

HARIJAN

24 Pages

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: K. G. MASHRUWALA

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TWO ANNAS

THIS ISSUE

Many a close associate of Gandhiji and Sardar has contributed for this issue, and there are several whom I can recall now as those whom I ought to have requested to write, but omitted through inadvertence. I thank all those who have kindly acceded to my request and beg to be pardoned by those whom I have omitted to do so.

Though we have given 24 pages in this issue, it has not been possible to include all the contributions received for want of space. We shall try to give them in subsequent issues.

The article on "Rama-Raj of Babu's Dreams" by me has been included in this number by the courtesy of the Press Trust of India.

Wardha, 17-1-'51

K. G. MASHRUWALA

AFTER SARDAR THAKKAR BAPA.

I have to perform the very unpleasant duty of adding one more sorrowful note to this issue mainly dedicated to the memory of revered leaders. The Radio has announced that Shri Thakkar Bapa passed away yesterday (Friday, the 19th inst.) at Bhavnagar. Gujarat had the proud privilege of having presented to the country three of the great servants of man in modern times: Gandhiji, Thakkar Bapa and Sardar. She has also the misfortune of being deprived of them all in rapid succession. Great and good men are not quite rare in the world. But it is rarely that two men, both good and great, work together shoulder to shoulder for the good of mankind. It would seem that their very selfishness makes them individualistic and non-co-operative. To Gandhiji, Thakkar Bapa and Sardar belongs the credit of setting a new precedent for good men to follow. They worked together more unitedly than even blood-brothers do, and for no selfish ends.

Owing to limitations of space, I am unable to speak more about Thakkar Bapa this week, and have to content myself with offering my prayerful salutations to him, who guided, inspired and encouraged me for more than a third of a century, and treated my wife and me as his pet children.

Wardha, 20-1-'51

K. G. MASHRUWALA

STRONG, GREAT AND BELOVED

It is difficult to write about one to whom I was so intimately and closely attached and with whom it had been my privilege for more than thirty years to work in the closest association. My acquaintance with Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel commenced at the time of the Kheda Satyagraha when I visited some villages in Kheda with Mahatmaji who was touring the district. It was on this occasion that I paid a visit to Karamsad, the birthplace of Sardar. When the non-co-operation movement started, naturally our association became closer and as days passed, we became intimate. By the time Mahatma Gandhi was imprisoned in 1922 and the great controversy about Council entry started, we had become close friends, and the Flag Satyagraha at Nagpur furnished me an opportunity of working in very close co-operation with the Sardar. It is a matter of pride and privilege to me that I have had the privilege of enjoying his love as a younger brother, and never during the long course of more than thirty years had I had one occasion of feeling that he treated me as anything but a younger brother. Even where I have differed from him, he has listened to me.

The Sardar had great qualities of leadership. He had a mind which could grasp complicated situations almost instantaneously. He could see things straight and after he had once considered and made up his mind on any matter, it was most difficult, if not impossible, to dislodge him. This does not mean that whenever one differed from him, one had to yield. If he held a different view on any particular point and he was pressed hard by his colleagues to take action in a contrary direction, he would not give up his own opinion but carry out the wishes of his colleagues. It was for this reason that he was known as the strong man of the Congress. Once he undertook a job, he would see to it that it was done. Where differences were so acute that he could not himself do the thing, he would simply keep quiet and let others carry on. But no one can say that he ever obstructed any one else in giving a trial to his own ideas, although he would not leave one in doubt about his own opinion. It was this straight way of looking at things and doing things which gave him strength. He was utterly fearless and would not hesitate to call

a spade a spade if the occasion demanded it. With all the differences with him, those who did not agree with him and might be called in a sense opponents, liked him because they knew exactly what he thought and felt. Behind a forbidding exterior, he had a very soft heart. Those who had the good fortune of coming in close contact with him knew what an amount of milk of human kindness was flowing through his veins. Like Mahatma Gandhi, he would look into the details of every problem that came up before him and he would not be satisfied unless he had probed the thing to its depth. He was not the man who took what might be called a bird's-eye view of a question neglecting small details. He had also a fund of confidence in himself and in the people whom he led and he would not hesitate to take risks because he really felt that there was no risk involved as things would, according to his calculations, set themselves right.

He was the one man in the Congress who had the credit of successfully launching and leading to victory a number of Satyagraha campaigns, the most important and outstanding among them being the Bardoli Satyagraha. His success was due to his power of organization, attention to and providing for details in working — which are often neglected —, confidence in the people whom he inspired and led and their unflinching confidence in him, his utter selflessness and fearlessness and above all, his courage and determination which never wavered even in the most adverse and difficult circumstances.

He was not great, however, only in a fight. I wonder if any one can claim as much constructive work as he accomplished. He was one of the earliest among the Congress leaders to interest himself in organizing labour. His interest in it began even before the non-co-operation movement was started and he had always been one of the pillars of strength of the Ahmedabad Labour Union which is even now the best organized and most successful Union in the country. Early in the days of non-co-operation, he was, if I mistake not, the Chairman of the B. B. & C. I. Railway Workers' Union. It is well known that it was under his inspiration and guidance and with his active support that what has now developed into a countrywide organization of labour, the Indian National Trade Union Congress, was started and fostered.

There has been no better organization of the people, and particularly of the peasants, than that of Gujarat, who have more than once been tested and have come out with flying colours after immense suffering and sacrifice through several Satyagraha campaigns. The Congress organization of Gujarat has been a model organization and continues to be so today without any of those party differences and bickerings that weaken it in many another part of the country.

In the Government he held two important portfolios, the Home portfolio and the portfolio of States which was created shortly before the attainment of independence in 1947. Apart from the ordinary anxieties for maintaining law and order which every Home Minister has, he had had to face three very extraordinary and critical situations which he tackled not only with firmness but also with foresight and understanding. The first crisis came just in the wake of the attainment of independence and manifested itself in widespread disturbances in retaliation for what was happening in Pakistan. The second crisis came on the occasion of the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi when people in some parts of the country went mad and started disturbances against a particular community. The third crisis came last year when something similar to what had happened in 1947 seemed to be repeating in Bengal. On all these occasions it was his understanding of the situation combined with firmness in dealing with disorders, which saved the situation.

The credit for converting what threatened to be a complete disruption of India with numerous independent or semi-independent States within its boundaries into a perfect consolidation of it is an achievement never equalled in the long and chequered history of this country. That this consolidation was achieved so speedily and as it were almost unnoticed and without the use of force speaks highly not only of the high spirit and patriotism of the Rulers and Princes who voluntarily gave up powers and privileges long enjoyed, but also of the great powers of organization and persuasion of the Sardar who was able not only to gain their confidence but also to retain it.

Like Mahatma Gandhi he was able to win and enjoy the confidence and trust even of those who suffered loss on account of his action. Work among industrial labourers, peasants and States people has very often been looked upon with suspicion by the factory owners, zamindars and Rulers of States whose interests seemed to be directly affected by its success. It is a marvel that Sardar Vallabhbhai's success in all these three spheres of work among the masses, far from diminishing, enhanced not only his prestige among them, but also won their esteem and confidence.

His earthly remains have been consumed by fire and even the ashes have been immersed in the holy waters of the Jamuna and the Ganga to be washed down to the limitless oceans, but his work and his example remain to inspire those left behind and generations yet unborn.

New Delhi, 15-1-'51

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G. O. C. OF THE NON-VIOLENT ARMY

[Summary of Shri Vinoba's sermon at the prayer-meeting in his Ashram at Paramdham, on 15-12-'50. The news of Sardar Vallabhbhai's death had spread in the village, and so there was naturally a large gathering of men, women and children, of all communities.]

"The diamond, that can withstand the blow of the smith's hammer, is valued most. The artificial one will get pounded."

—Tukaram.

In the above psalm, Saint Tukaram has described the qualities of the brave. He (the brave) is like the diamond, which does not break when struck by the sledge hammer. Such a diamond is given the full value. A false or artificial diamond will break into pieces, although apparently its lustre might be deceptive. The test of a diamond is in its capacity to bear the hammer.

The great man, who has passed away today from amongst us, received the designation of *Sardar*, because he was like the diamond of Tukaram's description. He was the accurate Bowman of Gandhiji's struggle, his disciple and his G. O. C. He knew no retreat.

Small things do not last long in history. Incidents which seem to us important today may not remain worthy of record after a century or two. But even then, there are two achievements of the Sardar which will take a permanent place in history. They are: his Satyagraha in Bardoli and the unification of India brought about by him.

He aroused the whole agrarian class. He electrified them as it were. The Sardar was a born *kisan*. Although he was a barrister and also an able statesman, he remained till the end a typical cultivator. He spoke straight and called a spade a spade like an unsophisticated *kisan*, so that his words often touched to the quick the person to whom they were addressed. But he was kind at heart, and soft for the peasant. That softness came to the rescue of the peasantry.

Much has been said and written about the science of violent warfare; the science of non-violent resistance is yet to be written. The Satyagraha of Bardoli will be recorded therein as a successful application of the non-violent technique.

The second item of importance is the creation of the State of United India by the merger of several hundred small States. This fact will be inscribed in the history of the nation as an unprecedented one.

I have mentioned only these two achievements of the Sardar. But that does not give full justice to the qualities of that great man. It was due to his presence in the Government that the people of India could keep courage and feel secure, just as in the time of Shivaji the people remained brave and unbroken due only to his personality.

I saw him first at the Sabarmati Ashram. He used to visit the Ashram now and then. He frequently visited also the Gujarat Vidyapith, where we used to work. He often came to Wardha, and once he paid a visit to this Ashram. It was on the eve of 17th October, 1939, the day on which I was to offer individual Satyagraha against the Second World War. We talked for

about an hour. I also met him at Delhi now and then. All the same, we were not quite intimately associated with each other. I knew, however, that he was a pillar of strength—to our great Ashram brotherhood. It is natural therefore that I experience the loss of a member of the family by his passing away.

Within a week, we have lost two personalities of very high eminence. Both of them were great soldiers of the country. Both rendered fullest service to the nation. Shri Aravinda was at first known to the people as a revolutionary leader. But that great man retired into solitude and spent forty years in meditation. He has written important books, which even scholars will require a deep study to understand. But they are books which will abide long in the river of time. The Polar star does not leave its place. It will meet your eye only if you look at it. Shri Aravinda was like the Polar star. They alone may know him, who want to find their path. The Sardar's position was quite the reverse. He was a servant of the people, who claimed his service as if it was their birthright. He did not write a single book. Speak, he did on occasions, but he was not fond of speaking often. But like the *pater familias* of a tribe, the Sardar carried in his mind, the anxiety for his people's good.

After Gandhiji's death he used to say, "It had been decided between us that we should go together." But his anxiety for the country made him live so long, and he served the country till his last. He reminds one of Janaka, who, though he lived in a palace and ruled over his people, was personally free from attachment to office and its luxuries.

The Sardar was very close to Gandhiji. Gandhiji's last interview, the one immediately before his death, was with the Sardar. After that the Sardar left for his home; and Gandhiji left for Heaven. Indeed, the Sardar had hardly reached his residence, when he had to return. Though they were so intimate, the Sardar did not shed tears at Gandhiji's death. Such was he, a great mountain of courage. Fear, he knew not. His maxim was, a true understanding must reveal itself in one's conduct. This was one of his outstanding qualities. In many respects he was comparable with Lokamanya Tilak. He was not a scholar like the Lokamanya. But in various other qualities, particularly in fearlessness, they were alike. So also in plain speaking, irrespective of what others might feel. Both would strike from the front, and bear the opponent's blows unflinchingly without showing the back. We should learn from him the quality of fearlessness. All other qualities fade away if there is cowardice. Even a virtuous coward commits a sin at the moment of trial; some one does it to save his own life, another to save a relation, a third to save his reputation. But whoever tries to save himself out of fear loses his manliness and becomes faint-hearted. All other virtues are like dust. Let us, therefore, imbibe this quality of fearlessness from the Sardar's life. There may well rise from among you, my young boys, men like Sardar Vallabhbhai.

Paramdham,
Paunar, 15-12-'50
(Translated from Marathi)

VINOBA

A RUBY IN IRON-FOLDS

I consider it a great privilege to be asked to contribute to the special Republic Day number of the *Harijan* an article on Sardarji. Having been so close to Sardarji and his times I first hesitated to comply; but on second thought I felt the occasion was too great and sacred to be missed. It would, however, be presumptuous on my part to sum up a great and historic personality and an illustrious and epoch-making career in the allotted space; I would, therefore, content myself with giving a few glimpses into that breath-taking wonderland.

Ever since his death, pages have been written of him and about him in newspapers and periodicals; full of feeling have been the outpourings from many a platform. Few have, however, stressed that uncanny gift he possessed of grasping the essentials of a case not so much through files or books as through discussions and observation. The outstanding examples of this have been the skilful and arduous negotiations he conducted with Mr Arthur Henderson, then Under Secretary of State for India, about the transfer of the Secretary of State's Services to Indian control and the vigorous and tactful but firm handling of India's case in the Partition Council. In one he exhibited all the adroitness of a clever advocate and reproduced his old form after thirty years since he abandoned the profession of advocacy; in the other, he showed an amazing capacity to grasp in one broad sweep such diverse subjects as the intricacies of finance, the technicalities of Defence requirements, the complexities of Banking and pensions, and the tangled skein of many other partition problems. In my humble judgment the services which he rendered to the country in these two roles will alone entitle him to an everlasting place in its annals. By his tenacity and brilliant presentation of the case regarding the liquidation of the Services he not only stormed the most important bastion of the Foreign Power but also saved for his country millions of rupees which would have gone towards compensation and the ignominy of having to pay large sums by way of compensation to its own nationals for having served another government. Similarly, by a firm refusal to yield any ground where India's interests were unmistakably involved and by displaying a vigilant regard for its future needs, he laid, on the secure basis of its Partition assets, the foundation of its security and economic potentialities.

These are by no means the only instances in which he displayed such marked capacity to master unfamiliar subjects. His practical eye quite often rested with baffling accuracy on the key points of a comprehensive subject. I recall his visit to the Unofficial Test match with the Commonwealth Eleven at Delhi in November 1949. Both the teams were presented to him and he saw the match for about 45 minutes when the Indian team was fielding. After the visit was

over, I asked him what had impressed him most during his visit. Out came a reply for which I was least prepared. He said something to this effect: "I compared the physique of the two teams, observed the difference in the standards of fielding and noted the absence of a fast bowler—and found India at a disadvantage in all these." I know that many a cricket expert of long experience would not be able to improve upon this statement of India's weaknesses in that game. It is this rare gift of picking out the kernel of an intricate problem in the shortest time possible which made it such a pleasure and liberal education to work with him and which enabled him to turn out a quantity of work which would have done credit to three men younger in years and in better health.

Little do people realize that all the mental and physical strain which he underwent during the last 4 years and the important tasks which he accomplished were done at great sacrifice of his own health and life. The first signs of a weak heart were detected 10 years ago when he was asked to cut down his physical exertions drastically; the doctors gave him the usual catalogue of do's and don'ts. His intestinal trouble was incurable; neither medicines nor drugs could have brought about a lasting cure and they merely served as palliatives. To add to it, the intestinal malady put a strain on his heart which it could ill afford to bear. He made light of all this and did not disturb his routine until the attack of coronary thrombosis in March 1948 compelled him to take his Doctors more seriously. Even then the sense of urgency and the short time which he knew was at his disposal gave him no real rest and peace of mind. He deeply felt the remorse and handicap of age; still he persisted in his endeavours to make a mere citizen of yesterday, that every Indian was, outlive the after-effects of the centuries of slavery. Seeing the conditions around him he sometimes expressed doubts if all that he had accomplished would be retained. His speeches and statements contained these doubts and fears, but he went on with the great task of unity and consolidation undeterred. Fleeting time impelled him into swifter action but brought him nearer and nearer his end.

He always felt amused at insinuations that he allowed himself to be guided by others or that he placed implicit confidence in such a politician or such a civil servant. Once a deputation came to see him and indirectly accused him of listening to the administration in preference to tried Congress workers. Sharp came the reply, "Perhaps I know them better after having worked with them for a short time." The irony of the reply and the absurdity of the situation both left no room for a counter-thrust even if they could muster up the courage to say anything. The truth of the matter was that nobody in the wrong could hope to sway him; everybody in the right could persuade him; and when he himself felt he was in the right, none could change

him. He selected his men for the job and having selected them and found them deserving of confidence he would withhold none; but it was a great achievement to pass through his test and a sacred privilege to earn his confidence.

Sardarji had the reputation of being an iron man. He was often called a dictator. If both these signify an inflexible will, an unbending determination, an unflinching resolve, and an unshakable faith in his mission, purpose, and action, the appellations are appropriate. But if they mean that he was intolerant of opposition, hostile to another point of view, ruthless in crushing opponents, and inimical to all rivalries, they are as separated from the reality as the two poles. He always carried the day by making the right appeal, laying the correct emphasis, instinctively seizing the most suitable opportunity and unerringly sensing the dominant feeling. He always spoke from the depth of his heart and conviction. His listeners knew that he meant what he said and said what he meant. I have heard him address many audiences and seen him deal with many individuals. He never consciously rode roughshod over opposition; he almost invariably succeeded in winning it. He would never do anything which primarily concerned somebody else without consulting the latter. He struck hard at enemies or political opponents but was always generous in victory. He believed in making friendships and keeping them. He would not make enemies for the love of the conflict; he would not mind them if his cause and convictions left no other way out. It was these traits that inspired respect and devotion for him even in his opponents and made him command the trust and confidence of the minorities. Never was this more publicly demonstrated than in May 1949 when he came down to Delhi from Dehra Dun in hot summer to move the resolution in the Constituent Assembly regarding minorities and the ovation which he got at the conclusion of his final speech will always remain fresh in my memory.

In a sense he died a worried man. I had the privilege of a more than an hour's talk with him on the 13th December — the last serious discussion I had with him on matters of diverse interests. In that talk he unmistakably displayed his anxiety about the future and talked of the dangers that lay ahead, our weaknesses and the forces that threatened the unity and consolidation which the country had achieved. Throughout his illness he was thinking of the manifold problems the strings of which he held in his own hand. Mysore, Rajasthan, Hyderabad, the Food problem, the Refugees, Nepal, Tibet, relations with America, the Punjab, China — all these and many more would crop up during discussion; some of them would trouble him even in his dreams; some names and problems he muttered even in his sleep. Almost the last problem which came to his mind was the retrenchment in the armed forces. This

occupied a few minutes of his discussion with me on the evening of the 14th December. But never once did he display any anxiety about those near and dear to him. That was typical of the man. The touchstone of everything — even his personal relationship — was the country's good. The country claimed his thoughts right up to the end. Nothing and none else mattered; even the regret of his last illness was not that he was suffering physical pain but that it was preventing him from attending to the many tasks and problems on which he had set his heart. Always impatient of delay in achieving practical results, he would not easily submit even to his illness standing in the way.

Such was the great leader, patriot, statesman, the nation-builder, and in the words of H. E. the Governor of Madras, the "wonderful master" whom it was my proud privilege to serve. I have here stated only some aspects of his life and personality which were either contributory to his glorious achievements and success or which, in my judgment, deserved notice even after such elaborate appreciations which have appeared in the Press. A fuller picture of his achievements and appreciations of the problems which he handled and the personalities who figured in the difficult and strenuous times through which we have passed during the last four years must await greater leisure and freedom from contemporary restrictions. In the meantime I shall content myself with citing, with apologies to a Poet who chanted them in the present tense, at a public meeting, the following lines:

आहनी खोलमें अक लाल छिपा रक्खा था,

खुरखुरा था मगर लाल बड़ा अच्छा था।

(In the iron-folds, a ruby lay concealed; it was a rough ruby but an excellent one.)

V. SHANKAR

AN INSPIRING CHIEF

It was, I think in July 1946 or thereabout, soon after the departure of the Cabinet Delegation from India, that I first met Sardar Patel. He had expressed a desire to see me through a common friend and I met him in Birla House, New Delhi. Though I had informal contacts with him even before I met him in July 1946, it was for the first time on that occasion that I came face to face with that great leader. His easy manners and affable disposition made a deep impression on me, and at the very first meeting there developed between us a kind of mutual understanding and affection. This marked the beginning of a personal association, the memory of which would ever remain the most treasured of my possessions. From that day right up to his death, there were very few days when we did not have occasion to meet.

The subject matter of our talk, when I met him, was the transfer of power. I was at that time Secretary to the Governor-General in charge of this subject. I acquainted him with

the background of the British Government's attitude in the matter and discussed with him in detail how the problem could be best tackled. His last words to me before I took leave of him on that date, which are still fresh in my memory, were :

"Menon, you and I are working for a common purpose. Let there be no mistake about our determination to achieve Independence. If the British are under the impression that they can hang on because of the difference of opinion between the Congress and the League, they are mistaken. We will not consider any sacrifice too great to achieve our objective."

From that day onwards, I was, with the full approval of Lord Mountbatten, in close contact with Sardar and had his complete support.

When the States Department was created in July 1947, the Sardar took charge of this portfolio and I was appointed its Secretary. The first task to which we had to address ourselves was to deal with the difficult situation arising out of the impending lapse of Paramountcy and to avert the threatened disintegration of India. The position as it stood at the time was that the Political Department had arranged to call a Conference of the Rulers in order to get their approval to what was known as a "Standstill Agreement". I was quite clear in my mind that this kind of Agreement would not provide any answer to the problem of States. I fully and frankly shared my doubts with the Sardar who himself was fully cognizant of the dangers that such a loose and slender association would have for India. We, therefore, evolved a different approach to it, which was that the accession of States on the three subjects of Defence, External Affairs and Communications should be our immediate objective. The Prime Minister also approved of it. A series of conferences had to be held with the Rulers and their Advisers to finalize the draft of the Instrument of Accession. While I had kept the Sardar fully informed of all developments and sought his approval to the main lines of the draft, I did not trouble him with the changes which the draft underwent from time to time without affecting its main features. One morning the draft of the Instrument appeared in the *Hindustan Times*, and when I went to see the Sardar, he asked me whether now that the draft had been published in the *Hindustan Times*, it would be possible for me to show it to him. He made this observation in such a serious manner that I did not first catch the joke. Then we had a hearty laugh. He was immensely pleased when I showed him the first batch of signatures on the Instrument of Accession. From that time onwards, he gave me a free hand in the execution of the policies, which were decided upon after mutual discussions and which brought about the integration of States. We were passing then through a dynamic phase of our history which called for quick adjust-

ments and prompt decisions. Detailed noting and protracted negotiations of the kind inaugurated and conducted by Lord Linlithgow between 1936 and 1939 were a luxury which we could not afford. Most of the matters were, therefore, settled at a personal level. At a time when the maximum of action and decisions had to be compressed into the minimum of time and words Sardar was undoubtedly the ideal chief. Nevertheless, he always kept himself in touch with the progress of detailed negotiations. We all had to render our accounts almost daily and justify the confidence which he placed in us.

One of the principal characteristics of the man of action that Sardar was, was that once he was seized of an important issue, his mind was not at rest till the objective he had set before himself had been achieved. The eagerness with which he awaited the outcome of important negotiations and talks was symbolic of the singleness of purpose with which he devoted himself to the task, which the Nation entrusted to him. There were times when he would not have the patience to await my arrival at his house to meet me. For instance, when I returned with the Instrument of Accession signed by the Maharaja of Kashmir, he was anxiously waiting for me at the aerodrome. It was only after I had shown him the letter and the Instrument of Accession that his anxiety abated. He then switched on to the next question of giving military assistance to the Kashmir State.

Sardar was predominantly a realist. He never underestimated the gravity of the problems which confronted him, but what struck me most was the quality of dauntless courage with which he faced them. Indeed, it would be true to say that he was at his best when things looked dark and gloomy and the prospect was depressing. I used to get slightly depressed on such occasions when his calm humour would come into play and revive me. His approach to all problems which he handled was essentially practical. When a problem was presented to him, he was quick to seize upon its main features and to sense at once what the solution was, even if he did not always labour to find a reasoned answer in support of his conclusions.

He was known as the "Iron Man", but I must say, from the first day to the last in my relations with him, I saw very little of "iron" in the "Iron Man". Once one had penetrated the exterior mask of taciturnity, one was immediately struck by the evidence of strong affection; in the latter days especially, this affection was of an overwhelming quality. In my official life, two persons got the most out of me—one was the Sardar, and the other was Lord Mountbatten. Both of them had an inimitable way of putting you at your ease and getting the best out of you. By nature, Sardar was not exuberant in his appreciation. But by

a word here, a look there and a gesture now and then, one could feel how happy he was at what one had done.

By the death of the Sardar, the country has lost a great statesman and a master nation-builder. My own abiding feeling is one of desolation at losing an affectionate friend and an inspiring chief.

V. P. MENON

THE SARDAR'S LAST ILLNESS

[Abridged from two letters written to Shri Narahari Parikh.]

Whenever the doctors advised special precautions to be taken or forbade touring, attending public functions or making speeches I used to tell them in the very presence of Bapu (Sardar Vallabhbhai) that they would be watching helplessly and when the time came he would pass away. And so it came about. For a full month some doctor or other was always present by his side. At the time of the last heart-attack Drs Nathubhai and Gilder attended. They, poor fellows, were trying their utmost for months. And at last what they had apprehended happened. There was a strong heart-attack and all remedies were of no avail. Bapu had grown so weak that he had no strength left to withstand such a severe attack. At the time of the first attack he had sufficient strength in him. But during the last year his body got weaker and weaker due to constant strain and for the last three or four weeks he experienced acute pain. He who would not let go a sigh from his lips was seething with pain whenever it became unbearable during the last ten or twelve days. When Bapu used to say, "Doctor this is as painful as death. This is unbearable," the doctors (Nathubhai and Gilder) used to tell him, "Bapu, you had got yourself operated upon without any anaesthetic in England; just have a little patience, keep courage; it will be all right." At this Bapu would answer, "I was young then."

The recent illness was very severe; his physical strength had definitely gone down during the year. I did not entertain any great hopes of his recovery. His restlessness and pain during the last fortnight frequently reminded me of the last illness and restlessness of Ba in the Agakhan Palace as described by Sushila Nayar in her *Bapuki Karavas Kahani*. And I told Dr Gilder accordingly several times. Shankar twice assured me that he would be all right. One day seeing me very gloomy, Dr Dhandha said to me, "You need not despair. His condition is no doubt serious, but he will be all right." But my mind would not be persuaded to believe. I was all the while thinking that they were giving me false hopes and assurances. Bapu's utterances like, "This is as painful as death itself", his singing on occasions stray lines of hymns like "When the fountain of life gets parched", "Open the sacred

portals of the temple" and his breaking out amidst this to the doctors, "I have sung enough hymns, heard enough of them." — all this seemed to me to be a premonition of the coming calamity. Sometimes his look (at me) indicated that he would not get out of this illness. Once he said to the doctor, "I thought that this is heart-trouble and I shall suddenly flit away; but this is causing intense pain." During the last three weeks he suffered intense torment. On the 3rd Bapu, of his own accord, asked the doctor to arrange for a nurse, adding that I would fall ill for want of sleep. Separate night and day nurses began to attend, but I could not feel at ease. If he happened to sit up or cough during the night, I would instantly sit up and run up to him and he would stare at me and say, "Go to sleep, my child, or you will fall ill." Only during the last two days did he not utter these words. When doctors asked him to sleep he would point at me and say, "Sleep is necessary for her." Night and day I was a witness to his pain and latterly began to mutter within myself and pray to God either to cure him or relieve him of the body. If I could not suffer to see the pain he was experiencing, how much more unbearable it must have been to him who was doing it. It was ominous when he ceased to be aware of his clothes being soiled; — he who would instantly ask for a change if he saw a single spot on them. He would say to the doctor, "It seems my limbs are leaving one by one."

Thank God he had no attachment left for anything. I was apprehensive lest he would be anxious on my account. During his last days even narcotics ceased to have any effect. Half awake, half in stupor, his mind was full of thoughts and words would come out of his mouth — words referring to some work or other. To the last he was thinking of the nation. Only on the last night did he not say anything particularly; had an heart attack at 3 a.m. A coramine injection was given. Instead of the oxygen tent a rubber catheter was held before the nose. All gave up hope. Shankar began to phone to Delhi and other places informing that he was sinking. Rameshwarji asked two Brahmans to recite the *Gita*. Gopi, his daughter-in law, sat by me, on my cot, and began to recite it. She finished one reading by half past seven and Bapu's pulse reappeared. The eyes also began to show lustre. In a short time he was awake and asked for water. When I gave him some in a feeding cup with honey mixed with it he said that it tasted sweet. He must have taken about 2 oz. in small doses. He was having great difficulty in breathing and now and again would stretch out his arm to sit up; but on my asking him to keep lying down he would let it go down again. But once or twice when he experienced much trouble he did sit up. At 9-35 he asked for the bed-pan. Then his life began to leave him. The nurse had

witnessed such deaths before. She instantly called the doctor in. Nathubhai who was talking outside with somebody came in and tried to feel the pulse but could not. The lustre in the eyes had disappeared. He placed his ear on the chest and saw that breathing was going down. At 9-37 life quitted the body. My heart began to beat very fast. I was desirous of serving to the utmost his body that was passing away. Dr Nathubhai called Dr Gilder also. But who could avail when the fixed time for departure came? The pulse that had ceased to beat again reappeared, which led Nathubhai to think that he might pull on till the evening, as it was Friday, the day on which Bapu (Mahatma Gandhi) passed away. Nobody entertained any hope that he would hold on longer. When the pulse reappeared Shankar began to inform people that life was coming back. But that was a passing, deceptive phase. Then all had to be informed of his expiry. Dahyabhai, Bhanumati and Baba were already there since three o'clock when they were phoned. Morarjibhai and Shri Kher had come at 4 in the morning. All other relatives and friends were duly informed.

In a short time the Birla House was full. With difficulty could people be made to go out so that his body could be given a bath. Up till Wednesday he was asking the doctors to allow him to take a tub-bath, but they could not allow. Now the doctors, the nurse and Dahyabhai bathed his body in the tub. In the meanwhile I prepared a bed with a clean bedsheet and cover and made a hank of my yarn. After bath he was dressed in a *dhoti* woven out of my yarn and a shirt, and covered with a sheet of *khadi* woven from the yarn spun by Bapu in 1940. I had taken this piece to Bombay to get a shirt made of it for him but God willed it otherwise. When after dressing him in *dhoti* and shirt his body was laid on a cot, I covered him with this sheet, made the saffron mark on his forehead and garlanded him with my hank of yarn. The doors were then thrown open. As Shri Ghanshyamdas Birla, Shankar's wife and two daughters and Ishwarlal were due to arrive at half past twelve in a plane, his body was allowed to remain at the very place where he breathed his last. After half an hour after their arrival, it was taken out and placed in the verandah, where he used to sit on the sofa in the evening, on a cot so that people might have a *darshan* of him.

The details of what happened afterwards have already appeared in the papers. A little discussion took place in connection with cremating him on the Chowpati. I negatives the proposal and said that Sonapur was the proper place. Many did not like this. But I still feel that the decision for Sonapur was the right one.

New Delhi, 28-12-'50

MANIBEHN PATEL

(Translated from Gujarati)

A RARE PERSONALITY

The death of Sardar Vallabhbhai has cast a gloom all over the country. There is admiration for our Prime Minister. But there was adoration for the Deputy Prime Minister, alas! who is no more. He was a tower of strength to the newly born Indian Republic. Although he was a non-communalist to the core, staunch followers of every religion in India felt that the legitimate interests of every religious community, in so far as they are not opposed to public policy, were secure and safe in his hands. He inspired this confidence among all kinds of people, who felt nervous at the declaration of the purely secular nature of the Indian Republic. These people were reconciled to this ideal of secular State as they realized that it was not incompatible with true religiosity of the staunch followers of every faith.

The interest he took in the reconstruction of the temple of Sorthi Somnath in Saurashtra, in the restoration of mosques to the Muslims in Delhi, in his sympathetic treatment of problems of quasi-religious nature, has revealed strong element of regard, that was in him, for the faith or religion of the people. His death has removed a person who was looked upon by all religious-minded people as protector of their faith. Though a staunch and pronounced Hindu, a devout follower of the *anasakti* cult of the *Bhagavadgita*, he was, like his master Mahatma Gandhi, a friend of all other religions. His presence kept them all in a mutually helpful spirit. It will take time before another such personality is seen to figure prominently on the stage of active politics.

His public life discloses three important stages. We first find him as a faithful follower of Mahatma Gandhi, not talking much but always busy in doing organizational work and carrying out the constructive programme.

In the second stage, we see him as a general commanding an army of non-violent peasants of Gujarat to fight the British Government.

In the last stage we see him as a statesman and administrator handling with great astuteness and ability most complicated problems of high State policy. The success he achieved in bringing under the National Flag of the Indian Union all the six hundred States is unprecedented. That is enough to secure for him a place among the immortal heroes of Hind.

नास्ति तेषाम् यशःकाये जरामरणजम् भयम् ।

Sardar's physical body has disappeared. But the body of his fame, the inner body formed of the golden deeds in his life, lives and will live for ever.

May his soul rest in peace, in communion with the Eternal Soul.

Patna, 10-1-'51

M. S. ANEY

"A GIANT AMONG MEN"

[From Shri Jawaharlal Nehru's broadcast on 31-12-50]

I am addressing you after a long interval and much has happened since I spoke to you last on the radio. Many calamities have fallen on us, bringing distress to our people. But the greatest of these calamities and sorrows has been the passing away from amongst us of a giant among men. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was a dear and valued comrade in the brave days of our struggle for freedom, a rock full of wisdom and determination, a rock of patient strength to whom instinctively all of us went for guidance. Later, when we occupied the seats of Government, inevitably some of the heaviest burdens fell on him and history will record how he discharged that duty.

His name will always be remembered not only as that of a great leader in the fight for freedom but as a great builder, unifier and consolidator of New India. That is a proud title to fame which he well deserved. For him it is well, for his life's duty was well performed and is done. But for us, it is not well, for we miss his strength and wisdom and we can no longer go to him for counsel and advice. That burden which his broad shoulders carried so lightly, has now to be shared by all of us.

HOW TO DESERVE HIS HERITAGE

How to deserve the brilliant heritage that the Sardar has left us is the great question before us. The way to do so has already been shown to us by the Sardar himself. That the Sardar easily surpassed most of us in his devotion, loyalty and love for Gandhiji, no one can deny. Those who did not know him even called him a blind follower of Gandhiji. But the Sardar used to say that he had seen enough of the world and was not a man to run after a naked fakir like Gandhiji. He had clearly seen that the emancipation of our country was possible through Gandhiji's method only, and not through any other; and hence it was that he stuck on to him (Gandhiji). By constant brooding and thought he had thoroughly assimilated Gandhiji's principles and method of work, and never let go a single occasion for its practical application on his own initiative. During the two years from 1922 to 1924, when Gandhiji was a prisoner in the jail and there was a split in the Congress, the Sardar, though not yet a front-rank leader, maintained the solidarity of Gujarat and kept up the morale of the country by successfully conducting the Satyagraha campaigns of Nagpur and Borsad. This clearly shows his loyalty to Gandhiji as well as his skill and tactfulness. When in 1927, at the time of the great flood in Gujarat, Gandhiji, who was convalescing at Bangalore, wired to the Sardar asking him as to when he should return to Gujarat, the Sardar

replied, "You have been training us for the last ten years. You can stay on there and see how we have assimilated that training and put it into practice." He had similarly told Gandhiji at the time of the Bardoli struggle, that he might remain at Sabarmati and see how he (the Sardar) and his colleagues conducted the fight; and if and when they thought his presence necessary, they would invite him to visit Bardoli.

It was on account of this self-reliance and, more particularly, his courage to differ from Gandhiji and take a different course that appeared to him the proper one on occasions, that he proved himself a worthy disciple of Gandhiji. In 1940, when the Second World War was on, the Congress offered to co-operate in the war effort if Swaraj was granted. Gandhiji was not agreeable to this, and consequently the Congress leaders had to part company with him. Explaining his position before a meeting of the Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee, the Sardar then had said :

"I frankly told Gandhiji, 'If you give the command, I have faith enough in you to run after you with eyes blindfolded.' But Gandhiji does not want us to follow him simply because he says so, but only if we are convinced that the path shown by him is the proper one. If I could go with him I would be more happy than any of you; but how can I say that I can see the way when actually I cannot? Neither I nor any from among you should be false to him."

The last sentence expresses the Sardar's loyalty to Gandhiji.

A somewhat similar incident occurred when we agreed to the partition and attained freedom. To Gandhiji, partitioning the country was a sin; but almost all Congressmen did not see any alternative course to agreeing to the partition. If partition were not accepted, they thought, the whole country would be plunged into a chaotic state similar to the one that prevailed in Bengal, Bihar and the Punjab. They, therefore, agreed to the partition to save the country from chaos and bloodshed. Gandhiji on his part gave up his opposition and appreciated the honesty and integrity of his colleagues.

On all these occasions the Sardar showed the qualities of a true and loyal colleague. Let us understand this properly and try to inculcate in our hearts his burning passion for public service. Thus alone shall we be worthy of his brilliant heritage.

NARAHARI PARIKH

(Translated from Gujarati)

TRUE REMEMBRANCE

Time and tide wait for no man and before we know where we are, 'Independence Day' comes round again.

It seems in one sense only the other day that we attained our cherished goal of political independence; and although its entry was greatly marred by the sorrow of partition we nevertheless ushered in the new era with high hopes. Bapu was there and somehow or other we had no fears while he was with us. With unerring instinct he pointed out the right way. The word *defeat* was not in his vocabulary. Difficulties were there, as he always said, to be overcome and the more intricate the problem the more did it put him on his mettle. The tiniest personal trouble of the humblest and most insignificant person claimed his meticulous attention just as did the biggest problem of the country or of those in high places. Therein lay his amazing love for humanity whereby, as a magnet, he drew all unto himself. And I am sure that I am voicing the feelings of thousands and certainly of those who had the inestimable opportunity of close contact with Bapu that one never came away from his presence without feeling the lighter and happier. Even when he chided one for any error committed it did not hurt, for there was the realization within that what he had tried to show one was the truth, and while Truth may be harsh it is inextricably bound up with its counterpart, Love. "Truth is God and Truth and *Ahimsa* are as the two sides of a coin." How often have many of us heard him say so whether in English, Gujarati or Hindi! And so it is only natural that on January 26th, the day on which all those years ago we pledged ourselves to achieve our political independence and having achieved it have chosen the same date for proclaiming India as a Republic, we should remember him who was God's great gift to us during the critical years of our history and through us to the world.

It is good that we choose certain dates in our calendar year for special remembrance. Man needs to be reminded now and again of the things that really matter and which he is apt by the very frailties of his nature to forget, particularly in the strain and stress of life which is his lot in the sad and troubled world of today. Another year has just dawned and that dawn has been ushered in not by the warm glow of the season of goodwill which immediately preceded it; for men seem to have forgotten the message, old yet ever new, that heralded the birth of the gentle Jesus. It has been ushered in by the noise and tumult of fighting in one corner of the globe and by the spectre of fear haunting the minds of men of all nations lest that unholy spark should become a flame consuming the entire world. It is indeed a tragedy that even after two global wars within 20 years of each other we stand in

danger of being plunged into another holocaust at any moment. When *will* we learn the lesson that war begets war and violence can and will continue to generate greater violence? There is something gravely wrong somewhere and it is to set right that something wrong that all men and women of goodwill must turn.

While it seems only the other day that we gained our freedom, — for what are three and a half years in the life of a nation? — India has been through much travail. The aftermath of partition will haunt many of us to the end of our days. Indeed none of us can ever forget the impenetrable darkness which enveloped us four days after we had celebrated January 26th for the first time after our independence. The gloom of that tragedy, caused by our own folly, has not yet lifted. Who knows but that we are paying for that sin by the disaster after disaster that had dogged our footsteps since we lost the beloved being who sought unceasingly to light our pathway?

But the light of Truth and *Ahimsa*, — and what is *Ahimsa* but infinite Love? — which torch he bore aloft with such faith and courage throughout his mission on earth can never be dimmed; for Truth and *Ahimsa* are God. With Bapu all celebration meant prayer and fasting. January 26th, April 6th, April 13th, *Krishna Jayanti* were all celebrated by him in the same way. As a rule celebrations convey feasting, merrymaking and illuminations to the average mind. But if we ponder deeply enough and believe that it is the things of the spirit that really count, then we shall realize that remembrance of any national day or great world event must make each one of us humble, must stir our innermost being to the depths so that our rejoicing and returning thanks to the Great Giver may mean the rejoicing in spirit which means communion with Him, and illuminations may mean the rekindling within each one of us of the flame of utter dedication to the service of our country and to the cause of world peace.

May the remembrance of January 26th, 1951, be a source of upliftment and blessing to us all and with pure hearts and clean hands may we be enabled to go forward in faith and courage with the immense task of building a good India. She can only be great if she is good.

New Delhi, 8-1-'51

AMRITKAUR

LIFE AND DEATH

Life, 'death, — death, life; the words have led for ages

Our thought and consciousness and firmly seemed

Two opposites; but now long-hidden pages

Are opened, liberating truths undreamed.

Life only is, or death is life disguised, —

Life a short death until by life we are surprised.

(From G. I. I. S. — Canada)

SHRI AUROBINDO

SARDAR'S CONTRIBUTION TO NON-VIOLENCE

There is scarcely any aspect of the character and life of Sardar Vallabhbhai which has escaped receiving its meed of homage in the numerous tributes that have been paid to him during the last three weeks. And yet, almost every one feels that he would be failing in his duty if he did not give public expression to the thoughts and emotions that rise in him at the passing away of one of the most powerful, and yet one of the most loving, personalities of modern India. Lest the personal aspect be overshadowed, I would like to hazard the view that the Sardar became strong and powerful because, as he grew in stature, he developed a humanitarian outlook. But even nearly a quarter of a century back when I had, for the first time, the privilege of seeing him, my impression was that of a considerate and affectionate personality. It is only such a personality, I would humbly suggest, that can evoke the unique, and almost unparalleled, devotion and love that he got from his daughter. It is true that the Sardar gave short shrift to the laggard, the crank, the intriguer; that, however, was no weakness of character. The greatest amongst the leaders of the world have had ever to discriminate between the chaff and the wheat; and the Sardar was no exception.

Among the characteristics of a great and good leader of men is, undoubtedly, courage. Coupled with it should, however, go a temperament that is both sensitive and considerate. All the three qualities the Sardar possessed in abundance. A sensitive nature is apt to become self-centred; and considerateness may be at the cost of principles. It is only a person who combines the three traits in due proportion that achieve greatness. It is because of this happy combination in his make-up that the Sardar was able, all throughout his long public career, to handle effectively individuals from among such diverse groups as ruling princes, commercial magnates, and civil servants. All these, as they came in contact with him, knew that the self-respect of the individual — their individuality — would be duly honoured, though not at the sacrifice of basic principles, the chief among these being the promotion of the common weal. It is the sense of security that the Sardar inspired that induced numbers among these sections of society to bow to his wishes and that bound several among them by ties of personal affection.

When the Sardar's achievement in unifying India and effecting a smooth transformation of the civil administration is assessed and compared with similar processes in Germany and other parts of the world, the fact is often overlooked that the process of unification elsewhere was accompanied by the use of force and by resort to methods of persecution. Save in Hyderabad, where it was not integration alone that had to be aimed at — and where conditions prevailed

which had extra-national complications — there was no need for the Sardar to resort to force in bringing about the unification of the entire country. In other countries, again, where there is transference of power, the emergence of groups within the administrative personnel, civil and military, is not unknown. These elements help in fanning public passions, fomenting disorder and promoting revolts. It is not through the pursuit of any ruthless methods that the emergence of such forces has been prevented in India. It is because along with his colleague, the Prime Minister, the Sardar won over, in the first place, the affectionate regard of those responsible for law and order and, secondly, because by his private and public conduct he succeeded in retaining and enhancing the respect and esteem they bore towards him. There could hardly have been a more convincing demonstration of non-violence in action, in the sphere of public administration.

In fact, the successful application of non-violence in various spheres of public life was the Sardar's greatest contribution to the progress of our nation. This started with his participation in the agrarian dispute in Kheda, in the better-known Bardoli struggle, and in the organization of industrial labour in Gujarat. Behind each one of these achievements lay a close and careful search for facts, because adherence to truth alone could lead to the enunciation of principles on which organization could be based and evil forces resisted and conquered. The idealist in the Sardar was always subordinated to the practical, the emotional to the rational. What made him great as a practical administrator, while he remained a leader of men and a statesman, was his study of details, his knowledge of facts combined with a deep insight, width of outlook and long-range vision. It is rarely that one comes across an individual possessed of all these qualities that make for greatness — courage, knowledge of what is right, honour in action.

In 1950, the world was poorer, also because of the loss of two other politically and socially great personalities — General Smuts and George Bernard Shaw. The former, who was among the earliest to appreciate the greatness in Gandhiji, was a statesman, soldier and administrator, who helped to raise his country in the estimation of the world and who contributed towards building up a world order. So did Bernard Shaw, through his writings and addresses and through his share in the evolution of the new democracy in Great Britain. We are too near the times when these eminent world figures lived and served humanity to assess the value of their contribution towards peace, prosperity and progress. But when the history of these times comes to be written, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's name will, it is certain, appear emblazoned there as that of a man cast in a heroic mould, who by his unique service to his own people served nobly the whole of mankind.

VAIKUNTH L. MEHTA

SOMETHING TO BE PROUD OF

What shall we say we have achieved when we reach another January 26th in 1951? Less and less initiative at the periphery, more and more dependence on the centre with more and more financial stringency there, and therefore greater disappointment, and a mood of bitterness all over. This is a confession of sorrow. But is this the whole of it? Certainly not. We are in difficult times, but we shall be out of the wood one day. If we had freedom twenty years earlier the story would have been different. Britain handed power to us just when, and perhaps just because, the world had become most difficult. We should not, however, complain. Let us inspire initiative in the villages, in the towns and in the provinces and let us turn to work, for work alone produces wealth and happiness, not laws or orders or plans or permits. May we be blessed with the urge to work and the stamina to overcome difficulties!

I said we have not achieved anything. But a voice tells me, nay, India has helped keeping off war, has helped the world to keep out of disaster. Is that not something to be proud of? And does this not indicate some power in us? Yes, and it is a thing to be thankful for. May our power be ever of this gentle and holy kind. With growing moral greatness we cannot long remain poor. Perhaps India was the earliest civilizer of humanity and, perhaps again, the tide of destruction that threatens civilization may be stemmed through her efforts.

C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

WALK ALONE

[A song of Rabindranath Tagore. Favourite with Gandhiji.]

If they answer not to thy call, walk alone,

If they are afraid and cower mutely facing
the wall;

O thou of evil luck,

Open thy mind and speak out alone.

If they turn away, and desert you when crossing
the wilderness,

O thou of evil luck,

Trample the thorns under thy tread,

And along the blood-lined track travel alone.

If they do not hold up the light

When the night is troubled with storm

O thou of evil luck,

With the thunder-flame of pain ignite thine
own heart

And let it burn alone.

(From G. I. I. S. — Canada)

"RAMA-RAJ OF BAPU'S DREAMS"

(Why We Haven't Realized

Gandhiji's Concept of Free India)

Again and again critics point out this or that defect in the Government administration and the consequent hardships to the writers or the public, and end with the refrain: "Is this the *Rama-Raj* of our Bapu's dreams?"

This is an erroneous and unhealthy attitude of mind. If we want *Rama-Raj*, or *Sarvodaya Raj*, or Welfare State, or any good government whatever, it cannot be established as long as this attitude of mind persists. It shows that the critic has not yet realized the full significance of the political freedom he has obtained, and the value of his coparcenary interest in it. He still retains the attitude of the timid youth, who, though he has attained majority and even been adjudged so, still labours under a subordination-complex, hesitates to begin to work out his own destiny, and wants to be managed by others; and then complains that his affairs are not as satisfactory as he would wish.

It should be remembered that neither 15th August 1947, nor 26th January 1950, established *Rama-Raj*, whether of "Bapu's dreams" or of anybody else's. It was not to be expected, and could not have been done. What was accomplished on 26th January, 1950, was not the realization of our dreams of *Rama-Raj*, but of our long-cherished desire to be free from British *Raj* and Princely *Raj*. We had believed that as long as these obstructions remained, it was not possible for India to organize a society in accordance with her own genius. We wanted freedom to mould our destiny as we pleased. Whether that freedom will enable us to build *Rama-Raj* or *Haram* (wicked) *Raj* must depend upon our efforts, conduct and character.

To establish the latter (*Haram Raj*) does not require too long a time, though it too requires an iron will, nerve and prowess. Half-heartedness and timidity cannot create even an intense hell. The erection of even a hell demands gigantic energy, resourcefulness for devising novel ways of exhibiting cruelty and wickedness, and absolute suppression of tender emotions of the mind.

We did exhibit a capacity for this during the years 1946-47. That exhibition did not accord with "our Bapu's dreams of *Rama-Raj*", who, being alive then, resisted it single-handed and succeeded in subduing it to such an extent as to be proclaimed a miracle. It so frightened those who prided in their capacity of spreading fire and sword that they destroyed his body. With his departure, his dreams have necessarily suffered a severe set-back. Since they were not the dreams of only Bapu's mind, but were shared, more or less, by others also, they are not destroyed by Bapu's physical destruction. But since it is to *his* dreams that critics refer, it should be realized that no longer can *Bapu's*

dreams of *Rama-Raj* be exactly fulfilled. Whatever is achieved in the way of good government and prosperous and progressive India, will be the dreams of you and me and the people and our most effective leaders. It is for you and me and the people to think clearly what are our dreams of *Rama-Raj*, and how we shall earnestly and zealously combine together for working them out.

We all desire a happy, prosperous and ever free India. But our dreams of that condition are not of the same pattern. This is not to be wondered at. In a country of 35 crores, uniform dreaming cannot be expected.

Let each one of us examine his dream of *Rama-Raj* and compare it with that of Bapu, when we angrily complain that his dream has not been realized. How many of us really wish to see the *Rama-Raj* of his dreams established? What are the implications of Bapu's *Rama-Raj*, and how much of them are we prepared to carry out in our life? To what extent shall we welcome the changes that will necessarily take place in our present mode of life if these are energetically carried out?

The dreams of Bapu's *Rama-Raj* are an India, in which:

1. There is a strong sense of common nationality among all the inhabitants of all-India, whether the country is subdivided into perfectly autonomous (Sovereign) or partially autonomous (Provincial) States, or other smaller political and administrative areas.

2. There is perfect peace and mutual trust among Hindus, Muslims and others, and no community tries to dominate over or oust another, or show favour for one or antipathy for another in the various spheres of life; there is no talk of establishing Hindu *Raj*, Muslim *Raj*, Sikh *Raj* etc. or of a dominating Hindu, Muslim or other sectional culture; it is the *Raj* of every one irrespective of class, creed, caste etc.

3. Security of the State is not based on the principle of "peace through armaments", but on the development of non-violent techniques of resistance to injustice and aggression whether from external powers or internal elements. This depends upon the strength of the moral fibre of the people, the evolution of a non-exploiting and non-imperialistic foreign policy and internal political, social and economic order, and a spirit of friendliness with other Governments and their nationals.

4. There is no jealousy or sense of otherness among people speaking various languages; hence there is no rivalry among Indians speaking different languages for getting a particular border area included in one or another division.

5. Decentralization, linguistic division, and greatest amount of autonomy to units is emphasized for enabling the ordinary people to manage their ordinary daily affairs of life without too much dependence, control and dictation from

above. The purpose is to enable the ordinary people to enjoy freedom of action as much as possible, so that their needs and ordinary aspirations of life might be satisfied with their own initiative and efforts, and there might be the least amount of delay, red-tapism and official annoyance — drawbacks inseparable from too much centralization. Such decentralization should make each citizen feel that he has directly and personally a share in some sphere or another of the day-to-day administration of the country, and that he is not a mere voter unintelligently casting his vote once in four or five years, and thereafter becoming a passive subject to be managed by a mechanical system. But decentralization does not mean parochial and fissiparous tendencies, and weakening of and lack of interest in the strength and affairs of higher or parallel units and the Centre.

6. In Bapu's *Rama-Raj*, the society cannot be one which is divided into high and low castes, touchables and untouchables, ruling sections and ruled sections, masters and bondsmen, people who are very rich and people who are very poor, and other glaring and invidious distinctions. It is to be a society in which all types of labour and occupations, which are honest and serve a useful function in society, are regarded as equally honourable, and not unworthy of any one, however educated, well placed and highly connected.

7. In technical and industrial advance, utmost value is attached to the preservation of health, morals and higher virtues of the people, and to the development of their intellect, personality, and social instincts, and to the annihilation of war and violence; human and other life and property are held in great reverence, not to be destroyed wantonly; unlimited increase of wants, pleasures and luxuries and enormous expansion of trade, commerce, cities, palaces, etc. are not regarded as the determining factors of a high culture and civilization: the technical and industrial advance is so regulated as to solve the problem of unemployment; it is not aimed at creating a show of monetary cheapness by reducing the number of workers in the manipulation of an article or by so dividing the process of manufacture into small bits, as to make the worker a mere automaton working at top-speed, with all his senses dulled and fatigued at the end of the day, and seeking refuge in passion-exciting pursuits.

8. Bapu's *Rama-Raj* might involve breaking up of several modern cities like Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi etc. into several hundred small towns; in his dreams, there is not much scope for overcrowded buildings and localities; his dreams do not raise the vision of a life of great luxury and rolling in riches and comforts; rather, you see therein a picture of fields and small decent buildings, in which men, women and children work hard for seven or eight hours a day and enjoy their work. From the

field-labourer and the child at school to the President of the Republic, every one is sinewy and hardy.

9. Bapu's *Rama-Raj* does not raise the picture of a network of dispensaries, hospitals, druggists' shops, poor-houses and homes for the aged and the cripple spread all over the land — for there is not much sickness, hunger and unemployment; the aged and the cripple are taken care of by the village people, generally domestically; widespread hygiene, cleanliness, sanitation, healthy food and pure water, a system of a simple treatment of minor disorders and accidents, and a general knowledge of nature-cure methods and simple local drugs fill the eyes instead.

10. There is education everywhere; but the schools are of a very different type from those now prevailing. The main building is the work-house; the next important one is the kitchen and the dining room, serving also as the meeting-hall; thereafter come the library, study-rooms and read-together corners.

Visitors are also taken round the latrines, the urinals and bathing places; the class-rooms are scattered all over: classes being held in a part of the work-house, the kitchen, the library, the store-room, the lavatories, the manure-pits in the open fields and under the trees also; you might see a class being held even on a river, a tank, or a well. There is work and there is play; there is also decency and neatness; but there is no room there for idle and nice-looking, smartly-dressed scholarship to stay and be regarded superior to others.

These are some of the features of the *Rama-Raj* of Bapu's dreams, as I can think of them. How far do they accord with those of the reader? If they do not, let him not yearn for Bapu's *Rama-Raj*. If, however, they do to a sufficient extent, let him work for it.

K. G. MASHRUWALA

HIS DOINGS AND EXPECTATIONS

Man has more in him than he ordinarily knows or feels. Mahatmaji knew this truth and he also knew the art of bringing it out. The nation lay weak, meek and inert thirty-five years ago. Here and there a spirited soul hurled defiance at the mighty power which ruled over the nation. But the effort from the nation itself which the leaders of the times could inspire was meagre and ineffective.

The year 1916 found Mahatmaji on the Indian stage. Prolonged *tapasya* had converted him into a psychological magnet. He drew out the best from each one he met or addressed. Those who had been born in plenty and nurtured in an atmosphere of wealth and comfort responded to his inspiration and were foremost in a programme of simplicity and suffering. Those whose daily thought was for their personal careers cast away all planning for self-advancement and plunged into the surging waves of a mighty movement unmindful of what

would happen to them. Softly brought-up women of India rediscovered within themselves the *kshatriya* spirit with its ancient and unending tradition handed down by the great Draupadi. Little timid boys transformed themselves into young soldiers of freedom and bore the cruel whipping in prison without a cry from their clenched teeth. Age-long addicts of drink developed the strength to become teetotallers for life in a moment. Slaves of foreign fineries — men and women — changed over into proud votaries of rough hand-spun cloth. Orthodox Brahmans, for whom the touch or sight of a Harijan was unwashable sin, did not mind being next to him listening to soul-stirring utterances of the great teacher in crowded gatherings. Many another wonder was wrought by those who came within the orbit of his influence.

He gave us nothing. He drew all this out of ourselves. The seed was there. It needed the skilful hand of a gardener to make it sprout, blossom and flower. He made us win our freedom and left for us his will and testament to complete the task and give to his people the fruits of that freedom. On each one of us lies the duty to execute that will and testament. He taught us how to work, how to progress and how to achieve. The nation will lose its way, if we do not re-learn that lesson and once again draw out from within ourselves the best that is in us and use it every minute of our lives so as to make all our surrounding happier and more contented. He helped us to win freedom, that is freedom to act rightly and in the interest of the people. We cannot act so unless our mind is vigorously searching for the right course of action as the situation around us changes from day to day and also unless every ounce of our energy is devoted to acting in the direction thus discovered to be right. We must re-cultivate the growth of such qualities for service as are embedded within us. We must once again become the instruments of an inspiring mission — instruments of a high quality and standard. Tireless in our labours, sympathetic in our approach to the people's problems, unnerved by seemingly stupendous difficulties, tolerant of differing opinions, accurate in thinking and execution, such must we be if we are to be the humble executors of Mahatmaji's life testament. Each day should see us developing gradually these qualities of true service of the people. We prefer the best things of the world if we can have them. The better the quality of what we want, the more we are drawn to it and appreciate it and, where we can, try to possess it. We like others to give us the best things. We must act similarly in our relations with society and give all our best to the people of our country. We must again rise to a high pitch of endeavour and evolve from within ourselves the latent good and the latent power that lie again dormant within us and let his ever-green memory function as the inspirer of this fresh endeavour and this new achievement.

JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

TO SARDAR — IN AFFECTION

January 26th, 1951, is the first Independence Day that will dawn for us without our beloved Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. The wound caused by his passing is still fresh and it is hard to reconcile oneself to the loss, personal to his many friends and to the Government and country which he served so loyally and unceasingly over a long and fateful period.

The Sardar was no ordinary person. He had rare gifts and with his death has died an epoch, as it were, in which he played a redoubtable part. Cabinet meetings seem strange without him. It is difficult to pass by 1 Aurangzeb Road, New Delhi and feel that that kindly smile and warm welcome which one always received from him are no longer there. There is a sense of absence of a special support and tower of strength which he had become. One by one the warriors of India's freedom struggle are passing on to their rest, their labours in this world finished, "to where beyond these voices there is peace." Human as we are, we miss them. Life has never been the same since Bapu left us. Now the Sardar too has been taken and we miss him and will continue to miss him, for our need for strength and wisdom and faith and courage is great in the critical days ahead. But we have to bow in humble resignation to His divine will Who does all things well and not for one moment may we give way to despair. The example of the great sons of India is there for us all to try to emulate and the Sardar was undoubtedly one of our great ones.

History will record his services in letters of gold. Much has already been written about him as a fighter, an organizer, an administrator, a disciplinarian, a statesman. But perhaps enough has not been said about the human qualities of this great man. He was not easy to know, he was a man of few words, in fact the exterior might even have been deemed as forbidding to those who could not see beneath. But it would be difficult to conceive a more generous or hospitable nature. I had the pleasure and privilege of living under his roof for over a year and never once did I feel as if I were anywhere but in my own home. It was an experience which I shall always treasure. Nothing was too much trouble or expense for his guests for this perfect host. The Sardar's humour never deserted him and never can I forget how his witty sallies used to make Bapu roar with laughter. With children he was a veritable child and how the little ones loved him for the romps he had with them! Tears welled up into his eyes when he heard of suffering and distress which showed that beneath that stern exterior there was a wealth of tenderness. He demanded loyalty and gave it in abundance. Justice and appreciation of good service were innate in him. A good friend and a good father has passed away. Those who knew him mourn his absence as a personal loss; those who knew him not feel a pillar of strength has been re-

moved. But the daughter who served him so devotedly has lost her all and to her our hearts must go out in deepest sympathy. Such perfect understanding and devotion between father and daughter is rare and therefore a thing of beauty.

May the great Sardar's soul rest in peace and may we be enabled even in some small measure to serve our country and people as he did.

New Delhi, 8-1-'51

AMRITKAUR

A BORN SOLDIER

With the passing away of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel one of the main links of the younger generation with Gandhiji has been severed. Within three years, it is sad to realize that the associations of the physical presence of Gandhiji are quickly fading away. Sardar's speeches often revived and reflected the glow of the all-consuming love that emanated from Gandhiji.

The passionate patriotism of the Sardar was contagious to the old and the young alike. His strong will and selfless devotion to duty was ever an inspiration to those around him. It is impossible for those of us, who had had the rare privilege of being associated with this giant among India's many heroes, to think of our country without him. He was a faithful friend, and wise counsellor, but a relentless foe as even British Imperialism learnt to its cost.

Although he loyally carried out Gandhiji's behests he hardly ever disclosed a heart-belief in the principles expounded by the apostle of non-violence. Yet it is remarkable with what devotion and meticulous care he carried out every detail of the constructive work entrusted to him by Gandhiji. He attended to such duties as though they were his own work to such an extent that many felt it hard to believe that his devotion to such constructive work was born of personal affection and loyalty and not of conviction. This is a rare quality hard to meet with in public leaders. It is an example of the soldierly qualities Sardar was richly endowed with. In such matters

"His was not to reason why,
His was but to do and die."

How many will emulate this model of this born warrior?

Coupled with his loyalty was his faithfulness to his colleagues. The trust he imposed on them encouraged them to further effort. In my early days in the Gandhi Camp, he greatly inspired me in my study of rural life especially in the Kheda District. It was he who was instrumental in thrusting on me the editorial charge of *Young India* when Gandhiji was in jail. On many an occasion he had entrusted to me responsibilities against my wishes. His confidence and friendship took us a long way in rendering what service we could to our motherland.

The passing away of the Sardar, though it is a personal loss, cannot be a national loss, as such men are immortal to the nation.

"Lives of great men all remind us,
We can make our lives sublime."

J. C. KUMARAPPA

HOMAGE TO THE SARDAR

[The following are three broadcast speeches by Shri Morarji Desai, Shri K. G. Mashruwala and Shri Jivanji Desai respectively from the All India Radio, Bombay, on 18-12-50.]

I

In the present situation of the world, especially in the situation prevailing in India, the passing away of the Sardar is a very great calamity. His need for us was the greatest in the present circumstances, for some years at least. For we will hardly be able to get a captain like him, able to lead the nation through the difficult situation that we are in today. His presence in these days by the side of Pandit Jawaharlal was very necessary. But God willed it otherwise and the burden has fallen on us all and it is our duty to take it up. To establish unity in the country and to raise India to a higher plane—that is the task before us. The Sardar during his lifetime showed us the way and led us in the Satyagraha fight for Indian independence; but now we shall have all to find our way together. Had the Sardar not been victorious with his tact and courageous behaviour at Bardoli, our struggle for Swaraj would not have, I think, gained that tempo which it did afterwards. He gave us courage. If we tread the right path we can be successful and maintain our freedom intact. He achieved a great task even after the attainment of freedom: With his tact and alertness he tied with the bond of unity the six hundred and odd States with the Indian Union, and has left a glorious example before the world. It is after millenniums that India has become one. To maintain and consolidate that unity is our task. We should forget our differences and unitedly strive to march forward. We should always bear in mind his burning patriotism and do our work. And this, I believe, is the duty we owe to his memory.

(Translated from Hindi)

II

It is very difficult for me to say anything about the Sardar. Even otherwise, I am unable to make a formal speech, especially when my relations with the Sardar are like those between members of one family. I have worked under him in the Executive Committee of the Gandhi Seva Sangh for some years. And even after that our relations continued as before, and grew very intimate.

After the death of my eldest brother the Sardar used to take interest in all of us including my nieces just like the head of the family. How can I speak of him only as a political leader? People might expect that I would describe his career and peculiar traits as a great political leader, but I shall leave that to others.

The Sardar unified Gujarat and maintained its unity. Let us not forget that we have to keep that unity intact and behave accordingly in the future also.

Nobody could cause a split in Gujarat so long as the Sardar was there in flesh and blood. In Gujarat has always prevailed one opinion, one command. If anybody ever tried to create a rift in the Sardar's order his efforts were never crowned with success. Let us, therefore, abide by the same order, all work in the spirit of co-operation and learn to live in accordance with the principles of truth and non-violence taught to us by Gandhiji—for this alone will redound

to our credit. It will lead to the glory of Gujarat and our strength too will grow with it.

(Translated from Gujarati)

III

It has not yet been possible for me to get out of the shock due to the Sardar's death. I had not the slightest idea when I saw him at Delhi a month ago that it was my last visit to him.

The Sardar's last visit to Ahmedabad was when he performed the opening ceremony of the Navajivan buildings on 31st October, 1950. He took a keen interest in my work and personal life and by his passing away I have been deprived of my elder and guardian. The loss to the country on account of his demise, no doubt, is far greater than mine. The Sardar was the foremost among those few leaders of the country and colleagues of Gandhiji who were always mindful of the fundamentals and trying to reconstruct New India on those foundations. Gandhiji developed the science of Satyagraha, shaped out of it a weapon for fighting and made a practical application of it in our country. The Sardar gave his loyal and hearty co-operation to Gandhiji in his undertaking. Such devotion and loyalty have hardly a parallel in the history of the world.

Various kinds of beliefs and opinions get currency in the case of great men. Due to his fearlessness and firm determination the Sardar won the epithet of the *iron man*. His unbending nature became hard-heartedness with the ordinary people. I can say from my own experience that the Sardar was very tender-hearted and loving. I have been in his contact long since 1928. It is difficult to measure his capacity for work. Brought up in a village in his early years, he later went to England and was called to the bar. Both these experiences tended to combine in him the capacity for management and practical wisdom, his qualities that have contributed much to the making of our nation.

The Sardar was connected with my work in the Navajivan House for quite a long time. The guidance that he gave me during all this period has been very helpful in the making of the institution. Gandhiji carried on the work of educating the people of Gujarat and India through this institution. That work is still going on and the Sardar took good care to see that it went on unhampered.

It would not be out of place if I mention the name of the late Mahadev Desai in this context. He was one of the makers of Navajivan. I have considered it my duty to place before the country the life and work of these two worthy leaders along with that of Gandhiji. As a step in this direction, the Navajivan Press has, only a few days ago, published the first volume of the Sardar's biography. Of course, the fittest tribute that can be given to the Sardar is to tread along the path shown by him—the path of sacrifice for the country.

It is my humble request to the people of Gujarat and of India that they should take a lesson from the Sardar's life and give their contributions to the great task of the uplift of our country. Let us express our sympathy in her bereavement and grief towards his daughter Shrimati Manibehn, who served him with a single-minded devotion and pray to God to give peace to his soul.

(Translated from Gujarati)

THE TWO FAKIRS

On this our Independence Day whom else are we to remember if not Gandhiji? Only those who have seen the condition of our public life before the advent of Gandhiji and the one that prevailed afterwards can have an adequate idea of the enormous change wrought by Gandhiji. He brought hope to a people that had been suppressed, oppressed, fallen into despair, had lost all energy and idealism; he gave it an ideal and purpose and taught it to stand erect; and infused fearlessness into it, so much so that it was able to oppose a mighty empire and throw away the foreign yoke. And all this he accomplished without any violence or disorder. There is no other example like this in the world's history.

But if this is all our estimate of Gandhiji we can be hardly said to have understood him. There is not a single field of life which Gandhiji did not influence. Not only did he accomplish Swaraj for us but placed a new viewpoint of social reconstruction before us and led the people towards it.

More important than all this, he lifted our public life from the morass and put it on a moral and spiritual level. Politics, it is generally believed, cannot go on without falsehood and deception. But he brought it within the purview of the moral law. Along with the innocence of a man of spirituality he had the statesmanship capable of checkmating the greatest statesmen in the world. And it could do so because it was based on the solid foundation of truth.

He gave lessons in true public service to people who wanted to do it. He taught even his own family to give up all thought of money and serve the people. When asked to send a message to the Parliament of Religions held in America or elsewhere, he sent this message: If I cannot give a message through the life that I am trying to live what other message is it possible for me to give? This was the standard of conduct he laid down for public or social workers; and the prestige our country has gained is due only to a few such workers trained under his influence. And it will last so long as the stream of such workers continues to flow.

Swami Vivekananda always harped on two things in particular: power and sacrifice. We see these incarnated in Gandhiji. Because of these, people were drawn towards him. But his strength was not physical but spiritual. Who would not bow his head to a man who was ever ready to sacrifice his life for the sake of truth? And his *aparigraha* (non-possession) is seen from his very will, wherein he says in so many words, I do not believe that I own any property.

We cannot think of Sardar Vallabhbhai without Gandhiji. He had woven each and every principle of Gandhiji in the fabric of his life. Of Ramakrishna Paramahansa it may be said that his was a life apart. Vivekananda placed his life

before the people. This cannot be said of Gandhiji. He was himself a great *karmayogi* (man of action). But this much is certain that if anybody has played an important role in the work of successfully implementing Gandhiji's principles in action, it was Vallabhbhai. To him goes the credit of most of the successful satyagraha campaigns in the country. And it would be no exaggeration to say that our War of Independence beginning with the Dandi March and culminating in the Quit India struggle became possible only because of the no-tax campaign of Bardoli, successfully carried on by Sardar Vallabhbhai. We know the Sardar's wonderful power of organization from the way in which he successfully conducted the various Satyagraha campaigns, his work in the Ahmedabad Municipality and many an other work, great and small, he undertook and latterly in his administration in the Central Government after the attainment of Swaraj. Like Gandhiji he also interested himself in every field of public work and placed it on a proper basis and policy.

But more than all these things, he gave up his legal practice, became a fakir and, devoting himself to the path of service shown by Gandhiji, trained a band of workers for national service; and this work of his will never be forgotten.

Gujarat must be thankful to God that such great personalities were born amongst us to lead us along the right path. Let us pray to God on this Independence Day that we may not forget the lessons taught us by these two great men and do anything that might tarnish the glory they have won for the nation.

KANAIYALAL NANABHAI DESAI

(Translated from Gujarati)

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THE GUARDIAN OF GUJARAT

On 15-12-'50 at 9-37 a.m. the Sardar left his mortal frame at Bombay. Only a month and a half ago Gujarat had celebrated his seventy-sixth birthday with great eclat. In spite his very indifferent health the Sardar did not miss the opportunity of seeing his people and came to Gujarat. And it was good that he came. The people of Gujarat could have his *darshan*, and he also could see the scene of his first activities and all his old comrades and colleagues. He took part in the celebrations of the Navajivan and the Gujarat Vidyapith — institutions, in the making of which he had taken constant interest. He performed the opening ceremony of the Navajivan buildings and saw the fulfilment of a long-cherished desire of the Navajivan Trust and Gandhiji, and presided over the Convocation ceremony of the Vidyapith, that was in abeyance for a number of years, made himself conversant with the activities going on there and satisfied himself. Who knew that all this was ordained by the will of God as preparatory to his departure hence? The Sardar no doubt had a feeling deep down in his heart that this was his last visit; and he must have bid his last farewell when he left Ahmedabad.

When after receiving the purse presented to him at Ahmedabad he left for Delhi, he had in his mind a second visit in January when he would be touring the various places in Gujarat which he could not cover at the time of this visit. But his health again took a bad turn after he reached Delhi and was taken to Bombay. He felt a little better for two days and all thought the Bombay climate would improve his health. But it was the last flicker of a dying flame; his condition worsened on Thursday night and he succumbed on Friday morning. This was sudden news and the whole country was stunned by it. A great pillar of the nation that was in the making after 1947, as it were, crashed down. Gujarat lost her guardian: the age that began in 1915 with the advent of Gandhiji came to an end; and the travails of the new have now begun.

When Gandhiji came to India in 1915, the Sardar had been in Ahmedabad nearly three years. As was usual with most pleaders, he used to while away his spare time in chit-chatting and playing cards at the Gujarat Club. But there was a fire burning in his heart. He was a great admirer of Lokamanya Tilak, who was a patriot burning for Swaraj. But what was to be done? Neither terrorist tactics nor fiery speeches and strong resolutions would be of any avail. Their futility was patent to him. What then was the way? He was from the first a man of few words and more deeds. To make vehement speeches and try to let out the fire burning within was not in his strain. For the first time he saw that capacity in Gandhiji under whose auspices one could find full scope for doing a thing and the satisfaction of having staked one's all and done his

part. This revelation of Gandhiji to Vallabhbhai led to the latter's conversion; the sense of emptiness which led him so far to quench the burning fire within by playing cards was gone and with it his plan of life was chalked out for good. Vallabhbhai found the mission of his life, and more than that a field of work where he could use his inborn talents. This magic wrought by Gandhiji was at the root of whatever Vallabhbhai accomplished later during his life. And it was as a result of this magic that the Sardar was able to use the appropriate ways and means to make Gandhiji's Satyagraha technique successful. The *guru* got the *chela* he wanted and the *chela* his *guru*. And the *chela* successfully demonstrated the potentiality of the *guru's* message.

What should we do to bring in Swaraj? How should we fight for it? How to prepare the people for it? These were not questions for the Sardar alone. They were before the whole Congress and the country after 1915. And hence as soon as a solution for these was found, Gandhiji and the Sardar came up on the all-India plane. The Sardar took charge of the work in Gujarat and enabled Gandhiji to devote his attention to the more extensive field of India. To mind and nourish all the activities of Gandhiji in Gujarat became the natural task of the Sardar. He became an elder of the vast family of workers, both men and women, doing work in different fields. He made the Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee take interest in these works; and consequently, that institution also grew and became the premier national institution of Gujarat. Works of service great and small flourished under its auspices and patronage; and a machinery for carrying on constructive activities in a co-ordinated way came into existence in Gujarat. That Gujarat could convince the nation that its strength can be built up and its valour find expression through constructive activities was due to Vallabhbhai's power of organization and his method of doing work in such a way that his colleagues would feel as if he were a member of their family. Consequently the workers progressed along with the work and thanks to the above method attained to stability and became one solid group.

But there was one proviso at the back of all this, without a knowledge of which you cannot understand the Sardar. This was the proviso of Swaraj. All the activities covered by the Constructive Programme were worth doing; they were a positive service of *Daridranarayana*; they expressed your sympathy for the poor and love for the motherland; but the standpoint behind them was neither purely or solely spiritual like that of the Ramakrishna Mission nor that of social reform like that of the Servants of India Society; but it was to make the people self-reliant and strong by self-purification for winning freedom. And if an activity or an individual or institution

doing it did not grasp this basic principle of Gandhiji or did its work without caring for it, it could not catch the Sardar's eye. The people can, if they will, help themselves and accomplish their purpose, the foreign Government notwithstanding — this was what the Sardar demonstrated. He did not leave any deficiency in providing for Gujarat workers the wherewithal for doing this so that they might not have to worry or experience any difficulties. Some of the constructive workers who buried themselves in their diverse activities and did not grasp this fundamental of the Sardar's policy even believed that the Sardar was averse to the constructive activities of Gandhiji. And latterly some even went to the length of saying that he did not so much as care to look at them. These opinions are the result of a lack of understanding of the Sardar's basic purpose. If we meet the present situation by the means ready at hand and develop the strength of the people for self-government, every thing will be all right — this was his simple understanding of a child. And this is the common understanding of a Gujarati in his practical affairs; and this also was the reason why all classes of people in Gujarat were able to win the sympathies of the Sardar. The Sardar added one thing to this practical understanding: he decided to devote it to the fulfilment of Gandhiji's ideal. Hence was it that he was always a lover of democracy; and he could show us that the democratic method did not consist in feeble-mindedness; there was enough scope for disciplined industry in it.

After 1947 — that is, after the reins of Government were transferred to the hands of our people, the Sardar pursued his old principle and practice; he applied them in the new circumstances and undertook works accordingly. There was one principle and purpose before him: to develop the country's strength and use it in doing works for the welfare of the people. Some people say that the Sardar after 1947 underwent a metamorphosis — he became a great statesman. This is a half truth. No doubt, with the transformed situation — from foreign rule to independence — the original talent and power of the Sardar took a new form. But the Sardar's work after 1947 was basically the same as before: to develop the strength of the nation by all means. It was with this set purpose that he undertook the task of merging and consolidating the States so that Bharat might become one nation, that he directed his attention to the services and undertook other activities one by one. He was the fittest person for all these works, he had a knack of doing them. There remained the great work of stabilizing the economic structure of the country. This is a very important work, a complicated work. The Sardar was mindful of it. It was necessary for the country, he thought, to be well organized and consolidated if its economic order was to be stabilized. Without it no

democracy can endure, nor any work accomplished. The Sardar applied this simple popular dictum to the more extensive social field. He was seized of this work during his last days. He very much missed Gandhiji in those days and frequently uttered, "Would that Gandhiji were with us now!" But instantly he would say to himself: "Bapu has left this work unfinished; if I live, it is for doing Bapu's work." At the time of the first heart-attack Shri Sushila Nayar was by him. She immediately took the necessary measures and averted the crisis. But the Sardar always used to chide her, "I was going to Bapu, you have come in my way. Well, it seems God wants me to finish Bapu's work left unfinished by him." And with a resolute will he applied himself to the task without caring for his health. He pulled on for two years. The credit for this goes to his daughter Shrimati Manibehn who looked after him with a mother's care for the last so many years. She rendered to him, single-handed, service a dozen volunteers could hardly do. She never waited for Bapu's asking for what he wanted; she anticipated and satisfied his needs with an ever attentive mind. The country must thank her for this service.

Did he then lose interest in life and become despondent and apathetic, towards the end? How otherwise did he succumb so suddenly? His frame could easily have endured for a couple of years more. But God willed it otherwise and took him away. And He knows best when to take whom. The Sardar departed at His appointed time. We should all reconcile ourselves to His will and march forward. This is the greatest lesson we can learn from the Sardar's life. He was the guardian of Gujarat. He has taught Gujarat to work unitedly; and this work must needs be in conformity with Swaraj. The Sardar also taught us not to allow provincialism or communalism to enter it. Those who consider him a provincialist or communalist know him not. Had he been either, he could not have accomplished what he did, nor could he have reached the status he did. He was a heroic soul; was a clever realist and understood the present well; he was perhaps more discerning in knowing men than even Gandhiji; and above all his was the heart of a *bhakta*. All through his life he was ever ready to do works beneficial to the country and died in harness. He was a true *kshatriya* and the functions of a *kshatriya* as defined by the author of the *Gita* were quite natural to him:

शौर्यं तेजो धृतिर्दाक्ष्यम् युद्धे चाज्यपलायनम् ।

दानसीश्वरभावश्च क्षात्रं कर्म स्वभावजम् ॥

(Valour, spiritedness, constancy, resourcefulness, not fleeing from battle, generosity, and the capacity to rule are the natural duties of a *kshatriya*.)

He has departed when our need of him was the greatest. But like the Lokamanya he was confident that Mother India would produce men

of the required calibre at the proper time. Let us all try to be such and gratify the soul of this brave patriot. He must have by now joined the company of his Mahadev, Ba and Bapu in their new jail in the next world—the jail of infinity. And he might be asking thence: who are the prisoners—you who are on the earth or we here! If we bear in mind the lesson of his life he is always by our side. He has become immortal by giving us that lesson.

26-12-'50

MAGANBHAI P. DESAI

(Translated from Gujarati)

SARDAR'S LOVE FOR HARIJANS

It was a fine October morning in 1923. I had gone to the little station of Vedchha (near Navasari) to receive the Sardar who was arriving from Ahmedabad to preside over the annual gathering of the Harijan Ashram at Abrama, near Vedchha. No sooner had the train halted than he asked me, "Hullo! How are you here?" I replied that after completing my studies in the Gujarat Vidyapith, I had participated in the Nagpur Satyagraha movement, and, on release from the jail, joined the Antyaj Seva Mandal (Association for Service of the Untouchables). I think that the Sardar must have seen me before only as a student in the Vidyapith, or as a Secretary of the Vidyapith Panchayat (Students' Association), or occasionally at the late Acharya Gidwani's house. Beyond this he could have hardly known me.

Shri Thakkar Bapa, the President of the Antyaj Seva Mandal, had also attended this function. At noon, the Sardar, Bapa and a few other workers took food at the house of a local resident. On our way back, Thakkar Bapa expressed his great concern at the want of workers for the Mandal, and also mentioned my name as a new entrant. Upon this the Sardar gave him my fuller introduction saying that I was a graduate of the Gujarat Vidyapith. As it happened I was appointed the Secretary of the Antyaj Seva Mandal the very next year. As per rules and regulations I submitted the annual budget of the Mandal to the Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee, and inquired whether my presence was necessary at the meeting of the Committee. The office answered that it was not. Later I came to know that the Sardar had left permanent instructions in the office that the budget of the Harijan work in Gujarat should be sanctioned without any discussion. Thus until the foundation of the Harijan Sevak Sangh in 1932, a budget of about twenty-two thousand rupees was sanctioned every year without any discussion.

In 1936, the Harijan Sevak Sangh was in straitened circumstances. I went to Wardha to ask Gandhiji for help. He promised to go to Ahmedabad in order to collect twenty-nine thousand rupees, and sent me back in advance with an appeal for funds. But unfortunately he

fell ill before he could start. Thakkar Bapa happened to go to Wardha at the time. He regarded Gandhiji's condition to be serious. He went to Ahmedabad and advised the Sardar to reach Wardha as soon as possible. There is a note in Thakkar Bapa's diary, under date 6th January, 1936, to the following effect:—

"I had my interview at 7-30 p.m. after Bapu broke his silence. He asked me to let the Sardar know that even after death his soul would not rest in peace if the sum of twenty-nine thousand was not collected. Bapu is not at all well. His condition is serious. I went to Maganwadi and asked Mahadev to stay near Bapu as much as possible as he was very ill. I left at 10-15 p.m. to catch the train for Bhusaval."

On receiving this message Sardar was on the move and within a day and a half secured promises for thirty-six thousand rupees from friends in Bombay and Ahmedabad. He handed over the list to me and left for Wardha.

In 1942, Thakkar Bapa decided to open a Harijan hostel at Surat. But he needed two thousand rupees to begin with. He wrote to Sardar. Immediately the latter sent him the first instalment of one thousand rupees and the work started.

There was some agitation in some of the villages of Kheda district, when it was known that Harijan children would also be admitted to the public primary schools. The law was that the schools would be closed in case Harijans were not allowed to sit with caste Hindus. This was not liked by the caste Hindus, and at one place an influential resident succeeded in not letting the local school to be closed. This caused anxiety to Harijan workers, who felt that they were thus deprived of the advantage given by law. Finally they approached the Sardar who was then in Bombay. He took interest in the matter and got the schools in two villages to be actually closed. This had the desired effect on the neighbouring villages. They withdrew their opposition, and the problem of Harijan entry in schools was solved.

For years the Sardar helped also the Mirakhedi Bhil Ashram, run by the Dohad Seva Mandal, and in spite of his worries and pre-occupations, whenever he came to Ahmedabad he made it a point to see the Sabarmati Ashram. While addressing the Ashram workers on his last visit he said, "This is a sacred place where one may wash one's sins. For this its sanctity must be preserved." The death of such a Sardar, the hope of the forlorn and the inspiration of the earnest, is a major calamity. May God give us the strength to follow in his steps.

PARIKSHITLAL MAZUMDAR

(Translated from Gujarati)

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THE IMMORTAL SARDAR

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was a man in the line of Shivaji and Lokamanya Tilak. But he saw that this age was the age of *Ahimsa*, India was bound to come under the influence of Gandhiji and so he accepted the leadership of Gandhiji, and stuck to him with the loyalty of a true soldier.

It is wrong to suppose that if he had not come under the influence of Gandhiji he would have remained engrossed in his legal practice and money-making like so many world-famous barristers. If he had not been influenced by the sincerity and patriotism of Gandhiji he would have entered the field of national service by some other path.

The Sardar was not a man of religion as Gandhiji was. But he was born in the tradition of the Swaminarayan sect and had in full measure the sense of loyalty to a person that is peculiar to that community. This loyalty is visible to us in his family life and particularly in his respect for his elder brother Shri Vitthalbhai. It was this same loyalty in a more brilliant form that he bore to Gandhiji.

Shri Vitthalbhai and Vallabhbhai were both able persons. Both had realized the power of Gandhiji; but due to temperamental differences their ways lay apart. Vallabhbhai, though he dedicated his loyalty to Gandhiji, never allowed his respect for his elder brother to diminish. The way he behaved towards his elder brother till the last shows us all these qualities he possessed.

Gandhiji had the extraordinary genius of arousing the latent faculties of men—their religiosity, their nobility and their valour. To strengthen these awakened powers and sharpen them like steel was the work of Vallabhbhai. Gandhiji taught the strength of character to the whole country and made the people brave. Sardar Vallabhbhai, by conducting the Satyagraha fights of Kheda and Bardoli, made warriors of the people of Gujarat. Gandhiji mobilized an army; Vallabhbhai by his uncommon proficiency in the technique of war won many a battle with the aid of that army.

It is said that gold becomes hard and strong when alloyed with copper; it gains in lustre and resonance. Gandhiji had in him the gold of faith in and loyalty to a principle. Not that he was deficient in practical wisdom and skill; but he was a man of vision, looking into the future. Knowing that the alloy of copper, if mixed with gold today, is bound some day to cause harm, he tried to keep away from copper as far as he could. Vallabhbhai was always mindful of success. He appreciated and valued gold no doubt. He also wanted to deal with gold. But he had no compunction to mix the copper of practical outlook with gold. The whole world knows that a guinea containing an alloy is harder and stronger than a *mohor* of pure gold.

A warrior that he was, Vallabhbhai could catch the weak points of his opponents very

quickly; and by striking at those very places, he defeated them. On the other hand, Gandhiji had no enemy. He tried to raise his opponents to a higher plane even as he was doing in the case of his own people.

We can understand the secret of Vallabhbhai's enormous success only if we grasp this subtle difference. Vallabhbhai's valour was not indiscriminate and blind like that of the Rajputs, nor was there in him the vindictive bitterness of the Muslim *jihad* (holy war). He never struck at the opponent below the belt. He had the knack of knowing the proper time like the foremost war-lords of our days, and he had the patience to bide his time. Gandhiji also possessed this quality, but his method was of the man who has no enemy.

Gandhiji and Vallabhbhai knew each other well. Both were glad at having found a man of the same make as himself. Without the high character that Vallabhbhai possessed, Gandhiji would not have made him his right hand; nor would Vallabhbhai, the proud man that he was, have become the soldier under Gandhiji's banner if the latter had not possessed character and burning love for the country. Without a common ideal and purpose their hearty co-operation for over thirty years would have been impossible.

The problem of our States and their princes was a complicated one. It was rendered more so by the British making them independent sovereigns at the time of quitting India. Under such a condition of the country, rendered weaker by the partition, it was very difficult to maintain its unity and consolidate it. Vallabhbhai alone could solve this tough problem. It was common practice with the princes to bow their heads before might, roll at the feet of authority, suppress their own subjects and use the security thus obtained in the pursuit and enjoyment of carnal pleasures. It is related of a black man that he selected and employed very black-skinned men for his servants so that his own colour might always look a little white by the contrast. Similarly, the government of the British, by law established, always appeared better in comparison with the government in the States.

Sardar Vallabhbhai caught the weak points of these princes. He also saw that they loved peace and security above all things. Lord Wellesley had, by means of his Subsidiary System brought all these kings and princes under his thumb. Sardar Vallabhbhai, in consultation with Gandhiji, adopted that very policy and consolidated the people's raj.

Had Sardar Vallabhbhai got the opportunity, he would, I am sure, have followed the policy of Gandhiji and tried his best to raise the level of these princes. After all, these princes are our countrymen. They have inherited many a virtue from tradition. The British suppressed

their good qualities and encouraged the bad ones; and consequently, they became indifferent or opposed to the liberty of their own subjects. Once our democracy is consolidated, these princes should be given good opportunities for serving the nation. They can be made to give good work as Governors or Ambassadors to foreign countries. I believe all of these princes — great and small — will stand as candidates in the coming elections, and use all their talents to win the confidence of the people. They have wealth, a little prestige, tradition, and also the knowledge of the peculiar measures necessary to accomplish one's purpose. If they stand in the elections it will be very difficult for many of the present leaders to defeat them. Had Vallabhbhai lived, he would, I believe, have drawn all these princes in the elections and initiated them into the service of the people.

The capability and prestige that the Agakhan has won by living in England can be achieved by some of the princes if once their ambitions are awakened. It will be the duty of Sardar Vallabhbhai's successor to yoke these princes to the service of the nation.

The late Shri Mahadev Desai has written the history of the Bardoli Satyagraha. A collection of the Sardar's speeches in Gujarati as well as Hindi has also been published. The first volume of his biography by Shri Narahari Parikh — an abler biographer you could hardly find — has very recently been published by the Navajivan Publishing House. Shrimati Manibehn had collected much of the material for it. People outside Gujarat know Manibehn only as an efficient nurse of her father. The country should also know the valour Manibehn showed during the days of our freedom struggle and the efficient constructive work she had put in. She has served her father with a single-minded devotion and loyalty till his last. She must now get an opportunity to render brilliant service to the country in whose cause her father spent his whole life. Then only will the country come to know all the facets of her personality. It was on the knowledge of these that Mahatma Gandhi had once said, "Mani is really a *mani* (a gem)."

Like Mahatma Gandhi the Sardar was in contact with most of the workers in the country and could decide what kind of work could be taken from whom. He who possesses this quality of the Sardar will alone be able to continue his tradition.

By the death of the Sardar the country has sustained a great loss. His advice and guidance will no more be available to us. But he will continue to serve the country through the tradition he created. The Sardar is gone; but the glorious ideal of national service that he had placed before the country will live. We can surely nourish that ideal and try to realize all the dreams of Mahatma Gandhi and the Sardar.

KAKA KALELKAR

(Translated from the *Mangal Prabhat*, January, 1951)

SARDAR'S LESS-KNOWN MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

So many of Sardar Patel's colleagues and others, who are most competent to speak of his many-sided activities and achievements as a patriot and as a man, have already spoken or written in homage to his memory, that there is not much that one can say without being repetitive. But it is somewhat surprising that not one of the many who have spoken or written about the Sardar since his death has referred to the part that he played in the Partition Council — and the Joint Defence Council, which in a sense, was only a sub-committee of the Partition Council — which took the numerous decisions immediately before and after the 15th of August, 1947, affecting every branch and subject of administration and of the property and assets and liabilities that belonged to undivided India. Many had at the time thought that to partition the country within a period of three months was an impossibility. But it was actually done. (The records of the decisions of the Partition Council and the reports of the various sub-committees run into 8 fair-sized and 5 somewhat more bulky volumes and appendices). While many contributed in different ways to the achievements of this stupendous task, it would nevertheless have been impossible of achievement, had it not been for the far-sightedness, generosity and breadth of mind which the Sardar brought to bear upon the numerous extremely complicated problems and difficulties that arose almost every day. It was he who virtually took decisions on behalf of India and in saying this no injustice is being done to his other colleagues, Dr Rajendraprasad and Shri Rajagopalachari. A good portion of this work and the spirit in which it was carried through was neutralized by the terrible happenings in the East and West Punjab immediately after partition, resulting in mass movements of population in those and, later, even in other areas. Nevertheless, that work, there can be very little doubt, will come to be regarded by historians as one of the more important achievements of the Sardar. He made himself available for consultation at all hours and showed to many of us who had not till then had the privilege of working closely with him what an astonishing grasp he had and what clarity of mind and practical commonsense he brought to bear on every problem that was posed to him. With an almost unerring instinct he knew precisely what the right course was and without any exaggeration it can be said that we have gone wrong only where we somehow succeeded in persuading him against his own instinctive view.

The scheme of the reorganization of the All-India and Central Secretariat Services, published a short while ago, should be regarded as another of Sardar's major achievements. It is unfortunately not generally realized in this country what an important and vital role the

Civil Services have to play in the efficient functioning of all governments and, in particular, a democracy. Unless our policy-making and executive machinery of Government succeed in planning ahead, are able continuously to adjust their technique and structure to the problems with which they are called upon to deal, unless they ensure freedom from domination by financial and accountancy considerations—for, important as both these are, they must never be allowed to be masters and must always remain the servants—, unless there is the ability to harness scientific and technical advances and most important of all, unless there is developed ability to take responsibility, unless the Civil Services are organized to be able to do all these things, it would be impossible for a democratic government to achieve its objective of the welfare State. The Sardar realized this again almost instinctively and insisted from the outset on a reorganization which would assist both in re-assuring those already in service and in encouraging the new generations to enter any one of the Civil Services in the confidence that they will have the fullest possible scope for their abilities and for rendering service to their country with a sense of security. It was he more than any other politician, who realized what it was that made the members of the old Indian Civil Service more capable of shouldering responsibility and of taking realistic and practical decisions and he insisted, therefore, on an arrangement which would ensure that the officers in the Secretariats should not be divorced too long from the districts where alone they can come in touch with the public and have an opportunity of seeing how what is decided upon in the Secretariats actually operates in practice. It is to be hoped that the public and the leaders will, following the lead given by the Sardar, assist in every way in the development of the Services along right lines, above all by encouraging them to develop and to maintain their independence and integrity.

Early in 1947, in the course of a short talk he gave to some 30 to 40 senior civil servants at his house in New Delhi, the Sardar explained how he and his colleagues had for years worked with only one burning desire, namely to serve the country, and invited the civil servants, as it were, to dedicate themselves equally to the service of the country. He did not promise in return anything more than the joy which he said he himself and his colleagues had experienced through this single-minded devotion to what they regarded as the supreme duty and which he was certain they too would experience. In his own way he was offering the civil servants "equality" of consideration, if only they too would respond and work as untiringly and unceasingly, as he and his colleagues, whether in or out of Government, had been doing, for the people of this country. This was unquestionably

the right approach, and the fact that the civil servants understood it is clear from the renewal of that pledge on the 16th December in the following terms:

"In grateful remembrance of his service to India and his trust in us, we pledge our complete loyalty and unremitting zeal in service to the land that he helped to liberate and strengthen."

Those of us who had the good fortune of seeing the Sardar at work, during the last 4 years at New Delhi, discovered quickly enough the aptness of the title "Sardar", which the people had so spontaneously bestowed on him after the Bardoli Satyagraha, for he was verily a leader who thought and planned as an inspired general would plan and conduct his campaigns. He selected his objective and then concentrated on it; he knew the importance of maintaining the morale of his men, small and big; he believed implicitly in the value of an offensive; exercised to the full the weapon of surprise action; never allowed his strength to be dissipated, no matter how many quarters he was attacked from; and concentrated his forces on what he regarded as the important link in the opposition; and finally, he realized, better than others, that his achievements would be the more certain and lasting the more he could secure team-work from the varied elements at his disposal. It was only fitting that Panditji should refer to him in one of the speeches or statements he made soon after Sardar's passing away: "We have lost a great captain of our forces, who with consummate skill had steered the ship of India through many stormy seas. The seas continue to be stormy and new rocks appear all round us, and we wanted that stout heart and strong arm more than ever before to meet the new crises."

A CIVIL SERVANT

A FEW INCIDENTS OF SARDAR'S LIFE

[The writer, Shri Kashibhai Jhaverbhai Patel, is the youngest brother of Sardar Vallabhbhai. — K. G. M.]

1. Takes the Teacher's Chair

I recollect an incident which relates to Vallabhbhai's school days. He had just joined the Government High School at Baroda. Once his teacher of mathematics got confused in an algebraic problem while solving it before the class. Vallabhbhai stood up and said: "Sir, you do not know how to solve this problem." The teacher replied, "Well, if I do not know it, come and be a teacher yourself." Vallabhbhai straightway went to the board, solved the problem, and sat down in the teacher's chair!

The teacher took this as an insulting behaviour and complained about it to the Head Master. The Head Master asked the Sardar to explain his conduct. Vallabhbhai tried to explain the background, but the Head Master was not satisfied and warned him that if such behaviour was repeated, he would be dismissed from the School. Vallabhbhai replied, "I do not wish to study in a school where there are such

teachers. I shall leave the school this very day." He left the school the very day and went to Nadiad.

2 Humbles a Munsiff

Vallabhbhai was practising as a District Pleader at Borsad (Kheda District). There was a door communicating between the Court room and the Bar room. The Munsiff (as the Judge was designated) felt disturbed by the constant exit and entry of pleaders through the door, and ordered it to be closed.

This put the pleaders to considerable inconvenience. They could not come directly from the Bar room to the Court room or get to know whose case had reached the hearing and who was wanted. They requested the Munsiff to revise his order, but to no avail.

This went on for some time. Vallabhbhai generally practised in the Criminal Court, and came once or twice in a month to the Civil Court. When there, he would sit and chat with the pleaders in the Bar room. He learnt about the Munsiff's order and also saw that none of the pleaders had the courage to raise a voice against it. He advised them to inform the Judge that if the door was not laid open, they would all go on a strike. This was done. The matter reached the ears of the District Judge who asked for an urgent explanation from the Munsiff.

The Munsiff was perplexed. He requested the Sardar through a friendly pleader to bring about peace. The pleader went to Vallabhbhai and said: "The Munsiffsaheb has invited you at his residence." The Sardar straightway replied: "If he wants to see me he should come to me." This was conveyed to the Munsiff by the pleader. The Munsiff who had become sufficiently humble by this time, sent the message, "I invite you and all pleaders at an At Home party. I want to make peace." But Sardar would not easily agree. He replied: "We would come if he would express regret before the pleaders." The Munsiff agreed to do it at the proposed At Home party. Needless to say that the door was reopened.

Viththalbhai and Vallabhbhai

Vallabhbhai was very fond of Viththalbhai, who was immediately older than him, and had a great respect for him. Whenever Viththalbhai visited him, he would bring his servants also with him. Sardar, however, would not allow the servants to attend to Viththalbhai's wants, but insisted on rendering himself all the personal service to Viththalbhai. For instance, he would himself bring water for Viththalbhai's bath or drink; bring him his clothes, and look to all his comforts. He considered it a privilege to serve Viththalbhai. This however did not prevent the two brothers from playing jokes with one another whenever an opportunity came.

I recollect an incident at Nadiad. Viththalbhai had come to Nadiad during the 'Flood

Relief' days (1927-28). The *Diwali* holidays had drawn near and it was one of the rare occasions, when our mother, Laduba, and all the five brothers, with their children, were all together at one place. Viththalbhai instigated the children to demand fireworks from 'Vallabh kaka' (uncle Vallabh). The children surrounded Vallabhbhai and made the demand. He advised them to ask these of *Motakaka* (elder uncle). But under Viththalbhai's instigation, the children did not wish to let go the Sardar and sought the elder uncle's advice. Viththalbhai prompted them that Vallabhbhai would not yield easily; some of them should seize his hands and others his legs, and pull him on two sides to make him surrender. The children began to pull the Sardar and Viththalbhai enjoyed the fun. But Vallabhbhai was not to be so easily defeated. He said, "You must ask *Motakaka* to give you fireworks, and if he does not, pull his beard. That will go easier with you." The brothers often played such practical jokes with each other.

KASHIBHAI JHAVERBHAI PATEL

(Translated from Gujarati)

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