

HARIJAN

12 Pages

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VOL. XI, No. 19

AHMEDABAD — SUNDAY, JUNE 8, 1947

TWO ANNAS

IN DELHI

In the sweltering heat of Delhi Gandhiji arrived on the 25th May in answer to Pandit Nehru's call. Both the Sardar and the Panditji had wired to him to go to Mussoorie where they had gone for a brief rest and change. But he could not go as he had promised himself not to leave his field of service till friendly relations were established between the two communities in Noakhali, Bihar and Calcutta. A member of Gandhiji's party at Patna came to see me while I lay ill in the hospital at Bombay last month. "Gandhiji is leaving hostages wherever he goes," she said humorously. "Pyarelalji and others who accompanied him to Noakhali are the hostages there and we who are with him in Bihar are left behind as hostages every time he goes to Delhi." The fact is that he would be in every riot-affected area himself if he could manage it by some magic. Mr. Khan of Chandpur came to pay his respects to him at Delhi the other day. "Tell the people of Noakhali that I have not deserted them," he said to him. "I hope to return as soon as possible." The workers of the Nature Cure Trust at Uruli and Panchgani have been beseeching him to go there for a short stay in the interests of the Trust and his own health. But he is adamant. "The Hindus and the Muslims of Noakhali and Bihar must first assure me that they no longer require my services. Then alone will I think of going elsewhere for rest."

The happenings in the country oppress him heavily. Having deprived himself of the help of his usual staff, he burns the candle at both ends. He has become reckless with regard to his health and life. "In the India as I see it shaping today, there is no place for me," he said. There was passion in his voice. "I have given up the hope of living 125 years," he continued. "I might last a year or two. That is a different matter. But I have no wish to live if India is to be submerged in a deluge of violence, as it is threatening to do. There is the communal frenzy and they are talking of militarization and industrialization. India might become a first class military power and a highly industrialized country. But where is the place for village industries or *khadi*, symbols of non-violence, in such India?"

In a letter to an old Ashramite he wrote: "I am in the midst of flames. Is it the kindness of God or His irony that the flames do not consume me?"

What is it that sustains him? It is his Himalayan faith. A European friend who had spent a few days with him in India in 1935 writes to him

from America: "I think of you in prayer while in that part of the world, where I am not very far from the place where they manufacture the atomic bomb material U 235. I see only the light of hope for our Western civilization in your radiant and friendly guidance and wisdom." In his reply Gandhiji wrote: "I am the same as when you saw me except that my faith burns, if possible, brighter than before."

The Chinese Ambassador Dr. Lo Chia Luen came with Pandit Nehru to see Gandhiji. "How do you think things will shape themselves? How do you predict the future?" he asked.

"I am an irrepressible optimist," replied Gandhiji. "We have not lived and toiled in vain all these years that we should become barbarians as we appear to be becoming, looking at all the senseless bloodshed in Bengal, Bihar and the Punjab. But I feel it is just an indication that as we are throwing off the foreign yoke all the dirt and froth is coming to the surface. When the Ganges is in flood, the water is turbid. The dirt comes to the surface. When the flood subsides, you see the clear blue water which soothes the eye. That is what I hope for and live for. I do not wish to live to see Indian humanity becoming barbarian."

"And who can predict the future? Years ago I read Butler's *Analogy* Therein I read that the 'future is the result somewhat of our past'. This thought has persisted with me because it coincides with the Indian belief. We are the makers of our own destiny. We can mend or mar the present and on that will depend the future."

The Chinese Ambassador was thoughtful. "History sometimes repeats itself, because we do not learn the lesson of history," he said. "It is only a half truth," replied Gandhiji. "History may seem to be repeating itself today. I believe that nothing remains static. Human nature either goes up or goes down. Let us hope, in India, it is going up. Otherwise, there is nothing but deluge for India and probably for the whole world."

They talked of the havoc wrought by the war in China. Would the war-weary Asiatic countries follow in the footsteps of Japan and turn to militarization? The answer lay in what direction India would throw its weight. "India is becoming the laughing stock of the world," he said in the course of one of his post-prayer speeches. "The world asks, where is your non-violence with which you have won your independence? I have to hang down my head in shame. Will a free India present to the world a lesson of peace or of hatred and violence of which the world is already sick unto death?"

The learned ambassador conveyed to Gandhiji the deepest respect and affection of the Chinese people. Gandhiji valued their affection and said he would love to visit China which had so much in common with India. The ambassador began to talk of Chinese philosophy and quoted Lao-tse's maxim: "Production without possession, action without self-assertion, creation without domination." Gandhiji's face beamed. "You are talking the language of the *Upanishads*," he said. "The same thought is to be found in the *Ishopanishad*."

New Delhi, 28-5-'47

S. N.

WEEKLY LETTER

INTOLERANCE

During Gandhiji's last visit to Delhi he had often to suspend public prayers as a result of some individuals' vociferous objection to the recitation of verses from the *Quran*. The majority of the audience wanted the prayers to be held and was indignant at the disturbance. In the surcharged atmosphere of the day, Gandhiji was afraid that a continuation of the prayers might result in injury to the objectors. Therefore, he suspended the prayers. In the meantime he continued to impress upon the public the need for keeping calm and maintaining discipline in spite of all provocation. This time also a lady sent him a letter on the very first day protesting against the recitation of the *Quran*. She was present at the prayer meeting. Before commencing the prayers Gandhiji explained that he could not stop the prayer because one or two persons objected. The owners of the *mandir*, where he was staying, did not object. He observed that the Delhi audience had obtained mastery over itself so as to hearten Gandhiji in the belief that they would not be provoked to do any injury to the objector. He, therefore, felt that prayer should be held irrespective of whether anyone objected or not. There was a similar incident at Calcutta, he said, but the prayer was held, because the vast gathering, which had assembled, wanted it. The objector desisted ultimately. He could not stop prayers every time someone objected. He asked the audience to pray, leaving disturbers unmolested.

The prayer was held undisturbed and in his post-prayer speech Gandhiji congratulated the sister for observing the outward decorum at least. That was the least that laws of public prayer demanded. He hoped there would be no disturbance from anyone in future. But on the second day the sister wrote again that the Sikhs and the Hindus had suffered untold miseries and hardships at the hands of the Muslims. The *Quran* preached killing of non-Muslims. How could Gandhiji include verses from such *Quran* in his prayers? She also tried to shout and cause disturbance when the prayer was started. The volunteers gently led her away.

She wrote again protesting against the holding of prayer and against volunteers leading her away. It was wrong on the part of any man to touch a woman, she said.

Replying to her on two successive days Gandhiji said that he did not agree that it was always wrong

on the part of a man to touch a woman. He himself leaned on girls' shoulders during his walk. There was nothing wrong in it. It was wrong for a man to touch a woman if it was done with a lustful impulse.

Public prayer, he continued, was a precious privilege. It could not be lightly thrown away. It was a good thing to pray silently when someone objected even though wrongly and there was danger of the objector being molested. But he was glad that there was an exemplary response to his entreaty and the audience had remained perfectly and deliberately passive. He had received threats that if he persisted in reciting the *Quran*, there would be a black flag demonstration on the prayer ground against it. Gandhiji declared that he would hold the prayers in spite of the demonstration. He asked the audience to take no notice of the demonstrators if they came. And if they all joined the demonstration and brought black flags and *lathis* and began to beat him, he hoped he would still go on repeating God's name under their blows, without harbouring any ill-will towards them. He might be killed, but they would afterwards feel sorry for what they had done. If, on the other hand, he retaliated and even succeeded in killing a few, he would be ultimately killed and they would feel proud of their victory.

To the objecting sister he said that she had been misled. He had read the *Quran*, which she had not. Nowhere did it preach killing of non-Muslims. It preached justice for all human beings: not that all Muslims had lived up to that teaching. But had all Hindus lived up to the teaching of the *Gita* or the *Vedas*? Did that detract from the greatness of the *Gita* or the *Vedas*? Why should the misdeeds of the Muslims detract from the greatness of the *Quran*? It was wrong to develop dislike for the scriptures of those, some of whom might become temporarily insane.

SCARE OF JUNE SECOND

There is a strong rumour afoot that on the 2nd of June following the Viceroy's statement, there would be country-wide riots. There is a tense atmosphere of expectancy as to what the Viceroy would bring. Deprecating this mentality Gandhiji said that he felt sorry that people should look to London for their own future. The Independence of India, which was their real Kohinoor, was there right in front of them and it was for them to decide whether to take it or discard it. There was endless speculation as to what the British political parties wanted to do or would desire to be done. All this should not affect Indian independence, if only the people of India decided to have it.

Following the same thought in a written message on Monday, he said: "It is unbecoming on our part to look to London for what the British Cabinet thinks. It is not for them to give us liberty. They can only get off our back. That they are under promise to do. But for keeping it and giving it shape we have to look to ourselves. And I promised to tell you how we were to do it. In my opinion

we are unable to think coherently whilst the British Power is still functioning in India. Its function is not to change the map of India. All it has to do is to withdraw and leave India, carrying out the withdrawal if possible, in an orderly manner, may be even in chaos, but withdraw in any case on or before the promised date.

"There is an additional reason why no vital change in the shape of Hindustan is possible in the present state of the country. There is the joint statement issued by the Qaid-e-Azam and me. It enunciates a sound principle that there should be no violence employed in the pursuit of political aims. If in the teeth of that document, the country continues the mad career of violence of the worst kind and if the British Power is weak enough to submit to it in the vain hope that after the mad thirst is quenched things will run smooth, it would have left a bloody legacy for which not only India but the whole world will blame her. We will then have learnt the cruel lesson that everything was to be got if mad violence was perpetrated in sufficient measure. I would, therefore, urge every patriot and certainly the British Power to face out the worst violence and leave India, as it can be left under the Cabinet Mission document of 16th May of the last year. Today in the presence of the British Power we are only demoralized by the orgy of blood, arson and worse. After it is withdrawn, let me hope, we shall have the wisdom to think coherently and keep India one or split it into two or more parts. But if we are bent even then on fighting, I am sure we will not be so demoralized as we are today, though admittedly all violence carries with it some amount of demoralization. I shall hope against hope that India free will not give the world an additional object lesson in violence with which it is already sick almost unto death."

TO THE HINDUS AND THE SIKHS

A telephone message from Bihar said that tension was increasing in view of the rumour that there would be unparalleled massacre and bloodshed following the Viceroy's declaration about transfer of power on June 2nd. It hurt him deeply. Why should they look to the Viceroy for what he would bring? Why should that make the Hindus and the Muslims panicky? There had been rumours of a similar nature previously also but nothing untoward had happened. He hoped the present scare would similarly prove baseless. This much he wanted to convey to the Hindus of Bihar that if they went mad again and began killing the Muslims there, whom he regarded as his blood brothers and who looked upon him as their friend, they would kill him.

He had received a letter from a Sindhi friend. The Hindus were in panic there. Had the Hindus and the Muslims all become brutes? Had they no fear of God?

The talk also went about that he was staying in Bihar, no doubt, in order to help the Muslims but the result would be that the Hindus would be butchered. He had said to the Hindus that even

if the Muslims went mad, they should not lose their reason. He was not ashamed of giving that advice to anyone. The Hindus were in a minority in the Punjab, but there were the brave Sikhs each one of whom considered himself equivalent to 1½ lac. Did it mean that one Sikh could shed as much blood as 1½ lac? He thought not. It meant that one Sikh could stand up to 1½ lac persons against him. In that sense it was a tribute to the bravery of the Sikhs. Not one Sikh should stand by and see a wrong perpetrated. He should give his life to prevent it. His advice, therefore, to the Sikhs also was that whatever might have been the use of the sword in Sikh history, in this age of the atom bomb there was no weapon like non-violent resistance. It did not make cowards of men. It infused courage even in women. If he recommended non-violence, it was because he was convinced that it was the weapon of the really brave.

ANALOGY OF THE MAD DOG

Some one asked Gandhiji what should be done with a mad dog? His reply was that if the friend meant a mad dog literally, he himself would say that in the first place a dog would not go mad amongst really god-fearing men. But supposing in the presence of men who considered themselves of God, they found a dog running amuck, they would naturally kill it rather than allow many of themselves to be bitten by a rabid dog and be sent to Kasauli for treatment as they used to before.

But what if a human being went mad? His own brother had gone mad. He (Gandhiji) was a small boy of ten at that time. But his mother and father did not have the mad son killed. They sent for *vaideyas* and doctors and had him treated and cured.

"You are all my blood brothers whether you are Hindus or Muslims. Supposing you go mad and I have a battalion at my command, would I have you shot? No. I would not like to be shot myself, if I went mad. My friend's son went mad. I had to send him to the lock-up but I would not have him killed."

Today the madness of communal frenzy had taken possession of the country. People talked of country-wide riots on June 2nd. He was convinced none of them wanted rivers of blood to flow. One had to put up with mad frenzy and not begin to be frenzied himself by way of retaliation.

He and the Qaid-e-Azam had issued an appeal not to use violence for political purposes. Suhrawardy Saheb and others had issued an appeal that the Hindus and the Muslims of Bengal were not to go mad on June 2nd, but remain friends. He hoped they would all follow the advice.

THE SACRED TRUST OF PROTECTING MINORITIES

Another correspondent had written a letter saying that whenever the Viceroy invited leaders from the Interim Government for discussions, he invited the Hindus, the Muslims and the Sikhs. Were there no other communities in India? What about the Parsis, the Christians, Jews and others? They had been with the Congress. Were they to be suppressed by the vociferous elements? The

Sikhs were a brave race. The Muslims had raised a hue and cry for years and so they were being consulted. Were the quiet citizens to have no voice in shaping the destiny of the country?

The question was relevant and important, said Gandhiji. If the Sikhs and the Hindus and the Muslims thought themselves to be the only people that mattered and the rights of the other communities were in any way less than their own, they would prove themselves utterly unworthy. The curses of the innocent would destroy them. Such a Government would never be *Rama Raj* or the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth.

It was the duty of every citizen to treat the lowliest on a par with the others. If some persons became mad, that was no justification for others to follow suit. If Indians decided to live independently, Gandhiji urged, none in the world, not even a combination of powerful nations, could thwart them.

New Delhi, 29-5-'47

S. N.

HARIJAN

June 8

1947

HOW DID I BEGIN IT?

(By M. K. Gandhi)

Readers must have noticed that last week I started writing for the *Harijan*. How long I shall be able to continue it, I do not know. God's will be done in this as in other things.

When I think of it, the circumstances under which I stopped writing for the *Harijan* have not altered. Pyarelalji is far away from me and in my opinion is doing very important work in Noakhali. He is taking part in what I have called *Maha Yagna*. Parasuramji, the English typist, who had become used to the work has gone to Ahmedabad of his own choice to help Jivanji. Kanu Gandhi was of much help, but he is also taking part in the *Maha Yagna* of Noakhali. Most of the other helpers are also unable to help under the stress of circumstances or other causes. To resume writing for the *Harijan* under these adverse conditions would be ordinarily considered madness. But what appears unpractical from the ordinary standpoint is feasible under divine guidance. I believe I dance to the divine tune. If this is delusion, I treasure it.

Who is this Divinity? I would love to discuss the question; only not today.

The question that is foremost with us all, I discuss every evening after the prayer. This writing will come before the readers after seven days. This interval would be considered too long in connection with the pressing problem. Therefore, in these columns for the moment, I must confine myself to things of eternal value. One such is *brahmacharya*. The world seems to be running after things of transitory value. It has no time for the other. And

yet when one thinks a little deeper it becomes clear that it is the things eternal that count in the end.

What is *brahmacharya*? It is the way of life which leads us to Brahma (God). It includes full control over the process of reproduction. The control must be in thought, word and deed. If the thought is not under control, the other two have no value. There is a saying in Hindustani: "He whose heart is pure has the all purifying waters of the Ganges in his house." For one whose thought is under control, the other is mere child's play. The *brahmachari* of my conception will be healthy and will easily live long. He will not even suffer from so much as a headache. Mental and physical work will not cause fatigue. He is ever bright, never slothful. Outward neatness will be an exact reflection of the inner. He will exhibit all the attributes of the steadfast one described in the *Gita*. It need cause no worry if not one person is met with answering the description.

Is it strange that one who is able completely to conserve and sublimate the vital fluid which has the potentiality of creating human beings, should exhibit all the attributes described above? Who can measure the creative strength of such sublimation, one drop of which has the potentiality of bringing into being a human life? Patanjali has described five disciplines. It is not possible to isolate any one of these and practise it. It may be posited in the case of Truth, because it really includes the other four. And for this age the five have been expanded into eleven. Acharya Vinoba has put them in the form of a Marathi verse: They are non-violence, truth, non-stealing, *brahmacharya*, non-possession, bread labour, control of the palate, fearlessness, equal regard for all religions, *swadeshi* and removal of untouchability.

All these can be derived from Truth. But life is complex. It is not possible to enunciate one grand principle and leave the rest to follow of itself. Even when we know a proposition, its corollaries have to be worked out.

It is well to bear in mind that all the disciplines are of equal importance. If one is broken all are. There seems to be a popular belief amongst us that breach of truth or non-violence is pardonable. Non-stealing and non-possession are rarely mentioned. We hardly recognize the necessity of observing them. But a fancied breach of *brahmacharya* excites wrath and worse. There must be something seriously wrong with a society in which values are exaggerated and underestimated. Moreover to use the word *brahmacharya* in a narrow sense is to detract from its value. Such detraction increases the difficulty of proper observance. When it is isolated even the elementary observance becomes difficult, if not impossible. Therefore, it is essential that all the disciplines should be taken as one. This enables one to realize the full meaning and significance of *brahmacharya*.

New Delhi, 2-6-'47

(Translated from the original in Gujarati)

CALL TO COURAGE

Division of India and consequent partition of the Punjab and Bengal has been in the Press for some time. "Let them have their Pakistan and see for themselves the absurdity of it," it is said. A Muslim lady met me in the train the other day. She was the wife of a high-placed military officer. She was sad and despondent over what was happening in the country. "My grandparents are Kashmir Pandits," she said. "How can I be a different nation from them? Today passions are running high. No one can think clearly. The Muslims won't realize the absurdity of the demand for Pakistan till they have it. But I am sure within ten years they will be coming back to the Indian Union."

She was a sensitive, well-educated, cultured lady. Her male companion had got ill and the guard of the train going in search of a doctor had called me to attend to the patient in the middle of the night. I stayed with her till the train stopped at the next station. There was a Parsi lady in their compartment. She started talking of the senseless arson and bloodshed going on in the country. "Here are we belonging to three different religions — perfect friends. Why cannot the same law apply to all?" she said. She was full of indignation. "Some of these leaders should be shot," she burst forth in anger. "To further their own schemes and their own selfish ends, they lead astray the innocent, poverty-stricken men and women and get them to kill each other. Tell me, has a single leader been killed in these riots?" We agreed with her. My own experience of the three months I spent in the riot-affected Noakhali was the same. The Muslim lady sighed and added, "I feel so utterly miserable. This country is literally going to the dogs. My children, when they grow up, will be utter misfits in this world full of hatred. In short it means "shed sufficient blood and you can get anything."

In Delhi I found some people talking of the same subject. "The Congress is now prepared to yield Pakistan," they said. "Why did not they do so a year ago? Is not it yielding to *goondaism*?"

Gandhiji's whole life has been devoted to infusing courage into the people and teaching them never to bend before violence. From the 29th May to the 1st of June his post-prayer speeches were devoted to this theme. The audience which is daily increasing in numbers listens to him spell-bound. The full text of Gandhiji's speeches from the 29th May to the 1st June inclusive is given below:

29-5-'47

Speaking after prayers, Gandhiji said that during the few days that remained between now and June 2nd, he would love to speak to them daily on some aspect or other of the topic that was uppermost in their minds.

By their exemplary restraint and attention they had drawn him and enabled him to open out his heart to them. How he wished that all those who called themselves the sons of the soil would think well and act bravely—a very difficult performance at the moment when newspapers gave gruesome

details about senseless arson and murder. He himself was not perturbed with the thought of June 2nd. He returned to India in 1915 after spending 20 years of the prime of life in South Africa. He had not stayed there to make money. He had realized early in life that God had created him to serve his fellow beings. In that service lay the service of God. That was the lesson of the first verse of the *Ishopanishad*: "That which is yours is not yours, it belongs to God; and that which belongs to others is certainly not yours." What was one to fight for?

Senseless correspondents would have him take to forest life unless he would ask the Hindus to answer sword with sword and arson with arson. He could not oblige those correspondents by denying the whole of his life and by being guilty of advocating the law of the brute in place of the law of man. On the contrary, he would plead with leaders of all parties at least to have courage to refuse to yield to brute force.

He was not thinking of the eternal law of love, much as he believed in it. If the whole of India accepted that, India would become the unquestioned leader of the whole world. Here he merely wished to suggest that there should be no surrender except to reason.

They had worked hard for achieving freedom. They had bravely faced the bayonets of the mighty British Empire. Why should they falter now? Let them not make the mistake on the eve of hard-won freedom of thinking that they were likely to lose it if they did not yield, even though it be to brute force. That way lay perdition.

He discounted all the cables that came from London. He must cling to the hope that Britain would not depart by a hair's breadth from the letter and spirit of the Cabinet Mission's statement of May 16 of last year, unless the parties of their own free will came to an agreement on any variation. For that purpose they had to meet together and hammer out an acceptable solution. That statement had been accepted by the Congress and the British Government. If either of them went back on it, it would be a breach of faith.

If they would face reality in terms of the welfare of their own country, they would agree first to establish peace in the country, telling the turbulent elements in the country firmly and boldly that there could be no departure from that document of May 16 until they stopped the sanguinary strife.

The Constituent Assembly was sitting in terms of the May 16 paper. It was for the British to hand over power and quit. The Government of free Indians formed under the constitution worked out by the Constituent Assembly could do anything afterwards—keep India one or divide it into two or more parts.

The British officials should know what the people were whispering. Many believed that their hand was in the riots. He must refuse to believe the serious charge unless it was established beyond doubt.

The Viceroy had no easy task before him. Here there was no question of brilliant naval strategy. It was one of honest and brave statesmanship. May God endow him with the required courage and wisdom.

30-5-'47

Speaking after prayer Gandhiji said that he had been telling them all these days not to look to London or to the Viceroy, but to look to themselves. He did not mean to suggest that the Englishmen in London were bad men or that the Viceroy was not a good man. He believed they were good men. But one did not want the interference of even good men in one's domestic affairs. They had in any case decided to go. There was no mention of safeguards for British interests. The Britishers in the Civil Services could stay on if the Indian Government would keep them. But they had to stay on their own responsibility. Not a single British soldier would be left for their protection. Their safety would be in their winning the goodwill of the Indians through service. The same thing applied to British traders and businessmen. That was the meaning of "Quit India". June 1948 was the last date on which they were pledged to quit India. "Let them look to their duty while we look to ours." And how could Indians perform their duty?

He had often wondered whether he represented anybody except himself. He did not represent the Congress because he was not even a four-anna member of the Congress. He sometimes did speak for the Congress, but that was by right of service. Similarly, he could speak for the Princes and even the Muslim League. Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah had wanted his signature to the joint appeal for peace issued by both of them sometime ago.

Being the joint author of the famous statement signed by Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah, he should represent him at least in the one deciding and supreme factor of peace. Did he represent the Qaid-e-Azam? If he did, they should be found working on the same platform and not resting till they had secured peace in the land of their birth or die in the attempt. He knew that he did not represent those who burnt villages near Gurgaon and committed murder. Whether they were Muslims or Hindus or both did not matter to him. They were all children of Mother India. It was unfortunate that the Interim Government had inherited a bad tradition and therefore they did not know who killed whom. It was the deed of "the members of a certain community." Why should they not be frank and bold enough to name the butcher by his name? Anyway he had made it clear the day before that if he had his will there never would be Pakistan before peace and certainly not through British intervention. After the joint statement he had just referred to, Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah had left no way open to himself but the way of conviction through cold reason for the attainment of Pakistan. Let him first establish peace with or without his (Gandhiji's) association and afterwards convene a meeting at his house or anywhere else of Indian leaders of all classes and

communities and plead with them the cause of Pakistan and wait till he had carried conviction to them. Let him dismiss the "Caste Hindus" from his brain. He would assure Jinnah Saheb that in the ocean of Indian humanity and even Hindu humanity they were but a microscopic minority if the Shudras were excluded. By "Caste Hindus" were generally known Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas. Jinnah Saheb himself excludes the Scheduled Classes from this category and therefore would have to exclude the Shudras. For the wretched caste system had always traduced the Shudras who together with the Atishudras made the millions. If Pakistan of Jinnah Saheb's conception was a reasonable proposition, he should have no difficulty in convincing India. Let him not appeal to the British power or its representative Viscount Mountbatten. The latter's function was only to quit India at the latest by the end of June next year, leaving India at peace if possible, but quit in any case, peace or no peace. Imposed peace would be the peace of the grave of which all India and the British should be ashamed. Let it not be said that he (Gandhiji) was too late on the scene. He was not. It was never too late to mend, never too late to replace the force of the sword with that of reason. Could the British dare to impose Pakistan on an India temporarily gone mad?

Was Pakistan, according to Jinnah Saheb, a State, where every child would enjoy the fullest security, where there would be no caste and no distinctions of high and low, where there would be justice for all? No one could have anything against such a Pakistan. He himself would tour with Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah all over and explain to the people that they could all live happily in that Pakistan. But the happenings in N. W. F. P., the Punjab and Bengal did not encourage such a belief.

A friend had sent him some literature to prove that the *Quran* preached killing of *kafirs*, i. e., non-believers. He had been in the midst of Muslims all his life. No one had ever suggested that he should be killed as a *kafir*. He had been in the midst of *Maulvis* in Noakhali. Learned Muslims had told him that the meaning of the particular verse of the *Quran* was that God would take to account the so-called non-believer. But that he would do to the Mussalmans also. He judges men by their deeds and not by their words. There was mention of terrible punishments in the *Bhagwata*, the *Manu Smriti* and the *Vedas*. Yet the central teaching of Hindu religion was: "Mercy or kindness is the essence of all religion." He wanted them to bear in mind what Tulsidas had said:

"Good and bad, all men are the creation of God. The man of God picks up the good and discards the bad like the proverbial swan which is able to drink the milk and leave behind water, when a mixture of water and milk is placed before it."

31-5-'47

Before commencing the prayer, Gandhiji told the audience that he wanted every word of what he said to them these days to sink into their hearts.

The best way to listen was to keep their hearts and minds open.

Speaking after prayer, Gandhiji told the audience how for a period of 54 years, since the light of non-violence dawned upon him in the far-off South African days, he had been trying to instil into them the beauty, truth and power of this matchless weapon. And yet there was the objector foolish enough to ask them to imprison Jinnah Saheb. He said that Jinnah Saheb could not be imprisoned by them and, if he could be, he would gain more strength. He suggested that the only way to do so was by remaining adamant against the establishment of Pakistan by force and by being friendly towards Jinnah Saheb. If all followed his advice, it was not impossible one fine evening to find Jinnah Saheb side by side with him. Gandhiji himself was the enemy of none and hence he claimed to represent Jinnah Saheb as he claimed to represent even Englishmen even whilst they repudiated the claim. He recited how a Pathan, his client at one time, had become his enemy and then his friend when he had discovered his mistake.

The speaker then came to the topic he wanted to discuss that evening. He reminded them that the previous evening he had said that in a free India they would neither have *Birla Raj* nor *Nawab of Bhopal Raj*. They would have *Panchayat Raj*. In a free India individuals did not count except as such. Therefore, in Kashmir, it was not the Maharaja with his soldiery that would count but the Muslims who were the vast majority there. The same thing applied to the rulers of Hyderabad, Bhopal, Travancore, Baroda and the rest. He fervently hoped that the Hindu and Muslim Princes would not take sides. It would be an evil day if they did. The Princes, therefore, would be wisely advised if they joined the Constituent Assembly. If the British were sincere, they would see to it that there was no Prince left capable of doing mischief.

Having spoken about the Princes, Gandhiji took the audience with him to a Harijan named Chakrayya, who had become a son to him in Sevagram and who died in a Bombay hospital three days ago. He was a true and brave young man. He was trained after the model of basic education. His conduct was exemplary. He belonged to Andhra and had learnt Hindustani. He was a believer in nature cure and would have willingly given up his life, if nature cure did not cure him of a tumour of the brain, had Gandhiji not intervened and wanted him to undergo what proved to be a fatal operation in spite of all the care bestowed on him by the best surgeon in the hospital. He was proud to be able to say that Chakrayya died with *Ramanama* on his lips, whilst he was conscious. It was the deceased's ambition, if he had lived, to work amongst the Harijans of Andhra. His putting Chakrayya's name side by side with the Princes had a meaning all its own.

1-6-'47

The usual interruption took place at the reading of the *Quranic* verse. Gandhiji asked the

people to bear with the insanity of the interrupter and also pleaded with the police not to remove him from the prayer ground if he remained quiet. Both requests were honoured and Gandhiji congratulated the audience and the policemen for their restraint. He then turned to the interrupter and told him that he would not have the usual *bhajan* if he continued the interruption and rebuked him for his rudeness. He claimed to be a *Sanatani* Hindu himself. The sacred thread and the tuft of hair did not make a Hindu without a pure heart and the spirit of toleration. The rebuke quietened the objector and the *bhajan* and the *Ramadhun* were sung. Gandhiji congratulated him on his ultimate restraint. He then told the audience with sorrow that Badshah Khan had during the day said that perhaps it would be best if he did not come to the prayer lest his presence might offend. But he insisted on his coming. The daily interruptions were a sign of madness and did no good to the Hindu religion. Commenting on the quality of discipline required in a free people he instanced that of the English people. He related the well-known story of Queen Victoria when at the age of seventeen she was awakened one night to be told that she was the Queen of England. The young girl was naturally agitated and overawed at the terrible responsibility thrown on her by God. The old Prime Minister as he knelt before the Queen consoled her. She merely said that she would be good. It was the disciplined people of England who helped her to govern. Today he wanted them to realize that independence was at their door. The Viceroy was only the nominal head of the Cabinet. They would help him by expecting no help from him in the Government of the country. Their uncrowned king was Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. He was working, slaving for them, not as a king but as their first servant. It was his desire through the service of India to serve the world. Jawaharlal was an international figure and he had friendly relations with all the foreign ambassadors who were now in India. But it was not possible for Jawaharlal alone to govern if the people by their indiscipline spoiled the work. He could not, as did the former autocrats, resort to the rule of the sword. That would be neither *Panchayat Raj* nor *Jawahar Raj*. (There was play upon the word *jawahar* meaning jewel). It was the duty of everyone to make the task of the Ministers easy and not force their hands in any way.

Then the speaker reminded the audience how a year ago he (Panditji) had gone to Kashmir when he was badly needed in Delhi and how at the bidding of the Maulana Saheb, the then President of the Congress, he had returned to Delhi. Today Panditji was talking of wanting to go to Kashmir again. His heart was sore because the leader of the Kashmiris, Sheikh Abdulla Saheb, was still in prison. But Gandhiji felt that Panditji's presence here was more necessary and offered to go in his place. There were many things to be considered before he was permitted by Jawaharlalji to go. If he went, he would even from there serve Bihar and Bengal as if he was bodily in one of the provinces.

He then reiterated what he had said the day before that the rulers of all the States in India were no more than individuals like anyone else. They could justify themselves only as servants of the people. The British power was to go from every corner of India and it was impossible to think of undemocratic rule anywhere in a democratic India.

What he said about the Princes applied equally to the rich business community of India. He would appeal to them also to be honest and pure in all their dealings and trade not for themselves but for the people. It was they who created the black market, it was they who often made prices of commodities soar, as was happening in the case of salt for instance. If they were like an honest *bania* that he was by birth, (this remark evoked hearty laughter from the big crowd), there would be no shortage of food and Rajen Babu's task would be greatly lightened.

It had hurt him much to hear from Panditji that the English people were living on short rations. Gandhiji was certain that if all put their shoulders to the wheel and were honest and if the God of rain favoured them, India would not only feed herself but could spare food for starved England also. Unfortunately they found greed, dishonesty and internecine senseless quarrel stalking the land. He had no doubt that India could become a model country, the cynosure of every eye, and the leader in world peace if only all her people would exercise self-restraint and be her disciplined servants.

New Delhi, 3-5-'47

S. N.

GLEANINGS

These are picked from what Gandhiji wrote during the week to friends.

"All rights to be deserved and preserved come from duty well done. Thus the very right to live accrues to us only when we do the duty of citizenship of the world. From this very fundamental statement perhaps it is easy enough to define the duties of man and woman and correlate every right to some corresponding duty to be first performed. Every other right can be shown to be a usurpation hardly worth fighting for."

"I am now trying to evolve a system of Nature Cure suited to the millions of India's poor. I try to confine myself to the propagation of such cure as is derivable from the use of earth, water, light, air and the great void. This naturally leads man to know that the sovereign cure of all ills is the recitation from the heart of the name of God whom some millions here know by the name of Rama and the other millions by the name of Allah. Such recitation from the heart carries with it the obligation to recognize and follow the laws which Nature has ordained for man. This train of reasoning leads one to the conclusion that prevention is better than cure. Therefore, one is irresistibly driven to inculcating the laws of hygiene, i. e. of cleanliness of mind, body and its surroundings."

FAITH IN NON-VIOLENCE RE-ENFORCED

[Gandhiji gave the following answers to questions put to him by the United Press of America —Ed.]

Q. 1. Do you feel that India will ultimately be united under one Central Government regardless of what the immediate settlement may be?

A. 1. The future will depend upon what we do in the present.

Q. 2. Do you foresee the possibility of the world being united under one central governing body composed of representatives of the component parts?

A. 2. That is the only condition on which the world can live.

Q. 3. Do you think there is any possibility of an armed conflict between Russia and the United States?

A. 3. Anything is possible, but it is highly improbable.

Q. 4. What do you feel is the most acceptable solution to the Palestine problem?

A. 4. Abandonment wholly by the Jews of terrorism and other forms of violence.

Q. 5. Do you believe that Egypt and the Sudan should unite under one government when the British leave?

A. 5. I have no doubt that they ought to.

Q. 6. As a result of your experiment during the past five months, do you feel that the principle of non-violence can yet be triumphant in the solution of the world's problems?

A. 6. My five months in Noakhali have only confirmed my previous experience that non-violence can solve all our ills.

Erratum

In *Harijan* of June 1, 1947, on page 170, column 2, in the last paragraph but one, for *outline* read *outline*.

THE NATION'S VOICE (Second Edition)

[Being a collection of Gandhiji's speeches in England and Sjt. Mahadev Desai's account of the sojourn—September to December 1931]

Edited by

C. Rajagopalachar
and

J. C. Kumarappa

Price Rs. Three

Postage etc. As. Seven

NAVAJIVAN KARYALAYA
Post Box 105, AHMEDABAD

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