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## **Nehru of India**



*BOOKS BY CORNELIA SPENCER*

THREE SISTERS

CHINA TRADER

ELIZABETH: ENGLAND'S MODERN QUEEN

THE EXILE'S DAUGHTER

MADE IN CHINA

MADE IN INDIA

THE MISSIONARY

NEHRU OF INDIA

# Nehru of India

CORNELIA SPENCER

NEW YORK

THE JOHN DAY COMPANY

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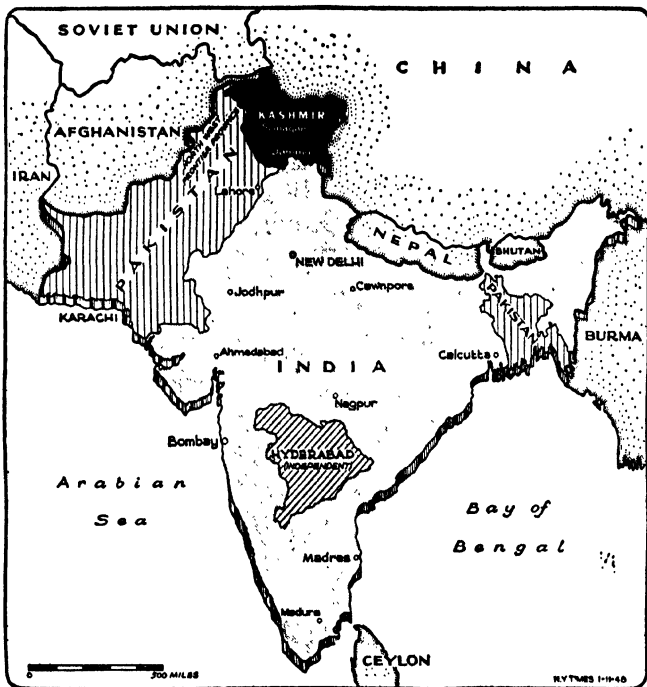
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“If I were given the chance to go through my life again, with my present knowledge and experience added, I would no doubt try to make many changes in my personal life; I would endeavor to improve in many ways on what I had previously done, but my major decisions in public affairs would remain untouched. Indeed, I could not vary them, for they were stronger than myself, and a force beyond my control drove me to them.”

Jawaharlal Nehru  
in *Toward Freedom*



Courtesy of *The New York Times*

## THE NEHRU FAMILY

MORE than two hundred years ago a man named Raj Kaul left his home in a high mountain valley of Kashmir, in northern India, and traveled southward to find a new home. Raj Kaul was a Brahmin, which meant that he was a scholar, and among others he knew the Sanskrit and Persian languages.

The rulers of India in his time were the Mongols, and their court at Delhi was magnificent. Raj Kaul was a well-known and important man, and when he reached the capital he was introduced to the Emperor, who gave him an estate beside one of the canals in the city. As time passed, Raj Kaul came to be spoken of as Kaul of *nahar*, or canal, and gradually the family name was changed to Nehru, or one who lives by a canal.

After Raj Kaul's death, ill fortune fell upon the family, and as the generations came and went, the estate was half forgotten. It was not until Kotwal Nehru became a successful attorney for a company of merchants that it was prosperous and well known again. Today it has become one of the most famous families in the world, for Jawarhalal Nehru is the head of the first government of free India.

How did it all come about? Like every other human story, the present comes out of the past, and what is now is the result of what went before. The Nehru family is today famous and beloved because of its devotion



to its country and for its part in the struggle for her freedom. Nehru, with Gandhi, led the struggle and founded the new government. But he was never a soldier. He did not believe in war and he led a resistance that, although it was nonviolent, was yet so strong and unwavering that at last it was successful. Sixteen years of his life have been spent in prison as a rebel and yet today he is the head of a free country, his own.

Strangely enough, the nonviolent fight for freedom in India was against the same power that the Americans fought, and although very different, the two struggles had something to do with each other. Perhaps the thirteen little colonies in the West would not have won their independence so easily in 1776 had not the eyes of England's king been turned then to the fabulous riches of India. The wilderness of the new country must have seemed poverty-stricken in comparison to the rich and ancient civilization in the East.

Four thousand years of human life had developed in India's arts and crafts and skills, science and literature and religion, to such a degree that she has been called the Mother of Civilization. Certainly the industries of India produced goods far better than anything the West had at that time, and it is no wonder that English traders found their way there. European ladies longed for fine Indian mulls and muslins to make their frocks, and they were eager for the wonderful jewels of India, for the ivories, the gold necklaces and bracelets, the fans, for carpets and furniture and porcelains—all the treasures of a people for centuries peaceful and learned.

Travelers and traders came back with fabulous tales of the luxuries of life in India, where princes ruled in splendor, shops were palaces of art and craft, and the architecture of cities was beautiful beyond imagination. Fine schools and great temples told of the vivid life of a people long civilized, so old, indeed, that in the

valley of the Indus River, flowing along the northwestern border, there have been found the ruins of two ancient cities, Mohenjo-daro and Harappa, which prove that India, like Persia, Mesopotamia, and Egypt, was a primary source of human culture.

The English were not the first people to seek these treasures. Civilization had already flourished for a thousand years in the Indus valley when fair-skinned Aryans, probably from Persia, came down the northwest passage of India and went on toward the great river Ganges, which flows eastward into the Bay of Bengal. They settled in the fertile plains and called their state Aryavarta. The people already there were the dark-skinned, black-haired Dravidians, and only after some struggle did the two peoples settle down to live together, with the newcomers in the victorious position.

The Aryans brought with them their own ways of living. They had a good family system, they lived in villages, they had their own arts and crafts, they understood agriculture and irrigation, and they knew how to make butter and various foods from milk. Perhaps it was they who began the veneration for the cow as a source of food and therefore of life, which has become through the centuries a part of the Hindu religion. They were a vigorous, fun-loving people, and they left behind them pictures and carvings of their games and musical instruments, their dancing and chariot racing. They divided themselves into groups, the priests or teachers at the top, then the warriors, then the farmers and artisans, and after they had conquered the dark-skinned people they made these into a fourth group, the workers who were sometimes slaves, too.

The Aryans worshiped the sun as their god, and after him all givers of light. Some of the most beautiful poetry that has ever been written grew out of this love of light. For many centuries these poems were memo-

rized by singers and passed down to their sons, until six hundred years before Christ they were made permanent in writing. These writings became the *Vedas*, and the best known are the *Rig-Veda*, the *Upanishads*, the *Ramayana*, and the *Mahabharata*, in which is the magnificent "Creation Hymn." Today these sacred writings have been translated into many tongues, and they can be read by us all.

Since the Aryans were a lively people, it is natural that they had other literature that had nothing to do with the worship of gods. They liked to tell their children fables and stories, and some of these stories have spread over the whole world. *Aesop's Fables*, *The Arabian Nights*, *Tristan and Isolde*, *Paradise Lost*, and many other well-known stories were first told in India. One early group of tales, *The Jataka Tales*, is especially interesting because it tells so much about the life of the people in India centuries before Christ. Roads and rest-houses formed a network for the benefit of travelers, and the roads led to foreign countries. A colony of Indian merchants lived in the city of Memphis, in Egypt, five hundred years before Christ, and there must have been a steady trade with their homeland. There are records of customs duties being paid by merchants, and so there must have been ships, and there are records of traders from India going to Central Asia, to the Persian Gulf, to Greece, taking with them silks and muslins, cutlery and armor, brocades, embroideries, rugs, perfumes, ivory, jewelry, gold and silver and iron.

Such riches tempted greedy and ruthless men, and in the fourth century before Christ, Alexander the Great of Greece invaded India. It was not much more than a raid over the border of the northwest, for he met stout resistance from the people there, and his own men did not want to go on. Yet he succeeded well enough to

set up a Greek state in the Punjab, and this accounts for the strong Greek influence upon the art of India.

It was not only material riches that the West wanted from India. The traders and invaders found there a knowledge that they did not have, as well as great literature. Indian scientists knew much about mathematics and astronomy. They knew the use of the zero, of the decimal system, algebra, geometry, the division of time, and weight and measures. They even had a beginning of the atomic idea. In Benares and Taxila there were great universities. The birth of Gautama Buddha, his rise into maturity, and his profound spiritual teachings drew men from all over the civilized world to India, and in the years after his death, China sent pilgrims to copy the great Buddhist writings.

Other invaders were tempted into India. The Kushans, a nomadic people from the regions north of India, followed the Greeks and set up their empire. But the Kushans accepted Indian culture, and indeed, helped India to preserve herself against future invasions. The vigor and strength of the new people made this a brilliant period. Known as the rule of Gupta, it continued for about a hundred and fifty years. The White Huns made a minor invasion, following the Kushans, but they were gradually absorbed into India's people.

It is wrong, however, to think of India as a people torn by constant invasions. These invasions took place only occasionally over thousands of years, and the life of the people went on growing and deepening. Perhaps India was so accustomed to wonder and respect from other countries that she did not realize the change in the sort of men who came in later centuries to her shores. One of these was Vasco da Gama, who, like others, had heard of the "fabulous Indies." He found his way at last around the Cape of Good Hope, and when other men, greedy for riches, heard of it, they followed him

as quickly as they could from Portugal, Holland, France, and England, competing to see who could get to India first. France and England were the two most successful, and for a time it seemed that France was the stronger. Then Robert Clive, an Englishman, overthrew the French from their foothold in India, and in triumph he set up the British East India Trading Company.

It is not easy to tell now, after nearly three centuries, what was in the minds of Robert Clive and the directors of the East India Trading Company, or in the minds of men in England at that time. Perhaps they did not plan an empire when they set up their trading centers. But trade has always been the forerunner of empires, and so it was in India. English traders grew impatient when they could not get the goods they wanted as quickly as they wanted them, or when Indian merchants refused to sell except on their own terms. It was easy to declare that there should be English police to see that English traders got fair play, and then to feel that there should be soldiers to protect English lives. When there were police and soldiers it was still easier to take over the control of one territory after another, and so it went until by 1800 the British ruled over most of India.

It is true that trade was somewhat difficult because it was a period of transition in India's history. The brilliant Mongol rule was passing into decline, and the new order had not yet begun. But this was only what had happened in other periods of India's political history, and she had always recovered stability. Meanwhile, whatever the political change, the life of the people remained steady. They went on manufacturing and exporting goods, the banking system was functioning, there was an elaborate system of agents, jobbers, brokers, and middlemen, and shipbuilding was flourishing. It was still true that India's civilization was the highest in the world. More people could read and write in India

than in England or Europe, and the social life was more cultivated than among Western peoples. Most important of all, India had higher respect for human life and the dignity of the individual than was to be found in any other country.

Yet her people, whose religion had taught them only peace, were compelled to yield to England's use of military force, and Englishmen became the new rulers of India. In some ways they were conscientious rulers. They set up a good civil service and they opened schools and colleges to train young Indian men for the system. But in other ways the life of India was wrecked. As the empire continued, India grew poor and still poorer. Her riches disappeared, her own schools could no longer keep open, and her children, not being taught to read and write, grew up illiterate and ignorant. When England began to make machinery and to establish modern industries, she no longer wanted the beautiful finished products of India. She wanted raw materials for the machines, and so by various measures she compelled India's artisans and craftsmen to go back to farming. But this put too many people on the land, and there was not enough food. Neither was much done for the farmer. He was not told of modern tools, and the old irrigation systems failed through lack of repair, and very few new ones were built. The people of India grew more and more poor and wretched through the centuries, except for the few who depended for education and employment upon the British or upon the Indian princes, still existing but nevertheless subordinate to the British rulers.

In their misery and poverty, the people remembered their glorious past, and they longed to be free again and able to control their own destiny. The first great outburst of this longing for freedom was to shake and forever affect the Nehru family.

## BELOVED BOY

THE Nehru family was caught in the first great rebellion against foreign rule. This was in 1847, when the sepoy, or the Indian soldiers who had been trained to protect the British masters, mutinied. To escape the dangers of retribution, the family left its home and went to the city of Agra. A strange thing happened on the way. One of the little girls of the family was very fair, as many people of Kashmir are, and some English soldiers, noticing her, accused the family of having kidnapped an English child. The family was terrified of quick punishment, but fortunately two sons spoke English and they tried to explain. The soldiers still doubted, until other friends gathered to add their words, and so the family was allowed to go on.

They settled in Agra, and there a third son was born, three days after his father's death, and on the same day that another Indian boy, who later became known as Rabindranath Tagore, one of the world's most beloved poets and a Nobel Prize winner, was born. This third son was named Motilal.

Now the mother had three sons. The two older sons had to support the family. The eldest took a position in the government and service and was not at home much of the time, and the second one had to be responsible there. But the mother loved Motilal, her youngest, best

of all. She was a woman of quick loves and hates and she ruled the home like a queen. Even today the women of Kashmir tell stories about her, so strong was her personality.

When it became necessary for the second son to work, too, in the government, where the most money was to be earned, the family moved for convenience to Allahabad, and Motilal began to go to school. He liked school and he did well, winning honors in Arabic and Persian. Perhaps because his second brother worked in the High Court, he became interested in being a lawyer. Before he could finish his education, however, this brother died, and Motilal had to take his place as the head of the house. It only made him work harder, and after he began to practice he was very successful and soon became well known for his ability.

He was a man now, busy and doing well, and he married a beautiful wife, a small, slender, dainty girl of a sweet and gentle disposition, whose name was Rani. Like his own, her family had come from Kashmir, and she had the dainty features and the fair skin of Kashmiri women. She was very beautiful and gentle, and Motilal was soon deeply in love with her. He loved to heap costly gifts upon her, and it was his only sorrow that the best gift of all he could not give her—that of good health. Rani was fragile, and he had always to take care of her, but this perhaps only made him love her more. He was entirely happy, and it seemed to him that life, even within the orbit of the British Empire, was good. Elsewhere in India there was much smothered and sullen rebellion, but in the midst of his own success and content he did not pay heed to it. An Indian National Congress had been formed in 1885, but Motilal had thought little of it. The men who were in it seemed to him only discontented students and professional men. Let them do their work better and take care of their own respon-



sibilities, he thought, and they would find less to complain about.

He himself was making much money as a lawyer, for in the struggle between new laws and old customs there were many disputes, and he had plenty of work. Motilal did not love money for its own sake, but he enjoyed spending it. He wanted his home beautiful and he took delight in entertaining friends, however busy he was. But his greatest joy came on November 14, 1889, when his son was born. Motilal named the boy Jawaharlal, and from now on, this is Jawaharlal's story.

What sort of parents did the boy find that he had, as he grew older? His father gave the impression of being taller than he was. He bore himself proudly, and there was magnificence about his head with its high forehead, strongly molded chin, and deep-set eyes. His eyes seemed to read one's inmost thoughts. There was no escaping their clear, perceiving expression. Sometimes they were stern, and often they flashed with anger, but they could be warm and gentle and understanding. He was a natural leader of men, but the children adored him, too. He was not demonstrative, but they knew he loved them and respected them as people—and he was strong.

The father worked hard, and this did not leave much time for family and friends. Throughout the day he was busy, but as his family grew, he made it a rule always to keep the early evening for them.

The evening began with dinner. The father sat at the head of the table, at which were always not only his immediate family but other relatives as well. He was at ease now, with time and the heart for fun, and he listened to what each one had been doing during the day, noticing a new dress or a change in the way of combing the hair, laughing, teasing, and joking. He was able to

guess what a person was thinking about—it was almost uncanny, and sometimes embarrassing.

The boy knew that his parents loved each other, for the father never forgot to mention with appreciation any small gracious act of his mother. When he complimented her, she blushed with pleasure. Sometimes he retold some incident of their early married life, as though only he and she were there. Then her face was radiant, and anyone could see that she thought him the greatest of men.

When dinner was over there were still two hours before the father went back to his work. This was a precious time. If the weather was pleasant, chairs and tables were set on the lawn, and nearly always friends dropped in to chat a while in the early evening. Sometimes there were as many as two dozen people gathered there, and he talked and laughed his great laugh—a laugh famous throughout the city of Allahabad because it was so free and loud. Wit sparkled among them, sometimes that of the host, sometimes that of guests. There were times when all sat spellbound under a tale that he told.

If the mother was uncomfortable, they sat indoors. Jawaharlal, as a little boy, used to hide behind the curtains of the doorway and listen to the talking and laughing, half shy, half delighted. Sometimes the grownups discovered him there and brought him out and set him on his father's lap.

Once when this had happened, his father drank a glass of claret. He had seen his father drink whisky but never this dreadful red stuff, and he slipped down and ran to find his mother. He must tell her that his father, the kindest of all men, was drinking something that looked like blood!

When the father was angry, everyone was afraid, and it was true that he was even more famous for his temper than for his laugh. Sometimes he lost his temper at one

of the many household servants. Jawaharlal, the small boy, was sorry for the servant, and he grew angry, in turn, against his father. He knew the servants well, for they took care of him and all the family. He could not feel it right that anyone, even his father, should be so harsh with them.

The father's anger was not always against servants. Sometimes it was for Jawaharlal himself. Once when he was about six years old he saw two pens lying on his father's desk. How could anyone need two pens? He reached for one and took it away. Soon a great search was going on through the house. They are looking for the pen! he thought in terror. He waited, silent, a small boy pale with fright. Servants were running here and there with troubled, whispered questionings. There was a hasty fluttering of papers and books. Even his mother was looking through the rooms, her face worried and puzzled.

He knew he should confess but he was afraid, for he knew he would be punished. They will find where I have put it! he thought in panic. Yet he was silent, waiting and knowing there was no escape.

It was found, and his father whipped him. He felt the stinging pain of welts rising on his back, but there was something much worse than the pain. . . . His father was angry with him.

When the whipping was over he ran to find his mother—to find comfort. He knew she loved him, not as his father loved, but with a deep, instinctive tenderness. She was as gentle as his father could be stern. She never cared whether he was right or wrong—she loved him always the same. So now he leaned against her knee while she murmured words of comfort and rubbed ointment on his welts.

Before Jawaharlal left his mother's side that day he had forgotten all resentment against his father. His

mother had accepted the punishment as something necessary. All she could do was to make it hurt as little as possible. To his own surprise he admired his father more, rather than less, after the incident. How strong he was, how noble! He watched him mounting his horse for the ride he took every morning, or stepping into his carriage. He felt very proud to be the son of such a man. When the dogs raced up and leaped in joy before their master, the son watched with understanding eyes.

Jawaharlal was not to remain the only child. A second boy, born after him, died, but when he was eleven years old a little sister was born, and she lived. She was given the name Swarup. She was small, and her features were dainty, like the mother's, and her skin was fair. Especially beautiful were her great liquid dark eyes and her little feet and hands. She had a strong personality from the very first, and she grew into a willful, gay little creature, loving her brother very much, but quite capable of being angry with him, too, and she was not as obedient to him as he wished.

Many years later, when Jawaharlal was at school in England, still another little girl was born to the family, Krishna, the youngest and last. The temperaments of the three were different, one from the others. Swarup was more like her brother, and the two were always to be close friends. Krishna was quiet and pensive, her face not often lit with laughter, and her eyes were thoughtful rather than gay.

The parents treated son and daughters exactly alike. Years later, when the father had devoted all he had to the struggle for freedom, he wrote to Krishna, thus:

"Many women have taken as great a part in the uplift of their country as any man has done, and some have distinguished themselves more than men. . . . There is no bar of sex—on the contrary a determined woman's

influence is much greater than that a man can sway. . . . You must remember that true patriotism is in your blood and unless you actively suppress it, it is bound to assert itself sooner or later."

The children had a happy childhood. The year before Swarup was born, the father had decided that the family should have a new and larger home. The one he chose stood on a legendary site, the place where, it was said, Rama, the great hero of the *Ramayana*, had met his son Bharat after fourteen years of exile. Sita, Rama's wife, had banished him in order to give the throne to her son. But the son had not been happy to take his father's place thus, and to show that he considered himself only a regent, he had kept a pair of his father's shoes always on the throne.

Not far from the new house, Anand Bhawan, stood the Bharadwaj Ashram, or The Hermitage. It had long been a university, and many people came to see it. During festival seasons not only The Hermitage but also the grounds of the Nehru home were filled with visitors, and as time went on people thought the two places to be equally important.

Jawaharlal loved the new home. For some time there were workmen leveling the grounds and making improvements, and he liked to watch them and ask questions of them, and they, knowing that he was the son of the Nehru family, answered him courteously. When they were digging or carrying loads of soil, the boy thought how hard it must be to earn a living so.

The house had an indoor swimming pool, something most unusual for the city of Allahabad. Jawaharlal went swimming several times a day, and in the evening his father brought his guests there to enjoy the brightly lit pool. Even the electric lights were a new thing, for few other houses in the city had them.

The father could scarcely manage to keep himself

up in the water, making the length of the pool with set teeth and violent effort, and Jawaharlal, diving in and darting about like a bronze fish, could have laughed, but did not.

Anand Bhawan was surrounded by a broad porch or veranda, which made the house look even more sprawling and comfortable. On one side of the building was a neatly trimmed lawn; in the back was a fruit garden; and in front another garden with flowers, summerhouse, and tennis court.

Inside the summerhouse was an image of Shiva, one of the Hindu sacred trinities. The deity stood high on piled rocks that looked like a miniature mountain. From the head a tiny stream trickled down into a pool at the feet. Small moisture-loving flowers grew in the cool shade, and running into the summerhouse Jawaharlal sometimes stopped to breathe in the freshness, and to remember stories told him of his Aryan forefathers, who had been the first to give the name of Shiva to one whom they worshiped.

In the new home the father set up the life of his family as he wanted it. As he loved India, so he loved much that was English, for many of his friends were in the Civil Service. Anand Bhawan was divided into two parts. In the Indian part the mother was mistress, and here decorations and food and ways of living were wholly Indian. The other part of the house was English, and in it the servants were English, ruled by an English butler. Jawaharlal lived in this double home for five years before he was ready to go away to school, and English ways became as natural to him as Indian ones. His father approved, for this was a time when every Indian who hoped to make something of himself must be altogether at home in both cultures.

The home was well named the Abode of Happiness. It was still too soon to feel the coming threat of the fu-

ture. Had Jawaharlal been older, he might have perceived the growing unhappiness of his people. His father was already having trouble. Just before Swarup was born he had made a journey to England, and when he came back he had refused to perform the usual purification ceremony for those who had been abroad and had come home again. It was the religious tradition of the Brahmins, but the father declared that he would not submit to it, and he and some of his friends formed a group of those who would never again go through rites for the sake of tradition. Was this not separation from India?

In the home the boy heard much give and take of talk, not all of which he understood. Occasionally his cousins talked of "incidents." Excitement hung in the air at these times, and though the words were quietly spoken, the boy felt hidden emotion. Compartments in the British-type trains were reserved for the travel of Europeans, and even if space were left empty there, no Indian was allowed to use it. Many things seemed strange and unfair as his cousins told of the overbearing manners of the ruling British. When an Indian was killed it seemed to matter less than when an English person died. And an English culprit was tried not by Indian courts but by British. Once he spoke up. "Then they hear only one side!" His father said nothing, but his eyes commanded silence.

Yet, his father often had English guests at his table, and dinner was always served elaborately. After dinner there were hours of warm and friendly talk and laughter. Jawaharlal had liked his own English governesses just as his father liked these British guests. And yet—what of the talk of his cousins?

There was other grown-up talk. Munshi Mubarak Ali, who helped his father, came from a wealthy Moslem family of Baduan, which, like the Nehru family, had

been uprooted by the Sepoy Mutiny. Munshi was a good man, made more gentle by suffering. Jawaharlal often went to him when his thoughts grew too heavy, or when he simply wanted to be amused. The old man, with his fine gray beard and glowing eyes, gave confidence. Even though there were things hard to understand, Munshi, as he was called with some reverence, seemed able either to explain or else to make one forget by the many stories he told the children.

Another adult whom Jawaharlal early loved was his aunt, his own mother's sister, whom they called Bibi Amma. She had been widowed when she was only a girl and she divided her time among her relatives.

She was not like her sister, being something of a scholar and knowing Sanskrit very well. Because she had no family of her own, she was more independent than most Indian women and she was a good business manager. But what the boy loved about her was that she never talked too much and she had a strong sense of humor. For him, she was next to his mother, perhaps because his mother was often ill and because, too, when he did something wrong Bibi Amma was ready to listen to his side of the story. She scolded but she scolded with understanding.

Long before he was a man, Jawaharlal saw that life was divided into one of men and another of women. Certain things belonged to men and others to women. Religion, for example, belonged to women, he thought. His father and the older men cousins only smiled quietly when it came time for religious observances. The family was Hindu, and the Hindus had many celebrations growing out of the long past, going back even to the time of the Aryan invasion. The boy knew these ceremonies were not taken seriously by men. Though he himself often went with his mother and his aunt to attend the observances, he was always a bystander,



watching what the women did. He did not want to take part in the ceremonies. They went sometimes to the Gangès River to take a dip there. There were thousands of other people along the banks at the ghats or steps leading down to the water. The dip was a religious rite, for the Ganges is a sacred river whose waters are healing. To him the water looked dirty, and the diseases displayed there repellent. Later, it is true, he discovered through science that the water of the Ganges contains a peculiar sort of bacteria that does indeed kill some germs. The people who bathed in it did not know this fact, but long experience had taught them that there was some benefit in the water and, like people everywhere, they had begun to worship that which they could not understand.

Sometimes the family made a journey to the sacred city of Benares, or they went to visit a holy man, often emaciated and bearing the marks of self-torture. The boy stood silently with the women, but the thinking part of his mind did not share the reverence.

Festival days were different. These seemed scarcely religious. Certainly, Holi, or the spring festival, was only a chance for a good time. The boys took it as freedom to squirt colored water at all who passed. Divali, which came in the autumn, was a festival of light, and every house was lit by small earthen lamps. This was beautiful, and something in him, coming perhaps from ages past, responded to that beauty and its symbolism. Dasehra and Ram Lila were always exciting because huge crowds gathered to see plays and processions presenting the old story of Ramachandra and his conquest of Lanka. The two days of Id were a Moslem holiday, and then Munshiji dressed himself in gorgeous robes and went to the mosque to say prayers. Afterward they went to his house, and Jawaharlal ate his fill of sweet vermicelli and other special foods. Of all the men in the

family only Munshiji took serious part in religious ceremonies.

Yet sometimes it was pleasant for Jawaharlal to be the center of the women's attention, and his birthday was one of these times. The day began very early. First, he was weighed on a large set of scales—himself on one end and on the other bags full of wheat and gifts, which were then distributed to the poor. Then, after bathing, he dressed himself in new clothes and all day he received presents and special attention. In the afternoon he always had a party. The whole day seemed to be all for him. He thought it was a shame that a year could hold only one such day.

Marriages, too, always brought great excitement to the family, especially for the women. When they went to another town for the wedding of some relative, they lived in a special wedding house. It was like a prolonged picnic, and the children ran about and played and got into mischief.

There was one day Jawaharlal always remembered. When he was about seven or eight years old he had fallen from his horse. He rode every day, and this day was like every other, and with him was always a *sawar* or cavalryman from the military unit near the city. On this day Jawaharlal's horse made off without him and went home. His father and some guests were playing tennis when suddenly the horse appeared with the saddle empty. The father immediately marshaled a searching party including all carriages and vehicles that could be found. When they found the boy they treated him like a hero—although he had done nothing except to be so awkward as to fall from his horse! He hung his head, and a dull pink spread over his face. "It was my own fault," he murmured. "You make me feel silly, making such a fuss about it." But his father had to feel him all over to be sure he was not injured, and his mother, wait-

ing at home, ran forward when she saw him and threw her arms around him.

Yet as he grew he continued to feel divided between his two worlds. While anger mounted against the British, Jawaharlal's own heart grew devoted to his tutor, Ferdinand T. Brooks. This teacher was a deeply religious man, a theosophist, and through him the boy came to be interested in philosophy and religion—not the traditional religious ceremonies, but the life of the human spirit anywhere in the world, in its relation to God. When Mrs. Annie Besant, the head of the theosophical society, came to Allahabad, Jawaharlal went to hear her. What she said interested him, and he felt moved to join the Theosophical Society, for their beliefs were drawn from the great Hindu religion itself and from the sacred books he knew so well. It filled him with pride that these books were known elsewhere, and that people from other countries believed in their teachings. But he was still so young, only thirteen, that he felt he should ask permission. To his surprise his father only laughed. The boy stammered, "I thought, sir, that you would wish to think it over."

When the father saw the boy's earnestness he grew grave. "You must do as you like, Jawahar," he said. "The road ahead is long, and many lights will guide you on your way. This is perhaps one." Jawaharlal was not fully satisfied, for he would have liked to have a clear *yes* or *no* from his father, but since the decision was his own, he did join the Society. He attended a great convention at Benares and came back an ardent member.

The household was growing smaller. Some of the cousins who lived with them were marrying and setting up their own homes. Often and more often the word "nationalism" was used in the conversations of his father and his friends. To find out more about it, Jawaharlal read the British papers. They were full of official state-

ments of the Government of India, with news of the Civil Service, with notices of promotions and transfers, announcements of parties and "at homes" of important British officials; with the scores of polo games and races, with notes of dances and amateur theatricals. The thought came to him that had he not known better, he would scarcely have guessed that these were papers written and printed in India. There was nothing here about India; it was as if there were only English in India, instead of the millions of Indians.

He was old enough now to view his own life. What a mixture it was! Here was his home—half Indian, half English—his very food divided! His mother was Indian and lived in the beautiful Indian fashion. His father—what was he? Indian, yes, yet loving the life that was British and so much that was England. Jawaharlal loved much that was England, too. He loved the little laboratory that Mr. Brooks had made for him, and where together they worked out scientific experiments in chemistry and physics. He loved the literature that his tutor brought to him, the great works of English literature, Dickens and Scott and Thackeray, the poets, the essayists, the playwrights. He steeped himself in their books so that when he began to write they influenced his own English style. Here, too, was his new religion, theosophy, set against his traditions of old Hinduism, and which was right he did not truly know. Here around him was British India, the India that he knew best, but out beyond lay the real India—his India that he scarcely knew at all.

He began to dream, for he was at the age of dreams. His own India must be free, too, able to enjoy life as he did. He would join the struggle of his people. The glow of the first dream was only a glimmer and it lasted only a short while. It was time for dinner, the English butler announced, and Jawaharlal found roast beef and Yorkshire pudding.

# III

## SCHOOL IN ENGLAND

WHEN Jawaharlal was fifteen years old, his father decided that the time had come for school in England. In spite of discontent among the people of India, British influence among the educated and well to do was so strong that only an English university could be considered for a beloved son. All the years of tutoring had prepared Jawaharlal for this, and he took it for granted.

Together, therefore, they set sail for England, his parents, his sister Swarup, and himself. He was registered for Harrow, and there he was taken at once. His parents could not stay with him, for their plans would take them to the Continent. He had to meet his new life without them, and with all his preparation, he felt lonely when they were gone. He knew England through books and through English people and he was able to live in English ways because part of his home had been English. But he missed India deeply. The climate of England was chilly, and often the landscape, though beautiful, lacked the vivid contrasts of India. And the English people, kindly in their quiet fashion, were not impulsively warmhearted as the Indians were. The English were quiet instead of talkative, and good manners meant being controlled and silent. The boys at school were friendly and courteous, but they were ruthless in sports, and sometimes he saw cruelty among them that he did not like. Everyone treated him very kindly,

and he had nothing to complain about, but he felt himself a bystander in his new world. Was it because the Indian part of him was stronger here than at home? And would he, when he went back to India, feel more English than Indian?

But, no, this could not be true. There were several other Indian boys in school, but he felt no closer to them than to the British boys. One of the Indians lived in the same house with him, and the English boys liked him because he was especially good in cricket. Then came a Maharaja's son who had lived in France, and Jawaharlal thought that this would make friends for him in school. Instead, the English boys did not like the Indian boy at all and soon fell to fighting him.

Finally there was an incident that embarrassed everyone and put an end to the open hostility. One night, very late, the house was suddenly searched. No one knew what was the matter. The next day it was discovered that the Maharaja's son had lost a beautiful gold-headed cane. It could not be found. Two or three days later there was an important game between Eton and Harrow, and as soon as it was over the cane reappeared in the boy's room. One of the English boys had borrowed it to use at the game, a show-off, surely, and then had returned it. Everyone felt like apologizing to everyone else.

Besides the Indian boys at Harrow there were some Jewish students. Everyone called them "damned Jews" behind their backs, but all made an appearance of getting along well enough. At first, Jawaharlal accepted this way of behaving. It was not until later when he came to know some of the Jewish boys better and had made some good close friends among them that he saw it was not a question of India, or England, or of any race or nation or religion. Some part of one's self was always one's very own, and one who came nearest to that part

might be different, in every other way, and still be a dear friend.

School was not, of course, all games and friendships. Jawaharlal soon found that he was not as good in Latin as he should be, and this kept him in a form lower than he qualified for in the rest of his subjects. He determined to work hard in this one subject so that he might be advanced, and in a short while he succeeded in doing this. And now he discovered that although some might be better than he in the assigned work, he knew more about other things than most of the boys did. He had read much more than they had and considered world affairs as part of his usual reading. For a while this discovery made him rather too sure of himself, and he wrote to his father that the English boys were very dull indeed, and cared for nothing but games.

In 1905 there was a general election in England, which resulted in a great victory for the Liberal Party. Jawaharlal watched it all with great excitement. Here everyone was free to vote for the form of government he wanted. One day his form master asked the class about the new government. A sudden silence fell over the room. Only Jawaharlal's hand was in the air. He gave a clear statement on the new government, half ashamed that he was the only one to speak. The master thanked him quietly and looked severely at the other boys.

But as the years of school passed, Jawaharlal found that there was still much of England that he loved. The long twilights, so different from India's swift darkness, the pleasant summers that were never too hot, the beautiful spring and its flowers, the cultivated fertile farmlands, the wonderful streets of London, the matchless seacoasts—all steeped themselves into his mind, to remain forever in his memory. There were happy hours at school and other happier hours in the homes of friends during holidays, and he enjoyed the study that

must be more profound as each year passed. He was gathering resources for the years ahead, years that as yet he had not planned and could not foresee, except he knew they could not be wholly peaceful ones.

He was still too young to dwell on the future, and he did not look much further than Cambridge. In some ways he had felt older than most of the boys at Harrow. Perhaps it was because during 1906 and 1907 letters from India kept him troubled because of what was happening there. Even the English newspapers made him realize that nationalism was growing stronger in India. The province of Bengal was in an uproar; Tilak was leading an independence movement; there was boycott of foreign trade, and people were being encouraged to use only Indian goods. What went on in the school often seemed unimportant when great and exciting events were taking place at home.

One of the things he found hardest was that he had no one to talk with about India. Sometimes during a holiday a relative who happened to be in Europe stopped to see him, but aside from this chance, there was no one. None of his English friends was interested in India. He felt the narrowness of the school atmosphere even more because of a prize he won, a volume of G. M. Trevelyan's *Garibaldi*. He became so interested in the story of this leader for Italy's freedom that he bought the other two volumes of the series himself. He read them all carefully. At last it seemed that he could no longer endure the localism of Harrow and he begged his father to let him go to the university after only two years at the preparatory school.

When, in October, 1907, Jawaharlal entered Trinity College, Cambridge, he was not quite eighteen. Here he found liberty for himself. He wandered about the courts with a feeling of freedom and ownership, and he plunged into the rich relationships of university life.



He spent three years at Cambridge. The subjects he chose to study were in the field of natural science, but he soon found that the conversation that interested him most grew out of history and literature and politics, and he felt he needed to know more of these. He began to read for long hours. Nietzsche and Bernard Shaw and Havelock Ellis and Otto Weininger all became familiar to him. New theories of sex were favorite subjects for discussion among the young men. But Jawaharlal was still shy and he let others talk.

As time passed he knew that these university years were a pause before decision. After them he must start on his life work, whatever that was to be. Yet he dreaded decisions. Life seemed less simple than it had been. One could not, after all, go out with a flaming sword to conquer the equivalent of a dragon. He wanted to work for India but he did not see how to do it. Letters from his father made him realize that his father would oppose any open stand for the nationalist movement. Was his father right in being a Moderate? He was still not sure of the answer. He let things drift. It was pleasant to argue into the morning hours around a smoldering fire; to lie on the grassy bank of the river Cam and dream. He was not ready for action.

There were times when he even wished he could forget India. Always his peaceful mood was disturbed by some fresh news or memory. Even the Indians in England were calling themselves Tilakites, after the leader in India. They were known as Extremists. In the university there was a society called the Majlis. The members had met to discuss theoretical politics. Now some of them grew fiery and talked of acts of violence in Bengal. Their patriotism was noisy. Jawaharlal kept silent. He felt that men so violent in what they said at the safe distance of England would not lift a finger in action if they were in India.

Yet he could not forever put off thinking of what he was to do. He knew that his father wished him to take a position in the Civil Service. Their friends and relatives, indeed, most people of their social standing, were all in the service, and his education fitted him for it. His father still believed in co-operation with the British and strongly disapproved of the Extremists. Jawaharlal saw an article that his father had written about these leaders in the independence movement, and to his own surprise, perhaps, he suddenly felt that his father was wrong. He wrote his father saying that surely the British Government would be greatly pleased with his article, and his father, angry in turn, commanded his son to leave England at once.

After this flurry of feeling had grown quiet again, his father wrote again, more mildly, saying that neither he nor his wife insisted on Jawaharlal's entering the Civil Service, for he might be stationed in a remote part of India, and they wanted him nearer home! This simple wish on the part of his parents left Jawaharlal free from compulsion. Well then, he would study to become a lawyer like his father, and time would show him how best he could serve his country.

When his work at Cambridge was finished he went to London. For two years he studied law. He still felt restless and unsettled, and in this mood he met up with some old Harrow friends and began to have expensive habits, to dress extravagantly, and to imagine himself rather a man about town. One summer he went on vacation to Norway. He and several of his friends tramped across the mountains. When they reached their small hotel they were hot and tired and asked for baths. There were none to be had there, but they were told that they could bathe in a neighboring stream. Jawaharlal and a young English friend took their towels and went to wash. The stream was a roaring torrent whose source

was a glacier near by. When Jawaharlal stepped into the water he slipped, and the freezing water numbed him so that he could not get a foothold. He was swept along by the current and would have drowned except that his friend ran swiftly along the bank and caught him and drew him out. They stood trembling on the bank. There, only a couple of hundred yards away, the stream dropped in an enormous waterfall over a high precipice!

When they came back to the inn and were warm and dry, Jawaharlal felt that his life, so narrowly saved, was now a gift to him. How should he use it? He was ready to practice law, but this did not satisfy him. What must he do for his country? He determined now to find the answer. After seven years in England, he made up his mind to go home.

# IV

## HOMECOMING

THE shores of India that lie along the Indian Ocean are low and green. They reveal nothing of the country behind them. India has the Himalayas, the highest mountains in the world, covered with eternal snow; she has great rivers and deserts, plains and jungles. She is a country of infinite variety, and Jawaharlal knew it as he stood by the ship's rail gazing at the approaching land. Seven years away had changed him very much. They were the seven most important years of his life, too, years that had made the boy into the man.

Home would be the same, he was sure, except for the new sister, Krishna, to welcome him. Swarup, whom he had parted from as a little child, would be tall now, a young girl of twelve. Girls grow up quickly in the hot climate of India, and she would seem older than her years. Father and Mother he hoped would be unchanged. Yes, home would be the same, but what of his country? Where was he to belong in this land of his, where millions were so poor and helpless, and a few so rich and powerful, and where all were under a foreign rule? He could not answer the question and he did not try. For a few weeks, at least, he could simply return to his home and get acquainted again with his family.

There were many preparations for his return. He was still the beloved boy, the only son, and the two sisters longed to know him. Swarup had almost forgotten how

he looked, and Krishna had never seen him. But she had heard so much of him, she had listened to so many of his letters, that she was half afraid of him. Later she confessed that she thought, Jawaharlal must be very wonderful indeed. I shall be afraid of anyone so wonderful!

On the day, at the hour when he was expected, everyone was waiting. When they heard a horse's hooves clatter on the driveway, they ran to the door and saw a handsome young man riding toward them. He jumped down from his horse and went first to his mother and took her in his arms. She was so small that it was like holding a child. Who can tell what was in the heart of mother and son, except that it was what would be in the heart of any loving mother and son who had not met for years?

When he looked up he saw Krishna. She was too shy to come to him, and so he went to her and lifted her in his arms. "So this is the baby sister!" he cried. "She's quite a little lady, now."

Swarup stood smiling, waiting. Jawaharlal, always sensitive to this older sister, saw that she had grown beautiful and that her eyes were as intelligent and lively as ever. He knew that she had already been engaged to be married by their parents. Would this proud and independent girl be happy in an old-fashioned, arranged marriage?

It took hours of talk and days of living together to tell one another what had passed in the years while Jawaharlal was away. At first it was happiness enough to live again in his old rooms, to swim in the pool, to enjoy the gardens and tennis courts of Anand Bhawan, and to play with little sisters. He had old friends to meet again and relatives to visit and to welcome. But Jawaharlal was like any other young man who comes home from college. After the first weeks had passed he began to grow rest-

less and to wonder what he ought to do with himself. "I was glad to be back at home and pick up the old threads," he says, "but gradually the life I led . . . began to lose all its freshness, and I felt that I was being engulfed in a dull routine of pointless and futile existence. I suppose my mongrel, or at least mixed, education was responsible for this feeling of dissatisfaction with my surroundings. The habits and ideas that had grown in me during my seven years in England did not fit in with things as I found them. Fortunately my home atmosphere was fairly congenial, and that was some help, but it was not enough." (From his autobiography, *Toward Freedom*.)

It was not long until he saw that his unrest was rooted in that same hesitancy he had felt all through the years in England when he thought of what he should prepare himself to do. No, it reached further back than that. He could see now that it went back to those days when he used to watch the workmen at Anand Bhawan and wonder about their lives—what of the lives of millions of his people? He had always been protected from the life most people in India had to live. His home had been half English, he had been taught by English tutors, and he had seen only the pleasant and cultivated life of his parents and their friends. True, he remembered the angry conversation of his cousins about incidents with the English, or the equally heated conversations at the university. But this was only the talk of intellectuals, a very small group indeed in the millions of India's people. He must know all his people, not just the favored few.

And yet he feared to see the truth, to break the illusion of all the beautiful and fanciful dreams bred in his mind by the fables and poetry and philosophy he so loved. They were real, too, but they were not all. After

all, he had been reared almost as an English boy, and he shrank from the poverty, the ignorance, and misery of his own people.

Meanwhile, he was not ready to leave the comfort of his life. He delayed, too, perhaps because he began to practice law. This kept him busy, and when he was not busy he went on the hunting trips so fashionable for young men of his kind.

"I liked the outing and the jungle and cared little for the killing," he confessed later. "Indeed my reputation was a singularly bloodless one, although I succeeded in killing a bear in Kashmir. A small incident with an antelope damped even the little ardor that I possessed for hunting. This harmless animal fell down at my feet, wounded to death, and looked up at me with its great eyes full of tears. Those eyes have often haunted me since."

The truth is that Jawaharlal was not by nature a huntsman. He was too kind, too sensitive, and above all, too intelligent to enjoy such sport. His active mind began to search for friends with whom he could talk and exchange ideas, and in an effort to find such a group he joined the Moderates of the All India National Congress. The Extremists were quiet now, crushed for the time because of the imprisonment of Tilak, their leader. Besides, Jawaharlal's father would never have agreed to his becoming an Extremist.

The Congress met in Allahabad that first winter, and Jawaharlal went to the meeting. He was discouraged rather than encouraged by it. The members seemed all to be conventional, well-to-do intellectuals who had no fresh ideas or vigor. Among them all only one man impressed him. He was G. K. Gokhale. Gopal Krishna Gokhale, lately back from Africa, was already known as a man devoted to his people, and he was the leader of the Moderates, just as Tilak was of the Extremists.

Suddenly, in that year of 1914, before Jawaharlal had come to any decision for himself, war fell upon Europe. The first World War seemed far from India until the Government passed the Defense of India Act. It decreed that men and supplies should be drawn from India to carry on Britain's part in the war. The people of India bitterly resented this conscription of men and goods to fight a war for England, and many were secretly happy when news of a German victory came. They were not sympathetic to Germany, but, weak and helpless themselves, they considered any victory over Britain an advantage for India. Among the Allies, the Indians sympathized most deeply with France, for they felt that most of the burden of the war fell on French soil.

The war did bring some advantage to India, for the Government of India, in the hope of winning more co-operation from India, released many political prisoners, among them Tilak. Mrs. Besant attended the meetings of Congress. Hope for independence came to life. Congress began to prepare a program of action.

So long as the discussion of such a program had been theoretical, the different peoples represented in Congress had been friendly enough together. Now that it began to look as though independence might some day become a reality, these peoples fell into dissension. It was not only the Extremists and Moderates who disagreed; the deepest division was between the Hindus and Moslems.

For many centuries various peoples have lived in towns and cities and villages of India side by side as friendly neighbors, and yet keeping alive their own ways of life, their own religions, their languages. It has been one of the glories of Indian civilization that within its wide borders many peoples have been able to live their own lives and yet be a part of India's whole. A good example of this generosity has been the Parsees, who



thirteen hundred years ago came from Persia, bringing with them their own religion, Zoroastrianism, the worship of fire as the greatest force in the universe. Today they are one of the richest, although one of the smallest, groups in India. They are quite content to stay there, for when, some years ago, modern Persia, or Iran, invited them to return to their homeland, they refused, saying that they felt they belonged to India, which had always treated them so well. Jewish colonies, too, at various periods of history, have lived safely in India and mingled with the people, who have never persecuted them.

Why, then, was there dissension between Moslem and Hindu, and why has it gone to such lengths that today the country is divided into Pakistan and India? The division causes Jawaharlal Nehru the deepest grief and concern, and it was with great reluctance that he agreed to it.

The cause for today's division is to be found in history. The Hindus still follow the peace-loving religion and culture brought to them through the *Vedas*, their sacred writings of the Aryan period. The cow, as a symbol of productivity, is sacred to them. Their temples are full of images of their gods. Their customs spring from the roots of both Aryan and Dravidian culture, and their religious festivals are celebrated with music and processions.

The Moslems were a new and war-loving people who came to India in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries bringing massacre, a rude new culture, and a new and aggressive religion. They thought of others as infidels who should be wiped out, and they had destroyed temples and beautiful works of art as they came, the temples, they said, because they honored a false religion, and art because Moslems did not believe in making pictures or images of gods or saints. The castes into which Hindu society was divided they rejected, for they

wanted only a Moslem brotherhood. Cows were for milk and meat, and no reverence was held for them. No parades or celebrations could be allowed—only the worship facing toward Mecca, the holy city, when the *muezzin*, or priest, called from the tower or the mosque five times a day.

Time made some of these differences less sharp, and during the centuries in most places the two groups lived together in peace, with only an occasional outbreak of feeling when one intruded into the other's customs or religious rites. In some great areas where most of the people were either Hindu or Moslem, one or the other group dominated without question. But the threat of trouble was always present because of the differences in the ways the people lived. A Hindu procession with its noise might interrupt the quiet prayer hour of a mosque. A Hindu cow might be killed by accident. Then, depending on the mood of the people, fighting might follow. To the old difficulty between Hindu and Moslem, which had come as the result of differences in history, religion, and customs, there was added another very serious cause for friction. The Government of India had made it a rule to preserve the divisions among people. Why this was done no one knows. Those who were friendly to the Empire said that it was to protect the individual groups. Those who were not friendly said that it was the Empire's way of keeping the people divided and quarreling with one another, so they would not have time and energy to unite for independence. Whatever the cause, the facts are that as early as 1909 a definite number of seats in the legislative assemblies were reserved for each group. The Hindu-led nationalist movement was gaining power at that time, and the Moslem group was given double representation by the Government because, it was claimed, Moslems had served the Empire so well. The divisions were increased

until in 1935 nineteen groups had separate representation in the provincial legislative assemblies, and each was so limited that a Hindu could vote only for a Hindu candidate, a Sikh for a Sikh, a Christian for a Christian, and so on. This made unity in India impossible. It was exactly as though in the United States the people should vote not in political parties of their own choice, but according to whether they were of Catholic or Protestant ancestry, or even according to denominations in the two large groups. Friendliness became impossible, and the division deepened between Hindu and Moslem, the two chief religious groups of India.

There were many friendly and broad-minded Moslems in Congress, but orthodox Moslems had formed a group of their own and the Moslem League became a strong political organization, separate from Congress.

Yet under the impetus of fresh hope at the close of the war, even the League began to co-operate with the Hindus of Congress in the movement for independence. The Home Rule League was set up in communities with the idea of teaching independence to the people all over the country. New fire and enthusiasm sprang up everywhere.

Jawaharlal's father had for all these years gone steadily along as a Moderate, taking no active part in the work of Congress. He would not accept the Extremists' position and he had found no way to draw Hindus and Moslems together. Now, however, even he joined the Home Rule League and was soon made president of the Allahabad branch. The union of Hindus and Moslems gave him such hope that he was willing to consider leaving his Moderate friends and taking a more progressive stand. What that position should be was still not clear to him.

Mrs. Besant became so active, speaking and taking part in great gatherings, that the Government of India,

growing afraid of her influence, interned her. This act crystallized the feelings of members of Congress. Some who had hesitated decided to join the Extremists and others still hesitating were less certain that they were right. Among these was Jawaharlal's father.

Father and son argued continually over what Congress ought to do, and evenings at home became times of tense feeling and bitter words. The father's uncertainty brought sharp words to his lips for he was arguing to convince not only Jawaharlal but himself. Jawaharlal argued to convince his father and to reassure himself, but he argued gently, for he knew the struggle in his father's mind. A change in point of view for him meant a change in his whole life, and he was no longer young. It would mean giving up his profession, adapting the life of the home to a lower income, the loss of many friends. There were times when the two could not speak their thoughts, for neither wished to hurt the other.

But Jawaharlal's own uncertainty was melting away. Day by day the conviction was growing in him that he could not live with compromise, and that he must give himself and his life to the cause of independence for his people, whatever the cost might be.

In 1915 a great meeting to protest a new Government restriction on the press was planned in Allahabad. Jawaharlal agreed to speak to the meeting. He talked only a short while and in English but when he came back to his seat a friend on the platform embraced him and kissed him. This first speech was a sign. Jawaharlal had stepped beyond the barrier of his own class—the barrier that until now had always surrounded him. He had freed himself and now he could free others.

# V

## MANHOOD

THE life of a beloved only son in India cannot belong only to himself, or even to his country. It belongs, too, to his family. Jawaharlal knew that his parents wanted him to marry and to have grandchildren. Anand Bhawan would never be complete in its happiness until little children ran about its gardens again. Swarup was growing up, and Krishna was no longer a little child. They were young ladies, not often seen in public, and spending most of their time, as yet, with their English governess in the English part of the house. But the most urgent reason of all for the parents to want their son married was that he was twenty-six years old, and it was time for him to begin his own family.

Jawaharlal's marriage was like himself, partly traditional and partly modern. Relatives and friends eager to be helpful spoke most highly of one among eligible girls—Kamala, a pretty Kashmiri girl of seventeen. She had been to school for a few years, and while she was not what could be called modern in her training and habits, yet she took up new ways easily, and they argued that Jawaharlal would not find her hard to teach. She was frank and sincere and with people she liked she could be gay in her own fashion. There was no reason, it seemed, why she would not make a good wife, and the engagement was arranged.

Jawaharlal's father set the wedding date for Vasanta

Panchami, a day heralding spring and, according to the old traditions, auspicious for weddings. For months before the wedding, Anand Bhawan was swept by the bustle of preparations. Merchants and jewelers and tailors came and went, and Rani was burdened with many details. The ceremonies were to take place in Delhi, at the bride's home. A week before the day, the wedding party with more than a hundred guests set out by a special train, beautifully decorated with flowers. Hundreds of other guests gathered in Delhi. There were not enough places for them all, and tents were set up to house them. Quite a colony of tents grew up, and it was called "The Nehru Wedding Camp." When the guests gathered for the wedding, it seemed to them that there could scarcely be a more handsome couple. Jawaharlal was quiet and dignified, Kamala delicate and beautiful. They went through the intricate ceremonies of the Vedic traditions with care for every detail.

So began another part of Jawaharlal's life as a young man. He had not had the opportunity to know Kamala before marriage, and now he must come to know her as his comrade as well as his wife. Could they be happy together, when they were so different? She was very young, and she had never been away from home, while he had been educated so far away.

The difference in our age was considerable [Jawaharlal says], but greater still was the difference in our mental outlook, for I was far more grown up than she was. And yet with all my appearance of worldly wisdom I was very boyish, and I hardly realized that this delicate, sensitive girl's mind was slowly unfolding like a flower and required gentle and careful tending. We were attracted to each other and got on well enough, but our backgrounds were different, and there was want of adjustment. These maladjustments

would sometimes lead to friction, and there were many petty quarrels over trivialities, boy-and-girl affairs which did not last long and ended in quick reconciliation. We both had quick tempers, sensitive natures, and childish notions of keeping our dignity.

They might have come to know one another more easily had they, like young Western couples, set up their own home. But they were Indian, and it would have been unthinkable for them to live elsewhere than with Jawaharlal's parents, and so they became part of Anand Bhawan. It was not easy to be alone there. Kamala naturally shared the life of the women and Jawaharlal that of the men. The summer after the marriage, however, the whole family went to Kashmir to visit their ancestral home. The family stayed in the beautiful valley while Jawaharlal and a cousin took a trip into the near-by mountains. He loved the natural beauty of any place, and few spots in the world are more lovely than this one. It was the first time he had been in the narrow and lonely valleys that lie very high and lead to the Tibetan plateau. From the Zoji-La Pass they could look down upon green mountains clustered in one direction, and upon bare, bleak rocks in the other. As they climbed the glistening heights at the edges of glaciers, snow-clad mountains towered above them, and the wind was cold while the sun was hot. The air was so rare that distances seemed shorter than they actually were, and often the young men made mistakes in judging how far away a certain point was.

One day they decided to go to the famous Cave of Amaranath, which, they were told, lay only eight miles away from where they were encamped. That seemed a short distance even though a great snow-covered mountain lay directly ahead.

At four o'clock in the morning they started out from

their camp with several porters and a shepherd as guide. It proved to be a far greater undertaking than they had thought. They crossed several glaciers, tied together by ropes, and as they climbed, breathing became difficult. Some of the porters, lightly laden as they were, began to bring up blood. It began to snow, and the glaciers became terribly slippery.

After twelve hours of climbing they saw only a huge field of ice ahead. Jawaharlal gazed at it with wonder and some fear. It made him think of ancient writings, of gods and goddesses reflecting the light of the sun. Then came mist and more snow, and the magnificent sight was entirely hidden from them. They were closed in and they realized that they must cross the ice field, seeing only a step at a time, and then go down on the other side of the cave, if indeed they could reach it. The fresh snow hid crevices, and they could not be sure of their footing. Suddenly Jawaharlal fell through the soft snow into a great crevice, but his rope held. He clung to the edge of a projecting rock until the others pulled him up and he was saved.

Again his life was given back to him; he remembered the freezing stream in Norway. Even this pleasure trip brought him again to the thought of what his life must mean. But now he knew that his course was chosen and only waiting to be taken.

The way across the ice field grew worse. The crevices grew wider, and it became impossible to cross them. There was nothing to do but to give up the hope of reaching the cave and, disappointed, they turned back.

The family, waiting in the valley, did not know how dangerous a trip it had been until the cousin told of it. Jawaharlal felt Kamala's eyes on him, wondering, and he longed to tell her of the beauty he had seen. Yet something held him back. How could he share the magnificence of those glaciers and the towering peaks with



her, who had not seen it? It would be one dull and meaningless description. Instead, he talked about some of the porters and the legends they had repeated, remembering one funny fellow who was full of superstitions. And Kamala, listening, tried to add this new picture of her husband to what she already knew of him.

They returned to Anand Bhawan. Jawaharlal must be fair in dividing himself between home and the work for his country's freedom. It was not easy. Even when he was with Kamala his thoughts were on the work he wanted to do. He knew that she needed his comradeship, and yet he felt that he failed to give it. When he went away for a few days, he came back to her eagerly. He was learning to love her well, and yet in his heart of hearts he knew that he denied her a full share of his real life.

He remembered the days in England again. Could one ever fully share life with another? Was there not always a center that was one's own? He accepted the fact with sadness. Not even with Kamala was it possible to open the door to all the feelings of his heart. But he tried not to be away from her long.

He found that they were to have a child. In the second year after their marriage, a daughter was born to them, and they named her Indira. With her birth his youth was over and his family begun, in this home within the home of his father. Now, indeed, he must go forward with his life's work. He could not do otherwise, for he had come to know Gandhi.

Of the meaning of Gandhi for India, Jawaharlal Nehru writes:

In history we read of great periods in the life of nations, of great men and women and great deeds performed, and sometimes in our dreams and reveries we imagine ourselves back in those times and doing

great deeds like the heroes and heroines of old. . . . Ordinary men and women are not usually heroic. They think of their daily bread and butter, of their children, of their household worries and the like.

But a time comes when a whole people becomes full of faith for a great cause, and then even simple and ordinary men and women become heroes and history becomes stirring and epoch-making.

Great leaders have something in them which inspires a whole people and makes them do great deeds. . . . Today in India a great leader . . . full of love for all who suffer, and passionately eager to help them, has inspired our people to great endeavor and noble sacrifice, so that they may again be free, and the starving and the poor and the oppressed may have their burdens removed from them. Bapuji [Gandhi] lies in prison but the magic of his message steals into the hearts of India's missions, and men and women, and even little children, come out of their little shells and become India's soldiers of freedom.

Mohandas K. Gandhi began his work before the first World War, in South Africa. Large numbers of Indian merchants and laborers had migrated there, and being badly treated because of their race, they were often mixed up in lawsuits. Gandhi went there as a young lawyer to take such a case. When he saw how his people were living, he was distressed and he decided to do all he possibly could to help them. He gave up his profession and most of what he owned and used all of his time for them. For years he worked so quietly that few outside of Africa had ever heard of him.

South Africa was under the British Colonial Government, and some of its officials were harsh in their treatment of those whom they ruled. Gradually the poor Indian laborers refused to submit to such treatment and,

led by Gandhi, they rebelled. The form of resistance they used was a new one, passive resistance, or non-cooperation. They called it *Satyagraha*, or "holding to the truth," and it was Gandhi's idea.

When people in India heard of it they were surprised and then proud. Their fellow countrymen were willing to go to jail rather than to give in to what they felt unjust! Money began to pour from India to Africa to help the laborers there. And the people of India realized with shame that they had been yielding too easily to the demands of their own government. Why had they not resisted too?

Gandhi drew his idea of passive resistance from many religious sources. He found it in Buddhism, the religion of kindness. He found it in Christianity, for he had studied in England and had been there often. But he found it most clearly for himself in the great Indian poem, the *Bhagavad-Gita*.

This poem has been described as "the most beautiful, perhaps the only true philosophical song existing in any known tongue." Jawaharlal Nehru says:

Its popularity and influence have not waned ever since it was composed and written in the pre-Buddhistic age (before 563 B.C.), and today its appeal is as strong as ever in India. . . . In times of crisis, when the mind of man is tortured by doubt and is torn by the conflict of duties, it has turned all the more to the *Gita* for light and guidance. For it is a poem of crisis, of political and social crisis, and even more of crisis in the spirit of man. . . . It is a call to action to meet the duties and obligations of life, but always keeping in view that spiritual background and the larger purpose of the universe.

Gandhi left Africa and coming home he began to apply his ideas to his own country. In a quiet way, what

he said and what he felt began to affect those near him and to spread through them to others, and so to the most distant parts of the country. Those who had felt in awe of the splendor of the English viceroy's palace and the court in New Delhi were suddenly ashamed of their awe. Those who had been proud of the wealth of the Indian princes, who ruled their own states, saw the injustice in such wealth, when all around people were desperately poor. Some rich Indians began to dress more soberly. Members of Congress felt an inspiration in their meetings when Gandhi spoke.

And yet, how could this man have so much power over others? He was small and wizened. He wore only a loincloth, which left his thin arms and legs bare. His large dark eyes peered at the world through spectacles. The first impression of him was almost grotesque. He was not like other men. He seemed not even to want those things that people as human beings crave. He ate only fruits and goat's milk and simply boiled vegetables and gruel. He kept long hours and woke early for long walks and meditations.

But Jawaharlal Nehru says that these first impressions are not true: "People who do not know Gandhi personally . . . are apt to think that he is a priestly type, long-faced . . . a killjoy, something like 'the priests in black gowns, walking their rounds.' . . . He is the very opposite of the priestly type. His smile is delightful, his laughter infectious, and he radiates light-heartedness. There is something childlike about him which is full of charm. When he enters a room, he brings a breath of fresh air with him which lightens the atmosphere."

Gandhi came often to Anand Bhawan, and Jawaharlal Nehru listened to long discussions. His father felt that Gandhi was extreme in his views, and yet Nehru himself was growing more and more dissatisfied with the

Moderates, though his father was still one. Gandhi felt strongly against the injustice done to the Untouchables, for example. Outside the castes, or the groups of recognized society in India, Brahmins or intellectuals, the rulers and warriors, the merchants, the farmers and other workers, there was yet a lower group who were the Untouchables. These were the people who did what was called "unclean work," such as scavenging, leather-work (because of the handling of carcasses), and street sweeping. In ancient times, partly, perhaps, because of the fear of contamination and disease, these workers at first had been avoided by others, and gradually rigid rules had grown up forbidding eating with them, intermarrying, or worshipping together, or having any contact. It became at last a real taboo, so that even villagers made their own rules about not using the same side of the street as the Untouchables did, or living in the same part of the town with them. Gandhi felt that this great group of people was one for which the Congress should take a stand, and wherever he went he was their champion. But Nehru's father, although sympathetic as far as the theory went, was not willing to make this an issue for Congress. He felt Congress ought to continue to improve its relations with Britain, politically. The only question, for him, was whether to do this slowly or drastically.

Nehru listened and pondered as the two older men talked. The removal of Untouchability was to him only one of the many ways in which to improve the life of his people. For him, freedom came first, and he was ready to take an open stand for independence. Only for his father's sake did he delay saying so in Congress.

But he could not wait much longer. His heart was ready for action, and India was ready. The war was over and it had changed much in India. New industries were developing and with them the power of the now

richer capitalists. The workers and villagers were poorer than ever. Men like himself who belonged between must be the ones to work for changes in the constitution that would bring about self-rule.

In the Punjab, in the north, the people were still angry that their men had been forcibly recruited to serve in the army, and these soldiers, back from service all over the world, were not willing to go back to the old life they had lived before the war. The Moslems, many of them with Arab and Turkish blood, felt that Turkey had been unjustly treated during the war.

Blind to the unrest in India, the Government now proposed the Rowlatt Bills, which made arrest possible on small charges and trials possible with fewer controls. The people received them with fury. Gandhi was ill, but from his bed he appealed to the Viceroy not to give consent to the passing of the Bills. No appeal made any difference.

Gandhi had never decided anything quickly and he did not decide quickly now. He knew the past and he knew the hard years ahead. But in the light of both he knew also that it was the time for action. He decided to start a passive-resistance movement against the Government. The members of the Congress would have to pledge themselves to disobey the Rowlatt Bills if they were used against them, and any other laws that seemed unjust. This really meant that those who took part in *satyagraha* would hope to be sent to jail as an open protest against what the Government was doing. Great courage was needed now, to face separations, hardships, and possibly physical punishment.

Nehru first saw Gandhi's announcement in the papers. It was simple and emphatic and it gave direction to the nationalists. Nehru accepted Gandhi's leadership, grateful for its clarity.

Here at last was a way out of the tangle, a method of action which was straight and open and possibly effective [he said]. I was afire with enthusiasm and wanted to join the *satyagraha* movement right away. I hardly thought of the consequences—law-breaking, jail-going, etc., and if I thought of them I did not care. But suddenly my ardor was damped, and I realized that all was not plain sailing. My father was dead against this new idea. He was not in the habit of being swept away by a new proposal. . . . The more he thought of *satyagraha*, the less he liked it. . . . It seemed preposterous to him that I should go to prison. The idea was most repulsive. Father was intensely attached to his children. He was not showy in his affection, but behind his restraint there was great love.

What was the right thing to do? The greater right, Nehru knew, was the cause of his country. But he owed his father a debt of love. They talked the movement over for days. Each was determined; neither wanted to hurt the other. Nehru says of these hard days: "Both of us had a distressing time, and night after night I wandered about alone, tortured in mind and trying to grope my way out. Father—I discovered later—actually tried sleeping on the floor to find out what it was like, as he thought that would be my lot in prison."

Then Gandhi came to see them. Perhaps what he said might make it easier for the father and son. The two older men talked alone for hours, and then Gandhi came to find Nehru. "Do not do anything to upset your father," he said gently, and went away.

So Nehru tried to take up life again as it had been. Kamala was absorbed in her young motherhood, and the baby, Indira, grew into her place in the great house. But Gandhi went on with the work of organizing

the nonviolent resistance. He proclaimed an all-India *hartal* or non-co-operation movement. This meant that all who joined it stopped work and refused to do what was expected of them. At once two of the leaders in the city of Amritsar, in the Punjab, were arrested. Feeling was still high in the Punjab because of the war. An unarmed mob marched to the local British magistrate, and the police fired at them, and several persons were killed.

The authorities then sent out warnings that any gathering of people would be unlawful, but this warning did not reach all parts of the near-by country. Three days after it went out, on April the thirteenth, there was a festival, and crowds came innocently from the countryside to the city. They met in an enclosed place called Jallianwala Bagh. Only one side was open. Under orders, soldiers blocked this exit, and the people were trapped. Without warning the soldiers opened fire. Those who could get away were ordered to creep through the one exit on their bellies. Relatives were warned against trying to come in to help the wounded and dying.

Word of what had happened swept India. The National Congress met for its annual session in this same city of Amritsar, in December of that year, 1919. Nehru's father presided. He appealed to the Moderates to come to the rescue of the people. They did not respond. They were still thinking of ways to change the constitution. The father needed nothing more to convince him of what he should do, and he argued no more with his son. Together, at last, they joined Gandhi.

A slogan began to be heard at the great Congress gathering: "Victory to Gandhi! *Mahatma Gandhi ki jai!*" But Gandhi sitting quietly before them knew that leadership meant service, and he spoke simply of what must be done.



But "the voice was somehow different from others," Nehru said. "It was quiet and low and yet it could be heard above the shouting of the multitude; it was soft and gentle and yet there seemed to be steel hidden away somewhere in it; it was courteous and full of appeal, and yet, there was something grim and frightening in it."

The meeting of Congress ended, and the people went away. Each man carried in himself a spark that was to kindle others, but in Jawaharlal Nehru there burned a steady flame of determination.

## VI

### NEHRU MEETS HIS PEOPLE

THE life of the family at Anand Bhawan was now wholly changed. Nehru and his father knew when they left the group of Moderates who had always believed in co-operation with the Government, to work with Gandhi for independence, that they could no longer earn as much money as they had before. Much of their popularity among the well to do would be gone, the large practice must be given up, and the easy, pleasant ways of the house must go. Perhaps this was one reason why the father had hesitated so long. His delicate wife, his two young daughters, and his son, and Kamala, too, would have to share in the sacrifice. Now that hesitation was ended, he proceeded at once. He sold the horses and carriages, dismissed most of the servants, stopped giving the splendid banquets at which he had been such a famous host, and sold much of the beautiful Dresden china and Venetian glass that had been bought in Europe. It was a sad time for the household, but the mother honored the decision that her husband had made and she did not complain.

A strange thing happened at this time, which further distressed the servants. Anand Bhawan, like many great houses in India, had a sacred cobra in the garden. Only the servants thought it sacred, it is true, and more than once different members of the family had declared that

it should be killed. But the superstition of the servants always prevailed to keep it alive in spite of orders for its death. Only Swarup's mother had perhaps a little respect for it. Once when they were reading together on the lawn, Swarup had heard her father speak a quick, low command. "Do not move, my child!" She had obeyed instinctively. At that instant the great cobra spread his hood over her and he went away again without harming her. Her mother declared this was a sign that Swarup one day would be a great and famous woman—a prophesy that has indeed been fulfilled.

But a servant at Anand Bhawan, who had never seen the sacred cobra before, had killed it one day in fear. "What have you done?" the others cried. "Now prosperity will leave the house!"

So they felt indeed when they saw the changes their master was making, and realized that from now on no one in the family would be safe from arrest and imprisonment. Even some of the old friends shared this feeling—they came no more to the house.

That summer both Kamala and Jawaharlal's mother were ill, and he took them to Mussoorie, where it was cool. He left them for two weeks of their stay and went back to Allahabad. While he was there, about two hundred *kisans* or peasants marched fifty miles from the interior to the city to bring their condition to the attention of the men in politics. Nehru learned that they were living huddled on the bank of the Jumna River, near the city, and he went with some of his friends to see them. The peasants crowded around him and began to tell how bad things were with them. The tax collectors were harsh and threatening, and they were afraid to go home. They begged Nehru and some of the others to go back with them and see for themselves how miserable their life was, and give them some hope of help.

Nehru promised to go. He says:

I went with some of my colleagues, and we spent three days in the villages far away from the railway. . . . That visit was a revelation to me. We found the whole countryside afire with enthusiasm and full of strange excitement. Enormous gatherings would take place at the briefest notice by word of mouth. One village would communicate with another, and the second with the third, and so on; and presently whole villages would empty out, and all over the fields there would be men and women and children, on the march to the meeting place.

*"Sita-Ram, Sita-Ram!"*—this was the peasants' call. It meant that Sita and Rama, legendary gods of womanhood and of manhood, commanded them. When the words echoed through the air, the people left whatever they were doing to come with all haste.

Nehru looked at them. For the first time he saw his own people. They were in rags, half-starved, diseased, and miserable. The mothers brought their babies in their arms and sometimes led other children by the hand. Even the old came, tottering on their bare feet, as if life or death were to be decided by their presence.

They showered their affection on us [Nehru says]. They looked on us with loving and hopeful eyes, as if we were the bearers of good tidings. . . . Looking at them . . . I was filled with shame and sorrow—shame at my own easy-going and comfortable life . . . sorrow at the degradation and overwhelming poverty of India. A new picture of India seemed to rise before me, naked, starving, crushed and utterly miserable. And their faith in us . . . filled me with a new responsibility that frightened me.

The peasants told of rents that were too high for them ever to pay fully, of illegal extra taxes, of being evicted

from their little huts, of beatings. They said that they worked all day for what was not theirs in the end, since it was not enough to pay the landlord or the money-lender from whom they must borrow in order to have anything to use.

This had been going on a long time, and they had seen no hope until recently when a man named Ramachandra had come from western India and organized them to action. He himself had been a laborer in Fiji—almost a slave, because he was indentured. He knew their hardships only too well and he knew, too, the new leaders and fresh strength in Congress because of Gandhi's leadership. He had gone swiftly from place to place, using the old cry "Sita-Ram," and telling the people to come together and act in groups. In the province of Oudh he had begun a great movement among the people who worked on the land, and it was this that Nehru now saw.

Nehru went again and again to the peasants. He wanted to learn all he could of their lives. At first he came in a light car, and the villagers were so anxious for him and his friends to come that they built temporary roads for the car. Sometimes the car got stuck, and then the people lifted it out bodily. But it became too hard to travel that way, even with all the help. Soon they were going on foot.

It was the hot season of the year, and the sun was scorching in its brilliance. Nehru forgot the heat, forgot that always in other years he had escaped by going to the mountains. He bound a towel around his head and he grew tough and tanned as he walked. But he succeeded in what he wanted to do. He came close to these peasants and he knew that they were the real people of India. "Somehow I had not fully realized what they were and what they meant to India," he tells us now. "Ever

since then my mental picture of India always contains this naked, hungry mass."

He had until now found it hard to speak in public, but now he was no longer shy, and he spoke to these who were eager to hear him. They were so poor, so simple, so hungry. He did not need oratory. All he needed to do was to speak as man to man and tell them what was in his heart.

All through the next year, long after Kamala and his mother were home again, he went among the people. He traveled through the United Provinces, which lie along the northeast border to the south and east of the Punjab. The movement of nonresistance had started there among the peasants who had also been stirred by Ramachandra. Congress workers went through the countryside preaching nonviolent resistance, and the people responded. Some could not understand, however, and there were a few times when they looted in the name of Gandhi. Once Nehru, speaking to a crowd, asked for a show of hands by those who had looted, and he insisted upon their arrest.

The Government of India was frightened by the growing disorder among the discontented people, and it hurried through better laws for holding and cultivating land. The people quieted down for a time, but Nehru knew that the long struggle for independence lay ahead. The method of nonresistance had proved successful. Real conflict with the Government of India was certain, for the officials were more and more troubled by signs of a stirring and determined India.

Members of Congress met and shared their resolve. They felt that they were giving themselves to a cause greater than anything personal and they were proud of their purpose. They did not care that there would be dangers. "Prison?" Nehru exclaimed. "We look for-

ward to it; that would help our cause still further. . . . We were proud of our leader and of the unique method he had evolved. . . . In the midst of strife, and while we ourselves encouraged that strife, we had a sense of inner peace."

Yet Nehru could not always agree with Gandhi. In his speeches Gandhi often spoke of religion, and Nehru saw that the people responded to this. But Nehru felt that religion and politics did not belong together.

Neither did Nehru agree with Gandhi about the use of machinery to produce goods in large quantities. Gandhi believed that village crafts should be encouraged in every way possible because these were Indian, while machinery was English. He himself did some weaving every day, as an example. He thought that working with the hands was good for people and that this was a better way to keep millions of India's people busy than to have them work in factories in industrial cities. But Nehru believed that India should improve her industries, and in modern times this could be done only through modern methods. He himself liked conveniences and speed and he could not agree that the people should live as they had centuries ago, and as the peasants still did. Yet he did not argue these differences with Gandhi.

More and more, now, Nehru's whole life was given to the movement for independence. He gave up friends, books, and even newspapers, except when they had something to do with the movement. His time was spent in offices and at meetings and among the great crowds that were always gathering, and his friends and even his family saw little of him. He had learned now how to work with the peasants. He was straightforward with them, and they trusted him and co-operated well. "I took to the crowd and the crowd took to me," he said, "and yet I never lost myself in it; I always felt apart from

it." He knew that as a leader he must not lose himself in it, for they looked to him, and decisions must be his.

In these busy days even home and family had their part in the mounting conflict between Government and Congress.

Swarup was to be married. The early betrothal to the man chosen by her parents had been broken off, and she had chosen for herself Ranjit S. Pandit. The wedding was set for the tenth of May. This day had been chosen because it was a good one according to the Hindu calendar, but it happened also to be the anniversary of the Sepoy Mutiny, and the Government officials at once thought there must be some political significance in the choice. The Mutiny had been the first rebellion of the Indian people against British rule. Suspicion was increased when Congress leaders, invited to the wedding, decided to hold a meeting of their working committee in order to save time and travel. Nehru learned that many of the English people were so afraid of a fresh uprising that they were actually going about armed, their servants were being watched, and the Allahabad fort was in readiness!

The wedding took place in peace, however. Hundreds of guests came, and the long and beautiful marriage ritual that had come down from the time of the Aryan writings was performed. The ceremonial fire in the court; the vows of the bride and groom as they held hands across the fire; the seven steps around the fire; the chanting of blessings by the priests while the parents and older relatives stood—all was done. When the bride went to her new home her husband gave her a new name, according to ancient tradition. Swarup now became Vijaya Lakshmi.

Now the younger daughter, Krishna, was affected by the increasing tension. It was decided that the British schools should be boycotted by Indians. The



father called Krishna to him and said gently, "Krishna, for the sake of India, each of us must do his full share."

"And I?" the girl asked hesitantly.

"You must leave the British school," he replied.

And after that she was taught at home by tutors.

Then the father himself was involved in an event that, although a personal one, became much more than that. The Prince of Wales was to visit India. Great preparations were made by the Government. A short while before the royal visitor arrived, Motilal received a letter from the District Magistrate asking that Anand Bhawan be open for members of the royal party. Strict orders were given as to how the guests were to be received. Without hesitation, Jawaharlal's father replied that the Magistrate had no authority over his private property, but that even as a non-co-operator he would see that nothing happened to the Prince.

The Government grew more and more severe in its treatment of Congress members. Many arrests were made, and with the coming of the Prince, new rules were made, ostensibly to safeguard him. All gatherings of any sort were forbidden. Congress volunteer work in Bengal and the United Provinces was declared illegal.

The answer of Congress members was that they would continue their work, and they published a list of volunteers. Although Jawaharlal's father was not a volunteer, he gave his name to lead the list. A few days before the Prince arrived in the United Provinces, mass arrests began.

On the sixth day of December the police arrested Congress workers in Allahabad. "I was sitting rather late one day in the Congress office . . . trying to clear up some arrears of work," Nehru says, "when an excited clerk told me that the police had come with a search warrant, and were surrounding the office building. I was of course a little excited, too, for it was my

first experience of the kind. . . . I insisted on the rest of the staff carrying on their usual work and ignoring the police."

Suddenly Nehru thought of what might be happening to the family and at once he went home. The police were waiting for him and for his father. The old servants wanted to resist, but his mother begged them not to make trouble. "It will only make them more harsh with your masters," she whispered. In this crisis she showed her strength. She did not break or falter when she learned that her husband and her son must go to jail. Her eyes were dry, her small head held high, as the two men climbed into the police car and were driven away.

In the district jail where they were held for trial, Jawaharlal and his father and the many others who were there as political prisoners, received word of what was happening. In spite of the Government, the coming of the Prince had greatly helped the cause of the Congress. It had strengthened the feeling and work of the volunteers. It had clarified the necessity for independence.

Wherever the Prince went, cities were dead or empty. Everything had stopped, and the people seemed to have disappeared. Nothing could be less interesting or less welcoming.

"It was hard on the Prince of Wales," Nehru said. "He was not to blame, and there was no feeling against him whatever. But the Government of India had tried to exploit his personality to prop up their decaying prestige."

Much more deeply exciting than the way the Prince was received was the evidence of what the Government had undertaken and how impossible it was. Trucks brought prisoners in to the jails by hundreds. There seemed to be no end to the volunteers. The jails were

overflowing, and the jail officials were at their wits' ends.

It became so difficult to carry out the jail routine that soon only leaders were arrested. Even so, about thirty thousand people were sentenced to imprisonment during the two months of December and January. Only Gandhi was still free, still speaking and working.

Then, suddenly, one day strange news came. Gandhi had stopped the non-co-operation movement! What had happened? How could he stop it at this, its most important, moment? Was all their work to be lost?

Slowly the story came in. Near the village of Chauri Chaura a mob of villagers had set fire to a police station, and a half-dozen policemen had been burned to death. Gandhi had sternly declared that this was a failure of passive resistance, and he decreed that the movement must stop. Nehru had thought that he knew Gandhi, his leader, even when they disagreed. But this was unexpected; and it seemed to waste all that had been done. The dreary hours in jail were meaningless if the cause for which they had worked was gone. He struggled against anger. There must be a reason he did not know or could not fully understand, he told himself, and he awaited trial as patiently as he could.

# VII

## NEHRU THE PRISONER

ON THE seventh of December, 1921, the trials took place. The Government Advocate who opened the case was an old friend of the Nehru family and he was most uncomfortable. He did not have the courage to refuse to prosecute and to resign his job, but he spoke in such a low voice that he could scarcely be heard. Doubtless, he remembered the many times he had been a guest at Anand Bhawan.

Jawaharlal's father was sentenced for being a member of an illegal organization, the Congress Volunteers, and a list was produced headed by the name, Motilal Nehru. Jawaharlal could not keep from smiling, for his father had signed it in a Hindu form so rarely used that few would recognize it, and the person was so illiterate that he held the paper upside down. It was an amusing and yet sad business. The trial was a farce, but his father was sentenced to six months' imprisonment.

Jawaharlal was tried for the offense of distributing notices of non-co-operation, although the act had not been made illegal. He was therefore falsely charged and he, too, was sentenced to six months' imprisonment.

In jail, Jawaharlal continued to think of Gandhi and his strange action in stopping the nonviolent resistance movement. He remembered a famous article that Gandhi had written two years earlier, called "The Doctrine of the Sword." In it he had said, "I do believe that when

there is only a choice between cowardice and violence, I would advise violence. . . . I would rather have India resort to arms in order to defend her honor than that she should act in a cowardly manner . . . and remain a helpless victim to her own dishonor. But I believe that non-violence is infinitely superior to violence, forgiveness more manly than punishment."

There could be no doubt that Gandhi believed in nonviolence. He had said, "Strength does not come from physical capacity, it comes from an indomitable will. . . . And so I am not pleading for India to practice non-violence because she is weak. I want her to practice non-violence being conscious of her strength and power. . . . If India takes up the doctrine of the sword she may gain momentary victory. Then India will cease to be the pride of my heart. . . . I believe absolutely that she has a mission for the world."

But there would often be such incidents as that in Chauri Chaura. People long oppressed and unfairly treated could not always restrain themselves, especially ignorant people who had not the deep faith of their leader. Was the great march forward to be stopped again and again because of these small failures?

Nehru tried not to be critical of Gandhi. He tried to accept his leader's complete devotion to peace but he could not forget that even Gandhi had written that there could be such a thing as cowardice when force was the only other choice.

Life in the jail at Lucknow was confused at best. The jail staff was disorganized and did not know what to make of their new prisoners. The keepers were used to handling criminals of a low class, but these who were here now, many besides the Nehrus, were educated and good people, although some of the younger ones were hotheads and excited by the news of fresh uprisings among the people. It was hard to conduct the life of the

jail as usual. In desperation the staff asked some of the Congress prisoners to help them to quiet those who were agitated by what they heard was happening in other places.

Another thing that confused the jail staff was the fact that no one seemed to want to escape! The staff wished that some of them would escape, for there were far more prisoners than could be accommodated. The superintendent told the jailer quite openly that if he could induce some of the Congress prisoners to escape, he would recommend him for an honorable title.

Most of the prisoners who had just come in were kept in a huge barracks in the inner part of the prison. About eighteen, including Jawaharlal and his father, were put in an old weaving shed. He supposed that they had been singled out for better treatment than the rest, especially since they and two cousins actually had a small shed to themselves and were allowed newspapers and visits from relatives. So much was going on around them, however, that there was scarcely any time for reading or for work.

Nevertheless, Nehru made a routine for himself. In the morning he cleaned the shed thoroughly, washed his father's and his own clothes in the space outside the shed, and did some spinning. Among the volunteers were illiterates, and Nehru and others taught them Hindu and Urdu languages. In the afternoons they played volleyball. But after a few weeks the restrictions were increased, and the classes were stopped. They were more and more cut off from any normal life, and news from outside was less frequent. Nehru realized that he must find ways of waiting in patience for freedom.

While Nehru and his father were in Lucknow Jail, Congress held a meeting in Ahmadabad on the west coast of India, north of Bombay. Jawaharlal's mother and Krishna and Indira went. When they returned they

visited the jail and told of the experience. For the first time in their lives they had traveled third class on a train, and the journey had been long and uncomfortable. Gandhi traveled in the same compartment with them. Wherever the train stopped, regardless of the time of night, huge crowds waited to see him. The peasants heaped flowers and food on him and tried in every simple way they could to show how they appreciated what Gandhi was doing. They trusted him completely and counted upon him to make them free.

When they reached Ahmadabad they had stayed in a hostel, all in one large room, and slept on the floor. They had to get up at four o'clock, even though it was very cold, in order to attend prayers, bathe, wash their clothes, and have some time with Gandhi. The food, Krishna said, was horrible, everything just boiled with no seasoning. She was always hungry and longed to get home for a decent meal. But she would always remember the prayer held on the bank of the Sabarmati River, at the hour of dawn, and Gandhi repeating the beautiful words with their deep meaning for India.

Gandhi had won them. No one could stand against that quality in him of faith, or was it love? Perhaps it was that his relation to the spiritual world was more real to him than the physical. Ah, but spirit had to work through the bodies of men in a physical world!

When three months of his term had passed, Nehru was told that he had been imprisoned illegally and was released. He had only one thought—to see Gandhi and talk to him, and he set out to find him. But before he could reach Ahmadabad, Gandhi was arrested and imprisoned in Sabarmati Jail. Nehru saw him next at the trial.

This time the judge was English, and it was soon clear that he greatly admired Gandhi. He was dignified and kind, and Gandhi appreciated the courtesy given him.

He said, in replying to the statement of charges: "The only course open to you, the Judge and the Assessors, is either to resign your posts and thus disassociate yourselves from evil if you feel that the law you are called upon to administer is an evil one and that in reality I am innocent, or inflict upon me the severest penalty if you believe that the system and the law you are assisting to administer are good for the people of this country and that my activity is therefore injurious to the public weal."

The room was quiet as everyone waited for the sentence. For that moment Nehru could not think of Chauri Chaura or of his doubts. Here was goodness and greatness. Sincerity, even if wrongly expressed, was still to be respected.

The judge sentenced Gandhi to six months of rigorous imprisonment. Then he added, his eyes on the small, half-naked man: "If the course of events should make it possible for the Government to reduce the period and release you, no one will be better pleased than I."

The people left the courtroom in silence. None could forget what had happened. Gandhi had spoken at length to explain his reason for the non-co-operation movement, his devotion to his country, his belief that she must be free. Without bitterness he had put the issue clearly to his English friend. Gandhi was the Mahatma, the "great soul." Though they might often question what he did, he was their leader; without him, all would be lost.

"I am too impatient," Nehru said. "I want to push on. I cannot bear a set-back. I am afraid that we cannot easily move the people to great effort again. I have not had faith enough in Gandhi. There is much I have to learn."

Nehru had looked forward to freedom, but now he



found that he was lonely and restless because so many of his friends were still in jail. Although the non-cooperation movement had been stopped, a boycott of foreign goods was going on. Nearly all the cloth merchants in the city of Allahabad had pledged themselves not to handle imported goods and, to strengthen this decision, they had formed themselves into an association. They decided that any merchant who broke the regulation was to be punished by a fine. Some of the large shops defied this rule and went on importing. Nehru led a movement to picket these stores. These merchants paid the fines, and the money went to the merchants' association, but Nehru was arrested again after only six weeks of freedom. He was charged with criminal intimidation and extortion, and this time his sentence was a year and nine months. On April the first he went back to Lucknow Jail. Meantime, his father had been transferred to Naini Jail.

There were changes made in Lucknow Jail. All the prisoners had been put into barracks, which cut them off more sternly from the outside. Interviews and letters were allowed only once a month. The food was worse, but prisoners were still allowed to receive food from relatives.

Nehru was put into a barrack with about fifty other people, their beds only three or four feet from each other. Since he knew almost everyone, this was not as bad as if he had been among strangers, but it was hard to live with no privacy. All his life he had been sheltered and waited upon by servants.

"We bathed in public," he said, "and we washed our clothes in public—and ran round and round the barrack for exercise, and talked and argued until we had nearly exhausted one another's capacity for intelligent conversation. It was the dull side of family life, magnified a hundred fold, with few of its graces or compensations.

. . . It was a nervous strain on all of us, and I often longed for solitude."

Sometimes he went and sat in the open part of the enclosure. The sun would have made this impossible if this had not been the monsoon season, when usually the sky was cloudy. Even when a gentle rain was falling he stayed there so that he could be alone.

Lying there in the open, I watched the sky and the clouds and I realized better than I had ever done before how amazingly beautiful were their changing hues. . . . The time I spent in watching those ever-shifting monsoon clouds was filled with delight and a sense of relief. . . . I do not know why that particular monsoon had that great an effect; no previous or subsequent one has moved me in that way. I had admired many a fine sunrise and sunset in the mountains and over the sea . . . but in jail there were no sunrises or sunsets to be seen, the horizon was hidden from us, and late in the morning, the hot-rayed sun emerged over our guardian walls. There were no colors anywhere and our eyes hardened and grew dull at seeing always the same drab view of mud-colored wall and barrack. They must have hungered for some light and shade and coloring, and, when the monsoon clouds sailed gaily by, assuming fantastic shapes and playing in a riot of color, I gasped in surprised delight and watched them almost as if I were in a trance.

The jail staff had suspected some prisoners in the barrack of being troublemakers, and one day seven of the men were transferred to a distant part of the jail. Nehru was among them. He was glad, for now they were not crowded, and he had time to read and write letters. They got seeds from friends and planted a small vegetable garden in the enclosure and watered it from a well.

Each of them did a little spinning every day. Nehru spent most of his time reading. He read so much that the English superintendent grew impatient with him. He told Nehru that *he* had read all he needed to read by the time he was twelve, and why did Nehru have to read so much at this age? Nehru only smiled.

The evenings and nights were longest of all, but they had some charts and maps, and by means of these they were able to find many of the stars and planets. Each night as they watched for certain stars, it was almost as if they were waiting for old friends.

But there could be no real relief from worry over families separated from them. The Nehrus had refused to pay fines, this being the Congress policy. The police came to Anand Bhawan and began taking away household goods to make up the fines. Piece after piece of furniture was removed. Nehru smiled to learn that his small daughter was the one who protested most loudly. He missed Indira bitterly.

"One misses many things in prison," he said, "but perhaps most of all one misses the sound of women's voices and children's laughter."

But the months passed, and on the last day of January, 1923, all the political prisoners in Lucknow Jail were set free. They came out excited, exhilarated, drawing the outside air into their lungs, searching distances with hungry eyes. Some were even a little hysterical. When Nehru reached home he was astonished to find in his mail a letter offering him the position of a minister of education in his province. For a while he was tempted, indeed. Perhaps he could do more for the people as a minister than through Congress. Then he understood what the offer meant and he was very angry. It was meant to tempt him. Still, he must not judge too quickly, and he took the letter to his father, who was at home again, too.

The father read the letter and then looked at his son. His eyes flashed behind his glasses. "Accept no such offer," he said. "You see its meaning as well as I." He handed it back.

"Then we agree," Nehru said quietly.

Life went on in the changed house. There were only a few servants now. The rooms were emptier and were changed. Jawaharlal missed the beautiful things he had loved, which had been a part of his childhood. Even the garden was changed.

"The borders have gone quite wild," his mother said, when they walked there. "The gardener says that by the time one part is weeded, another is badly in need of it and so never is all as it should be."

She stood small and fragile in the unkempt garden, where so many happy parties had been held, and he saw her against the earlier background. Her eyes looking at him from behind their spectacles, her gray hair mostly covered by the loose fold of the sari thrown over it, made a picture of gentle acceptance, and he loved her more than ever. Her home and her family were her life—and she had given them up without complaint or wish for pity.

He had the house repaired and the garden cleared and the trees and shrubs trimmed. This once, at least, he could do it for his mother's sake.

But he had to think seriously of how to earn a living for Kamala and Indira. He had given up his law practice when he began to work actively with Congress. Should he not find some other work? He spoke to his father, who had been taking a few law cases again.

"What, give up your work for the Congress in order to make some money!" he said. "Do you not see which is the greater service, so long as we have enough here?"

Jawaharlal said no more. His father was proud to provide for them all.

And Kamala said quietly one night, "Do not worry about money, Jawahar. When the time comes, there are my jewels. What good are they to me? Should they be worn with homespun?"

"You would give even them?" he asked.

"Of course!" she replied.

What did he know of Kamala? She had come faithfully to the jail, bringing food and letters as often as she was allowed. She had never complained of anything at home. But what she understood or thought of non-cooperation he had never known until now.

This time spent at home was treasured, for he knew he could not long be free. When Congress met in Delhi, he went and he found that there had been trouble still farther north in the Punjab among two Sikh tribes. These Sikhs of the regions of Patiala and Nabha had quarreled so seriously that the ruling Maharaja had been replaced by a British administrator.

Nehru traveled with two friends. The city to which they were going stood in Nabha territory. As they went by train, thousands of Sikhs marched toward the same place for a demonstration. Nehru and his friends had scarcely left the train when an order came saying that they were not to enter Nabha territory, and if they had already entered they were to leave at once.

Nehru told the police that he and his friends had not come to take part in the demonstration and were only spectators. There was no train out of the territory for hours, so they decided to stay. All three were arrested.

Nehru and one of his friends were handcuffed together, and that evening were led down the street from the lockup to the police station.

"This march of ours down the streets of Jaito town reminded me forcibly of a dog being led by the chain," Nehru said. "We felt somewhat irritated to begin with,

but the humor of the situation dawned upon us and on the whole we enjoyed the experience."

They were chained in this way until noon the next day. In the night, which was spent partly in the lockup and partly on a slow-moving train, Nehru found that here was another lesson to be learned as a prisoner. It was not pleasant to be so closely fastened to another person so as not to be able to move without the other's co-operation.

When they reached Nabha Jail they were housed in a small room, the three of them together. The ceiling was so low that they could almost touch it, and while they slept on the floor, rats ran over them. Their trials dragged on for two weeks, and Nehru saw how badly the Indian States were ruled. The states were still semi-feudal, and the British administrators used old as well as new laws. At last the sentence was given. It was for two years and a half of imprisonment. To their surprise, when the sentence was due to begin, the three prisoners were set free, and the reason for this was never explained.

But all three men had been infected with typhus in the dirty jail. Nehru had always been proud of his fine health and he was not used to being ill. Now, for weeks he lay feeble and useless. He looked back over the ten years since he had returned to India. What had he accomplished? He thought of those first years when he had groped to find the way to serve India. He remembered how hard the step out into the unknown had been. And now that unknown was his life. He knew the needs of the people at last, their struggles and suffering, and their faith in their leaders.

"I suppose that this experience or something like it, is common to those who have passed through serious illness," he said. "But for me it was in the nature of a

religious experience—I use the word not in a narrow religious sense—and it influenced me considerably. I felt lifted out of the emotional atmosphere of our politics and could view the objectives . . . that had moved me to action, more clearly.”

He recovered and in December, 1923, was elected secretary of the Congress for one year. During this time the president was to be a Moslem named Mohammed Ali. Ali and Nehru were friends and they knew they could work together, although they were unlike in many ways. Ali was very religious and he used the name of God even in resolutions! When Nehru protested, Ali accused him of being irreligious. When they talked quietly, however, Ali often told Nehru that he was more religious than he pretended to be.

“I have often wondered how much truth there was in this statement,” Nehru said. “Perhaps it depends upon what is meant by religion and religious.”

Ali liked formal titles. The Congress, however, had made a rule that its members were to be called only by their names. Once while Ali and Nehru were separated and Nehru was following Congress practice, he received a frantic telegram from Ali ordering him to use titles, especially “Mahatma” before the name of Gandhi, whose many names were confusing. To his closest friends he was Bapu, or father, which for Indians is a term of honor. With even more reverence he was called Bapuji or Honorable Father. Often he was called Gandhiji, which added the honor to his surname, but more and more he was called Mahatma, or Great Soul. Nehru liked Bapuji best, but he used the higher title as he was told to do.

The difference between himself and Ali in the matter of religion brought to Nehru’s mind a question: Was the individual more free as a Moslem or a Hindu? Sometimes they discussed this, but it was hard for Ali to talk

of his religion as compared to another. Hindus, Nehru found, were careful in what they did or did not do, but they felt free to discuss all religious ideas. Perhaps this was because there were so many kinds of Hindus. There were even professed atheists among them.

This discussion of religion made Nehru stop to ask himself what he was. He writes:

A Brahmin I was born, and a Brahmin I seem to remain whatever I might say or do in regard to religion or social custom. To the Indian world I am "Pandit" so-and-so, in spite of my wish not to have this or that or any other honorific title attached to my name. I remember meeting a Turkish scholar in Switzerland, once, to whom I had previously sent a letter of introduction in which I had been referred to as "Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru." He was surprised and a little disappointed to see me, for, as he told me, the "Pandit" had led him to expect a reverend and scholarly gentleman of advanced years.

In spite of their differences Nehru and Mohammed Ali remained fast friends.

All this time Gandhi was still in prison serving out a six-year sentence. He became seriously ill in 1934, and it was decided that he must have an operation. It was performed in Poona. As soon as it was over and he was out of danger, streams of people came to ask about him and to try to see him. The whole nation had been waiting for the latest word from him, and now they came with tremendous relief.

When he was well enough to leave the hospital, the rest of his sentence was remitted and he went to a small seaside resort near Bombay, to grow strong again. The Nehru family went there too, that they might be with him. Nehru loved the swimming and running on



the beach. But there was a greater reason than pleasure in their coming to this place. They were anxious to talk with Gandhi. Nehru felt that some of the educated people were less enthusiastic about the nonviolence movement than before. The common people would never waver in their faith in Gandhi, but others were less faithful and it was from the educated that leadership must come. Jawaharlal's father had formed a new party for these and had named it the Swaraj Party. Father and son waited to talk with Gandhi about it.

This Swaraj Party believed in independence through reform within the Government, but Gandhi did not. He believed that independence must come through the determination of the people—by suffering, by patience, by religion. Jawaharlal's father was a practical man. He was as determined and as certain as Gandhi himself was, and he did not consider even Gandhi as a saint. Both men had steel in them and they could not agree about the Swaraj Party. Yet each recognized the greatness of the other, and their friendship held.

But Nehru was afraid that it might be impossible to mobilize the people again. He had come to know these people and he knew that they always needed something to dramatize their purpose. They were imaginative, emotional, demonstrative. They might die for India gladly, but they must see the cause clearly. They would do nothing for a halfhearted purpose, weakly stated. Gandhi's command for nonviolence continually cooled their hearts and held them back.

He tried to make Gandhi know what he meant. The great little man lay back in a reclining chair in the shade of the veranda, facing the beach. He turned his eyes toward Nehru and watched him while he spoke and felt his troubled impatience. He looked away to the sea again and waited until Nehru was done.

"Preparation of the heart is necessary for the suffer-

ing which lies ahead," the Mahatma said, quietly. "This preparation does not come quickly. . . . Nor does man shape the events of half the world so easily. Time brings opportunities if we are but ready to seize them." His eyes rested on Nehru, gentle and probing, kind and yet rebuking, and Nehru listening knew he must follow Gandhi, even against his judgment. Without Gandhi, the people could not be inspired.

In December, when Gandhi was made president of Congress, he insisted that Nehru again serve as secretary. Nehru could not refuse, for he was committed now to Gandhi, and he accepted him as his leader.

# VIII

## INTERVAL IN EUROPE

KAMALA was not well. For a long time she had been concealing how ill she felt, for she was beginning to share in the general longing for independence and she did not want to acknowledge that she was ill. But in 1925 she had to yield and be taken to the Lucknow hospital. Nehru longed to be free to give her all his time. Instead, as secretary of the Congress, he had to attend its meeting in Cawnpore, and he went back and forth between the hospital and the meeting.

But Kamala grew no better, and at last the doctors decided that she must leave India. Switzerland was recommended. Early in March, Kamala and Nehru, and Swarup and her husband sailed from Bombay for Venice. Swarup and Ranjit had planned to make the trip as a vacation before Kamala's condition seemed serious. Now they all went together. Nehru took Kamala to a mountain sanatorium near Geneva. She needed complete rest, and for him there were long hours for reading and thinking. He was glad to be able to look back at India from a distance and gain a fresh point of view.

"On our mountain-top, surrounded by wintry snow," he said, "I felt completely cut off from India as well as from the European world. . . . I was a distant on-looker, reading, watching, following events, gazing at the new Europe (after the first World War), its politics, economics, and the far freer human relationships, and trying to understand them."

They moved to a flat in Geneva, and in June, Krishna, Nehru's younger sister, came and stayed with them and acted as her brother's secretary. It was not all work, however. When they were not busy, he took her to see museums and art galleries, and they joined the International Summer School in Geneva. There, students gathered from all over the world, and it was delightful to work with them and talk long hours about their countries.

When the General Strike broke out among the miners in England, however, Nehru went to see it for himself. In the mining areas he realized that there was a likeness between the terrorized looks and pinched faces of the miners' families and the oppressed people of his own country. Even so, the miners were better off than the people of India.

One incident in England he could not forget. He saw three or four women with bitter faces and undernourished babies in their arms as they stood in court and were prosecuted for the offense of having jeered at a magistrate. They reminded him of the peasants in his own land, with their constant debts to the landlords and the moneylenders. There was suffering everywhere.

At the end of 1926 Nehru went to Berlin. While he was there he heard of a meeting of the Congress of Oppressed Nationalities, which was to be held soon in Brussels. Surely his nation must be represented. He sent word to India at once and was appointed to attend the meeting as delegate from the All-India National Congress.

That meeting of the Congress of Oppressed Nationalities was unforgettable. Dr. Albert Einstein, Madame Sun Yat-Sen, Romain Rolland, and other distinguished people sponsored the meeting. Germany then was interested in all who felt themselves oppressed, for she

was deeply discontented with the settlements of the first World War. Latin America felt that the United States had imperialistic intentions. The new Chinese Nationalist party, Java, Palestine, Syria, Egypt, and the Arabs of North Africa and African Negroes were represented.

Nehru saw that all colonies and colonial peoples had the same problems, and their first hope was always to become free from the ruling power. He knew now that India's struggle was part of a world-wide determination for independence. He left Berlin believing that India's part was not only to free herself, but by her own liberation to bring freedom to others.

The next summer his father came to Europe, and they talked long hours about all that was happening in India, and Jawaharlal longed to go home. By the end of the year he hoped that Kamala would be well enough.

That summer of 1927 was the tenth anniversary of the Russian Revolution. A great celebration was planned in Moscow, and the Nehru family was invited. The train trip was very long, and the compartments in the coach had few conveniences. Jawaharlal's father, who still enjoyed comfort, grumbled at the barbarous accommodations. "If this is evidence of the great progress which free Russia has made—" he declared, and then broke off.

Moscow was grim even in summertime. The people were poorly dressed and gave the impression of putting up with much sacrifice. But as Nehru had opportunity to talk with them he felt a great and determined spirit in them. His own heart responded to it and he knew that they, like his peasants at home, were willing to do without many things and to suffer for the sake of the dream of freedom and a new way of life.

The Grand Hotel was grand only in the size of its almost empty rooms. All the beautiful furniture be-

longing to the time of the czars was covered with coarse cloth slips so that the room would look plain. The building was chilly, and when they asked for a bath in the morning the maid looked at them as astonished as if they had asked for heaven itself! Even hot water was a luxury hard to obtain. But the celebration of the Revolution was magnificent. The people were sincere in their homage at Lenin's grave in the Red Square, and the Nehru family shared something of the deep feeling of those around them.

Krishna told her brother of a small incident that had impressed her. She had gone to a meeting and sat down beside a young Communist girl. Knowing how the Russians felt about wearing what looked rich or costly, she had worn her simplest sari without jewels and with only the little *kum-kum*, or red mark of her caste on her forehead. At home, all of Krishna's friends painted on the *kum-kum* whenever they dressed, without thinking of any religious or even class significance in connection with it. It was no more than a habit of her group.

The Russian girl looked at her several times and then leaned over and touched the mark on Krishna's forehead.

"Why do you put that on?" she asked. "I hope it is not a sign of any religion, for we in Russia do not like religion." After a moment she went on, "It must be a beauty spot. Do you use it as such? Communists do not believe in these bourgeois ways of enhancing one's looks by unnatural means."

Nehru smiled to hear Krishna tell of the incident, but his sister said unhappily, "Even the plainest of our saris looks out of place here."

"All that matters is that everybody has enough," Nehru answered. "What we wear does not matter."

Krishna looked at him. "What do you think lies

ahead for India, Jawahar?" she asked. She was no longer just a daughter of the Nehru family, but a young woman of India, thinking of her country.

"Suffering," he said simply.

"Will we know how to suffer?" she asked again.

"We will learn," he answered.

"You *have* suffered, Jawahar," she said.

"No, Krishna, not yet. I wonder sometimes if I am equal to what may lie ahead." He spoke quietly, and her silence was agreement. India could be free only when her people would suffer to free her.

# IX

## THE LATHEES STRIKE

AT THE end of the year they returned to India, Nehru refreshed and Kamala almost well. They were at once overwhelmed. Could they so soon have forgotten how impetuous their own people were? Greetings and problems and urgent needs—all seemed heaped upon them without an instant to readjust after months away.

The Congress was meeting in Madras and Nehru went off to it at once. He had determined to present a straight resolution for planned independence. All would like to have independence, but would all work for it to the very end?

He presented his resolution, and it was accepted without any discussion. Surely, everyone did not realize what the words meant! But he could not challenge Congress—he could only wait and see.

As if to test the point to which Congress would go for the sake of independence, the British Government now announced that it would send a special mission to India to study the political situation and to suggest plans for a colonial government. The phrase used was that India should be examined as to her "fitness for self-government," and this angered Nehru and his colleagues. Why should any other country decide upon the form of India's government? Even the Moderates protested against the investigation when it was found that there was not a single Indian on the Commission.



In 1928, however, the Simon Commission arrived, and India was ready for it.

"Wherever the Commission went," Nehru said, "it was greeted by hostile crowds and the cry, 'Simon, go back!' and thus vast numbers of the Indian masses became acquainted not only with Sir John Simon's name but with two words of the English language, the only two they knew."

Those simple words were full of portent. The crowds were quiet, and there were only such minor incidents with the police as must be expected where large groups of people are gathered. But the people knew the meaning of this investigation and they did as they were told and waited.

An incident in Lahore brought indignation to the whole country. There, the anti-Simon demonstration was headed by Lala Lajpat Rai. He was one of the greatest of the Indian leaders, the most popular man in the Punjab. He was not young and he was not well. As he stood by the roadside in front of thousands of demonstrators, he was assaulted and beaten by the police, and not only he, but many of his companions. The death of Lala Lajpat Rai a few weeks later, possibly hastened by this incident, increased the demonstrations against the Commission tremendously. Smoldering anger quickly spread over the country, and although violence was as always controlled, huge processions and meetings were organized at each place where Sir John was to arrive.

Rehearsals of these processions were held, for reasons that they would then move more smoothly and because the rehearsal served as propaganda. These rehearsals came to be an annoyance to the authorities, and orders were issued against the forming of any procession in certain areas.

The Commission was soon to come to Lucknow, and

it was decided that small groups would form and go separately to the meeting place to avoid trouble. This still did not obey the letter of the law, for sixteen persons and a flag were considered by the police as a procession. However, it would at least be an attempt to avoid drawing attention to what was taking place.

The day for rehearsal came. Nehru says:

I led one of the groups of sixteen, and after a big gap, came another such group. . . . My group had gone perhaps about two hundred yards—the road was a deserted one—when we heard a clatter of horses' hooves behind us. We looked back to find a bunch of mounted police, probably about two or three dozen in number, bearing down upon us at a rapid pace. They were soon right upon us, and the impact of the horses broke up our little column of sixteen. The mounted police then began belaboring our volunteers with huge batons and truncheons. The refugees sought refuge on the sidewalks and some even entered petty shops. They were pursued and beaten down.

There was no time to stop and wonder what he could do, how he would act, whether or not he would be able to meet violence with nonresistance. This was a moment when instinct seemed to decide. Nehru says:

My own instinct had urged me to seek safety when I saw the horses charging down upon us. . . . But then I suppose some other instinct held me to my place, and I survived the first charge which had been checked by the volunteers behind me.

Suddenly I found myself in the middle of the road; a few yards from me, in various directions, were the policemen beating down the volunteers. Automatically I began moving slowly to the side of the road to

be less conspicuous, but again I stopped and had a little argument with myself and decided that it would be unbecoming for me to move away. . . .

Hardly had I so decided, when I looked around to find that a mounted policeman was trotting up to me, brandishing his long new baton. I told him to go ahead and turned my head away. . . .

He gave me two or three resounding blows on the back. I felt stunned, and my body quivered all over, but, to my surprise and satisfaction, I found that I was still standing.

The next morning Sir John Simon arrived. The many small groups of demonstrators gathered in front of the railroad station, but only after various sections of it had been stopped by the police along the way. Now they lined up and stayed there without trying to push forward or move out of place. Before them were large numbers of foot and mounted police. On all sides, sympathetic onlookers gathered and some came into the open space by twos and threes.

Suddenly [Nehru writes], we saw in the far distance a moving mass. It was two or three lines of cavalry or mounted police, galloping down toward us and striking and riding down the numerous stragglers that dotted the *maidan* [space]. The charge of the galloping horsemen was a fine sight, but for the tragedies being enacted along the way, as harmless and much-surprised sightseers went under the horses' hooves. Behind the charging lines these people lay on the ground, some still unable to move, others writhing in pain, and the whole appearance of the *maidan* was of a battlefield.

We did not have much time for reflection . . . the horsemen were soon upon us, and their front line

clashed almost at a gallop with the massed ranks of our processionists. We held our ground, and as we appeared to be unyielding, the horses had to pull up at the last moment and reared up on their hind legs with their front hooves quivering in the air over our heads. And then began a beating of us, and a battering with lathes and long batons both by the mounted and the foot police. . . .

The clearness of the vision that I had had the evening before, left me. All I knew was that I had to stay where I was and must not yield or go back. I felt half blinded by the blows and sometimes a dull anger seized me and a desire to hit back. I thought how easy it would be to pull down the police officer in front of me and to mount up myself—but long training and discipline held and I did not raise a hand except to protect my face from a blow. Besides, I knew well enough that any aggression on our part would result in ghastly tragedy, the shooting down of large numbers of our men.

There was no satisfaction now. It was a bitter measuring of determination and hope against organized military power; it was soul force against body force. It was to be a long, hard struggle.

The Simon Commission moved on into the distance. The procession lined up; the police withdrew and fell into rank again. Orders had been followed. But that was not the end of it in the minds of the people, nor could it be. Nehru writes:

The memory that endures with me far more than that of the beating itself, is that of the faces of those policemen, and especially the officers, who were attacking us . . . those faces, full of hate and blood-lust, almost mad, with no trace of sympathy or touch

of humanity! Probably the faces on our side were equally hateful to look at, and the fact that we were mostly passive did not fill our hearts and minds with love for our opponents or add to the beauty of our countenances.

When the procession was over, the wounded cared for, and the excited ones calmed, Nehru thought back over the last two days. He had known that this would come. He had wondered whether he could meet blows without resisting. He had been afraid of himself. He was bruised and sore in every limb, and humble because he remembered the moments when he had longed to return violence for violence. But something had held him to what he really wanted to do. He knew now that he could meet the lathees again and again, if need be.

# X

## FATHER AND SON

NEHRU had known that a day would come when the conservative members of Congress would come to an issue with the progressive ones. It would have been easier to face had he not known that his father and he would be on opposite sides. Jawaharlal had been right in thinking that when his resolution on independence was passed at Madras, its full meaning was either not understood or else ignored. He, with others who felt as he did, formed the Independence for India League. Its platform was freedom.

But the conflict ahead included more than the steps toward independence. It was disagreement about how to make living better for the people. Nehru felt that any form of government India had must be responsible for making life better for its workers. He thought of the overburdened peasants and remembered the miners of England and the poorly clad citizens of Moscow.

His own life was shadowed for he knew that at any moment he might be arrested again. He was constantly watched, and everything he did and said was reported. He was warned by friends and through the press. In the night Kamala said, "Jawahar, I do not wish to stop you for I know you must do what you do, but you know that all you even think is known."

He answered simply, "Yes. Is it all right with you, Kamala?"

And she answered, "Yes."

Writing of this time, he says, ". . . rumors of arrest were not without their compensations; they gave a certain excitement and bite to my daily life. Every day of freedom was something precious, a day gained."

In December the Congress met in Calcutta, and his father presided, while he was secretary. The conflict between father and son was strong. Nehru saw that his father was determined to work for compromise with government.

"To this," Nehru says, "he knew I was not agreeable because I was not prepared to compromise on the independence issue, and this irritated him. We did not argue about the matter much, but there was a definite feeling of mental conflict between us, and an attempt to pull different ways. Differences of opinion we had often had before, vital differences that had kept us in different political camps. But I do not think that on any previous or subsequent occasion the tension had been so great. Both of us were rather unhappy about it."

The long discussion on the floor at the meeting began. It was clear at last that the resolution on independence was a formality. A strong group of those who had voted for it were now working only for dominion status. It would be better, at least, than what India now had, they said. But Nehru, sitting at his place, asked himself, what right had England to keep his country in bondage? The road ahead was long, and no miracles could be expected. England was making great profits out of India, and why should anyone expect that she would easily give them up? He had loved England, and he loved much about her people still, and many of her ways. But now to him the people of England were those miners, and the people of India were peasants. Freedom was necessary for two reasons: the people of India might choose



Jawaharlal Nehru's grandfather, Pandit Ganga Dhar Nehru  
*(from an old painting)*

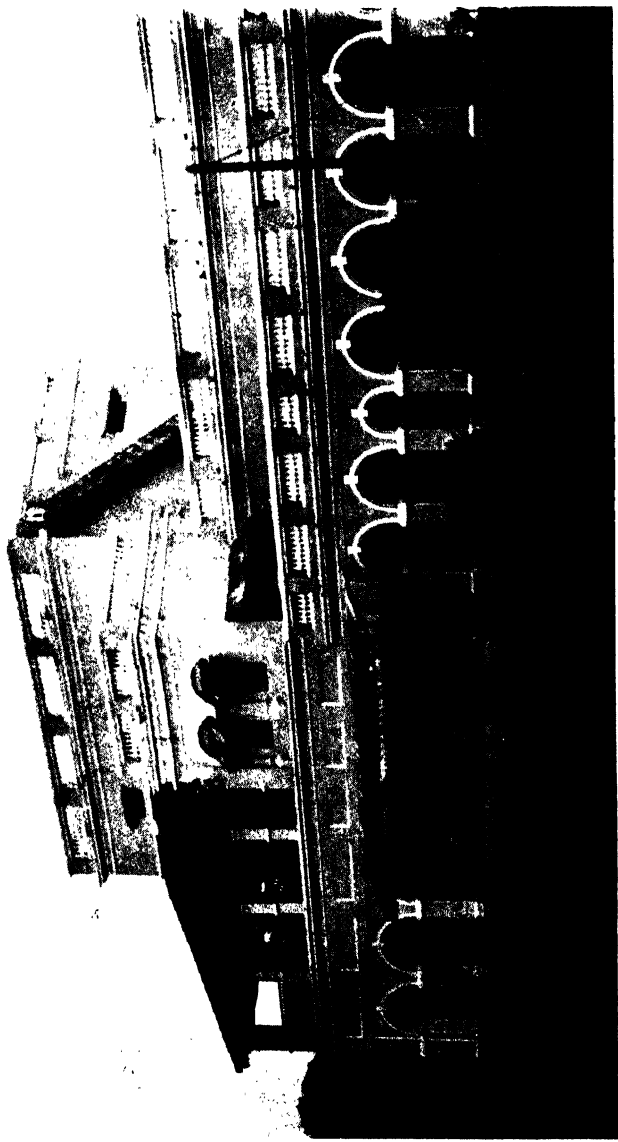




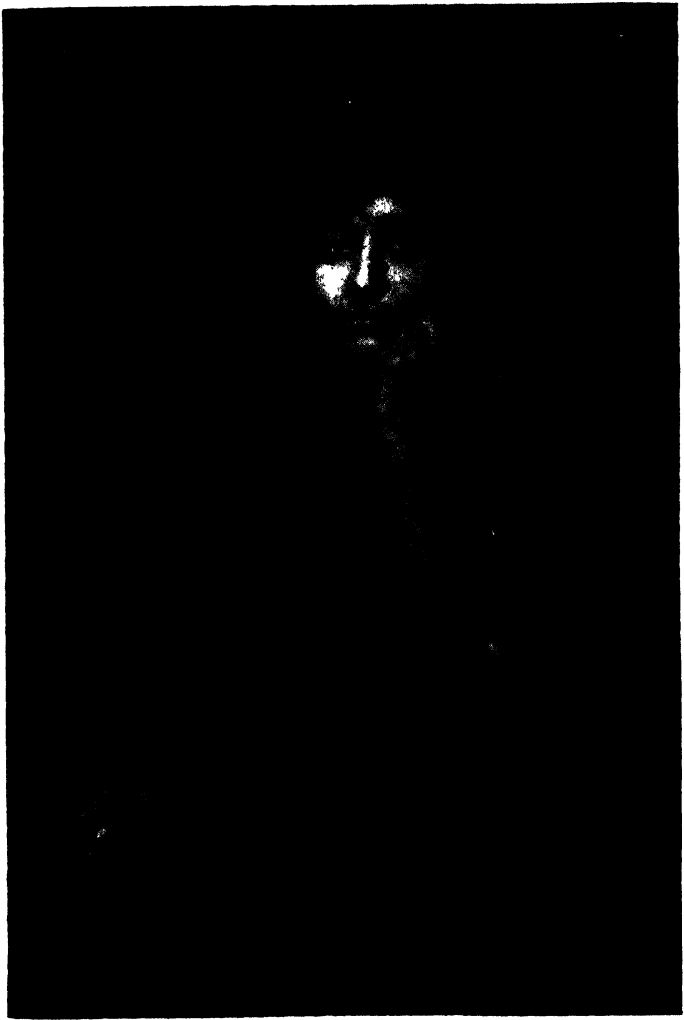
Motilal Nehru, Jawaharlal's father



Rani Nehru, Jawaharlal's mother



Anand Bhawan, the Nehrus' famous house, which has been given to the nation and is now called Swaraj Bhawan



Kamala, Nehru's wife



Swarup (Vijayalakshmi Pandit) , the older of Nehru's two  
sisters

*Photograph by Alexander Alland*



Krishna Nehru Hutheesing, the younger of Nehru's sisters



Nehru with his daughter, Indira

their own form of government, and these peoples might have a better way of life.

His father's voice broke through his unhappy thinking. He was saying that if a majority of Congress did not favor his All-Parties Conference report, which advocated compromise, he did not wish to preside over the Congress meeting. He had the constitution on his side, but this was pressing the decision, and there was a flutter of dismay.

After a long discussion, they reached a semidecision. A new constitution was drawn up. It was based on the president's report but it included a condition; if the British Government did not accept this new constitution within a year, then Congress would go back to the Independence Resolution.

As Nehru read the new statement aloud, his heart sank. This resolution did not even ask for dominion status for India. Yet, at least, it kept Congress from complete division—and, he realized with sudden relief, it was most unlikely that the Government would accept it within the year.

When he had finished, he glanced at his father. The older man seemed satisfied. As the meeting proceeded, his voice rang out and his eyes rested for a moment on his son, as if he said, "It is best so, Jawahar. Do not invite conflict and suffering."

But Nehru knew that no delay could avoid that moment when the people would rise to demand their real freedom. He would spare his father, if he could, but could any be spared when the time came?

Congress was to meet next time in Lahore. Who should be the new president? Everyone turned toward Gandhi, but he refused. Jawaharlal Nehru, he declared, should be chosen, but Gandhi's refusal was not accepted as final, and Nehru himself was among those who felt



that Gandhi would still accept the office. But at the last moment Gandhi made it clear that he would not serve, and Nehru was elected. He was not happy about it.

He says, "I have seldom felt so annoyed and humiliated as I did at that election. It was not that I was not sensible of the honor, for it was a great honor, and I would have rejoiced if I had been elected in the ordinary way. But I did not come in at the main entrance, or even by the side entrance; I appeared suddenly at the trap door and bewildered the audience into acceptance."

But not everyone felt as Nehru did. His father was deeply pleased.

"He did not wholly like my politics," Nehru admits, "but he liked me well enough, and any good thing that came my way pleased him. Often he would criticize me and speak a little curtly to me, but no person who cared to retain his good will could run me down in his presence."

Others accepted Nehru gladly, and he was relieved. He heard it said that Gandhi's intuition was again proven; he had known the right one to put forward at this time.

What did the time demand? The peasants of the United Provinces were stirring. The youth movement for independence was growing rapidly. Youth Leagues were forming all over India. Boys and girls went into the villages and lived and worked there to help the peasants to become aware of the need for freedom and what it could bring them. Labor strikes and peasant marches made the air tense. The worried Government was trying to get nationalists to go to London for a meeting. Even at Nehru's home there was a change. His father gave Anand Bhawan to Congress as a gift and moved his family to another place, which he again named Anand Bhawan. The old home was now rechristened Swaraj

Bhawan and was used for Congress offices and a Congress hospital.

Nehru knew, now, that India was moving on beyond the control of any one person.

"Individuals," he says, "for all the brave show they put up, played a very minor role. One had the feeling of being the cog in a great machine which swept on relentlessly." This was the country whose destiny rested upon him.

The time for the meeting of Congress came. His father handed the *gadi* or gavel of authority to Nehru. The great crowd was silent, and then broke into deafening applause. Seldom was such an honor passed on from father to son, the highest honor that India had to offer to any one of her citizens.

I can never forget [Nehru writes of that moment] the magnificent welcome the people of Lahore gave me, tremendous in its volume and intensity. I knew well that this overflowing enthusiasm was for a symbol and an idea, not for me personally; yet it was no little thing for a person to become that symbol, even for a while, in the eyes and hearts of great numbers of people, and I felt exhilarated and lifted out of myself. But my personal reactions were of little account, and there were big issues at stake. The whole atmosphere was electric and surcharged with the gravity of the situation. Our decisions were . . . to be . . . a call to action.

Nehru himself gave the call in the closing words of his presidential address:

We have now an open conspiracy to free this country from foreign rule, and you, my comrades, and all

our countrymen and countrywomen, are invited to join it. The rewards that are in store for you are suffering and prison, and, it may be, death. But you shall also have the satisfaction that you have done your little bit for India, the ancient but very young, and have helped a little in the liberation of humanity from its present bondage. *Vande Matram!* [Hail to the Motherland!]

A great campaign was planned to start on January the twenty-sixth, which was fixed as Independence Day. On this day a pledge of independence would be taken all over the country. The people who had come to the meeting of Congress went back to their places to organize and inspire their people. Many of them had come from the Frontier Provinces, which lay near Lahore, and these provinces must be prepared to take a great part in what lay ahead.

Nehru now waited to discover how the people would feel about the campaign. Would they respond as they had before?

He had an opportunity to see them close at hand, for in January the annual fair, Magh Mela, was held, and hundreds of thousands of people streamed into the city. He writes:

They were all kinds of people, chiefly peasants, also laborers, shopkeepers, artisans, merchants, business and professional people . . . a cross section of Hindu India. As I watched the great crowds . . . I wondered how they would react to the call for civil disobedience and peaceful direct action. How many of them knew or cared for the Lahore decisions? How amazingly powerful was the faith which had for thousands of years brought them and their forebears from every corner of India to bathe in the holy Ganga!

Could they divert some of this tremendous energy to political and economic action to better their own lot? What strength lay behind them, and what capacity for organized action, for long endurance?

The crowds came not only to Allahabad but to Nehru's house. He was beset by people, day and night. He knew with sudden misgivings that they were seeking him out as their hero, a symbol of their resolve for freedom. He heard songs about himself and stories, many of them without the least basis in fact.

Yet he really did not believe they came to see him as much as his father, whom they knew better than he. He did the best he could when his father was away. He tried to say a few words to each group of twenty, or fifty, or a hundred, as they came. This soon became impossible. There were too many, and all he could do was to salute them silently.

"There was a limit to this, too," he writes, "and then I tried to hide myself. It was all in vain. . . . It was impossible to work or talk or feed or, indeed, to do anything. This was not only embarrassing, it was annoying and irritating. Yet there they were, these people, looking up with shining eyes full of affection, with generations of poverty and suffering behind them, and still pouring out their gratitude and love and asking for little in return, except fellow feeling and sympathy. It was impossible not to feel humbled and awed for this abundance of affection and devotion."

He had a horror of growing conceited.

"Conceit," he says, "like fat on the human body, grows imperceptibly, layer upon layer, and the one whom it affects is unconscious of the daily accretion."

There were safeguards, however. Nehru's family picked up some of the high-sounding titles that were given him and bandied them about most irreverently.

At home he was addressed as "Jewel of India," or, "Embodiment of Sacrifice," and Indira, his daughter, laughed at him, her eyes twinkling. Even his father laughed. But his mother shook her head. She took her son seriously. His greatest help was his own sense of humor.

"Public functions were," he says, "a great strain on my nerves and my sense of humor and reality. . . . Everybody would look so solemn and pious that I felt an almost uncontrollable desire to laugh or stick out my tongue or stand on my head, just for the pleasure of shocking and watching the reactions on the faces of that august assembly. . . . Sometimes I suddenly left a procession, arranged in our honor, and disappeared in the crowd. . . . Gandhi once told an interviewer that if he had not had the gift of humor, he might have committed suicide, or something to this effect."

He soon ceased to trouble about himself or to heed the praises and adoration that the people heaped on him. He was president of Congress now, and action lay ahead.

# XI

## INDEPENDENCE IS DECLARED

THE twenty-sixth of January, 1930, was the day set for the Declaration of Independence. All over India enormous gatherings peacefully and solemnly took the pledge. "We believe that it is the inalienable right of the Indian people, as well as of other people, to have freedom and to enjoy the fruits of their toil and to have the necessities of life, so that they may have full opportunities of growth. We believe also that if any government deprives a people of these rights and oppresses them, the people have a right to alter it or abolish it."

Where was the great movement to begin? Everyone looked to Gandhi for the answer.

"We will attack the salt laws," he told them.

The people understood Gandhi's meaning. Salt, a necessity of life, was a government monopoly, and the tax upon it fell most heavily upon the poor. Salt was to be a symbol of this civil disobedience revolution in India, just as tea had been the symbol for the American colonies. Again, the cry was against taxation without representation. With his almost uncanny perception Gandhi had chosen the thing that would most easily be accepted by all India.

But Gandhi never allowed himself to be hurried. He planned first to petition the Government to revise the salt laws, and he carefully prepared a statement of reforms, known as the Eleven Points. These were sent to

the Viceroy ten days before the date set for the beginning of the demonstration that he would lead if the reforms were refused. The answer to the petition came back. It was not satisfactory. The passive fight was on.

Congress met in Ahmadabad to make final plans for the struggle ahead. They had to decide what to do when arrests were made and who was to take the place of each one taken. A system of so-called dictators, or those authorized to act, was set up. This was kept secret.

"Congress dictatorships were really stepping stones to prison," Nehru said.

Plans for Gandhi's symbolic demonstration were simple. He was to march to the coast and evaporate sea water to make salt in defiance of the laws. This moment would be the sign for civil disobedience to break out all over the country.

On the twelfth of March he left his retreat near Ahmadabad and started for Dandi on the Bay of Cambay, just north of Bombay. With him went a few chosen helpers, and behind him surged a mass of humanity. Each village through which he passed added its people to the crowd.

On his way back to Allahabad, where much waited to be done, Nehru stopped at Jambusar to see Gandhi, who had come this far. He says, "That was my last glimpse of him then as I saw him staff in hand, marching along at the head of his followers, with firm step and a peaceful look. It was a moving sight."

And now all India was waiting for the moment when Gandhi would reach the sea and perform the symbolic act that would set off the great campaign.

Nehru writes:

April came and Gandhiji drew near the sea, and we waited for the word to begin civil disobedience by an attack on the salt laws. For months past we had been

drilling our volunteers. . . . The object of the training was to make them more efficient at their work and capable of dealing with large crowds. The sixth day of April was the first day of National Week (celebrating the event at Jallianwala Bagh). On this day Gandhiji began the breach of the salt laws at the Dandi beach, and three or four days later permission was given to all Congress organizations to do likewise and begin the civil disobedience in their own areas.

The people responded, magnificently. Men, women, and children rushed to the nearest salt water with buckets, pans, whatever they could find to make salt for themselves, and so defy the tax laws. Nehru says:

It seemed as though a spring had suddenly been released; all over the country, in town and village, salt manufacture was the topic of the day, and many curious expedients were adopted to produce salt. We knew precious little about it, and so we read up where we could and issued leaflets giving directions; we collected pots and pans and ultimately succeeded in producing some unwholesome stuff, which we waved about in triumph and often auctioned at fancy prices. It was really immaterial whether the stuff was good or bad; the main thing was to commit a breach of the obnoxious salt law and we were successful in that. . . . We marveled at the amazing capacity of [Gandhi] to impress the multitude and make it act in an organized way.

The air was tense now. The Government would act soon. The volunteers waited for orders from Congress and the Congress Dictators. Among the women volunteers were Krishna and Kamala. They were dressed as men so as to be more ready for the active work ahead.



Nehru looked at Kamala. She was slim, too slim, and her eyes were bright, and the smile she gave him made him remember with wonder their wedding day so long ago. Was this that girl who then could not have dreamed of a life like this? He thought with a pang that he had been almost more wedded to Congress than to her—and yet she had never complained.

The Government acted almost at once by declaring Congress an illegal body and confiscating its funds. All civil liberties were denied, and the whole country was put under special ordinance laws.

On the fourteenth of April, Nehru started for a meeting. As he was boarding the train, he was arrested. That same day he was tried and sentenced to six months' imprisonment under the Salt Act. Kamala saw him taken away from the courtroom. His last glimpse was of her standing there smiling at him.

Nehru was put in Naini Jail, and here he saw the machinery of the Government's criminal system as he had not before. He says: "As I watched the workings of an Indian prison, it struck me as not unlike the British Government in India. There is great efficiency in the apparatus of the government . . . and little or no care for the human material of the country. Outwardly the prison must appear efficiently run. . . . But no one seemed to think that the main purpose of the prison must be to improve and help the unhappy individuals who come out of it. Break them! That is the idea, so that by the time they go out, they may not have the least bit of spirit left in them."

Seven years had passed since Nehru was last in jail. He was now placed in solitary confinement, but even solitary confinement did not leave him really alone, for all around him were other prisoners, two thousand of them, and he felt them near him and seemed ever to

hear them. He was one part of a great system of punishment, and the realization was not a pleasant one.

He lived in a small enclosure that held four separate cells. He was given two of these, and the other two were for a time unoccupied. The enclosure was surrounded by a wall fifteen feet high.

"Was it my fancy," he writes, "or is it a fact that a circular wall reminds one more of captivity than a rectangular one? The absence of corners or angles adds to the sense of oppression. In the daytime the wall even encroached on the sky and allowed only a glimpse of a narrow-bounded portion. . . . At night the wall enclosed me even more, and I felt as if I were at the bottom of a well."

His impression of the jail was not improved by the only view he had. This was of a strange structure that looked like a huge cage. At first he could not imagine what it was. He could see men going slowly around and around in it. When he inquired he discovered that it was a water pump worked by sixteen men at a time. It seemed to him a horrible example of the inhumanity of the jail system. He could think of nothing but a zoo as he watched the slow, dogged pacing of the men.

At first he was not allowed to leave his enclosure. Later he was permitted to go out under the main wall and walk for half an hour in the early morning, when no other prisoners would see him. He wanted to make the most of this opportunity, so instead of walking he ran, and this refreshed him very much.

He was in this solitary confinement for a month. The only people he saw, besides the men in the pump, were the convict cook and the overseer. Occasionally a prisoner came on a special errand. These prisoners were always lifers. Life sentences were supposed to end after twenty years, but he soon found that this was a pleasant

myth. Each prisoner wore attached to his shoulder a small wooden board that told why he was convicted and when he was due to be released. One day Nehru read the board on one of the men who had come on an errand and saw to his astonishment that the man was to be released in 1996. He was a man of middle age and had already served several years. Questioning him, Nehru found that he had been given several sentences and, when added up, the period went far beyond the man's lifetime.

It was impossible not to think of the meaning of a life sentence. Whenever he had a chance he talked to the men who came to his cell. He found them brooding and bitter. They were wrapped in thoughts of fear and hate and revenge, and they seemed to have forgotten that there was any goodness, or kindness, or joy in the world. Some had reached a stage even beyond this. They had become machines, dulled to a point scarcely human.

"People argue against the death penalty and their arguments appeal to me greatly," Nehru says. "But when I see the long-drawn-out agony of a life spent in prison, I feel that it is perhaps better to have that penalty than to kill a person slowly and by degrees."

Worst of all were the boys in the jail, some of them no more than fifteen years old. There were very bright ones among them. Surely, there were great possibilities in these young fellows. Yet they were locked into cells for twelve hours each day and even when outside them were given absolutely nothing for recreation or education. Nehru's anger and disgust mounted.

On the other hand, European prisoners were always treated better than the rest. They could have visitors every week, while the other prisoners had them once in three months.

"No one," Nehru said, "grudges the European convicts these privileges, for they are few enough, but it is

a little painful to see the utter absence of any human standard in the treatment of others—men and women. . . . One sees in prison the inhuman side of the State apparatus of administrative repression at its worst. . . . I have seen long-term convicts sometimes breaking down at the dreariness of it all and weeping like little children. And a word of sympathy and encouragement, so rare in this atmosphere, has suddenly made their faces light up with joy and gratitude.”

With Nehru in jail, someone must take his place as president of Congress. Gandhi refused to serve, and Jawaharlal's father was chosen. He was not well but he threw himself into the work. The son heard it with misgivings. It was a hard time to serve as president. The great civil disobedience movement was sweeping on. Processions continued, with lathee charges, shootings, and boycotts. Boycott was, of course, the reply of the Nationalists to the action of the Government. English goods were almost completely shut out of Indian trade. Nehru knew that his mother, his sisters, and Kamala were among the picketers, standing for hours in the hot sun and braving the possible attacks of the soldiers.

His father had visited him and told him about Kamala, and Nehru had listened with anxiety. She was not really strong, but she was organizing the women of Allahabad. She was up at five in the morning to drill the women, and by eight they were at the cloth shops.

Gandhi was next arrested, and this was followed by great raids on the commercial salt pans and depots on the west coast. The volunteers were stronger than ever. The police tried to check them, and many were wounded—so many that Congress hospitals were opened in Bombay to take care of them. All this made it even harder to be in jail. Nehru felt that he was almost living in comfort when he thought of his family and his people.

In June his parents and Kamala went to Bombay. All Bombay and the surrounding district welcomed his father as president of Congress. It was a tremendous ovation—and it was followed by a savage lathée charge on the volunteers. Jawaharlal's father was already unwell, and now his doctors urged him to take a short rest in the family hill home at Mussoorie. He took their advice, for he could not afford to be ill now. Gandhi and Jawaharlal were both in jail.

Nehru learned with relief of his father's decision, for he had seen that his father looked ill on his last visit to the jail. His relief lasted only a few days. One afternoon his door was thrown open, and there stood his father and Dr. Syed Mahmud, one of the Congress leaders. A guard was with them. Nehru was speechless with surprise.

"I and Mahmud have come to join you," his father said simply.

"You never reached Mussoorie!" Nehru rose and led his father to a chair. How ill he looked!

"They arrested me before there was time," Motilal answered, and sat down wearily. "Government is growing more severe," he went on. "They will arrest any Congress group wherever it meets. Kamala is a member of the Working Committee now. So many have been taken that she was next in line."

Kamala a member of the Working Committee! Then she, too, might be arrested at any moment. The work for India's freedom had become their whole life. Perhaps it would demand even life. But he must take care of his father now—it was all he could do. Another prisoner had been put in with them, which made four in the small, crowded enclosure. The jail authorities tried to make them comfortable, however, and built a small porch on one side of the block of four cells.

In spite of everything, Nehru was grateful that at last

there was someone to talk with about all that was going on outside. They talked for hours, argued, planned. His father's sense of humor was still lively, ill though he was, and sometimes his laugh rang out. It was still his famous laugh, heard in such different circumstances before. But they were soon to be troubled by a misunderstanding with Gandhi. When Jawaharlal's father was arrested he had made a statement concerning the terms on which the civil disobedience campaign might be stopped. The press had reported it wrongly, and Gandhi now sent a representative to see the Nehrus.

After talking with this man, Jawaharlal and his father both felt that they must meet Gandhi and come to an understanding, and after some negotiation they were able to get permission to go by special train to Gandhi, who was in Poona Jail. To avoid crowds and publicity, the train was not to stop at any big station.

They boarded the train and halted only at night at small, wayside places to take on supplies and coal. To their surprise, voices cried out in welcome, and people clung to the steps of the coach. Flowers, always the symbol of honor and welcome, were thrown into the windows. The people had heard—how, no one knew, but they were waiting when the train drew to a stop. Nehru was deeply touched. These peasants, whose lives were so full of hardship, must somehow have their faith rewarded, their hope fulfilled.

For three days Jawaharlal and his father talked with Gandhi, and the statement they drew up together was then published. The conference had been exhausting, and when it was over, his father was too ill to travel. They waited for four days and then set out again by special train.

The Government was again kind to Jawaharlal's father, for if a man so beloved by the people should die in jail, it would mean endless trouble for the author-

ities. The journey was made safe and comfortable, and they were allowed to break the journey at Yervada Jail. Here, the superintendent, by order of his superiors, came to see what he could do for the sick man. Jawaharlal was amused and he describes the scene thus:

Colonel Martin . . . asked Father what kind of food he would like. Father told him that he took very simple and light food, and then he enumerated his various requirements from early morning tea in bed to dinner at night. (In Naini we used to get food for him daily from home.) The list Father gave in all innocence and simplicity consisted certainly of light foods, but it was impressive. Very probably at the Ritz or Savoy it would have been considered simple and ordinary food, as Father himself was convinced that it was. But in Yervada Prison it seemed strange and far away and most inappropriate. Mahmud and I were highly amused to watch the expression on Colonel Martin's face as he listened to Father's numerous and expensive requirements in the way of food. For a long time he had had in his keeping that greatest and most famous of India's leaders (Gandhi) and all that he had required was goat's milk, dates and perhaps oranges occasionally. The new type of leader that had come to him was very different.

Nothing would ever change his father, however. Even as leader of a great movement of peasants, he was still himself. Only his heart had changed.

When they were back at Naini Jail again, Nehru hoped that his father would be better for the journey. Instead, he was worse, and friends began to urge that he be released. The old gentleman was displeased when he heard that the Government was being thus pressed by his supporters.

"Tell them to stop it," he said petulantly. "I suppose I am as able to serve my sentence as anyone. I want no favors."

The agitation went on, however, until at last the release was granted to him.

"Nonsense!" he shouted. "Send a telegram to Lord Irwin," he commanded his son. "Tell him I do not wish to be released before my time is up."

But Jawaharlal, although he sent the message, knew that his father must not stay in jail any longer. The older man was losing weight rapidly and he watched the wasting face with deepest anxiety. Release came, and his father was taken away. How much Nehru missed the domineering, active presence! It was as if the sun itself had been darkened. Then, almost at once, Swarup's husband, Ranjit Pandit, came to fill the empty place. Who in the family would be next? But time had passed somehow, and now it was only a month until his six months would be up. There was much he knew must be done, and another arrest might overtake him before he had finished. It was only sensible to realize, even now before he was free, that certainly he would be arrested again.

The moment the prison doors opened and he was able to go home, many things demanded immediate attention. There was scarcely time even to realize freedom. Kamala was so busy that Nehru hardly recognized her. She appeared to be more delicate than ever, but she seemed borne along by some inner power that led her beyond her real physical strength.

What was the next step for Congress? It would soon be time to pay taxes and rentals. Should there be a campaign against these? At a meeting in Allahabad it was decided to sanction such a campaign wherever a district felt ready to undertake it.

Beneath the pressure of events in the city, Nehru



thought constantly of his father, who was now in their country home at Mussoorie with his daughters and his wife attending him, and as soon as he could get away Nehru went to him.

He found his father looking so much better he could hope the worst of the illness was over. Nehru's spirits lifted and he let himself enjoy his daughter and Swarup's three small girls. One of their favorite games was to form a procession and march around the house waving the Congress flag and singing the flag song, "*Jhanda unche ruhe hamara.*" Nehru laughed at them and hugged the youngest, who was only three. He loved children and longed for more of his own and time to be with them. Kamala had joined him, and for a little while they had a taste of the old happy family life again.

When he prepared to go back to Allahabad his father insisted on going with him and only with difficulty did the family persuade Motilal to let his son and Kamala go without him. It was an exciting trip, and Nehru was thankful at Dehra Dun, at Lucknow, and again at the station in Allahabad, that his father was not there, for at each of these places he was served with a warrant.

It was only a matter of days before he would be arrested again. What should he do first in the time left? It was not hard to decide. He must meet again with the peasants, for they were the body of the whole movement. A peasant conference was planned. He spoke to the peasants and felt anew the courage of their determination. They decided to start the no-tax campaign in the Allahabad district. As their voices rang out in approval, he knew that their faith in him, expressed again, was what he needed for strength to carry him through whatever was to come.

The day the meeting was to close, he went to the station to meet his father and the other members of the

family who were coming home with him. The train was late, and he wondered whether he could keep his promise to attend the final meeting of peasants and townspeople, which had been set for that evening. He was torn between his love for his father and his loyalty to the people. At last the train came, and he hastened to help his father off and to see him on his way home. There was time for only a few hurried words.

"You are better?" he asked.

His father nodded but his face was ashen, and Jawaharlal thought he looked no better. He told his father that he would leave the meeting early and come home.

"Go, Jawahar, they need you more than I," his father replied. "I shall be awake when you come back."

So Nehru and Kamala went to the meeting, but as soon as it was over they left, to hurry home. Suddenly a shout stopped them. The car jolted and ground its way to the curb. Sharp orders came clearly through the night air. There was no need to ask the meaning of it. Nehru knew that he was under arrest again. Kamala clung to him for an instant and then as quickly released him.

"Only eight days of freedom, Jawahar!" she whispered, and he heard the tremor in her voice. He turned back to her even though the officers were impatient.

"Only eight, Kamala," he said sadly, "but we did not expect long, did we? Are we ready, my dear?" he asked again, and she answered, "Ready."

At nine o'clock the gates of Naini Jail had closed behind him again. It was his fifth term in prison. He was sentenced to two years of rigorous confinement, and another five months for good measure.

What would his father do? When Kamala came to visit him, Nehru discovered what had happened. His father had straightened in his invalid's chair and banged the table before him.

"I'm not ill," he announced. "I shan't be ill—there is no time for such a luxury. Bring me—" and he listed the leaders of the campaign whom he wished to see.

The family could do nothing with the strong-willed old man. Visitors came every day, some from the most remote parts of India, and he urged all of them to press the civil disobedience movement. A great all-India celebration of Nehru's birthday was planned, and they selected the parts of Nehru's speeches that had led to his arrests to be read aloud to the crowds. The father forgot his weakness. He actually seemed better, and those who watched him said among themselves, "Either he is better, or else he knows that time is short."

On his birthday Nehru waited anxiously for news. It came at last. Terrible lathee charges and five thousand arrests had taken place. What share had his words in all this? He thought of his father with mingled love and concern and he wrote to beg him to take a complete rest, now that the day was over. Rest would be impossible in India. Why not go to the Dutch East Indies, away from everything? To his surprise, his father agreed, and the trip was planned. He got only as far as Calcutta, however. There he grew so ill that he could travel no farther. His wife and daughters nursed him for seven weeks while he tried to pull himself together. Only Kamala remained in Allahabad working.

Meanwhile, Congress was having increased difficulties, for the Government was growing more and more severe against the civil disobedience movement. Local committees and youth groups were declared illegal. Prisoners were treated more harshly. There was reason for the Government to grow desperate. Many of the prisoners who had finished their terms and had been released went back into Congress work and had to be rearrested at once!

Then Nehru heard that young boys belonging to

Congress Youth Groups were being beaten. They were not criminals, and his anger rose hot in him. He had already lost fifteen pounds since coming to jail, but he and the three others in his barrack announced that they would fast in protest.

How bitter the days in jail were, with all that was going on outside! The men tried to put their thoughts on other things. Ranjit Pandit, Swarup's husband, transformed the tiny space outside the cells into a flower garden and even set up a miniature golf course. Nehru determined to begin writing. For more than two years he would be separated from Indira. He had written Indira before, when he was in jail, and letters again must take the place of all he could not give her.

The first letters had been published under the title *Letters from a Father to His Daughter*. Now he would continue from where he had left off. He had no library in Naini Jail, but years ago he had formed the habit of taking notes, and these he always kept with his personal belongings. He wrote the first letter for New Year's Day, 1931.

On this same day he learned that Kamala had been arrested. He knew that many of the women of his family and among his friends would have been taken long ago if the Government had used the same charges against them as against men. But the Government had not wanted to begin on the women. Now Kamala had done her work too well. When the word came, Nehru smiled. To the others he said, "I am pleased. Kamala told me that she longed to follow the rest of us." Then his face sobered. "She's not strong," he added. Later he saw the statement Kamala had given to the press when she was taken. She said, "I am happy beyond measure and proud to follow in the footsteps of my husband."

The news of Kamala's arrest made Jawaharlal's father decide to leave Calcutta for Allahabad, even

though he was still far from well. On the twelfth of January he went to see his son in jail. It was nearly two months since the two had met, and now the son could not hide his fear. Yet the father's spirit was the same, his voice held the same old dauntlessness, and he joked, as he often did, about living to a ripe old age. But when he went away, Jawaharlal could not forget his face.

On the twenty-sixth of January, Nehru was summoned from his cell. His father was gravely ill. Nehru and Ranjit were both allowed to leave jail. They hastened home to find the father in bed. When he saw them he insisted on getting up and sitting in his favorite chair.

"I've rested enough," he growled.

Others of the Congress prisoners were released, too. Kamala came home, pale but composed, and Nehru welcomed her with new love. Common experience had made them one. Even Gandhi was freed. There must be a plan behind this. Soon they discovered that the Government had purposely released the leaders so that they might meet together and work out a compromise for the civil disobedience campaign. Jawaharlal's father was worse, and he was anxious to see Gandhi and the other leaders, and a great celebration for Gandhi's release was held. After it, the mighty little leader came as quickly as he could. It was late at night when he arrived in Allahabad, and his old friend was lying awake waiting for him. He could do no more than hold out his hand in welcome, but his son and the others standing by saw the pleasure on the ill man's face, and his wife came forward to take Gandhi's hand. "I'm glad you've come," she said.

Not only Congress leaders, but friends from all over India began to come when they heard of their leader's illness. The doctors allowed them to come in, two or three at a time, in the morning and evening. "Here,

help me up," the old man always commanded just before they came. "Receive my friends lying down? Never!" They helped him up into his chair, but tears stung many eyes. He was like an old lion who is mortally wounded, struggling to keep his grip on life. Only once did he openly admit that this might be his final illness. Once when he was talking with Gandhi he spoke of the meeting of the Working Committee.

"Good," he said. "Decide India's fate in Swaraj Bhanu; decide it in my presence and let me be a party to the final honorable settlement of the fate of my motherland. Let me die, if die I must, in the lap of a free India. Let me sleep my last sleep not in a subject country, but a free one."

Soon it was not a matter of how serious was the illness, but of how long death could be held away. The old arrogant determination to see India free was not to come true for Jawaharlal's father. "I'm going soon, Mahatmaji," he said to Gandhi. "I shall not be here to see Swaraj [self-government]. But I know that you have won it and will soon have it."

Gandhi leaned forward and stroked his friend's hand. "We will have it, Motilal," he said simply. "Together we have worked for it, and partly because of it you lie here today. It is a great price paid for a precious article." They looked at each other in complete understanding.

Early on the morning of February the sixth, 1931, Nehru was watching beside his father. The family took turns now, except that sometimes Nehru insisted on staying even though another was supposed to take his place. Now he noticed that Motilal's face grew suddenly calm. He's resting better, he thought with relief. But his mother, coming in, ran to the bed with a quick cry and threw her arms about her husband's shoulders. Then she raised her terrified eyes to her son. "He's gone!" she whispered.

The other members of the family came in at once, and Gandhi was with them. Nehru sat beside the bed stroking his father's head as though he were only ill. Gandhi went at once to the bed. He stood there for a moment with closed eyes, his head bent. Then he turned to Jawaharlal's mother.

"Motilal is not dead, Rani," he said in a strong, clear voice. "He will live long."

The little mother looked into Gandhi's face. She could not speak, but her eyes clung to him as the only strength she had. It was true, Gandhi had made defeat into victory—sad victory it must be.

It was not possible to hold a small, quiet funeral. Nearly a hundred thousand people gathered on the banks of the Ganges to see the cremation of their old leader's body on the funeral pyre. Peasants and workers and professional men and wealthy leaders were there, and in the dusk of that evening there was no difference between them.

Gandhi rose to speak. The great mass of mourning people grew still and silent. His words rang out.

"Let every man and woman here vow before the remains of our great hero . . . that he or she will not rest until the freedom of India has been achieved, because this was the cause dear to the heart of Motilalji. It was this for which he gave his life."

"As evening fell on the river bank that winter day," writes Nehru, "the great flames leaped up and consumed that body which had meant so much to us who were close to him as well as to millions in India. Gandhiji said the few moving words to the multitude and then all of us crept silently home."

## XII

### TRUCE

WHILE Nehru had been serving his fifth sentence in jail and other important Congress leaders were also imprisoned, the First Round Table Conference on Indian Independence was taking place in London. The British Government had tried before to get Congress leaders to attend such a conference to discuss methods for change. When at last the meeting was being held, the most important leaders were in jail. Those who were able to go were only the more conservative members of Congress. In London they planned a Second Round Table Conference, when a conservative plan of co-operation might be discussed.

Those who had been abroad arrived back at the very time of Motilal Nehru's death. Some went at once to Allahabad to report on the meeting. It was scarcely a time for Nehru to welcome such representatives, but Gandhi and other newly released members of the Working Committee were still in the city, and they met together to hear the report of the Conference, which, it seemed, had been valueless for India. Then Gandhi was invited to meet with the Viceroy. He agreed to go, and after a few days Nehru and others, too, were summoned to Delhi. They met with the Viceroy for three weeks. Sometimes a single word and its interpretation would take hours of time. Toward what were they moving, Nehru asked himself? Even more troubling was a grow-



ing fear about Gandhi's own point of view. Nehru remembered the stopping of the early campaign because of the violence of the peasants at Chauri Chaura. There had been other times when it was hard to understand motives in Gandhi's decisions. But Gandhi was the leader, and for the sake of unity in their cause, Nehru could only follow.

One night all had left the Viceroy's office except Gandhi. They waited for him. The hours passed slowly by. At last he came at two o'clock in the morning. He was quietly calm as he told them that an agreement had been reached, and he showed them the draft. It was called the Delhi Pact and it announced that the civil disobedience movement was to be stopped, at least for the time being. Nehru could not trust himself to speak. He went away to bed, feeling that the whole movement for independence was threatened. All night he lay sleepless. There must be some reason behind Gandhi's decision—something that Nehru did not understand.

In the morning Gandhi came to him. "Come and walk with me, Jawahar," he said in his kindly fashion. "I wish to talk with you."

It soon became clear to Nehru, as they talked, that Gandhi interpreted the Delhi Pact in his own way. To Gandhi no principle had been surrendered. He simply felt that greater progress could be made in the end by accepting this agreement now, in order to have peace. There was nothing to do but to receive it as a truce. Civil disobedience was stopped all over India, and most political prisoners were set free.

But not even Gandhi had taken the people into account. When they greeted the released prisoners they celebrated with great processions and many flags. This was embarrassing to the police, for only a short time ago they had been ordered to stop all parades connected with the work of the Congress. Should they stop parades

welcoming release of the prisoners? They did not know what to do when the people turned the occasions into great triumphal marches. Nehru could only smile at the predicament of the Government authorities.

According to this new plan for co-operation and truce, the Second Round Table Conference had to be arranged. Everyone expected Gandhi to go, but he hesitated. He did not know what might happen in India while he was away, and only at the last moment was he persuaded, and Nehru saw him off.

The Government had been irritated at the triumphal parades and now it was impatient with the people of the province of Bengal. All along the northwestern frontier the people were restless because they were pressed to pay taxes for which they had no money. They came to Allahabad and complained to Congress leaders. Nehru went back with them, touring the country and urging the people to resist the payments. His sense of justice would not let him do anything else, although he knew the danger to himself. He was twice served with ordinances forbidding him to attend any public meeting, to address any group, to write in any newspaper. He paid not the slightest attention.

When Gandhi was to return, Nehru went to Bombay to meet the older man and was arrested, and others with him. In the lockup, waiting for his sentence, Nehru wondered why he had ever expected to be able to carry out that reunion.

It was only the beginning of more severe repressions by the Government. There was no longer a truce. The people rose up in a fresh civil disobedience movement. January the fourth, 1932, was the climax. Nehru was sentenced to two years in jail. Both his sisters were arrested, and each was sentenced to a year. That same day Gandhi and the Congress president were arrested. In the city of Allahabad and the surrounding country, great

crowds gathered in protest, and the Government attacked them with lathes. Many were wounded and some killed. Nehru hearing of it, was glad only that Kamala was ill and could not take part in the demonstration. At least, she had been saved.

Now the Government went even further. It again declared Congress illegal, and beyond that, the Working Committee, local committees, peasant unions, youth organizations, student associations, national universities and schools, and hospitals. Property and bank accounts were seized. India was living under what amounted to martial law. Bitter as it was, Nehru tried to be fair. He said:

I did not think that any Congressman had the right to object to the procedure adopted by the Government, although the violence and coercion used by the Government against an overwhelmingly non-violent movement was certainly most objectionable from any civilized standards. If we chose to adopt revolutionary direct-action methods, however non-violent they might be, we had to expect every resistance.

The resistance went on. The old Nehru home, Swaraj Bhawan, was confiscated by the Government, and it was rumored that Anand Bhawan would also be taken, since Nehru had refused to pay the taxes (although after the Delhi Pact and the truce it had seemed only right to reconsider, and so he had paid one installment). Now he was troubled by the thought that his mother would be deprived of her home, and that important books and papers might be scattered. As far as the house was concerned, he did not care. Had not thousands of others lost their homes? But Anand Bhawan was not taken. Perhaps the Government knew that such an ac-

tion would have raised only a great surge of strength for the movement.

National Week came. The people were ready. Processions and demonstrations broke out everywhere. But Nehru did not hear of what happened until several days later. When the procession formed in Allahabad, his mother joined it. They were stopped by the police, and lathees were brandished about, but there was no actual attack. Someone brought his mother a chair, and she sat down at the head of the column to wait for the next development. Nehru's own secretary was watching over her. Suddenly the secretary and other friends of the family who were concerned for the elderly lady, were seized, and she was alone. Before she knew what was happening she was knocked out of her chair and hit on the head a number of times with canes. Her head began to bleed, and she fainted. When she came back to consciousness she was home again in Anand Bhawan. Then rumor started. It was said that Jawaharlal Nehru's mother had been killed, and angry crowds gathered, forgot about nonviolence, and attacked the police. The police fired, and some of the people were killed.

When he heard of it all, Nehru was sick with anxiety for his mother and distress at the incident. What would he have done? he asked himself. He remembered how uncertain he had been of his own actions before he had felt the lathees biting his flesh. But that had been *his* flesh. If he had seen his mother beaten and bleeding, could he have held back from violence? He knew he could not.

The next month, his mother came to see him in jail. Nehru had been anxiously waiting for her.

"You are still in bandages!" he exclaimed at once. But this small, frail woman who had always leaned so

heavily on the strength of her husband only smiled.

"It was my part, Jawahar," she declared.

He could not accept this. "Now, Mother," he said gently, "all through the years your part has been the hardest—to give up home and husband and children for the sake of India. These are much harder than the excitement of taking part in the movement."

"I suppose that is true," she agreed, "and yet I have never felt I took a real part until now."

What more could the son say? He let her go away and reproved her no more.

# XIII

## THE MEANING OF LIFE

DURING the long jail sentence, Nehru fell ill. The weather was very hot and he was moved from one jail to another, until finally he reached Dehra Dun Jail, which stands at the foot of the Himalayan Mountains.

The mountains rested and refreshed him immensely. He says, "I could not see them from my cell, but my mind was full of them; I was ever conscious of their nearness, and a secret intimacy seemed to grow between us. . . . Their solidarity and imperturbability looked down upon me with the wisdom of a million years and mocked at my varying humors and soothed my fevered mind."

It was winter when he arrived, but he found the bare trees beautiful. Then spring came and he watched its approach with delight. He wrote: "Suddenly there was a stir both in the pipals [a kind of fig tree] and the other trees, and an air of mystery surrounded them as of secret operations going on behind the scenes; and I was startled to find little bits of green peeping out all over them. It was a gay and cheering sight. And then, very rapidly, the leaves came out in their millions and glistened in the sunlight and played about in the breeze."

In Dehra Dun he learned more of the art of living in jail. There were not only the mountains and the trees outdoors; there was the life within the cell. He was the only human there but he soon found other life about him.

As I grew more observant I noticed all manner of insects living in my cell or in the little yard outside. . . . I was not alone in my cell for several colonies of wasps lived there, and many lizards found a home behind the rafters, emerging in the evening in search of prey. . . . I realized that while I complained of loneliness, that little yard, which seemed empty and deserted, was teeming with life. All of these creeping or crawling or flying insects lived their life without interfering with me in any way, and I saw no reason why I should interfere with them. But there was a continuous warfare between me and the bedbugs, mosquitoes, and to some extent, flies. . . . Bats I did not like, but I had to endure them. They flew soundlessly in the evening dusk, and one could just see them against the evening sky. Eerie things; I had a horror of them. They seemed to pass within an inch of one's face, and I was always afraid that they might hit me. Higher up in the air passed the big bats, the flying foxes.

I used to watch the ants and white ants and other insects by the hour. And the lizards, too, as they crept about in the evenings and stalked their prey and chased each other, wagging their tails in the most comic fashion. Ordinarily, they avoided wasps, but twice I saw them stalk them with enormous care and seize them from the front. I do not know if this avoidance of the sting was intentional or accidental.

Nehru made pets of a pair of pigeons who nested just above his cell door. They were one of the things he had to laugh at, for after a time they came to demand their meals, and if he was late in feeding them, they sat quite near him and loudly demanded food.

He had a pet dog, too. A jailer had a bitch, which he abandoned when he was transferred. The poor thing

was not fed by anyone, and Nehru adopted her. When she had a litter of puppies, one of them fell sick with distemper, and he nursed it carefully. He says, "Sometimes I would get up a dozen times during the night to look after her. She survived and I was happy that my nursing had pulled her round."

What meaning had these little animals as the symbols of peoples?

Different countries [he writes] have adapted different animals as symbols of their ambitions or character—the eagle of the United States of America and of Germany, the lion and the bulldog of England, the fighting cock of France, the bear of old Russia. How far do these patron animals mold national character? Most of them are aggressive, fighting animals, beasts of prey. The people who grow up with these examples before them appear to mold themselves consciously after them, strike aggressive attitudes, roar and prey on others. The Hindu is mild and non-violent, for his patron animal is the cow.

But this attention to the small things around him and his thought of animal symbols could lead him only to deeper thinking of what was taking place in India, and to the question of the real meaning of life. The movement toward freedom seemed to be dying. The leaders were in jail, and the Third Round Table Conference in London proposed more safeguards for Britain's hold on India. Nehru felt the four hundred million people of India were being forgotten again, while English military, civil, and commercial interests were made stronger than ever. He thought of other countries and their problems and he saw wherever he looked that the same struggle was going on—that of freedom for the people. India was not alone, then, and he realized that even



though the movement might be slowed for the present, the love of freedom could not easily be killed. He had only to remember the faces of the peasants to be reassured of this.

Yet freedom from England could not be enough. There was the oppression of the rich upon the poor. He had always thought much about socialism. What would happen to Congress if it were asked to make a decision now about socialism in India? What would Gandhi say? He had followed Gandhi through the years, and he remembered with warm appreciation how often Gandhi had led his own family from sorrow to hope—and yet he knew that they did not always agree.

In September, 1932, Nehru learned that Gandhi had decided to fast as a protest to a decree of the Government that had set up election groups among the people by classes. Gandhi believed that classes should not even exist. What if Gandhi died as a result of his fast? Nehru realized then that not even Gandhi's death could stop what had been started among all the thousands of peasants. As if to prove this, Gandhi's fast started a wave of enthusiasm all over India. It was more than enthusiasm for freedom—it was the people's longing to do away with the restrictions of class, to wipe out Untouchability. This, too, was Gandhi's heart's desire.

The fast was successful. The plan for elections was given up, and Gandhi was alive and victorious. This was a new beginning for Gandhi. He started the Harijan Movement to remove all caste divisions, and Nehru, while he heartily agreed with the purpose, began to fear lest the new movement would divert the struggle for independence. He began to feel far away from his old leader, who made a religion out of anything he did. He knew that this trait was not Gandhi's alone, for in his whole people there was a deeply mystical, religious sense that he did not share.

I was torn between rival loyalties [he said]. I knew that there was trouble ahead for me, when the enforced protection of the jail was removed. I felt lonely and homeless; the India to whom I had given my love and for whom I labored, seemed a strange and bewildering land to me. Was it my fault that I could not enter into [all] the ways of thinking of my countrymen? Even with my closest associates I felt that an invisible barrier came between us, and, unhappy at being unable to overcome it, I shrank back into my shell. [And later he wrote] India is supposed to be a religious country above everything else. . . . The spectacle of what is called religion in India and elsewhere had filled me with horror, and I have frequently condemned it and wished to make a clean sweep of it. Almost always it seems to stand for blind belief and reaction, dogma, bigotry, superstition and exploitation, and the preservation of the vested interests. And yet I knew well that there was something else in it, something which supplied a deeper inner craving of human beings. How else could it have been the tremendous power it has been and brought peace and comfort to innumerable souls? I am afraid it is impossible for me to seek anchorage in this way. I prefer the open sea with all its storms and tempests. Nor am I greatly interested in the after life, in what happens after death. I find the problems of this life sufficiently absorbing to fill my mind. The traditional Chinese outlook . . . has appeal for me . . . how to understand life, not to reject it but to accept it, to conform to it, and to improve it.

No, he could not accept a religion that, for him, seemed to try to close its eyes to reality and make one think only in terms of spirit and emotion. To him real

spirituality was in the living of life and in the relationships of men. Yet, he remembered people who were strongly religious and who were also magnificent souls. Had religion anything to do with their stature? He doubted it. Religion seemed to him something that cut one off from others—the mystic and the ascetic always left life and lived apart from others.

His thinking had led him back to Gandhi who had always said that man could not live without religion any more than he could breathe without the organs of respiration. Gandhi went further and declared that those who said that religion had nothing to do with politics did not know what religion meant.

“What is goodness?” Nehru asked himself. “Is it an individual’s relation to God or is it one’s responsibility to man?” Here was the heart of his difference with Gandhi. Gandhi began with himself—his attitudes, his relation to God, and after that, to man. He, Nehru, felt his whole responsibility was to man, and his duty to make life good for other human beings, wherever they were. Gandhi believed in village industries, the simple life, personal devotions, the ascetic acceptance of poverty.

“I hate poverty and the praise of it,” Nehru declared. “I do not honor suffering. I do not think they are desirable, and they ought to be abolished. . . . I understand and appreciate simplicity, equality, self-control; but not the mortification of the flesh. . . . Nor do I appreciate in the least the idealization of the simple peasant life. I have almost a horror of it. . . . I want to drag out even the peasantry from it. . . . Present day civilization is full of evils, but it is also full of good; and it has the capacity to rid itself of these evils.”

No, for him, goodness meant the greatest good for the most people.

Gandhi wants people to give up bad habits and become pure [Nehru wrote]. He lays great stress . . . on the giving up of drinking, smoking, etc. Opinions may differ about the relative wickedness of these indulgences, but there can be no doubt that even from the individual point of view, and even more from the social, these personal failings are less harmful than covetousness, selfishness, acquisitiveness, and the fierce conflicts of individuals for personal gains . . . the inhuman exploitation of one group by another, the terrible wars between nations.

The meaning of life? Life was life for everyone, and all must have their share and their chance.

# XIV

## THE EARTHQUAKE

NEHRU's mother fell ill, and he was released early. Two years away had brought many changes at home. Little children looked more than two years older; others he had thought of as children were now gangling adolescents. People had been married, deaths had taken place. He seemed like a visitor in his own house.

And yet he soon felt a weight of things to be done. First of all, his mother must be nursed back to health. Kamala looked ill, although she seldom rested and helped his sisters to care for the mother. Krishna was to be married, and it was hard to decide how to plan the wedding. Much depended upon the mother's health. His father's personal affairs had still not been settled. Every mail brought requests for financial help. Indira was ready to go away to school, and money had to be put aside.

Beyond these many personal demands upon him was the much greater question of how to work for Congress and avoid immediate rearrest. The only safety would be to stop work altogether. This he could not do. As usual, before he made any decisions about public work, he must see Gandhi. However they might disagree, they must go on together with the great task. Gandhi was recovering from a fast, and looked more frail than ever. His eyes seemed enormous in his thin face. But as Gandhi grew stronger they talked long and often. Each accepted

each other's differences in their plans for independence; Gandhi was for the encouragement of village industries and no great industrial movement, while Nehru stood for socialistic industrialism.

Nehru began a series of articles for the press. What he wrote appeared not only in India and England, but was published even in Teheran and Kabul. Meanwhile, whatever Nehru did, the needs of the family must be met. His mother was still ill in the hospital, and twice a day he went to see her.

As soon as his mother was better and at home again, Krishna's wedding date was set. She was marrying into a different caste, and according to the British law no religious ceremony could make this legal, and they could have a simple civil wedding. Krishna had chosen her own husband, her mother approved, and Gandhi knew his family. The wedding was at Anand Bhawan, but how different it was from the old days when Nehru had been married, and Swarup! When it was over and all the family and relatives were seeing Krishna and Raja to the train, Nehru clasped his younger sister to him. "Be happy, darling!" he whispered. It was hard to believe that she was grown and married. Suddenly he felt old with the years and their burdens.

His mother was much better now, though still far from well. Money was needed to pay for this illness and then for Indira's schooling. Both Nehru and Kamala felt that Indira must not attend one of the regular universities influenced so strongly by the Government. They chose Santiniketan, the school founded by Rabindranath Tagore. They had been to see the place, but the fees were high. Again Kamala said, "There are my jewels." This time they sold them.

Now he began his own work again. Congress was still declared an illegal body, and to speak in that organization was to court rearrest. He wanted to travel just to

know what was taking place. He attended Congress but only incidentally, and in the same way he addressed great meetings in Jubbulpore and in Delhi at the Moslem university at Aligarh. Twice the Working Committee met secretly, even though it did not officially exist, and then Nehru made an open stand for socialism. Many of the Congress members resented this. They said that he was drawing them all into a position to which they had not agreed.

Meanwhile plans were made for the celebration of Independence Day. Each district was to decide upon its own ceremonies. Allahabad was going to include the whole district. Before these celebrations Nehru wanted to see the people in the province of Bengal. The peasants there had suffered a great deal because of their work for independence. On the way there he wanted also to stop in Calcutta to have doctors see Kamala. He was more and more troubled about her health. Neither of them wanted to think of illness that might disturb the time that they had together, and yet something must be done.

On the afternoon of the day they were to start, Nehru stood on **his** porch talking to one of the many groups of peasants **who** were always coming to see him. It was also near the time of the great festival of Magh Mela, and visitors were **beginning** to pour into the city for that. While he was **talking** he felt himself suddenly sway, and he almost lost **his** balance. For a moment he thought that faintness must have come over him. Then he heard doors banging and tiles clattering as they slid down the roof of the house. It was an earthquake! He had never experienced one, and yet what else could shake the whole house? He saw fright on the peoples' faces and to quiet them continued his talking, and even spoke of the earthquake as amusing.

That night he and Kamala went to Calcutta as they

had planned to do. When they reached the city, there was not much reported about the earthquake. Only after they had been there three days did they begin to know how terrible the effects were.

On the way home they stopped to see how much damage had been caused by the quake and what was being done to help the people. Nehru was horrified to find that in many places almost nothing had been done. He hurried to Allahabad for the Independence Day celebration and then set out at once on a tour of the whole earthquake area. He found that Government properties had been repaired and protected, while in those same places living people were still being dug out of the ruins after having been buried for twelve days. He himself helped to do some of the digging and unearthed a body. Deep anger at the negligence of the Government rose in him, and he kept careful notes of what he saw during the ten days of his tour.

Back in Allahabad he began work on his notes. He was so tired that he had to stop and sleep a few hours before he went on. But he knew that he must work fast and put everything else aside. The day after he reached home he stopped in the middle of the afternoon for a cup of tea with Kamala. When they had finished they stood on the veranda for a moment before he went back to work. At that instant a car drove up, and a police officer alighted. Nehru says, "I knew immediately that my time had come. I went up to him and said, 'I have been waiting for you a long time.' He was a little apologetic and said that he was not to blame. The warrant was from Calcutta. Five months and thirteen days I had been out now."

That night he was taken to Calcutta in the big prison truck. He was almost at home in a prison truck now, and he had wired Indira half in jest, "I am going back to my other home for a while." But the constables with



him tonight looked thoroughly unhappy. The light from the street caught the face of one. Nehru was shocked to see that his eyes were glistening with tears. They are only tools, he thought, only cogs of the machinery.

On the sixteenth of February he was again sentenced to two years in jail.

# XV

## KAMALA IS NO MORE

AFTER his trial, Nehru was sent to Alipore Central Jail and put in a cell about nine by ten feet. In front of it was a veranda and a small open yard. These were enclosed by a seven-foot wall, and towering above the wall were the chimneys of the jail kitchens, belching forth heavy black smoke. . . . But just beyond the wall, in the adjoining yard Nehru could see one or two trees, and these he could watch as the symbols of spring.

The routine began. From sunrise to sunset the prisoners were locked in their cells. The early part of the night was fairly quiet, with only the distant sounds of the city, but a little later the guards began their hourly inspection. At three o'clock in the morning the kitchens started a tremendous scrubbing and scraping, and there could be no more sleep. The whole jail, although only about half the size of Naini, was far more strictly disciplined. There seemed to be twice as many officers, and many of them were English. The atmosphere was almost military.

But Nehru had to take jail life as it was and make the best of it. Much more troubling were his thoughts on what was going on in India and, indeed, the world. He knew that fascism was gaining power in Spain, and Austria had lost democracy. What was happening in Europe?

Suddenly his thoughts were brought back to India.

The superintendent of the jail told him casually one day, as if it were only a comment on the weather, that Gandhi had again stopped the civil disobedience movement. Nehru was not allowed to have a daily paper, only the weekly *Statesman*, published in Calcutta. Here the next week he read Gandhi's statement. Gandhi had stopped civil disobedience because one of the Congress prisoners had refused to do his full share of the prison work in the spirit of *Satyagraha*, or nonviolence. Nehru read on. Gandhi took the blame for having been blind to the prisoner's weakness and said that now he himself must be the only representative of the civil disobedience movement.

Nehru felt something like fear. This was an example of Gandhi's deeply religious sense. Further on in the statement he specifically urged the members of the Congress party to spread hand spinning, abstain from intoxicating drinks, practice personal purity. How was a national movement for independence to go forward on a platform of this kind? But he had to remember again that Gandhi was still the one who had always been able to inspire the people. He was still the one who knew when to touch the spring of action. "Almost he *was* India, and his very failings were Indian failings," Nehru said later.

Nevertheless, Nehru's own feelings changed. The cords of allegiance that he had always kept strong between himself and Gandhi now snapped. "Suddenly I felt very lonely in Alipore Jail. . . . Of the many hard lessons I had learned, the hardest and most painful now faced me. One must journey through life alone; to rely on others is to invite heartbreak."

He fell ill again and once more he was moved to Dehra Dun Jail. He was glad. Now there would be the mountains. Alas, when he reached there, he found that he was not put into his old room, but into an old cattle

shed that had been repaired, and the wall around it had been raised by several feet so that he could see nothing at all above it. He knew that just beyond this wall were the grass and trees and mountains that he loved, but they were as invisible as though miles separated them from him.

He could not seem to get better. When he slept he had nightmares, and sometimes the guards came and woke him because of his shouting. He felt nervous and shaken. He knew that worry was eating his heart, not only distress over what was happening in Europe, but in his own country as well. The All-India Congress, after being declared illegal for three years, had been declared legal again, because conservatism was once more in the lead and the Government was no longer afraid. Peasant unions and labor unions were still outlawed, and the Government helped the landlords to organize, and even collected taxes for them. The Working Committee had met and passed an astounding resolution that anyone who believed in socialism or in leveling the differences between the castes was not allowed to be a member of Congress.

It seemed a complete repudiation of Jawaharlal Nehru. Isolated and helpless, he could only try to stop thinking.

Distressed with the present, I began thinking of the past, of what had happened politically in India since I began to take some part in public affairs. How far had we been right in what we had done? How far wrong? It struck me that my thinking would be more orderly and helpful if I put it down on paper. This would also engage my mind in a definite task so diverting it from worry and depression.

So in the month of June, 1934, I began [an] "autobiographical narrative" in Dehra Dun. . . . As I

wrote I was hardly thinking of an outside audience; I was addressing myself, framing questions and answering them for my own benefit, sometimes even drawing some amusement from it. I wanted as far as possible to think straight, and I imagined that this review of the past might help me to do so.

Thus he decided to occupy himself, and he would be able to do a great deal in two years, and there was satisfaction in setting down not only the historical account of his life and the life of his country, but also his inmost feelings. He was not always consistent, for issues were rarely clear, and he had always been able to see many sides to any question. But he did try to be entirely frank. From his pen flowed a manuscript written almost entirely from memory. He did not try to appraise it except as it met his own need.

His sentence was interrupted once more, as it had been in other years. After six months had gone, Kamala was seriously ill, and he was temporarily released to go to her. When he reached home he found the house full of doctors, nurses, and relatives. He was dazed and anxious, and he went to Kamala at once. She looked so frail and weak.

"... the thought that she might leave me became an intolerable obsession," he said. "It was eighteen and a half years since our marriage, and my mind wandered back to that day and to all that our marriage and these succeeding years had brought us. . . . Our marriage had almost coincided with new developments in politics, and my absorption in them grew." Had he sacrificed his wife to the cause of India's freedom? Yet she had never complained at their separations, and she had quietly taken a more and more leading part in the political movement. He was filled with mingled remorse, sadness, and delight in her. She still looked so young,

even though ill. He had gone bald and he knew the lines in his face. Once, she and Indira had been taken for sisters and he for their father! How long would they let him stay here with her? Every day he dreaded the summons to go back to jail.

Meanwhile his friends came to see him even now. They complained that Congress was growing weaker, more conservative, that civil disobedience had stopped. Nehru must begin work at once, they declared, or the cause was lost. He refused, first because he knew he would have to finish his sentence in jail, and second, he did not feel it would be fair to take advantage of the courtesy granted him in being allowed to stay with Kamala by using the time for political work. He continued to stay with his wife and he sent regular bulletins of her condition to the Government as he had been instructed to do.

Day passed day, and Kamala slowly improved. It was the ninth, and then the tenth. Friends told Nehru that he might be permanently released were it not that Congress was to meet in Bombay soon, and after that came elections. The Government feared his activity and would send him back to jail for safekeeping. He himself did not try to guess what would happen. On his eleventh day out of jail, the police car arrived, and the officer told him that his time was up. He was to be taken to Naini Jail, which was nearer to his home.

So he must leave Kamala, after all. She was a little better but would she grow worse again after he left? He could do no more than press her hand and whisper a word of comfort. She looked silently at him and smiled faintly. Then he went quickly to the car. At that moment his mother ran to him, her arms outstretched in final farewell. He was never to forget the look on her face.

Back in jail, Nehru scarcely noticed where he was

housed. It was not in the place that he had been before, where his brother-in-law had planted the small flower garden. He lived now for the daily bulletins about Kamala that the Government had promised. In the hours of waiting, his writing was the only thing that made his life endurable.

The bulletins continued to come for two weeks, and then stopped. Nehru knew that Kamala was no better. Time became a torture to him, especially the nights. A month after his rearrest an officer came again to take him to see Kamala for a little while. It was a short and hurried visit and he could not tell what progress she was making, but he was promised a visit of this kind twice a week.

He waited for the officer to come at the next appointed time—no one came. He heard that Kamala was worse. Time dragged on day after day, until a month had passed before he was with her again. She was worse, and he learned indirectly that it might be possible for him to stay with her if he would give even an informal assurance that he would take no part in politics until the time of his prison term had passed.

The idea sickened him. He was greatly troubled that Congress was doing almost nothing, but could he repudiate his own pledges, or be disloyal to friends and coworkers? Then he thought of Kamala. Would it make the difference between life and death? But Kamala would never want him to give such an assurance. If he did so, he would injure her rather than help her.

The next time that he was taken for his short visit to Kamala, he found her lying half unconscious with fever. They could talk very little, but when he was about to leave her again, she beckoned to him to stoop down. When he did so she whispered, "What is this I hear about your giving an assurance to the Government? Do not give it, Jawahar!"

He went back to jail satisfied and yet deeply troubled. She was growing worse, and each time he went he saw the change. To be in jail now, of all times! When his thoughts drove him in a circle of despair, he set himself to his autobiography. Page after page of fine handwriting was heaped upon his desk. Would it ever be published? He did not now care. Swarup had made into a book those letters that he had written to Indira beginning in 1930 and ending in 1933, and it was called, *Glimpses of World History*. He had meant them only for Indira, but if they had meaning for anyone else, then let them be read by others.

The next word of Kamala was that she was to be taken to a place called Bhowali, in the hills. Nehru was allowed to go and tell her good-by. He found her bright and cheerful, and for the first time he came away encouraged.

The next news was good, too. He was to be moved to Almora Jail because it was nearer Bhowali, and he could see Kamala more often. Bhowali was on the way, and so again he was able to stop off and see Kamala. She was really better, and his heart lifted.

The road to Almora was more beautiful than he had expected. The gorges and peaks, the firs and pines, the rivers far below were magnificent. He saw the tiny mountain villages clinging to the slopes, the small fields hewn out by greatest labor, and his feeling for the peasants returned to him afresh. Then as they came near the end of the journey, the clouds opened suddenly, and there framed in them were the snowy peaks of the Himalayas glistening in the far distance, high above the wooded mountains that intervened. "Calm and inscrutable, they seemed, with all the wisdom of the past ages, mighty sentinels over the vast Indian plains. The very sight of them cooled the fever of my brain, and the petty conflicts and intrigues, the lusts and false-



hoods of the plains and the cities seemed trivial and far away because of their eternal ways."

The jail stood high on a ridge, and Nehru was given a huge old hall with barred windows without glass. As it grew colder some of them were covered with matting. No one was with him, and during the day he walked about the barrack yard and looked over the wall at the beautiful mountains and the blue skies dotted with clouds. Here again he could write and with a new sense of peace now, because of the beauty around him.

When he had been in Almora a month he was again allowed to visit Kamala, and after that he was allowed to go twice a month. She was not so well again. When she could talk, they grew nearer to each other than ever before, but there were times when she was too ill to do more than greet him.

She grew steadily worse. In May of 1935, the doctors advised that she be taken to Europe for treatment. Arrangements were made for her going, and on the day she was to leave, Nehru was allowed to see her off. He kissed Kamala gravely, and she smiled back at him. Then she was lifted into the car and was gone. Nehru turned around sharply when she was out of sight, embraced his mother and sister Krishna, and went to the police car that was waiting for him. To those who watched him, he seemed suddenly old. If only he could have gone with her! This was the bitterest price that his country's freedom had demanded of him. He must write, or anxiety would eat out his heart.

In September, five and a half months before his sentence ended, Nehru was suddenly released from jail. He was told that his sentence had been suspended. He did not need to ask why. It was Kamala.

That very afternoon Nehru left India by air. The liner took him to Karachi and Baghdad and Cairo. From Alexandria a seaplane carried him to Brindisi. He

reached Kamala in Badenweiler, Germany, four days after he started.

She was smiling the same brave smile but she was too weak and in too great pain to say much. In the next few days she grew a little better, and he began to read aloud to her. This she loved, although he could never read long at a time because the very effort of following was too much. One of the books she particularly liked was Pearl Buck's, *The Good Earth*.

Morning and afternoon Nehru went from the house where he lived to the sanatorium, but the evenings he spent alone. Sometimes when the weather was good he went for a walk. A hundred pictures of Kamala as she had been during their married years came to his mind.

We had been married for nearly twenty years [Nehru wrote in his autobiography], and yet how many times she had surprised me by something new in her mental and spiritual make-up. I had known her in so many ways, and in later years, I had tried my utmost to understand her. That understanding had not been denied to me, but I often wondered if I really yet knew or understood her. There was something elusive about her, something fay-like, real but unsubstantial, difficult to grasp. Sometimes looking into her eyes, I would find a stranger peeping out at me.

Perhaps he was as hard to understand as she; indeed, he did not fully understand himself. In spite of this, she had stood by him. She had become more than herself—a symbol of Indian women.

Sometimes [he writes], she grew curiously mixed up with my ideas of India, that land of ours which was so dear to us. . . . What was Kamala? Did I

know her, understand her real self? Did she know or understand me? For I too was an abnormal person with mystery and unplumbed depths within me, which I could not myself fathom. Sometimes I had thought that she was a little frightened of me because of this. I had been and was a most unsatisfactory person to marry. Kamala and I were unlike each other in some ways, and yet in some other ways very alike; we did not complement each other. Our very strength became a weakness in our relations to each other. . . . Neither of us could live a humdrum domestic life, accepting things as they were.

But warm and clear and without questionings came the picture of Kamala at work for Congress. With no help from anyone she had taken a heavy share, especially when so many of the Congress leaders were imprisoned and she had to take the responsibility for organizing the work in Allahabad. She was inexperienced, "but," writes Nehru, "she made up for that inexperience by her fire and energy, and within a few months she became the pride of Allahabad."

Kamala now seemed so much better that Nehru felt a great relief. This improvement lasted for another month, and he took the opportunity to make a short visit to England with Indira, who was in school at Bex, near by. He had not been in England for eight years, and many friends urged him to visit them.

When he came back he fell at once into the old routine. The most noticeable difference in his life now lay in the fact that winter had come and the country was covered with heavy snow. It was beautiful but hard to plow his way through to and from the sanatorium.

Near Christmas, Kamala was suddenly worse. She rallied again and wanted to be taken away from Badenweiler. They thought of Switzerland.

In January, Nehru made a short visit to Paris and then to London. Old pressures were heavy on him. Back in India he had been elected president of Congress a second time. He wanted to resign in order to be able to stay with her, but she would not let him. She kept hoping that she would get just a little better and that he could go back before she did. Congress was to meet in April.

In January, Kamala was moved to a sanatorium near Lausanne. When she was established there, Nehru faced the question with the doctors of his going back to India. They agreed that he could go, and Kamala also felt that he should. The reservations for Nehru's trip were made, and the days went by, too fast for the separation ahead, too slow for the necessity of his going. Indira was coming to spend the last four or five days with her parents.

Suddenly, Nehru noticed a change in Kamala. She looked no worse, and as far as the doctors could tell, her condition was the same, but she had given up the will to live.

On the last day of February, 1936, she died.

Her body was changed to ashes, that her dust might rest in India. Nehru took the precious urn back with him. There was nothing to keep him longer now in Europe. In the flight from Cairo, as hours passed over desolate desert country, terrible loneliness came to him. Kamala was no more.

When at last he reached Allahabad he saw as if from a great distance all the familiar faces—so many of them. He did not stop to think how he looked to them. Nothing could be the same. Then, Nehru writes: “. . . we carried the precious urn to the swift-flowing Ganges and poured the ashes into the bosom of that noble river. How many of our forebears she had carried thus to the sea, how many of those who will follow us will take that last journey in the embrace of her waters!”

# XVI

## THE NEW TASK

CONGRESS had many problems before it, and the people of India awaited Nehru's return.

In his opening presidential address he said, in part:

I am heartened and strengthened by you, even though in this great gathering I feel a little lonely. . . . We cannot rest, for rest is a betrayal of those who have gone, and in going handed on the torch of freedom to keep it alight; it is betrayal of the cause we have espoused and the pledge we have taken; it is betrayal of the millions who never rest. . . . I am a little weary and I have come back like a tired child yearning for solace in the bosom of our common mother, India. That solace has come to me in overflowing measure; thousands of hands have stretched out to me in love and sympathy; millions of silent voices have carried their message of affection to my heart. How can I thank you, men and women of India? How can I express in words feelings that are too deep for utterance?

So he put his own personal loss behind him and he pressed forward to all that needed to be done. The old struggle for freedom lay ahead unwon. But he saw now more clearly that problems within the Indian peoples themselves must be faced.

One of these was an old difference—the Hindus and the Moslems. Through the years he had felt the two cultures distinctly. Mohammed Ali had been president of Congress when he first became secretary. How often they had clashed over ways of thinking, from the use of titles to religion! Yet Moslems had taken part in the work of Congress for years. They were very strong in the civil disobedience campaign of 1920 and again in 1930. The Frontier Provinces had been especially active, and Congress had always welcomed forward-looking Moslem members. And how his father had rejoiced when Hindus and Moslems had come together in the Home Rule League years ago to work for independence!

Now, however, Nehru heard more and more talk of communalism. Mr. M. A. Jinnah, a lawyer, became the head of the Moslem League, although for many years he had lived in England, and under his leadership it had become stronger than ever before. It was even whispered that when independence was won, India should be divided into two sections, one Hindu, one Moslem.

Nehru's whole being revolted at such an idea. In the early days, Jews and Christians, Parsees and Moslems were all part of Indian life. When the Moslem Mongols came as conquerors, their thought was still to unify India. The Great Akbar Padshah was famous for his unification of India. "And now," says Nehru, "we are told to go back to the pre-Akbar days, to reverse the process of history, to think in terms of medievalism. When nationalism is giving place to internationalism, an even narrower creed than that of nationalism is advanced. . . ."

The whole basis of division seemed to lie in the differences in the culture, and religion, of the two groups. Minorities in India were not racial minorities as in

other countries. They were religious minorities, or putting it more broadly, cultural minorities.

Hindu and Moslem cultures [Nehru says] . . . how these words hold out fascinating vistas of past history and present and future speculation! . . . What is this "Moslem Culture?" Is it a kind of racial memory of the great deeds of the Arabs, the Persians, the Turks, etc.? Or language? Or art and music? Or customs? I do not remember anyone referring to present day Moslem art or Moslem music. The two languages that have influenced Moslem thought in India are the Arabic and Persian. . . . But the influence of the Persian has no element of religion about it.

The Persian language and many Persian customs and traditions came to India in the course of thousands of years and impressed themselves powerfully over northern India. Persia was the France of the East sending its language and culture to all its neighbors. That is a common and precious heritage to all of us in India. . . . I must say that those Moslems and Hindus who are always looking backward, always clutching at things that are slipping away, are a singularly pathetic sight. I do not wish to damn the past or to reject it, for there is much that is singularly beautiful in our past. . . . But it is not the beautiful that these people clutch at, but something that is seldom worthwhile and is often harmful.

No, Nehru felt that communalism was artificial and that it was being nurtured and kept alive. There were some within the Congress itself who were communalists first and nationalists second, although as a whole Congress had worked toward unity.

He wanted to be just but he became convinced, and

others with him, that the British Government had deepened the division in India. England had always been sympathetic to the Moslem League and to its complaints against Congress. Moslems had always educated themselves for the Civil Service. From among them had come comparatively few leaders who were ready to put their whole effort toward a free India. How much Britain could have done to bring the two groups together had she chosen to do so! She could have made unity the premium for advance, made it the price of many a step forward.

Yet the suffering of India was not entirely Britain's fault. The weakness and failure of her own people were also responsible. What of the Indian princes? Almost one third of India was made up of what were known as the Indian States. These were ruled by the maharajas or Indian princes, some of whom were notorious for their misrule and cruelty, and for their fabulous wealth. A British resident lived in each state and he administered modern laws, but many ancient codes were still impressed upon the people by the prince. Nehru himself had experienced this confusion when he was jailed, years ago, in Nabha Prison waiting two weeks for the farcical trial. The purpose of the British resident seemed to be to strengthen British agencies rather than to bring justice for the voiceless people.

The other two thirds of the country was British India, where the Civil Service of the Government of India was openly at work. What had Britain done in all these years to make life better for the people? Instead of encouraging the opening of industries, she had discouraged it. Raw materials were produced to be sent to English factories; taxes controlled the exports and imports to Britain's advantage. Why else had not India been forging ahead in her own development as Japan had done?



And now the Government had made a new proposal to Congress, the Government of India Act. It proposed some independence for the provinces of British India and it proposed a federation between these provinces and the Indian States. Under this constitution the princes would have more than their share of representation in the central government and so overbalance the nationalist representatives. As far as he could see, the new constitution accomplished nothing except to strengthen the British control.

The people must be helped. Trade unions and peasant organizations considered Nehru their champion. The subjects of these very Indian States leaned on him for help. He felt the weight of these millions of lives that looked to him. This he saw and for this he would stand. Conservatives in Congress did not agree with him, and many others were afraid. He was the first socialist president of the National Congress, and his greatest problem was to know how to lead these different parts of Congress into a joint effort.

To Congress he said:

I see no way of ending poverty, the vast unemployment, the degradation and the subjection of the Indian people except through socialism. That involves vast and revolutionary changes in our political and social structure. . . . That means the ending of private property, except in a restricted sense, and the replacement of the present profit system by a higher ideal of cooperative service. It means ultimately a change in our instincts and habits and desires. In short it means a new civilization. . . .

But even as he spoke he knew that first must come the freedom of India. Could he hold Congress together to work for that one thing? Divisions had deepened. The

years had been hard, but he did not regret them. He would finish the task, but the people themselves must help him.

Nehru now undertook something much harder than just a tour of India to see the peasants again. Congress had rejected the new constitution and had decided to put up its own candidates for positions in the provinces. This meant that the people had to understand and be prepared for elections. In a country where everyone could read this would be fairly easy, but in India only about 9 per cent of the people could read, and so they had to be told about what was happening.

The Government of India had always said that any kind of democratic election would be impossible in India because so many of her people were illiterate. Now Congress overcame this difficulty by planning a clever method of color identification for candidates to match colors that the voters held, so that they did not need to be able to read to vote intelligently.

Nehru took loud-speakers with him and addressed as many as a dozen meetings a day, and these did not include the many times that he stopped to speak to impromptu gatherings of people along the way. He went from place to place, from the north to the south. He seemed to need no rest and he writes of this time:

Toward the end of 1936 and in the early months of 1937 my touring progressively gathered speed and became frantic. I passed through this vast country like some hurricane, travelling night and day, always on the move, hardly staying anywhere, hardly resting. . . . I travelled mostly by automobile, partly by airplane and railway. Occasionally I had to use, for short distances, an elephant or a camel, or a horse; or travel by steamer, paddle boat, or canoe; or use a bicycle; or go on foot.

He had trouble keeping to any schedule because he was so often stopped along the way. Always he was racing against time because of the great crowd that he knew was waiting for him at his destination. Even though it was cold weather he knew that they would be sitting shivering in their scanty garments.

One day he began with a meeting in the morning at eight o'clock and ended with one that was seven hours late, at four o'clock the next morning. He had covered four hundred and fifteen miles that day, and the following day's program began just an hour after this last meeting was finished.

It seemed that he could stand anything. . . . Sometimes he slept for an hour in the car, between speeches, found it hard to waken, and then was instantly fresh and alert to meet the enthusiasm of the people. They were irresistible. Millions of friendly eyes looked at him, and a million hands went up in salute.

Sometimes when he reached a gathering a great roar of welcome rose to greet him—*Bahrat Mata ki jai!* "Victory to Mother India!" He would ask the people who the Mother India was, and they would look at each other wondering what to say. Someone would answer that it was the soil, the mother earth. Then Nehru asked, what earth, and again they would consult together. Usually he ended by showing them that *they* themselves and the plot of land they tilled was Mother India.

Nehru talked of more than the election candidates. He had to make the people feel a part of India and related to all others within her borders. So he told them about tribes and villages unlike theirs, and why they were different. He tried to make the peasants conscious of others and to get them to understand the need for all to take part in what was happening.

He himself was seeing a panoramic picture of peoples

who showed plainly the roots of an ancestry that varied in a hundred ways.

When I think of India, I think of many things: of broad fields dotted with innumerable small villages; of towns and cities I have visited; of the magic of the rainy season which pours life into the dry, parched up land and converts it suddenly into a glistening expanse of beauty and greenery, of great rivers and flowing water; of the Khyber Pass in all its bleak surroundings; of the southern tip of India; of people individually and in the mass; and above all of the Himalayas, snow-capped, or some mountain valley in Kashmir in the spring, covered with new flowers, and with a brook bubbling and gurgling through it.

Nehru was working for the elections but he did not believe that the pushing forward of certain names and much talking about individual candidates would bring the fairest election or the choice of the best men. At any rate, the number of candidates in this general election amounted to many thousands. Twelve per cent of the population was to take part in the voting, this number being decided by the rules of what was known as a restricted franchise. But even this percentage meant that about thirty million Indians would be voting. How would it be possible to separate by name these many thousand candidates for the provincial assemblies, and to instruct thirty million people how to vote? Of course it was not possible, nor did Nehru wish to do this. He did not know all the individual candidates, and how could he honestly praise one above another? Instead he asked the people to vote for Congress and for the struggle for independence. He made no great promises except that the struggle would go on until freedom came. He even urged the people not to vote for Congress

unless they fully understood and wanted to support what it was trying to do. It would not help Congress to get false votes. An election victory with none to uphold it in the future would be empty honor. People understood him.

"They came and spread like a mighty wind fresh from the sea, sweeping away all petty ideas and electioneering stunts. I knew my people and liked them, and their million eyes taught me much of mass psychology."

When the time for the elections drew near, both sides were tense. The Government of India said that Congress could not speak for India. Gandhi said, "I speak for the dumb millions of India." The Government of India said that to vote for the Nationalist candidates was to vote for chaos, loss of properties, the end of religion. Even Nehru, they said, was a socialist and a man without a religion. Congress called upon men to vote for their country and its freedom. As the day drew near, pictures of Gandhi appeared at the polls and with them pictures of the candidates with the words, "A vote for me is a vote for Gandhi." The old appeal of Gandhi was still strong. Everyone knew him.

The election came and went. Congress carried seven out of the eleven provinces. It was a great triumph.

# XVII

## THE SHADOWS OF DEATH

NEHRU continued his travels after the elections were over. In the summer of 1937 he visited Burma and Malaya. He half hoped that these trips could be something of a vacation after the strain of the past months. But he was everywhere surrounded by crowds of eager people and he was asked to speak again and again. Yet these people were refreshing. After his more serious countrymen and the constant urgency of work for freedom, the Malaysians and Burmese seemed lighthearted and merry, and he was delighted with them.

When he came back to India he found new spirit in his people. Nationalists were serving as ministers of the provinces, even under the constitution that they had rejected, and although Nehru had not approved of this, now he found that where these Congress ministers were at work the people were encouraged and expected great changes. He did not dare even to say that he doubted many great advances could be made because of the conditions under which they would have to work. He knew that hard times still lay ahead.

Among the ministers was his own sister Swarup, in the United Provinces. She was the first woman ever to hold such a position in India, and Nehru felt great pride in her. He knew that she was able and that she had special gifts in public service. When he saw her he found

her calm and confident. Her interests were practical, and she was working at public health and education. Congress was doing some remarkable things, even though it was not free in many ways. The most important of these was perhaps in improving education.

Nehru's term of office was almost over, and in the new elections Subhas Chandra Bose was chosen as the new president. Now Nehru decided to go to Europe. He longed to see Indira, and he longed to get away from India in order to be able to see her again from a distance.

In January, 1938, Krishna took her little sons for their annual visit to their grandmother's in Allahabad. Nehru was there, and Swarup and her husband and children were visiting, although Swarup had soon to return to her post in Lucknow. Krishna had said several times that she ought to return to Bombay but each time she mentioned it, their mother asked her to put it off. So she delayed a few days longer.

One evening they were all together. Their mother seemed more lively than usual, even though she was now very frail indeed, after two slight paralytic strokes. But this night she talked until about ten-thirty, and they were all astonished that she did not seem weary. When anyone suggested that perhaps she had better go to bed, she insisted that she would wait until time for Swarup to leave for her train to Lucknow.

At eleven o'clock Swarup got ready to go and then went to her mother to tell her good-by. As she rose to embrace her daughter, she suddenly crumpled. Nehru and Krishna ran to lift her up. They got her to bed, but even before this was done she fell into unconsciousness.

They sent at once for the doctor. "It is only a matter of a few hours," he told them.

All night Nehru and his sisters watched by their mother, and faithful old servants waited with them.

At five o'clock their mother stopped breathing, and the children knew that she, too, was gone.

When the funeral was over and Anand Bhawan was settled again somehow, without its mistress, the children returned to their places. Swarup went back to Lucknow, Krishna to her own home in Bombay, and Nehru started for Europe. He flew straight to Barcelona and stayed there five days. Each night he watched the bombs falling. It was terrible to see the destruction and the suffering, and yet the resistance of the Spanish people to Franco warmed his heart and reminded him of his own people at home. He visited the armies at the front and went to see the young men of the International Brigade. India must help these people, for they were all working for the same thing. Perhaps when he got back—no, it could not wait. He would get a relief committee set up at once.

He went to England. Sir Neville Chamberlain was spokesman for England, and the people were wavering between support of him in hope of peace and the impulse to face invasion of Europe. Nehru believed that the common people of England were made not of this uncertain stuff. They had a courage and greatness that could not long put up with sacrifice of principle. He felt a stiffening in the mood of people in the street, in the markets, in the pubs.

From England he went to Czechoslovakia. There, he says, he "watched at close quarters the difficult and intricate game of how to betray your friend and the cause you are supposed to stand for on the highest moral grounds."

He went to Geneva next, and it was a museum displaying the fossils of international organizations. The League of Nations had lifted the hearts of many people after the first World War. Now it was dead.

Munich was the city of negotiation, and Nehru had



watched it from London, from Paris, from Geneva. Where were all the people of conviction and strength? They seemed to have melted away while whole countries were bartered. In Paris, the Paris of the Revolution, he expected to hear some echoes of that cry for liberty. He heard none. No one protested. Everyone seemed indifferent.

He went back to India with a sad heart. It seemed to him that even those upon whom he had counted were betrayers. France he had often championed. England, while he had deplored her foreign policy in India, he had not believed could take part in what was happening now. He saw that Europe was rushing toward war, in spite of all that she was yielding to avert it. It would be called a war for democracy, but actually it would be a war for new imperialism.

Yes, war was coming. Certainly England would draw upon India for men and supplies as she had in the earlier war. At the Independence Day meeting of Congress he moved a resolution, urging India to record her entire disapproval of the Munich Pact, the agreement with Italy and the recognition of Franco's Spain, and to announce that she would have nothing to do with England's policy in Europe. He concluded: "In the opinion of Congress it is urgently necessary for India to direct her own foreign policy, as an independent nation . . . pursuing her path of peace and freedom." The motion was passed without any discussion.

It was an unsatisfactory meeting of Congress. He felt discord and lack of order. There were petty disputes, and once there was so much noise that he had to wait for silence to return. He was angry and he spoke out against those who were causing the trouble. But the atmosphere of the meeting was important only because it showed inner dissension.

In August he flew to China as a sign of friendship be-

tween these two countries that had always been friends. He was there two weeks and he found that the Chinese were as eager as he to keep the old relationship. He had always admired the Chinese and he admired them even more now, since Japan had invaded them. He found the temporary capital in Chungking, far inland, very different from Nanking, but the spirit of the people was not subdued, not as much subdued, he realized, as that of his own people. Then he remembered that they were a free people. He had not seen a China under an oppressor.

The war in Europe began, and it seemed that everything for which Congress had been working through the years, the hard work of the provincial ministries now, was to be ended. India waited like a doomed creature expecting a blow. When it came it was even worse than expected. Before anyone knew, Indian troops were sent off secretly to Egypt, Aden, and Singapore. In England it was decided that the British government of India should limit the liberties of Indians by emergency laws. Then from the Viceroy's office in Delhi came the announcement that India had been proclaimed one of the belligerents in the war.

Without any reference to our people, the Central Assembly, or the provincial governments [Nehru says] India was at war. . . . One man, and he a foreigner and a representative of a hated system [he went on], could plunge four hundred million human beings into war, without the slightest reference to them. . . . In the dominions the decision was taken by popular representatives after full debate. . . . Not so in India, and it hurt.

The Congress Working Committee at once asked the Government for a statement of war aims. It asked to

have a special or Constituent Assembly formed. The answer it got was that nothing asked for would be granted. Instead, the constitution was suspended and new ordinances were announced, and Congress workers were arrested in larger numbers than ever.

Anger grew, deep and silent, like the gathering pressure of a volcano that has not yet burst through the outer surfaces of the earth. It was Gandhi who held it in check. They must not, he said, embarrass the opponent in his hour of need.

The war in Europe went on, and India was increasingly puzzled. What was the meaning of all that was happening? The Russo-German pact, the Soviet invasion of Finland, Russia's friendly approach to Japan, the strange events in Norway, the horrors in Holland and Belgium—had these anything to do with a war for democracy?

Nearer to home, the Burma-China route was closed to appease Japan. Nehru remembered Free China closed in by the enemy with this her only door to the outside world.

Congress decided to try once again to get India's position in the war clear. It asked that India be acknowledged as independent and that a provisional national government be in charge of defense. This would mean that the people of India could be behind the war effort as they were not now. Congress members knew that they were asking this of Winston Churchill. The time of Neville Chamberlain was past, and Churchill, as prime minister, was controlling the part that England played in the war.

India could remember bitter things said by Churchill. But since those things had been said, he had suggested union with France, and he had demonstrated statesmanship. The proposal of Congress was made with some hope. The reply came on the eighth of August, 1940.

Nehru says of it: "It is in the old language of imperialism, and the language has changed in no way. The sands of time run out here in India, as in Europe and the world."

The members of Congress had done what they could to bring India into the war as a partner with others, and they had failed. They turned to their old method of civil disobedience as a moral protest.

The arrests began. First the leaders were taken and then others, until thirty thousand Indians, leaders and workers, were in jail. In October, Nehru was arrested. He was sentenced to four years' imprisonment. But in a year he was released again and found nothing changed between Congress and the Government.

What had changed was the urgency of the war. Japan had struck at Pearl Harbor. It now seemed likely that India herself might be bombed or invaded. How would the people resist when they had no weapons? It was against the law for a man even to have a knife more than a few inches long. What would Gandhi say? Would he still insist on nonviolence? Nehru was surprised and pleased to hear Gandhi agree to India's taking part in the war actively, if she could do so as a free country. India would not be able to act as a free country, but this meant that Gandhi chose freedom first and nonviolence second. He had not changed, he still believed firmly in the principle of passive resistance. He liked to make a difference between these two terms, nonviolence and passive resistance. The first, he said, did not result from conviction, merely a lack of arms. The second came from the heart, it was soul force.

The war was coming nearer. India grew more and more tense and still did not know what to do. She was unarmed, helpless, waiting for direction from the British Government. The markets, or bazaars, were buzzing with rumors. The wealthy were afraid that there would

be changes coming that would cost them their fortunes. The worker and peasant felt that anything they could get would be better than what they held now.

In the midst of willingness to resist Japan as an aggressor nation, there was a curious sense of pride, but not liking, for Japan, because as an Oriental power she had challenged a Western power. Nehru knew that an Englishman in high position had said that he would rather have had their good ships sunk by the Germans than by the Japanese. There was a turn in the road of history.

After Pearl Harbor, the United States rushed into the war in the Far East, and soon India seemed full of noisy young Americans. "They were very much in a hurry, eager to get things done, ignorant of the ways and ceremonies of the Government of India and not particularly anxious to learn them," writes Nehru. "They pushed aside red tape and upset the even tenor of the life at New Delhi. . . . Indians liked them on the whole. . . . Their forthrightness and freedom from official constraints were appreciated. There was much silent amusement at the underlying friction between the newcomers and the official class, and many true or imagined stories of this were repeated."

But the war itself grew worse rather than better. Burma and Malaya and Singapore fell, largely because the peoples had no heart to resist. It was certain that India would soon be attacked. Refugees from these near-by countries were already pouring into India, bringing nothing but the clothes they wore.

The story of the refugees of Burma, mostly Indians, roused anger wherever it was known. These people had been deserted by the refugee organizations and left to shift for themselves. They trudged hundreds of miles over mountains and across rivers and through dense jungle forests, with the enemy following them and stalk-

ing them wherever it could. Many were wounded and lay dying, with no help. Many were sick.

It was a horrible story but it grew more horrible when it was known that the British refugees from Burma were carefully taken care of—their transportation and food arranged.

At one place two roads led to safety. Here thousands of refugees, both Indian and European, had gathered. The better road was reserved for the Europeans, the less good for the Indians. Everywhere in India that good road was called the White Road.

On the eighth of March, Rangoon fell.

# XVIII

## THE PAST IS DEAD

INTO this charged atmosphere of India came Sir Stafford Cripps, leader in the British Cabinet, with a proposal for the All-India National Congress. Sir Stafford Cripps was an old friend. Nehru had known him for years, had talked with him in England, and had welcomed him more than once to India. To the English people it seemed as if no better one could have been chosen to rally the Indian people to defend their own country against the invasion of Japan. When Nehru read the proposals that England had sent, however, his heart sank. He had expected Sir Stafford to understand what was needed now in the urgency of war, but there was little here about the defense of India. Instead, there were the vague promises for her gradual independence. Talks between the English representatives and the Indian leaders began, although not even all of the members of the Congress Working Committee were asked to meet with the English. The Viceroy never talked with any of the Indian leaders.

Nehru was especially troubled because, while the Cripps proposal spoke of an Indian union, it was so left that any provinces or states not wishing to join the union need not do so. This meant the division of India. The Moslem League had before suggested the division, but nothing had come of it, and the whole independence movement had been based on a unified India. Now the

unhappy question came again. But this was more serious than a suggestion from the Moslem League. No, Congress could not agree to such proposals. To have done so would have been to betray those parts of India that could not be heard and that were relying on Congress to safeguard them.

Nehru writes: "I think that Sir Stafford Cripps meant well for India and hoped to see a free and united India. But this was not a matter of individual views or personal good will."

The talks in Delhi went on. Defense was the most important now, while India was threatened. Indeed, the power that controlled defense would really control all else in India for the time being. It began to seem that while the commander in chief of the war operations would be British, the Government would be willing for the defense department to be under an Indian. But Nehru learned that the defense department would have no real responsibility beyond public relations, petroleum, canteens, stationery and printing, social arrangements for foreign missions, and small comforts for the troops. Even though this was absurd, the talks went on.

At this moment when time was so precious and both Indian and English representatives knew that agreement had to be reached quickly, word came that Lord Halifax of England, while speaking somewhere in the United States, had violently attacked the Indian Congress. India was puzzled. Did this speech present more truly the feeling of Britain than all the carefully worded promises that had been made in Delhi? Sir Stafford put his whole heart into persuading his Indian friends to accept the proposals as they were offered, staking his own honor, his very future, on the promises England now made for India's future freedom. At last, late one night, Nehru and his colleagues agreed to accept, putting their trust in Sir Stafford. He asked them to wait



while he went to the Viceroy. They waited, and hour after hour passed. When Sir Stafford returned, his whole demeanor was changed. He informed them that his own assurances were unwarranted. The proposals must stand as they had been made. What had happened Nehru and his colleagues did not know. But if the proposals were accepted, power was still in the hands of Britain, and India did not wish merely to serve in the capacity of a menial who looked after canteens and saw to the providing of stationery. The Cripps proposals were rejected.

Sir Stafford left India suddenly, and the people were more disappointed and bitter than ever before. All the talking had meant nothing at all except delay, and now India must see to its own defense in the best way it could.

The chances for invasion were growing. Refugees were pouring over the eastern frontiers of India. In eastern Bengal, tens of thousands of riverboats were destroyed supposedly to check any help to the invaders but these people depended upon boats as their only means of transportation. In Madras a rumor started that the Japanese fleet was getting near and all the officials had left. It seemed that the civilian government was falling to pieces.

"What are we to do?" was the question in the minds of Congress leaders. "We had to advise the . . . vast masses of the civilian population," says Nehru, "as to what they were to do in case of invasion. We told them that in spite of their indignation against the British policy, they must not interfere in any way with the operations of the British or Allied armed forces, as this would be giving indirect aid to the enemy aggressor; further that they must on no account submit to the invader, or obey his orders, or accept favors from him. If the invading forces sought to take possession of the

peoples' homes and fields, they must be resisted even unto death. The resistance was to be peaceful; it was to be the completest form of non-co-operation with the enemy."

After talking with Gandhi and getting his approval, the All-India Congress Committee announced a statement on the eighth of August, 1942. This resolution has come to be known as the famous Quit India Resolution. It asked for recognition of India's independence. It asked for the end of British rule. It asked for a provisional government that would set up a constituent assembly that would in turn prepare a constitution.

It was a harassed India's final answer. She must be free if she were to resist the enemy. The Committee appealed to Britain and the United Nations, for it could no longer hold back the people. Nonviolent resistance to Government would begin again. Every member of Congress knew what this meant. It might be days, it might be only hours, until the arrests began.

There was no answer to the appeal. The United States ignored it. A few hours after the passing of the resolution the arrests began in Bombay, and then all over the country. Nehru was taken to Ahmadnagar Fort.

During the two years that he was here, serving his ninth sentence, it was hard to follow events outside. But he knew that official estimates put the killing of Indians by British forces in 1942 at 1,028, with more than 3,000 wounded. This was certainly less than the real number, for the same official reports stated that firing took place on 538 occasions, and he knew that the police often shot at moving lorries, and then no estimate could be made of the casualties. Indians put the deaths at 25,000. Nehru felt that 10,000 was more nearly correct.

Jail again brought the tragic leisure that had somehow to be endured while his people suffered outside.

During the last five months of his sentence Nehru set himself to the writing again. The new book was *The Discovery of India*. His autobiography, published in England, had by now fourteen editions there, and many printings in America. The new book was the story of his own country as he had come to know her through all the years of his own life.

From Ahmadnagar Fort, Nehru wrote on April the thirteenth, 1944:

It is now more than twenty months since we were brought here, more than twenty months of my ninth term of imprisonment. The new moon, a shimmering crescent in the darkening sky, greeted us on our arrival here. . . . Ever since then the coming of the new moon has been a reminder to me that another month of my imprisonment is over. . . . The moon, ever a companion to me in prison, has grown more friendly with closer acquaintance, a reminder of the loveliness of this world, of the waxing and waning of life, the light following darkness, of death and resurrection following each other in interminable succession.

In the long lonely hours he came to see that India must take one road and England another. Now in jail once again, he remembered words he had written years earlier in his autobiography, when he had been thinking of separating from England.

I am sorry [he had said] for in spite of my hostility to the British imperialism and all imperialism, I have loved much that was England and I should have liked to have kept the silken bonds of the spirit between India and England. Those bonds can exist only in

freedom. I wanted India's freedom for India's sake, of course; but I wanted it also for England's sake.

He meant these words more than ever now. He had hoped always for something from the English people that would reach beyond their government and demand freedom for his people. Now he knew that unless the people of England took over their own government, for themselves, there would be no chance for India's freedom.

Yet all these years while he had worked against many of the proposals of the Government of India, much of himself was English. His home had always been as much English as Indian. His education had been English. His thinking, his feelings, his personal likes and dislikes, all had been tempered by English culture. An old friend had once told him that he, Nehru, was proof that the East and West could meet—had indeed called him the man of the future. In his autobiography he had written:

Anger and resentment have often filled my mind at various happenings, and yet, as I sit here and look deep into my mind and heart, I do not find any anger against England or the English people. I dislike English imperialism, and I resent its imposition on India; I dislike the capitalist system; I dislike exceedingly and resent the way India is exploited by the ruling classes of Britain. But I do not hold England or the British people as a whole responsible for this; and, even if I did, I do not think it would make much difference, for it is a little foolish to lose one's temper at or condemn a whole people. They are as much the victim of circumstance as we are.

Personally, I owe too much to England in my mental make-up ever to feel wholly alien to her. And, do

what I will, I cannot get rid of the habits of mind, and the standards and ways of judging other countries as well as life generally, which I acquired at school and college in England. My predilections (apart from the political ones) are in favor of England and the English people, and, if I have become what is called an uncompromising opponent of the British rule in India, it is almost in spite of these.

He wondered whether it could be that while India understood England, England could not understand India. Perhaps the two peoples, even the liberals, were so different in their very natures that no fate, or suffering, or need could draw them toward each other. History had shaped them too differently.

In this mood of conciliation and co-operation he wrote:

We are the citizens of no mean country and we are proud of the land of our birth, of our people, our culture and traditions. That pride should not be for the romanticized past to which we want to cling; nor should it encourage exclusiveness or want of appreciation of other ways than our own. It must never allow us to forget our many weaknesses and failings or blunt our longings to be rid of them. We have a long way to go and much leeway to make up before we can take our proper station with others in the van of human civilization and progress. And we have to hurry, for the time at our disposal is limited and the pace of the world grows ever swifter. It was India's way in the past to welcome and absorb other cultures. That is much more necessary today, for we march to the One World of tomorrow where national cultures will be intermingled with international culture of the human race. We shall therefore seek wisdom and

knowledge and friendship and comradeship wherever we can find them, and cooperate with others in common tasks, but we are no suppliants for others' favors or patronage. Thus we shall remain true Indians and Asiatics, and become at the same time good internationalists and world citizens.

On the twenty-eighth of March, 1945, the members of the Congress Working Committee who had been imprisoned in Ahmadnagar Fort were sent to their provincial jails because the military camp was to be closed. Nehru was sent to the old familiar Naini Jail. Two months later he was sent to the mountain prison of Almora.

News came from the other side of the world. Swarup, known now as Madame Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, was at the United Nations Conference, in San Francisco. She went as an unofficial and independent representative for a subject India, but her voice was heard. To the Secretary General of the Conference she had said: "I speak here for my country because its natural voice has been stilled by British duress. But I speak also for those countries which, like India, are under the heel of alien militarists and cannot speak for themselves. . . . The voices of some six hundred million of the enslaved peoples of Asia may not be officially heard at this Conference . . . but there will be no real peace on earth as long as they are denied justice."

This was Swarup. His mind flew back over the years. He remembered the day he saw her when he returned from Cambridge, her eyes so soft and beautiful, the gentleness of girlhood on her face. He remembered her wedding. (Now she was a widow. Ranjit had died as a result of his long imprisonment.) He remembered her as the first woman minister in India, in jail, as president of the All-India Woman's Conference. Now she

was touring the United States trying to make the American people understand the meaning of India's struggle. He read her words with pride in her and hope for India.

On June the fifteenth, Nehru was released. He had been in jail this time more than a thousand days, and he found it hard to get used to the confusion of life again. He attended a meeting of the Congress Working Committee and then went to a conference called by the Viceroy in Simla.

But he had to have a little time to adjust. After the years behind walls, his mind flew to the snow-covered peaks of Kashmir. He longed to see them and their distance views, and he wanted to see the beautiful valley again. He went and stayed for a month and came back refreshed.

In August, Indira's first child was born. She named him Rajiva Ratna.

I am a grandfather! Nehru thought with a sense of flying years. He held the tiny baby in his arms. He had always loved little children and he remembered Indira protesting the police as they came to take things away from Anand Bhawan in payment of taxes; Indira and his little nieces (now grown and studying abroad) marching around the summer home at Mussoorie, singing the national song and waving the flag. . . . He used to teach the children to stand on their heads, to swim and play games. Somehow or other, the words "plum pudding" had come into the family. Yes, it had started when the children used to cry when they fell. Once he remembered that he had told them to say quickly, "Plum pudding!" instead of crying. . . . Through the years that had been the family way of saying, "Grin and bear it." It had come to be a sort of secret password for the Nehru and Pandit families while they all lived to-

gether—arrests and sickness and all sorts of hard things came to be greeted and accepted by those words.

There were other times, as his nieces and Indira grew older—quiet hours with books—*Don Quixote* had been such a favorite. What discussions they had had! Religion and everything else had been torn to pieces by the hour.

He smiled now, remembering the stories he had told those children. Some were written stories, many of them famous, out of the lore of all the world, but others he had concocted out of his own mind. . . . How long ago it all was—and here was Indira's baby!

The war ended in the solemn atmosphere of a world startled by the atom bomb.

The Labour Party won in English elections, and a conference with India's leaders was called in London. Nehru and Jinnah, head of the Moslem League, both went. The purpose of the meeting was to clear up some of the differences between the Congress party and the Moslem League. An Interim Government that would function until India was independent was proposed, and part of this was the Constituent Assembly, which Congress had long asked for. But the argument over the division of India still went on. Nehru agreed to head the Interim Government, but he came away with a heavy heart.

Under the Interim Government of India, Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit was appointed to head the Indian delegation at the meeting of the General Assembly of the United Nations, at Lake Success, in October, 1946. Nehru read what his sister had said there with deep approval. She spoke not only for India but for all the oppressed peoples. What an ovation they gave her! India had taken her cause to the world's highest tribunal.



The next few months were confused, exciting, hopeful, and distressing. The chief trouble was the question of the partition of India into three parts, two to be Moslem, one Hindu—Pakistan for the Moslem and Hindustan for the Hindu. Nehru would have none of it. He wanted no emphasis on Hinduism. If it could not be a unified India, it must be India and Pakistan.

But now it was clear that the new leadership of England intended that India should be free. Those words of promise, given so many times through the years, were to come true. The British Government was to withdraw from India! India was represented at the United Nations, and now she began to send out her ambassadors. Mrs. Pandit was appointed as ambassador to Soviet Russia. Mr. Asaf Ali was sent to Washington.

In her own hemisphere India planned a great conference of Asiatic nations with representative groups from Central Asia and the Near and Middle East. Special guests from groups interested in Far Eastern affairs were also invited.

This was not to be a political meeting. It was to be about culture, industries, social welfare, the movements of peoples, the position of women, and the changes from colonial to national economy.

This was thought of as a rather small meeting—a kind of round table where two or three representatives of each group would sit and talk over affairs. But the countries were eager to accept the invitation. Instead of sending two or three people, some sent twenty-five or thirty. When the meeting opened on the twenty-third of March, 1947, 250 guests were there.

At the open meetings there would certainly be a huge crowd. Quickly a great *pandal* or shed was erected, something like a "big-top" in America. It was set on the ruins of the 3,000-year-old site of the first city of Delhi. Three meetings were held and at each as many as ten thousand

people must have been present. The smaller groups that were intended as informal discussion meetings were made up of as many as five hundred people.

Nehru opened the conference. He was composed, but in his heart was the thought that here were represented more than a billion people. He did not show pride, and yet he was conscious of the fact that his India, soon to be free now, was taking a leadership among her neighbors. He felt deeply the sudden responsibility, but his words rang out clearly. In part, he said,

In this Conference and in this work, there are no leaders and no followers. All the countries of Asia have met together on an equal basis in a common task and endeavor. It is fitting that India should play her part in this new phase of Asian development. Apart from the fact that India herself is emerging into freedom and independence, she is the natural center and the focal point of many forces at work in Asia. . . .

We have no designs against anybody; ours is a great design of promoting peace and progress all over the world. For too long we of Asia have been the petitioners in Western courts and chancellories. That story must now belong to the past. . . . The countries of Asia can no longer be used as pawns by others. . . . In this atomic age Asia will have to function effectively in the maintenance of peace. Indeed, there can be no peace unless Asia plays her part. . . . Peace can only come when nations are free and also when human beings everywhere have freedom and security and opportunity.

The whole conference had one great message. It was that imperialism was dying and new life was coming to the countries of Asia. For the first time, the peoples of Asia had come together to discuss their own problems rather than to have them discussed by outside powers.

As Nehru looked over the great crowds he seemed to feel a new atmosphere. There was something stimulating in the very air everyone breathed. "We are meeting as free peoples," he put it to himself. "No dominating power is present."

India knew how to be a magnificent host to her guests. The meetings themselves were taken very seriously, but at other times programs of entertainment were presented. The famous Indian dancer, Tara Chaudri, gave her recitals of classical dances. Students from Tagore's university presented dances from one of his dramas. A group of Malabar guests presented the Kathakli dances. Nehru had a special party in honor of the delegates and at this the Chhau dancers of the small Indian state of Seraikella performed. It was a beautiful affair.

A ballet based on *The Discovery of India*, the book Nehru had written while he was serving his last prison term, was given by the Indian National Theater. This was particularly significant because of its source and because it reproduced all varieties of Indian classical dancing.

Among the numberless teas, receptions, and luncheons during the conference, there was an "at home" given by the Viceroy and his wife, Viscount and Viscountess Mountbatten. It was a magnificent affair and Lord Mountbatten was a kind and gracious host. Nothing was spared. The Mogul gardens of the palace were in full bloom, fountains played, and spotlights played upon the wonderful flower beds. The Governor-General's bodyguard was resplendent in scarlet tunics. Suddenly the dusk melted away and the brilliant lights of the palace flooded the gardens.

Nehru watched it all, took part in it all. Lord Mountbatten was the great-grandson of Queen Victoria, under whose authority India had been made subject to England. More than three generations had passed since that

servitude began. But now it was over, soon over. This man who was host today was the last viceroy of India. He was a tribute to England, the new England. It was good that some other had not been in his place.

Nehru held out his hand to say good-by when the party was over. "Thank you," he said simply, "and may there ever be an England, such an England as there is today." His eyes glistened suddenly but he kept them on the Viceroy's face.

"And ever a free India," Lord Mountbatten replied gravely, bowing above their clasped hands.

At the second meeting of the General Assembly of the United Nations, Madame Pandit again headed the delegation from India. All bitterness was gone, and she spoke for India when she said: "We shall be forever grateful to the Labour Government of England that has given us freedom."

# XIX

## INDIA IS FREE

THE fourteenth of August, 1947, was the date set for the declaration of India's freedom. Congress had not wavered from its determination to have a unified India, but the Moslem League had refused to take part in the Constituent Assembly and now insisted upon partition. Congress, willing to go as far as possible to reach an agreement, and relying upon the liberal men in the new government of England, asked for dominion status as a step toward complete independence. They feared that insistence upon full freedom would alienate the Moslem League to the point of losing freedom for India altogether.

The Moslems remained adamant, and at last the members of Congress unhappily agreed to the proposal of a divided India. When the final statement was drawn up and Nehru accepted it, he said:

We shall seek to build anew our relations with England on a friendly and cooperative basis, forgetting the past which has lain so heavily upon us. It is with no joy in my heart that I commend these proposals, though I have no doubt in my mind that this is the right course.

For generations we have dreamt and struggled for a free and independent united India. The proposal to allow certain parts to secede if they so decide will

be painful for any of us to contemplate. Nevertheless I am convinced that our present decision is right.

Gandhi also agreed to the division of India. He had always strongly opposed it, but now, feeling that the whole step toward freedom might well be lost if he withheld his consent, he said no more. With the decision of these two great leaders, London was pleased. The United States hailed the plan drawn up as the solution to the long struggle.

Would the day of independence really come? For more than a generation the long struggle for freedom had gone on. For more than three hundred years the people of India had been restless beneath a foreign rule. Even yet, many wondered whether that rule could be coming to an end.

India waited.

The plans were carefully laid. At midnight on August the fourteenth, the Constituent Assembly of the Union of India was to meet in Constitution Hall, in New Delhi, to celebrate the coming of independence and to inaugurate the new governor-general.

Long before the hour the members of the Assembly gathered. Silence and excited talking followed each other intermittently. Sometimes there was a flurry of papers rattling, and a messenger came running in.

Memories flew back to those who were missing from this gathering. Not even Gandhi was here. He had chosen rather to remain quietly in his Calcutta bungalow. He was old, now, the struggle had been long, and he met this half-bitter victory in silence and in prayer. There were many others who belonged in this place at this time, but they were no more.

Eleven o'clock—the bells and clocks rang out the hour. Nehru rose in his place on the dais. He looked worn, there were dark shadows beneath his eyes, and his

mouth was more set than it used to be. He began to speak in a clear strong voice:

"At the stroke of the midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will wake to life and freedom. We end today a period of ill fortune and India discovers herself again. . . . The ambition of the greatest man of our generation has been to wipe every tear from every eye. That may be beyond us, but so long as there are tears and suffering, so long our work will not be over." He paused and in that pause before he went on again, tears shone in the eyes of many as they heard the name of Gandhi, the one who had inspired them all.

When Nehru had finished speaking, he read as a formal motion the solemn oath that all the members were to take at midnight. The motion was seconded by a member of the Moslem League, who pledged the loyalty of that League, within the Union of India, to the new state. If any there thought how much better unity might have been than a pledge of loyalty, none spoke.

Now, in silence, they listened for the coming of twelve. The strokes began—slowly, loudly, burdened with portent rarely equaled in the history of the world. Four hundred million people freed—and no war fought! When had it ever happened before?

The last stroke sounded, and a tremendous cheer went up, voices from the streets blending with those in the Assembly. It was a strange cheer—wildly joyful, yet deeply sad. Faces beneath the lights of the hall were lined with weariness and stirred with emotion. None was carefree. A long road lay behind, a road strewn with the costs of victory. Ahead the road wound on, not clear and straight, but twisting and turning and sometimes almost disappearing from sight—the road to true freedom.

The cheer died down at last. Mr. Prasad, president

of the Assembly, rose and the people with him. He administered the oath, and voices rang out in the pledge that dedicated these who made it to the service of India, and through India, to the peace of the world.

Dr. Prasad and Nehru left the hall. They had yet to go to the viceregal palace and report the actions taken. The Constituent Assembly had assumed the governing of India and had recommended that the now former Viceroy, Lord Mountbatten, be Governor-General of the new India.

They drove through celebrating crowds. Often their car had to come to a dead stop. When it moved, it only crept. The people had gone wild. They heaped flowers upon the two leaders, they sprinkled rose water upon them, they sang, they danced, they clapped. It was impossible for anyone to speak. The two men simply nodded in appreciation.

Nehru listened and watched. Was there bitterness in the hearts of his people? It had been pent up so long, and now there was nothing to impose restraint. Over there, a European, who went into a hotel, glanced about him as he went in, half surprised. No one touched him, no one pointed him out, no one laughed or jeered. The hotel page boy bowed him in. . . . There went another and another. . . . In all the words that filled the air around him, Nehru heard nothing that was rude or reviling toward the English.

With his colleague he came to the great open squares where the monuments to Queen Victoria and the military leaders of India's history stood—Englishmen who had ruled India. They stood as regally as ever, looking down on the changed scene. No one had spit upon them, or thrown dust or mud upon them. No name was smeared across them. "This is as it should be," Nehru thought with satisfaction.

But how many out of the past came to his mind as the



night moved to the dawn of the first day of his country's freedom! To these there would never be a memorial except that which stood in the hearts of his people. . . . All those whom he had known in the years in jail—boys and old men, and men like himself, and women; all those who had fallen in the dust beneath the lathees; those with whom he had sat in endless and bitter conference; those shot down during the war, when he was not there to know or see; peasants, whose part none would ever know.

This was the day his own father had hoped to see, yet had known long before his own end that he would never set his eyes upon. His mother would have rejoiced in her gentle way, not so much at independence, perhaps, as that her menfolk had won their hearts' desire.

And Kamala! . . . But this was not a day for memory. It was a new day, and he must be ready to meet it.

The sun rose brightly, majestically, and suddenly blazed across the sky. This was the first day of India's freedom. Today, in embassies around the world, the new flag of the Union of India would rise against other skies, and men of many different countries would watch and raise their hands in salute. It was the old flag of the Congress that had waved over the many thousands who had marched in the cause of freedom for their people. Three bars of strong clear colors divided it, saffron for courage and sacrifice, white for peace and truth, and green for faith and chivalry. In the middle of the white field, where once had been the emblem of Gandhi's spinning wheel, was now the wheel of Asoka, the ancient ruler of India who had been the lawgiver and yet himself had obeyed the laws he had made, as one of the people. Would the people of this new India remember how their freedom had come? Would they say among themselves as they saw the colors lifted high, "With no

war, with no armed revolution, the peoples of India have won the greatest political victory of history”?

Who can tell? The struggle for freedom is ended, but the struggle to be truly free, not only of the past, but of the weight of present weakness and poverty and ignorance, is still to be made.

As prime minister of the government that has to complete the task of the centuries, Jawaharlal Nehru now faces the future. The years in prison, the years of separation from those he loved, the lonely years, and the years when he had not an hour to himself, have carried him to the place of highest honor in his own land. Today he is more than a man of India. Born in the East, educated in the West, his mind and heart disciplined by suffering, his integrity complete, he is ready and able to lead his country to her rightful place among the nations of the world.

## EPILOGUE

ON THE afternoon of January 30, 1948, Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated. He was going to his accustomed evening prayer in the garden of Birla House, New Delhi, where he was visiting. Three shots were fired at him at close range as he was about to mount the dais where he prayed. The assassin lifted the pistol to his own head but was so quickly seized that the bullet only grazed him.

Gandhi sank to the green lawn, raising his hand to his forehead in a sign of forgiveness. A cry and a sob rose from the hundreds present as they realized what had happened. He was hastily carried to his room in Birla House. A physician present pronounced him dead in a few minutes.

Those who had come to evening prayer were multiplied into thousands as the radio carried the news. Prime Minister Nehru received the word while he was at work in his office. Always before, at crises, he had been at his leader's side. Today he had been overcome with work. But only that noon he had lunched with relatives who had visited Gandhi in the morning and reported him cheerful and well.

The crowds on the streets near Birla House and on the lawn and in the passages of the house parted to make way at the whisper, "Jawahar!" At the threshold of Gandhi's room, Nehru hesitated as though he could not go in and see that body lying there. But he must go, and gentle hands pushed him on. He went in quietly and knelt beside the bed.

For an instant he gazed at Gandhi's face. It was still lifelike, gentle and touched with a smile. After a moment Nehru dropped his head in his hands and wept. The thousands wept with him, and there was no other sound but that of sobbing and the beating of breasts.

Early the next morning Gandhi's body lay in state. It was clad in what he had always worn, its regality a coverlet of flowers and rose petals put there by loving hands. Diplomats in court mourning, officials in full insignia, peasants, and simple folk of the cities passed by the bier to do him homage, tears in the eyes of all.

Later in the day, the frail body, draped in the national flag, was placed on a trailer and pulled by army, navy, and air force men along the six-mile route to the Jumna River. There the pyre was prepared. Thousands of people lined the roads and followed behind the bier. Sometimes a surging group broke through the cordon in an effort to get a last glimpse of Gandhi's face.

The sandalwood pyre was lit at five and the breeze fanned the flames. As they leaped up, fresh realization swept the crowd, which had grown to millions. Gandhiji, Bapuji, the Father of India, was gone.

The hearts of everyone turned to Nehru. He was the one on whom Gandhi had always depended. They would depend upon him, too. None knew as well as he the heart of the lost leader. Now, looking, they saw Nehru standing almost alone against the suddenly dark sky of India. They waited for him to lead the way.

On February 2, Nehru spoke in Parliament. He was still shaken, and sometimes his words broke with emotion. He said: "A glory has departed and the sun that warmed and brightened our lives has set and we shiver in the cold and dark. Yet he would not have us feel this way after all that glory that we saw, for all these years that man with divine fire changed us also and, such as we are, we have been molded by him. . . . All we know is that there was a glory and that it is no more. All we know is that for the moment there is darkness: not so dark certainly, because when we look into our hearts we still find the living flame which he lighted there, and if those living flames exist there will not be darkness in this land, and we shall be able with our effort, praying with him and following his path, to illumine this land again.

. . . So he would chide us if we merely mourn: that is a poor way of doing homage to him. The only way is to express our determination to pledge ourselves anew to conduct ourselves so and dedicate ourselves to the great task which he undertook and which he accomplished to such a large extent. So we have to work, we have to labor, we have to sacrifice, and thus prove to some extent at least worthy followers of his. . . . In the ages to come, centuries and maybe millenniums after us, people will think of this generation when this man of God trod the earth and will think of us who, however small, could also follow his path and probably tread on that holy ground where his feet had been. Let us be worthy of him, let us always be so."

Before Nehru lay his task. Four hundred million people without the leader who had always been able to draw them together, newly free and not yet adjusted to that freedom, torn by a division that had brought about the death of Gandhi, millions of them poor and sick, looked to Nehru. He himself felt leaderless but he could not look back, he could not falter, he must push on.

He spoke to the people by radio. "I plead for tolerance and co-operation . . . and the joining together of all forces which want to make India a great and progressive nation. . . . People talk of a memorial to [Gandhi] in bronze or marble or pillars and thus they mock him and belie his message. What tribute shall we pay him that he would have appreciated? . . . To follow reverently in the path he showed us and do our duty in life and death. . . . His dominating passion was truth. . . . That truth led him to fight evil and untruth wherever he found them regardless of consequences. That truth made a service of the poor and dispossessed the passion of his life, for where there is inequality and discrimination and suppression there is injustice and evil and untruth. And thus he became beloved by all those who have suffered

from social and political evils. Because of the truth in him, wherever he sat became a temple and where he trod was hallowed ground. . . . He taught us to rise above our little selves and prejudices and to see good in others. His last few months and his very death symbolize to us this message of largehearted tolerance and unity. A little while before he died we pledged ourselves in this before him. We must keep that pledge and remember India is a common home to all those who live here, to whatever religion they may belong. They are equal sharers in our great inheritance, and they have equal rights and obligations. . . . We must all hold together in this hour of crisis."

The next day the ashes of Gandhi were immersed at the historically sacred spot, the confluence of the Ganges, Jumna, and Saraswati rivers near Allahabad. Five million people gathered on the banks to watch the ceremony with reverence. All over India other millions prayed and repeated the Hindu scriptures at the hour. As the boat bearing the urn of ashes glided out, many waded and swam beside it, while overhead planes dipped in salute and showered down flowers upon it. The crowds on the shore chanted, voices rising in a great chorus of grief.

Prime Minister Nehru and other officers of the Government of India were present. Nehru said, "For ten thousand years and more Mahatma Gandhi's name will shine out as invincible. . . . Though Gandhi's earthly sojourn has ended, his spirit will serve as a beacon light to posterity, and he will continue to guide us. He led us triumphantly in the battle for freedom. In gratitude for what he has done for us we owe him a duty. Our duty today is to complete the work started by him and establish the India of his Ideal. In India we must give equal rights to all persons irrespective of their religions, and we have also to extend to the rest of the world that lesson of equality of all men."

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