed henceforth to riot in debauchery, licensed by law and countenanced by magistrates. For, there is no doubt, but those in authority will be directed by their masters to assist in their design to encourage the consumption of that liquor, from which such large revenues are expected.

“When I consider, my Lords, the tendency of the Bill, I find it only for the propagation of disease, the suppression of industry, and the destruction of mankind. I find it the most fatal engine that was ever pointed at a people—an engine, by which all those who are not killed will be disabled, and those who preserve their wits will be deprived of their senses.”

Lord Chesterfield was no Puritan, his own morals were not high, if judged by the Christian standard. But this licensing of gin shops, for the sake of revenue, was too much for him. With remarkable precision, he then pointed out exactly what would happen, if a Bill were passed in England. The authorities, he said, were bound to endeavour to increase the revenue. In this way, they would promote the

liquor-traffic itself, and become panderers to vice. We know for certain this has happened in England. We know, also, that England has imported this evil into India, and that the British Empire in India has been built up, with liquor-traffic as one of its financial foundations and with opium-traffic as another. So true is this—that the argument openly used in the Behar Legislative Assembly by the Executive Members of the Council was, in so many words that the Government could not be carried on without its 'drink' revenue.

In the Government of India Legislative Assembly, the answer given by Sir William Vincent was more non-committal than that given in Behar. When the question was asked,

"Is there any truth in the allegation, that men have been prosecuted for preaching temperance?"

Sir William instantly replied :—

"Certainly not! Government has never opposed anyone advocating the cause of temperance only. When violence is used then persons are prosecuted."

This is all very well as a copy-book maxim. But when the Government of India make a profit each year of 17 crores of rupees out of its licensing and excise for 'liquors and drugs,' and when Government has a special department, whose sole interest it is to collect this revenue, and when promotion in this Service depends largely on the effectiveness of revenue collection, is it not certain that what Lord Chesterfield predicted will happen? Is it not certain that, "those in authority will be directed by their maste

to assist in their design to encourage the consumption of that liquor, from which such large revenues are expected" ?

Again, if this is the actual position and standing of Government officials as collectors of revenue from drink and drugs; if their profession is of such character that promotion depends upon effective collection, then, is it not a foregone conclusion (human nature being what it is) that these officials will endeavour to the utmost of their power to prevent forcibly voluntary temperance workers, who wish to reclaim drunkards, from carrying on their beneficent work? What is easier than to trump up a charge of violence or intimidation against them, and have them stopped or imprisoned by law ?

Before coming out to India, when I was quite young, I lived among the very poor for many years in Sunderland and in South-East London. My room in which I lived and slept, was in their midst and I knew everything that was going around me. I have no hesitation in saying that five-sixths of the misery, the destitution, the crime, the sickness, and even infantile mortality, which I thus saw with my own eyes, was due to intemperance. This intemperance was being fostered by the all-powerful licensed Victuallers' Trade, which was carried on under the direct license of the British Government, and with an yearly profit to Government that ran into more than a hundred million pounds sterling, even in my own recollection of nearly thirty years ago.

Those sights, which I saw then—nay, those sights which I *lived* among them—have been branded on my memory for all time. They can never be effaced! The horror of them can never be forgotten as long as I live—never! Only those who know the drunkenness of the slums of London can understand what I have described. In India during these later years of my life, since I landed at Bombay in March, 1901, I have seen a steady increase of intemperance in almost every part of the country, which I have visited. When I first came out, I wrote in one of my books, “I have never *once* seen in the streets an Indian drunkard”! Alas! I could not write this to-day. I have seen drunkenness wide-spread in *Perambur*; among the Madras labourers, it was not an uncommon sight in Bombay. I have seen it also in Calcutta. And I have witnessed the same miserable spectacle in the country-districts, also—men intoxicated with country liquor. I have seen Indian women intoxicated also. Still further, in this very district where I live, in Bengal, the whole countryside has deteriorated, owing to two main causes, (i) malaria, and (ii) the drink and drug habit, which has been steadily and insidiously increasing.

Our student workers have been making a noble effort to get the villagers to give up intoxicants. The people have now abandoned drink in large numbers, and license-holders of liquor-shops under Government, have approached me and asked me whether they can throw up their licenses as they do not wish to go on

any longer with the drink-traffic. The question is now going to be put to the licensing authorities themselves, whether they are ready to allow licenses to be cancelled; we shall find out how far Sir William Vincent's maxim holds good, when he said;

"Certainly not. Government have never opposed anyone advocating the cause of temperance only".

Will Government oppose these repentant liquor vendors?

P. S.—

The following quotation from *The World and New Dispensation* seems to sum up the whole matter. It writes: "The majority of Hindus are teetotallers by nature, and to the true Moslem religious instruction notes drink *haram*. Shall not, then, Hindus and Moslems join hands in forcing the Government to abolish the excise altogether?...Now that the country as a whole is working towards this end, let us concentrate our efforts, and push forward the work through chosen bands of workers. Behold the Light of Heaven in the country to-day! Behold the Spirit of God walking and working among the people".

The Opium Trade of India*

—:0:—

IN certain respects, the 'drug' evil is more insidious and underground in its nature, than the 'drink' evil. For it can be indulged in more secretly, and it often acts more cruelly. Also, there is this further most important fact to remember, that the most iniquitous part of the whole traffic is not in India itself (though the opium habit is increasing in India with terrible rapidity), its deadliest effects take place in foreign countries, such as China, to which the Indian opium finds its way.

Opium is grown in India under Government supervision. It is sold by auction, by the Indian Government, for use abroad. It is shipped to foreign lands with the direct certainty that it will debauch millions of other people outside India. And all the time, this Government Opium Monopoly (which brings into the Government of India Exchequer from £2,000,000 to £3,000,000 each year) is so out of sight, so secret, so silent, that the Indian public knows nothing about it. Herein lies the real danger. For things, that do not come into the light of publicity, are always the most dangerously prone to produce gross abuses. Owing to this secrecy, the immorality of this export opium trade from India, which leads directly to the poisoning of other nations, is apt to be overlooked. An immense sum of revenue money is

* *The Indian Review*, September 1921.

taken from it and employed, by the Government of India, in order to obtain more guns, more munitions of war, etc., and so the vicious circle of evil is made complete. The question, where this opium revenue comes from, is never asked. Yet, it is just this question, which we must ask, insistently, if the evil is to be overcome, if the national conscience is to be purified, and if India is not to be a curse to the Far East.

For more than a hundred years, this Indian revenue from the opium poison has been collected. Its profits have been spent in India. Only the merest fraction of this money has been obtained by the legitimate sale of opium for strictly medicinal purposes. During by far the greater portion of this period of a century, this 'export' opium has actually been forced on China, at the point of the bayonet. Even to-day, after all the promises and pledges, given both in Parliament and at International Conventions, the fact has been plainly revealed, that the Indian Government is still conniving at its entry into China by tortuous channels, when a single act of closing down the greater part of opium production as a whole in India and strictly confining its growth for medicinal uses only, could stop the whole shameful thing in a few months. For India is the chief place, where opium is grown and packed and exported.

The fact, cannot be repeated too often, that, at the Hague Convention, the representatives of the British Government on behalf of India signed the following document:—

"The Articles of the present Convention, if notified by His Britannic Majesty's Government, shall apply to the Governments of British India, Ceylon, the Straits Settlements, Hongkong and Wei-Hai-Wei, in every respect in the same way as they shall apply to the United Kingdom and Ireland."

There can be hardly any mistaking such words as these. They declare emphatically that the United Kingdom and Ireland and India and the British Colonies of the Far East shall all be under the same rules and regulations, as far as the sale of opium is concerned. It would seem as though there could be no other interpretation of the words 'in every respect' in the above passage. But, when put to the practical test, the failure of this Hague document is proved complete. For, in the United Kingdom and Ireland, a 'Dangerous Drugs Act' has actually been passed, which restricts the sale of opium to medicinal purposes,—indeed, this Act has become the common law of the land in Great Britain and Ireland. But when we ask the question, "does the 'Dangerous Drugs Act' apply to India?" we are officially told that it does not. "Does it apply to Ceylon?"—No! "To Hongkong and Wei-Hai-Wei?"—No. "To the Straits Settlements?"—No, certainly not. The reason why it is not made to apply to all these places according to the Convention, is not stated; but the simple truth is that India, Hongkong, Singapore, etc. make an immense revenue out of opium sales, and they are determined to help that revenue to the last possible moment.

And yet we are told, in this very same document, (which was supposed to be the world's charter

- for humanity's release from the drug of opium), that the opium articles of the Hague Convention should apply, in every respect, to British India as to the United Kingdom and Ireland!

The answer of the British Government in India has hitherto been, that, in India itself, the consumption of opium is not really 'abused.' It is argued, that, even though opium is eaten as a drug, it is not eaten in quantities large enough to do any actual harm. Let us take that answer, and test it by actual facts. In the Calcutta newspaper called '*Capital*,' an Assam correspondent has written an account concerning the smoking of opium in Assam, the effects of which he had studied at first hand,—

"Since 1903," he writes, "the consumption of opium as a drug has been steadily increasing. Though the price is much higher now, the victims pay the price freely, at the cost of comfort and the bare necessities of life. They are fully aware, that they are in the grip of a most deadly poison, from which they cannot get free, even if they wish to do so. But they would welcome any measure that would at least get their children free from it.....There is no meanness, no humiliation, which a needy opium eater will refuse to stoop to, in order to get a dose of the drug."

At the very time, that this pathetic description was given at first hand, concerning the things that were happening in Assam, the Secretary of State for India was engaged in a correspondence with the Edinburgh Anti-Opium Committee,—a Committee, which was specially formed for promoting the objects of the Hague International Opium Convention. Mr. Montagu wrote, through his Secretary, as follows:—

"Mr. Montagu takes strong exception to the statement made by your Committee that the measures adopted by the Government of India are by no means in consonance with the

spirit of the Hague Opium Convention.....The Government of India do not admit that the opium used in India, or exported, is 'abused'.....The Dangerous Drugs Bill does not apply to India.....It is believed, that no alteration will be necessary in order to bring the laws, rules and procedure into exact conformity with the provisions of the Hague Convention, as the Indian law and practice have for years been in accord with the principles of that Convention."

It is a subtle irony, that only a few months after this letter was written by the Secretary of State for India, the Assam Legislative Council decided, on its own initiative, by an overwhelming majority, that the sale of opium in Assam must be prohibited, because of its terrible abuse; that the law, rules and procedure in that province of India, must be drastically altered, in the very same direction that the law, rules and procedure in the United Kingdom and Ireland had been altered, *viz.*, so as to make the sale of Indian opium strictly confined to medicinal purposes only.

But the Secretary of State's letter, concerning Indian opium, is, if I may say so in writing, even more shameless still in another direction. Its ignorance, whether wilful or assumed, about the 'export' trade is monumental. It refuses to admit that the 'export' opium,—*i. e.*, the opium which is grown in India and exported abroad (chiefly to the Far East) is abused. On this point, a convincing indictment has been drawn up against the British Government. It has been published by Miss La Motte, of America, in her book, called 'The Opium Monopoly.' It would be quite impossible, at the end of this article, to give in full the evidence,

which Miss La Motte has collected, from Government Blue Books and Statistics,—evidence which proves, up to the hilt, the fact that the Indian opium, which is exported abroad, corrupts and debauches the Eastern peoples, and yet is knowingly sold, both by the Indian Government and by Colonial Governments in the Far East, in quantities which exceed a hundred or even a thousandfold the medical requirements. To give one example only, the Government of India have quite recently received a five-year agreement to supply 10 chests of opium a month, (from January 18th, 1921) to the tiny Colony of Hongkong, which lies at the very door of China. This means, that the Indian Government will continue to export 15,600 lbs. of opium, every year, to Hongkong, when ten or a dozen pounds would be more than ample for all purely medicinal requirements. All the rest represents the sale of opium, as a drug, to be smoked, which the Hague Convention, as clearly as possible, declared to be an ‘abuse.’

The same facts as these could be told about the export of Indian opium to Bangkok, to Singapore, to Shanghai, to Saigon, to Batavia, to Macao, to Mauritius. And yet the Secretary of State for India grows indignant at the mere thought, that the ‘export’ opium, which is sent from India and is grown in India, could be ‘abused’!

The time has clearly come for the whole of the Indian people to rise up together against this hateful traffic, whether inside British India, or for the purpose

of export abroad. The only safe rule to be followed, by any people that wishes to protect its nationals, is to restrict the manufacture and the sale of opium, strictly to the medicinal needs of each country. If this were done, then a couple of hundred chests of opium, at the outside, would be more than sufficient for the medicinal needs of the whole of India, instead of the 8,000 chests, which are consumed at present. Furthermore, with regard to 'export' opium, for sales abroad, probably five hundred chests could be the outside limit required, for strictly medicinal purposes. This would reduce the opium traffic, as far as India is concerned, almost to nothing. The inland revenue, that would be forfeited owing to the loss of sales in India, would be more than compensated for by the greatly improved health of the Indian people. The revenue from 'export' opium would be more than compensated for by the genuine bonds of friendship that would at once be linked up between China and India,—a friendship which might have far-reaching consequences for the future history of the world.

Let me repeat in conclusion,—what is needed in this matter is a great act of national self-purification, and the times are ripe for such an act.

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