

HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: K. G. MASHRUWALA

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TWO ANNAS

THIS ISSUE

I have decided to devote this issue to writings of and concerning Gandhiji. Articles and notes on other subjects have therefore been held back this week.

Wardha, 14-7-48

K. G. MASHRUWALA

GANDHI

Suffering is the mark of the human tribe. It is an eternal law. The mother suffers that her child may live. Life comes out of death. The condition of wheat growing is that the seed grain should perish. No country has ever risen without being purified through the fire of suffering. . . . I cannot account for the existence of evil by any rational method. To want to do so is to want to be co-equal with God. I am therefore humble enough to recognize evil as such, and I call God long-suffering and patient precisely because he permits evil in the world. . . . Why should we be upset when children or young men or old men die? Those who believe in the soul, — and what Hindu, Mussalman or Parsi does not? — know that the soul never dies. — *Gandhiji*

Mahatma Gandhi's death at the hand of a Hindu assassin shakes the soul with its shocking reminder of the power of evil. More than any other man of this century, Gandhi returned good for evil, blessing for cursing, love for hatred. When he was reviled, he reviled not again. He prayed for those who persecuted him. He turned the other cheek again and again. He made no effort to save his life by surrounding it with the protections usually considered necessary by the great. He knew the risks he ran, for several attempts had previously been made to kill him. But he went freely among the people, received everybody who wanted to see him, and finally was shot at one of the public prayer meetings which he held daily.

If anyone could be said to have tried to overcome evil with good, Gandhi made that attempt. But he is dead. The good has been overcome. Gandhi did not seek to save his life, and he did not save it. The apostle of non-violence is dead, a victim of violence. The champion of truth has perished, laid low by treachery. The man who loved even his enemies died at the hand of an enemy. Evil has done its worst. Has it triumphed over good?

Gandhi was the greatest man in our world. Standing beside him Roosevelt, Stalin, Hitler, Churchill, or even Wilson, Sun Yat Sen and Lenin, all his contemporaries, lose stature. His greatness

did not lie in the fact that more than any other man he must be given credit for winning independence for India. Neither did it reside in his recent amazing achievement by which, through "soul-force", he brought about a truce between the warring religious communities of India. Rather it was in his recognition that the supreme struggle of the modern world is not in politics but is the battle between good and evil in the soul of man. This insight on Gandhi's part often confused and dismayed his political associates. Nehru's books are full of confessions of his inability to understand the saint whom he nevertheless loved and to whose wisdom he generally deferred.

But Gandhi was right, as his own death reveals. The outcome of all political arrangements depends in the last analysis on the issue of the spiritual struggle. The final boundary is the inner frontier of the soul, and modern man is being pushed back to that ultimate outpost. Gandhi was murdered because he relentlessly drove his fellow Hindus back to that frontier. He undertook his recent fast because he could not endure seeing India destroy itself in communal strife without doing something about it. When people of all parties came to plead with him to state on what terms he would consent to give up his self-imposed suffering, he laid down conditions only for his own religious community. He asked no pledges of the Moslems or Sikhs, but he asked a great deal of the Hindus.

In effect, Gandhi brought his fellow Hindus to pledge that they would take upon themselves the humiliation and pain of walking through the fire of suffering. They agreed to invite the millions of Moslems who have been forced to emigrate to Pakistan back to their homes in India. Hindus, who had themselves suffered frightful atrocities at the hands of Moslems, agreed to assure safe-conduct for all who accepted. Moslem mosques were to be reopened and restored to their owners, and all social and economic discriminations were to cease. As a pledge of good faith and an act of penance, Hindus agreed to visit their Moslem friends on the first feast day and to take them gifts, as they did before communal strife began a generation ago. On top of all this, Gandhi insisted that India release \$ 166,000,000 (Rs. fifty crores) of Pakistan funds, impounded because Indians had every reason for believing it would be used to finance the Moslem attack on Kashmir. The money was turned over.

Can an American even faintly grasp what this meant? Imagine California's landed interests

apologizing to the dispossessed Japanese-Americans! Imagine the American Legion seeking amnesty and indemnification for imprisoned conscientious objectors! Imagine white Protestant churches opening their membership to Negroes, or Roman Catholics holding out the hand of fellowship to Communists! If the United States were now freely to welcome all homeless Germans, and if we had lost twice as many dead at German hands as we did in the recent war, we would be doing something comparable to what the Hindus agreed to do to save Gandhi's life. It is not surprising that a considerable number of people in India took the view Gandhi's assassin took that forgiveness under these circumstances, on such a scale and at such a price, was madness.

So Gandhi is dead, murdered by a Hindu because other Hindus had been moved to repent and to forgive their enemies. But being dead, Gandhi yet speaks. He has sealed with his life the covenant made between himself and the Hindu leaders, binding them to its fulfilment more strongly than any pledge made to the living. And his sacrifice will do more to soften the attitude of the Moslems towards the people of Hindu India than anything that has yet happened. One refuses to contemplate what might have happened had Gandhi's murderer been a Moslem, but the fact that Gandhi was killed by one of his own brethren dramatizes the inner and spiritual nature of the Indian problem in a way which will bring it home to the members of all India's communities.

Gandhi is dead, yet paradoxically he lives more powerfully than ever. He lives in the common people of India, whom he lifted to self-respect for the first time in modern history. He lives in Nehru and the other leaders of India, Hindus and Muslims alike, who have pledged themselves to return good for evil. He lives in the Christian community around the world, which has been forced to recognize in him a more compelling embodiment of Christian practice in political relationships than it has been able to produce from its own ranks. And he lives in history as one more proof that our conflicts in the inner and outer worlds, our spiritual and our political struggles, are really one and must be decided together.

Having said all this, it must be admitted that unless something more can be affirmed, Gandhi's life ended in failure. So far as his 78 years were concerned, his attempt to overcome evil with good was smashed by the bullet of a killer. Unless there is a life beyond this, then injustice, hatred and violence won the day over the most Christlike life this century has known. The persistence of a man's influence, even the healing influence of Gandhi, is not an adequate answer to the problem of evil as embodied in the murder of this good man.

Gandhi believed with the Christian church that death is not the end of a good life, but that the soul lives on. Long ago he said some words which bear remembrance now:

"I do perceive that whilst everything around me is ever-changing and ever-dying, there is, underlying all that change, a living power that is changeless, that holds all together, that creates, dissolves, and re-creates. That informing power and spirit is God. I see it as purely benevolent, for I can see that, in the midst of death, life persists; in the midst of untruth, truth persists; in the midst of darkness, light persists. Hence I gather that God is life, truth and light. He is love. He is the supreme good."*

In that faith Gandhi lives on. In that faith, and in it alone, the cross of Christ has meaning for our day, and forever.

(With apology to *The Christian Century* of 11-2-'48, Chicago, U. S. A.)

[Note — With all deference to the writer of this beautiful editorial, I must politely say that I am unable to accept his conclusion as expressed in the penultimate paragraph. Whether or not there is a life (that is, persistence of individuality) beyond this, the destruction of the body of a resister of evil cannot be the deciding factor for adjudicating upon his success or failure. If the bullet which kills a good man simultaneously permanently injures the cause which the shooter represented, while it strengthens the cause for which the good man laid down his life, then surely the mere taking of his life is no failure. It is a part of the price of the cause; perhaps, more price of the same nature may still have to be paid. Future alone can decide the degree of success achieved.

Wardha, 15-7-'48

— K. G. M.]

* From a recording made by the Columbia Gramophone Company.

BAPU — MY SAVIOUR II

In face of Bapu's clear injunction I had anyhow to restrain myself. But later on when Bapu informed me that he was leaving for Sevagram on September 30, 1944, I could no longer do so, and so I immediately hastened to Sevagram to be in time there for Bapu's birthday celebrations. Bapu received me, as he always did, with an ineffable tenderness and hearty pat on the back. My heart was full, indeed too full for words. Now that after all I was so near him, my Master, I tried to merge Vidya's personality into his and forgot my sorrow for a while. I also tried to be cheerful as though nothing really was the matter with me, but the attempt failed as it was bound to. So not being able to hold my grief any longer, one early morning after prayers I went up to Bapu as he was lying on his cot in the open under a mosquito net, hid my head in his bosom and bitterly wept. I sobbed like a child. For about an hour or so, I was kneeling by Bapu's bed, listening to the words of comfort that he caressingly spoke into my ears. This heart-to-heart talk with Bapu greatly composed my spirits, and since that day I made it a point to hold daily communion with him at that early morning hour and derive whatever solace I could.

I can never, never forget the precious hours that I spent with my beloved Bapu during my stay of full

eight weeks in the *Ashram*, and the tender love that he showered on me. Every morning as I would bow down my head before him for his blessings, he would greet me with a fascinating smile and ask, "Well, Anand, how did you pass the night?" And then I would unreservedly open out to him and appear before him in all my nakedness. I would not hide anything from him so that Bapu may see me as I am. He would again speak words of sympathy and solace, and, lest I forget, he would also write down something on a piece of paper for me to meditate upon during the day. From 13-10-1944 onwards he wrote continuously for a fortnight and then off and on till he sent me to Bhimavaram for Nature Cure treatment. What he wrote for me to soothe my sore heart is of such universal importance that I feel it would be too selfish on my part not to share it with the general public. This is what he wrote on 13-10-1944:

"Those who will look only to God shall cease to look to persons dead or alive.

"If you digest this, well, you will never grieve."

Again on 14-10-1944:

"Do you know the poem *Try Again*? No giving in permitted. All other trust is in vain. Only trust in God. That is the lesson of Vidya's death. Your love is on trial.

"This for today"

Next day 15-10-1944 I told Bapu that the grief still gnawed at my heart and I felt that I would be relieved of it only if the grace of God descended upon me. I then asked him how to qualify myself for that grace. Thereupon Bapu wrote (in Hindustani):

"The grace of God proceeds from doing God's work. You have to do God's work. Do you ever spin? Spinning is the greatest of all *yajnas*. You should spin even whilst you are weeping.

"Think over this today."

When I met Bapu the following morning (16-10-1944) I frankly told him that I could not apply my mind to spinning as I was stricken with sorrow. He, then, administered a gentle rebuke and supplemented it by the following lines:

"Everything is possible in peace and tranquility. Charkha is the support and solace of the hungry and the distressed. It should never be given up while one is in sorrow."

And that very day Bapu wrote to Vidya's father in reply to the latter's note as follows:

"Sevagram, 16-10-1944

"My dear Kewalramani,

"I have your note. Vidya was a priceless girl with her thoughts always turned towards God. I miss her probably as much as you do. But Anand is simply disconsolate. I tell him in being so, he fails to be true to Vidya. Her soul is surely not at peace when she knows that her dear ones grieve over the dissolution of her perishable body, instead of copying her godliness and doing the work of God. Anand is trying to be peaceful and useful.

"Yours,
BAPU"

There is no gainsaying the fact that I honestly tried to be "peaceful and useful", but somehow or the other I could not take my mind off my sorrow. Day and night I was haunted by Vidya's memories. Next day (17-10-1944) when I confessed to Bapu as much, he wrote down the following:

"You should make your time-table so as not to leave a moment free. That is the real love for the departed. Look at the Englishmen. They also love their dear ones. But they devote themselves to service all the more when they lose their dear ones."

On 18-10-1944, I asked Bapu what he meant by writing to Vidya's father that "her soul is surely not at peace when she knows that her dear ones grieve over the dissolution of her perishable body instead of copying her godliness and doing the work of God." Did he believe that my weeping and wailing after Vidya had a disturbing effect on her soul? If so, then by the same process of reasoning, how was it that Vidya's soul failed to exercise soothing influence upon me when it knew that I was so much in distress? To this query, Bapu's answer was:

"We cannot say if the dead commune with the living, but there is not the least doubt about the fact that the living do influence the dead. Hence, we should never weep after them.

"God's grace is attained by doing God's work. And His work can be done by serving the poor in thought, word and deed."

And the next day (19-10-1944), again he enjoined upon me as follows:

"Think what a poor man would do if he were in your condition. He would labour twice as much if he lost his wife. He is also a man of God. The inner joy comes from doing God's work. We should all place ourselves in the position of the poor. You must treat your deafness as a blessing from God. To remain idle even for a moment is God's theft. I do not know of any other way that leads to inner or outer happiness.

"Do you follow all this? Or, would you desire me to write in English?"

ANAND T. HINGORANI

(To be continued)

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MY HIMALAYAS IS HERE

[Gandhiji's post-prayer speeches as published in the English edition of the *Delhi Diary* are more briefly reported than the same in Hindustani. I have therefore taken the liberty of giving an exact translation of a portion of his speech on the 29th January, 1948, the day previous to his assassination, for its importance in throwing light upon his attitude towards life, death and world problems. In the speech Gandhiji reports to the audience the purport of a conversation between himself and a member accompanying a deputation of refugees from Bannu (N. W. F. P.) which had waited upon him that day. — K. G. M.]

They were all good people. It was natural that they should be full of anger. But ultimately they accepted my advice. One of the party—I do not know whether he was a refugee or just a companion—told me, "You have already done much harm. Do you want to go on adding to it? It would be better if you go away. What does it matter, even if you are a Mahatma, if you are simply doing us harm? You leave us, forget us; run away." I asked him where he wanted me to go to. He said, "Go to the Himalayas." Thereupon I reproached him, saying, "You are not as old as I. Of course, you too are old; also strong in body. You can easily knock down five or seven men like me. I am only a Mahatma, with a weak body. If I get frightened, where would I be?" And then smilingly I added, "At whose bidding shall I go away? Whom should I listen to? Some tell me that I should not leave this place; others say I should leave it. Some threaten me, some abuse me, others praise me. Whose opinion shall I take as my guide? So, I have accepted God as my guide, and act as He bids me. You might say that you do not believe in God. But in that case you should at least allow me the freedom of my conscience. You might also say, 'We are God.' That is to say, that the corporate will of the society is God. But this is not a question of the corporate will of the society. God here is not Himself the sufferer or in affliction. But It is He who is the friend and succourer of the afflicted.

"When I say that every woman is my own sister or daughter, her grief becomes my grief. Why do you feel that I do not know your adversities and do not feel my share in them? Why do you think that I am an enemy of the Hindus and the Sikhs, and a friend of the Muslims only?"

It was good of this friend to speak to me frankly. Some write to me in an abusive manner and some do so politely that I should leave them alone even if they were in hell. They want me to go away from their midst. But how can I go at

anyone's bidding? I have not taken to the service of humanity at anyone's bidding, and cannot give up that service at anyone's bidding. I am what God has willed me to be and act as He directs. Let Him do what He wills of me. If He so chooses, He can kill me. I believe that I am acting as God commands me.

I would very much enjoy living in the Himalayas. I will not be in want of food or drink or clothing there. It will be a peaceful place. But I do not want peace of that sort. I want to reach peace through agony. My Himalayas is here. If you are all going to the Himalayas, you can take me with you.

(Translated from the *Delhi Diary*—Hindustani edition)

SHRI BHANSALI'S FAST

I regret to read irresponsible and untrue reports of Shri Bhansali's fast. They do his cause more harm and contribute to the prolongation of his fast unnecessarily. It should be realized that though India-Hyderabad relations is a political issue, Shri Bhansali's fast is on humanitarian grounds, unconnected with politics. It is for the acceptance of the principle that woman's honour will always be considered sacred even in military or semi-military activities. When politicians work up popular feeling against the State, the State authorities naturally suspect the bona fides of Shri Bhansali and delay the solution of his demand to visit the State. My name has been unauthorizedly and wrongly brought in. I have not had any communication with the State authorities in this matter. In fact I have no *locus standi* to do so. I am not going myself, am not a political leader, and Shri Bhansali is not going at my suggestion or on my behalf. Shri Bhansali is of course an esteemed colleague, stays at Bajajwadi, and thus naturally I try to help him and his cause to the best of my ability. My influence, if at all, is to prevent Shri Bhansali from taking any step which would jeopardize his life more than what the fast itself is capable of doing. As a humanitarian I am not one of those propagandists who would desire to so exploit the situation that war between India and Hyderabad would be precipitated. Being unable to point any definite line of non-violent action I have kept silent over this subject, but I do not welcome a solution of the problem through violence by either side. I do not believe in the slogan "Violence to end Violence."

Wardha, 20-7-'48

K. G. MASHRUWALA

P. S. : The Hyderabad Government having assured that there would be no restriction of Shri Bhansali's movement on previous conditions, Shri Bhansali has replied that he starts for Madura on the twenty-second after provisionally breaking fast and will not recommence it if women's honour is safe, but must do so if their condition is helpless. The fast was broken at eleven this morning with glucose water.

Wardha, 21-7-'48

K. G. M.

MAHATMA EVER PRESENT

One evening a sannyasi from a Telugu District came to Raman Maharshi of Tiruvannamalai, and asked him a question about Mahatma Gandhi's death which had cast a gloom all over the world. The sage of Arunachala confidently replied that Gandhi was not dead.

The words of that great sage of India went into my heart and made me reflect seriously over the age-long problem of life and death and the calamity that had befallen our Indian nation. My deeper thoughts led me to believe that the Mahatma is as alive as ever and he is more accessible to us here and now than while he was occupying his physical tabernacle. The ancient Aryans never called a man dead. What they said was that his body had come to an end. The word *dehanta* is still popularly used in Hindi. This word is a correct expression of the Hindu faith which teaches that the dissolution of the body of a man does not touch the real living and conscious self in him. Almost all the ancient Hindu scriptures assert with no uncertain voice that the soul of man survives physical dissolution and lives for ever, being imperishable and undying. "It is unborn, perpetual, eternal and ancient. It is not slain when the body is slaughtered. Weapons cleave him not, nor fire burneth him, nor waters wet him, nor wind drieth him away. Uncleaveable he, incombustible he, and indeed neither to be wetted nor dried; perpetual, all pervasive, stable, immovable, ancient" (*Bhagavad Gita* Chap. II, verses 23 and 25).

THE ISLAMIC STAND

Similarly Islam has also taught that the human soul is immortal. The Holy *Quran* says that God breathed His own breath into the nostril of man. The real man survives when his body is perished. The ordinary Arabic words for death are *intiqal* and *rihlat* which mean transference from one state to another. In cases of saints and sages the word used is *wasl* or *wisal* which means union with God.

An Urdu poet says: '*Maut ek mandgi ka waqfa hai, yane age barhenge dam lekar.*' Death is a respite after (life's) fatigue, i. e. we shall go forward after resting a while.

The great mystic-poet of Persia, Hafiz Shirazi, has proclaimed his faith in the immortality of a true lover of God: '*Hargiz na mirad an ke dilash zinda shud ba ishq Sabt ast bar Jaridai-alam dawam ma.*' He whose heart is enlivened by love (of God) never dies. My permanence is writ on the book of the world.

Shri Pyarelal (in the *Harijan* dated 22nd February, 1948) says; "Mahatmaji had long ceased to belong to his family. Home he had none, or rather, one might say the whole world was his home and mankind his family." In this way he had learnt to identify himself with the Cosmic Consciousness. He lived in the lives of all. His outlook was Universal. He saw "one Self equally dwelling in all human hearts" to quote his most favourite sacred scripture, the *Gita*.

DEATH—A TRUE FRIEND

Having realized that he was the ever-living, immortal self and not the decaying and changing physical vehicle, "he hated making a fetish of the perishable body whether dead or alive."

In a letter addressed to Shri Shankaran, dated 29th January, 1948, he wrote, "Death is a true friend. It is only our ignorance that causes us grief. Sulochana's spirit was yesterday, is today and will remain tomorrow. The body of course, must die."

It is blasphemy to talk of such a man as dead. The permanent essence of him abides with us for ever. Let us erect for the only Lokamanya of India an imperishable monument by weaving into our own lives his fearlessness, his utter simplicity, transparent honesty and sincerity, his remarkable industry, his exemplary love of his country and people.

In the words of Vallabhbhai Patel the surest and most pleasing memorial to Gandhi is to follow his inimitable teachings and to devote oneself to the constructive ideas which he preached and practised. It is only thus that we can really enshrine him in our hearts and after all that is the place where we should all like him to be always.

It is an agreeable coincidence that what Sardar Patel said about his chief was truly portrayed in a Persian couplet long ago. *Bad az wafat turbate mardar zamin ma ju-dar sinahai-e-mardume-e-arif mazare - mast.* Do not seek my tomb on earth after (my) death. My resting place is found in the hearts of men of wisdom.

DISEMBODIED INSPIRATION

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Mahatma's devoted lieutenant and disciple, and others are naturally deeply grieved and feel forlorn and forsaken. There is none, they think, to whom they may go for guidance and help. The light that used to illumine their hearts is gone for ever. But let us remember that great saints never leave us, far less die.

Some of the great Islamic saints and mystics are treated as ever present, and watchful of the interest of those who commune with them. More than 600 years have passed and people from all over India flock round the tomb of Hazrat Moinuddin Chishti and Nizamuddin Auliya of Ajmer and Delhi, with the faith that if they prayed at the shrines, the souls of these saints would grant them their hearts' desires.

Similarly, our beloved and most venerable Bapu is far nearer to us now than he was ever before. He is not bound by physical limitations of time and space. In a disembodied condition he is in a far better position to help us than he did before he discarded his physical vehicle. We must constantly bear in mind that he is ever present here and now, provided we think of him intently, and commune with him silently. Particularly when we go to sleep we should reflect on the problem on which we are anxious to seek a solution and light and we shall be overjoyed next morning to discover that our individual problem has been solved and that we have sufficient light to guide us in our affairs.

M. HAFIZ SYED

OUR HUMBLE HOMAGE

Our Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, while paying homage to our Gurudev Bapuji remarked that it was hard for us to praise Bapuji, his praise being nothing but our own praise. I recall certain instances to show how Bapuji too never expected and desired his near and dear ones to make any public praise for him, who was exactly like a real father and mother to us.

After staying with Bapuji for full seven weeks at Sevagram Ashram and receiving his day-to-day instructions and guidance, we were sent, along with a letter of introduction written by him, to Rajkumari Amrit Kaur at Simla (March 1945).

Later on Bapuji himself arrived in Simla in connection with the first Simla Conference. We both went to Rajkumari's House to receive him. We had brought garlands of flowers to pay homage to our Bapuji, but the moment he saw us holding garlands for him, he said rather feelingly: "What has happened to you? Don't you know me? What are you doing? Will Devdas and Manilal do this?" It was only then, that we could realize our mistake that one who loves us like his own children Devdas and Manilal could never expect to make a show of our honour in public, in any formal way, as is the case in our actual daily life.

But young and inexperienced that we were, we did not fully appreciate the deep significance of his noble words, and his intense love for children. When therefore we saw that he did accept a garland of thread from Rajkumari, we felt a bit hurt and did not go to him for a couple of days. When Bapuji found that, being rather sensitive, we had not been near him, he sent Shri Pyarelal to our house at a distance of two miles, to tell us that Bapuji had remembered us and enquired why we had not been to Manorville.

On that very evening we went to Manorville. As it was drizzling at that time, the prayers were held in Bapuji's own room instead of in the open. When we entered, Mirabehn was singing *Raghupati Raghav Raja Ram*. Bapuji's eyes were closed. The moment prayer was over, Bapuji opened his eyes, and seeing us said the sweet words *aa gaye!* (you have come!) in such an enchanting tone, that we remember them even now ringing in our ears. These loving and enchanting words, we shall never forget. We went near him, he enquired after our health, and in fact of everything and everybody connected with us. Such a sweet Bapuji we have lost through our own mistake and misfortune. As he rightly said to me at the Birla House only a few weeks before his tragic death: "We are responsible for whatever is happening in this country today and it will not be proper to say that Nature has done it. Nature has no hands. Nature does things through your and my hands and it is therefore I say that we have done everything that is happening around us."

Every day at Sevagram we used to put a question in writing and Bapuji used to write the reply in his own hand, in one of which Bapuji wrote,

"Congressman is he who sincerely works for the Congress and not one who deceives by paying four annas." Therefore, this is the time to be a true Congressman in that sense of the term and pledge to ourselves, that the great principles of freedom, love and brotherhood, for which he lived, worked and died, shall inspire his countrymen for ages to come, and through them the whole world. Amen.

GOPE GURBAX

VIMLARANI GOPE GURBAX

OUR BELOVED MAHATMAJI

Mahatma Gandhiji, the soul of India, the spiritual light of humanity and the enigma of the world, is gone for ever. Friday evening, the 30th January, 1948, ruthlessly snatched him away from the bosom of our Mother India. Mother India wept aloud through the quivering lips of Pandit Nehru—"The light has gone out of our lives and there is darkness everywhere. Our beloved leader, Bapu as we called him, the Father of the Nation, is no more." We feel forlorn since our most beloved Mahatma Gandhiji's eternal departure.

"No act of mine is done without prayer"—said Mahatmaji all along. Mahatmaji, the image of non-violence, is gone to heaven to be mingled with God in the chariot of non-violence.

What India is today is entirely due to Mahatmaji. He was the liberator of India. He was the guide of the true sons of India. He was the friend of the poor. He was the adviser of the rich. He was the succour of the oppressed. He was the revealer of Truth, Love and Non-violence—the eternal tunes of all religions of the world. What Mahatmaji thought, he taught. What Mahatmaji pondered, he penned. What Mahatmaji discovered, he disclosed. Such was our most beloved Mahatma.

S. Radhakrishnan writes:

"Gandhi belongs to the race of the prophets who have the courage of the heart, the courtesy of the spirit and the laughter of the unafraid. Through his life and teaching, he bears testimony to the values for which this country has stood for ages, faith in spirit, respect for its mysteries, the beauty of holiness, the acceptance of life's obligations, the validity of character, values which are neither national nor international but universal."

G. N. Dhawan writes:

"In the line of saints and prophets he has often been ranked with Buddha and Christ. To millions of people in India and outside he is the highest embodiment of India's genius and of her eternal will to non-violence."

Romain Rolland writes:

"One thing is certain: either Gandhi's spirit will triumph, or it will manifest itself again, as were manifested, centuries before, the Messiah and Buddha, till there finally is manifested, in a mortal half-god, the perfect incarnation of the principle of life which will lead a new humanity on to a new path."

Louis Fischer writes:

"If you strike right with Gandhi you open a new pocket of thought. An interview with him is a voyage of discovery."

These thought-provoking words of these savants of the East and the West lead us all on to the sacred feet of the departed Mahatmaji. These ever scintillating words still ring throughout the world and will remind the coming new generations of the entire humanity to know Mahatmaji thoroughly and will lead them on to be tinged with the Gandhian ideals and philosophy.

Thrice came revered Mahatmaji to our Assam. He loved our Assam. He saved our Assam. He declared to the world that Assam was the sublime picture of the serene natural beauties and the land of charkhas and handlooms. Assam is really so and will continue to be so. We, the Assamese, are ever respectfully grateful to this divine soul and always bow down at his lotus-like feet for his blessings, guidance and voice from the heaven where he remains resplendent with the omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent God.

Truly a well-known Assamese Poet, Shri R. N. Choudhary, writes in a philosophical poem, "Nothing remains of the perishable body. Only the memory lingers on in this world." Mahatmaji is gone. But, his sacred memory dwells in the hearts of humanity. The tune of his words of Truth, Love and Non-violence still melodiously float in the air. His actions smell sweet and blossom in his fragrant dust.

Our most beloved Mahatmaji is invisible to us for ever. Where has he gone? A distant still voice vibrates in the air—"He has gone there where God is." Will he not come again? God only knows whether he will come. But, at the same time the answer is audible—"I once thought that I could finish the wheel of rebirth in this incarnation. I know that I can't and that I shall have to return to it. We cannot escape it, but I hope it will only be once more that I come back to it"—said he to Millie Graham Polak. "Everything in India attracts me"—said Mahatmaji. In India he was born. In India he grew. In India he learnt. In India he worked. In India he thought. From India he spoke. From India he taught. From India he is gone. To India he will come. Otherwise the above words would not have come out from the core of his heart. This is our hope. This is our prayer too.

India is void today. India is dreary today. India is dried up today. But, Mahatmaji's ideal, teaching and voice still remain in India. "God knows what work to take out of me. He will not permit me to live a moment longer than He needs me for His work"—said Mahatmaji. So, he is gone for ever according to divine arrangement.

Now, with bended knee I pause with offerings of deep love, veneration and reverence to the departed Mahatmaji, the leading star of humanity, by citing the perfectly poised words of C. F. Andrews:

"They will discover that Gandhi is astonishingly and delightfully human. They will find in him a character which at times will remind them of St. Francis of Assisi by its inner radiance and beauty."

Gauhati, 15-6-'48

J. B. Borooah

MAHATMA GANDHI AND TOLSTOY

In modern times we know one great soul whose writings Gandhiji studied many years ago, with whom he also corresponded and who left a deep impress on Gandhiji. That man was Leo Tolstoy of Russia. After a luxurious life and military activity, he found great disappointment in and disgust for the selfish worldly life and turned to the Christian teaching in an unorthodox and broad-minded manner. He studied the essential teaching of Jesus and proclaimed it and tried to live up to it. He gave up his big estate and adopted a simple vegetarian diet soon after the change in his life and ideas. This is explained in his *First Steps*. He dressed like a peasant very simply and lived in an unfurnished room in his house, where the writing materials and a plough and a spade and a wood cutter's axe and a saw, and a shoemaker's tools were kept. He tried to live like a peasant working with the plough or sawing wood with workmen. Unfortunately most members of his family except his daughter and one son were of another mind. His eldest son, whom I met in Paris hated his father, blaming him, quite wrongly, for the Russian Revolution, through which they had lost their big estate.

Tolstoy-like Gandhiji was against all violence. He believed that the world can be uplifted through non-violence and passive resistance, that is, resisting evil not by evil or force but by good, as Jesus had taught. But this revival of Christian teaching was based not on mere passivity but active non-co-operation with force and violence in every form. That was what the Christians had forgotten or had not recognized after the primitive Christian cults. When Emperor Constantine became a Christian after his predecessors had persecuted this cult, he kept his arm and the sword of empire outside the baptismal font and thus made violence sneak back into Christian thought and life.

Tolstoy left his family because he could not live fully according to his ideals in their company, as they lived in luxury and did not give back the land to the peasants as Tolstoy wished. He got ill through exposure to great cold, and died of pneumonia away from home. This was his act of martyrdom.

His position in life, his great influence among the idealists of every land made it impossible for the Russian Government to imprison him although he offered himself to be put into jail, when an admirer of his writings was tried and imprisoned for circulating his manuscript, which was not allowed to be published in Russia. But the authorities refused to try or punish Tolstoy as they did Mahatma Gandhi in India, because the Russian rule was not foreign as here.

Tolstoy believed in Truth, love and *brahmacharya* (sexual purity), not taking what belonged to others and utter simplification of life, as Gandhiji did. Like Tolstoy Gandhiji believed in cleanliness, contentment, austerity, study of scriptures, and dedicating all activities to the Lord.

Tolstoy succeeded in greatly influencing some of his friends among big land-owners and princes who gave up their estates to the peasants. Mahatma Gandhi has also influenced the lives of many persons though few have understood him fully. But this did not discourage him, though he carried out some of Tolstoy's ideas even more thoroughly than Tolstoy could. He applied the soul force of passive resistance to Indian politics and succeeded in achieving great success in spite of the people not having understood or followed him in a perfect manner. But there is no doubt about the success which he gained and which will go down in history unequalled by any other people before. There are some previous instances of passive resistance in history. For instance, it succeeded to some extent in Hungary after the failure of military resistance and war in about 1850. Tolstoy has also mentioned it in his works that it was going to be applied in America also by Lloyd Garrison to free the slaves, but the American Government came in and used military force to the same end. All the same those attempts are not a patch on what Gandhiji has achieved.

In the beginning Tolstoy wrote mainly on Christian lines though he was never orthodox or narrow-minded. Later on he found that all religions had very similar essential truths. He called these principles trans-divine which did not depend on any individual teachers.

For Mahatma Gandhi also, Truth had the real significance and not human or so-called divine myths which alone attract the unenlightened man. He called God Truth, even as the Arabs called Him *Haq*, and Truth he called God.

One day when a guard kicked a pregnant peasant woman on the lawn of Yasnya Polyana, for trespassing there and which was prohibited by the Countess Tolstoy to whom that estate belonged, Tolstoy wept with sorrow and indignation, but said nothing to offend her. I also remember having read some years ago that Gandhiji could not bear Kasturba use a few rupees from public money for a private purpose.

Leo Tolstoy wrote many books and pamphlets to convey his ideas to the world, beside his famous earlier stories of large and small size which had made him popular in the literary world, but which later he denounced as works of art, and he wanted the world not to read those stories but his ideas about religious and social truths which he tried to make simple and did not embellish them as artistic productions.

Mahatma Gandhi has written a good deal, but he spent more time and labour in practically carrying out his mission which was the aim of Tolstoy also.

Gandhiji seemed a little disappointed with conditions and tendencies of violence which he tried

to remove and which resulted in his martyrdom. Tolstoy was also disturbed with the world conditions there. But they surrendered themselves fully to the will of God and the destiny of the world which is expressed by the resultant of all the forces of good and evil that exist here. The thoughts and activities of such great men are one factor in that destiny, while the resistance of evil inherent in ignorance which partly yields to the force of good according to the totality of that will, is the other factor.

BEAUTY OF THE SOUL AND FEATURES

The Greek philosophers have said that the face is an expression of the soul. But they did not mean merely beauty of the features, but the expression of feeling and thought. Otherwise the great spiritual and philosophic persons like Socrates in ancient times and Leo Tolstoy and Gandhiji in modern days would have been handsome, which none of them were.

But the expression in the eyes and faces of these men was beautiful and resplendent with compassion and sympathy and love and the will to suffer for the suffering and down-trodden.

Here we find another resemblance between Gandhiji and Tolstoy. And I have heard of this even from persons who were by no means friendly towards Mahatma Gandhi.

A STUDENT OF RELIGIONS

DELHI DIARY

[Prayer speeches from 10-9-'47 to 30-1-'48]

As the explanation of the title indicates in this Diary are collected the prayer speeches delivered by Gandhiji to his prayer audiences during his last stay in Delhi.

Gandhiji himself has said in one of these prayer speeches that "*they were to be regarded and listened to as an integral part of the prayer*". These speeches reveal the travail the Father of the Nation went through when the new State was born.

With a foreword by Babu Rajendraprasad

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