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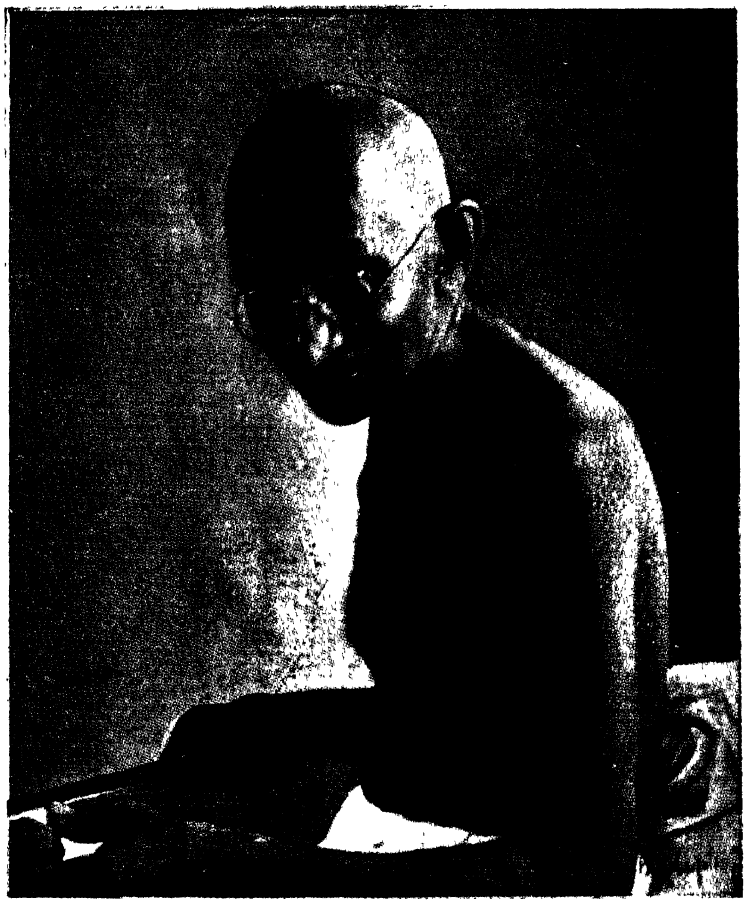
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TEACHINGS OF MAHATMA GANDHI



Ah, c'est ici que j'ai passé les plus belles années de ma vie, à la belle étoile, avec mes chers amis les hommes rats.

TEACHINGS
OF
MAHATMA GANDHI

EDITED BY

JAG PARVESH CHANDER

WITH A FOREWORD BY

Dr. RAJENDRA PRASAD

EX-PRESIDENT, THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

THE INDIAN PRINTING WORKS

KACHERI ROAD LAHORE

Price Rs. 10/-/-

By the same author

ETHICS OF FASTING
TAGORE AND GANDHI ARGUE
GANDHI AGAINST FASCISM
THE UNSEEN POWER
GITA THE MOTHER
THE GOOD LIFE
THE CONGRESS CASE
THE PENSIVE MOOD (A Collection of Poems)

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Printed and Published by Mr. Narain Das Kumar at the Indian Printing Works Kacheri Road, Lahore : 1st Edition, September 1945.

Foreword

DURING the last forty years or more of his most busy and eventful life, Mahatma Gandhi has spoken much, and written a great deal, on a large variety of subjects of great interest and importance to India and to the world at large. His writings and the reports of his speeches are enshrined in the columns of newspapers and particularly of the weeklies which he has conducted. It is difficult to find out his views on a particular subject without reference to old files which are not easily available. Only some of his writings have been published in book form, *e. g.*, *My Experiments with Truth* and *Satyagraha in South Africa.* His articles in *Young India* were published in 3 volumes by Mr. S. Ganesan. His speeches have also been collected and published by Mr. G. Natesan. But all these publications are out of date as they were published several years ago. Since then a great deal more has been written

Gandhiji is a growing personality and he has never allowed himself to be a slave of consistency. His latest views on any subject are therefore of great importance to the public. They are not easily

available in a handy form. Sjt. Jag Parvesh Chander has attempted to collect together his writings under appropriate headings in a chronological order in this book. One can at a glance get at Gandhiji's views on a particular subject and see the development of his thoughts on that subject as disclosed in his own words in his writings.

The book will prove of immense help to any serious student of Gandhian literature as a book of reference. That Gandhiji covers a vast variety of subjects is apparent from the fact that the book contains more than 340 headings under which his writings and speeches are divided.

The compiler has devoted much time and labour and I hope his labours will be appreciated by the public.

RAJENDRA PRASAD

. . . . Introduction

WHEN man forsakes the sacred and ancient path of Truth, and in the insolence of his evanescent power desecrates all that is holy and of a permanent value in the land, God the Merciful and Jealous Custodian of Right sends His personal messengers to reinstate in the human breast the eternal and fundamental things that constitute the greatness of Man. And these are the things that differentiate him from the beast who only obeys the law of the jungle. The Creator, through His inscrutable ways, sees that man must remain a man and fulfil his destined mission. The purpose that lies behind this division between man and beast must be realized.

These prophets, who are the pride of the age in which they are born, hold communion with their Master. The divine message they interpret through their intellect and translate it in the customary human language for the benefit of the world. They practise in their own lives what they preach to others. They keep aloft and burning the flame of Righteousness amidst the "encircling gloom" of Greed, Selfishness and Expediency.

The twentieth century in a way has been the blackest chapter in the history of mankind. Violence has been the guiding star of modern times. Exploitation is the first article of faith of the ruling powers. In this age of the so-called freedom, a major portion of the world's population is held in abject slavery.

God wanted man to be free and live on the basis of perfect equality. But that was not to be. The powers that were given to man for nobler purposes were misused. Intelligence with which man was blessed was wholly used in a way that negatived the ambition of God. Realising the hideous sins that man was committing, God sent Gandhiji to warn the misguided ; reform the wrong-doer and lead the miscreants to the right path.

To-day the world may not admit but Gandhiji is indisputably the latest in the glorious and glittering line of the prophets. His life is a heritage of all the good that his predecessors said and did. The earlier prophets were maligned as imposters ; their teachings were reviled as the odd fancies of an obsessed mind. They were persecuted, stoned and even crucified. Such is the tragedy of life ! Such is the reward that mankind offers to its guides, friends and well-wishers ! Gandhiji too has suffered much at the hands of his " foes."

But undaunted by physical tortures the prophets preach the divine gospel ; unmindful of calumny they work for the uplift of those who besmear the dew-like purity of their lives ; unconcerned with the seeming failure of their mission, they pursue their work with a zeal that baffles the critic.

Posterity repents for the sins committed against them and spontaneously enshrines their sublime teachings in the imperishable Book of Life.

Look at the sufferings of Christ and look at the popularity of the *Bible* ! When he was crucified, the cross became a symbol of the fulfilment of the spirit of

retribution. To-day the Cross is worn next to the heart. It serves as a reminder of his gospel. The Cross to the Christians is as dear as the heart itself. Not a trumpet was beaten and not a bugle was blown to honour his selfless service. But to-day millions of bells toll from the belfry storeys in the praise of the Great Teacher. No dirge was sung at his funeral procession but to-day every Sunday the jubilant air re-echoes melodiously the soft and soothing music of the hymns sung to invoke the mercy of Christ.

To me at least, Gandhiji is as big a prophet as Christ was, or for that matter any other prophet. It has been my cherished wish to condense his inspired thoughts in a handy book. No other prophet has written or spoken so much as Gandhiji has done. The circumstances in which he is living have forced him to do so. The complexity of modern life demanded his tackling the intricate problems that face mankind.

For an ordinary busy man engrossed in his daily routine work, it is physically impossible to acquaint himself with Gandhiji's views on a particular subject. First, even the *Young India* and the *Harijan* files are not available in the market, let alone the expense involved in buying them. Secondly, even if one could borrow from a friend, the difficulty of collecting his ideas on any subject is overwhelming. So much so that one's enthusiasm and energy needed for the research work will vanish by the time.

Taking these facts under consideration I took upon myself the task of classifying Gandhiji's writings and speeches under different heads and arrange them alphabetically. In this book the reader has just to

look at the Contents and then turn over to the particular pages and he has before him the choicest wisdom of Gandhiji.

I have taken utmost care to avoid repetition of his views. The best and the most necessary quotations and articles are given. Selection has been done with devotion and pruning with diligence.

The book has a unique reference value and is indispensable both to his admirers and critics.

I thank Mr. K. L. Chopra, B. A., one of the Managers of the Bharat Insurance Co. Ltd., Lahore for helping me in editing some of the portions of this book. Though he is an insurance man primarily, he has an acute sense of discrimination in choosing and placing the right passage in its right place.

JAG PARVESH CHANDER

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TEACHINGS

OF

MAHATMA GANDHI

A

Abuse

WE should meet abuse by forbearance. Human nature is so constituted that if we take absolutely no notice of anger or abuse, the person indulging in it will soon weary of it and stop. —*Young India*: Nov. 26, 1928.

◈ ◈ ◈

SUPPOSING some one showers abuse on us, what shall we do? We will not ask him to be quiet, but will shut our own ears. Supposing someone calls me names, shall I go to his house and receive more abuse? I wonder if you know the statute of the three monkeys in Kobe. It represents three monkeys with closed ears, closed mouth, and closed eyes, eloquently teaching the world to hear no evil, to speak no evil, and to see no evil. —*Harijan*: March 2, 1940.

Action

ALL action in this world has some drawback about it. It is man's duty and privilege to reduce it, and while living in the midst of it, to remain untouched by it as much as it is possible for him to do so. To take an extreme instance, there can perhaps be no greater contradiction in terms than a compassionate butcher. And yet it is possible

even for a butcher if he has any pity in him. In fact I have actually known butchers with gentleness that one would hardly expect from them. The celebrated episode of Kaushik the butcher in the *Mahabharata* is an instance in point. —*Young India*: Aug. 1, 1929.

Adaptability

ADAPTABILITY is not imitation. It means power of resistance and assimilation.

—*Young India*: Oct. 7, 1926.

Adoration

BLIND adoration, in the age of action is perfectly valueless, is often embarrassing and equally often painful. —*Young India*: June 12, 1924.

Adultery

WHERE there is a non-violent atmosphere, where there is the constant teaching of *ahimsa*, woman will not regard herself as dependent, weak or helpless. She is not really helpless when she is really pure. Her purity makes her conscious of her strength. I have always held that it is physically impossible to violate a woman against her will. The outrage takes place only when she gives way to fear or does not realise her moral strength. If she cannot meet the assailant's physical might, her purity will give her the strength to die before he succeeds in violating her. Take the case of Sita. Physically she was a weakling before Ravana, but her purity was more than a match even for his giant might. He tried to win her with all kinds of allurements but could not carnally touch her without her consent. On the other hand, if a woman depends on her own physical strength or upon a weapon she possesses, she is sure to be discomfited whenever her strength is exhausted.

—*Harijan*: Jan. 14, 1940.

◈ ◈ ◈

IT is my firm conviction that a fearless woman who knows that her purity is her best shield can never be dis-

honoured. However beastly the man, he will bow in shame before the flame of her dazzling purity.

—*Harijan*: March 1, 1942.

◈ ◈ ◈

A WOMAN is worthy of condemnation only when she is a willing party to her dishonour. In no case are adultery and criminal assault synonymous terms.

—*Harijan*: March 1, 1942.

◈ ◈ ◈

GOD will protect their honour. When, as if to mock man, her natural protectors became helpless to prevent Draupadi from being denuded of her last piece of cloth, the power of her own virtue preserved her honour. And so will it be to the end of time. Even the weakest physically have been given the ability to protect their own honour. Let it be man's privilege to protect woman, but let no woman of India feel helpless in the absence of man or in the event of his failing to perform the sacred duty of protecting her. One who knows how to die need never fear any harm to her or his honour.

—*Young India*: Dec. 15, 1921.

◈ ◈ ◈

A GIRL who rather than give her living body to a would-be ravisher presents him with her corpse, confounds him and dies a heroine's death. Hers is a stout heart in a frail body. —*Harijan*: July 13, 1940.

Advertisements-Immoral

I DO from the botom of my heart detest these advertisements. I do hold that it is wrong to conduct newspapers by the aid of these immoral advertisements. I do believe that if advertisements should be taken at all there should be a rigid censorship instituted by newspaper proprietors and editors themselves and that only healthy advertisements should be taken. The evil of immoral advertisements is overtaking even what are known

as the most respectable newspapers and magazines. That evil has to be combated by refining the conscience of the newspaper proprietors and editors. That refinement can come not through the influence of an amateur editor like myself but it will come when their own conscience is roused to recognition of the growing evil or when it is super-imposed upon them by a government representing the people and caring for the people's morals.

—*Young India*: March 25, 1926.

Agitation

AGITATION means no more than movement towards something. But just as all movement does not mean progress, so does an agitation not mean success. Undisciplined agitation which is a paraphrase of violence of speech or deed, can only retard national growth and bring about even unmerited retribution such as the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre. Disciplined agitation is the condition of national growth. —*Young India*: Dec. 31, 1919.

◈ ◈ ◈

WELL-ORDERED, persistent agitation is the soul of healthy progress. —*Young India*: Oct. 20, 1927.

Anger

ANGER is sort of madness and the noblest causes have been damaged by advocates affected with temporary lunacy. —*Young India*: Sept. 27, 1919.

◈ ◈ ◈

'CONQUER *anger*,' says Lord Buddha, '*by non-anger*.' But what is that 'non-anger'? It is a positive quality and means the supreme virtue of charity or love. You must be roused of this supreme virtue which must express itself in your going to the angry man, ascertaining from him the cause of his anger, making amends if you have given any cause for offence and then bringing home to him the error of his way and convincing him that it is wrong to be provoked.

This consciousness of the quality of the soul, and deliberate exercise of it elevate not only the man but the surrounding atmosphere. Of course only he who has that love will exercise it. This love can certainly be cultivated by incessant striving. —*Young India*: June 12, 1928.

◈ ◈ ◈

I DO sometimes become extremely angry with myself but I also pray to be delivered from that devil and God has given me power to suppress my anger.

—*Young India*: Nov. 12, 1931.

◈ ◈ ◈

Q. You have the reputation of never being angry. Is that true?

A. It is not that I do not get angry. I do not give vent to anger. I cultivate the quality of patience as angerlessness, and generally speaking succeed. But I only control my anger when it comes. How I find it possible to control it would be a useless question, for it is a habit that everyone must cultivate and must succeed in forming by constant practice. —*Harijan*: May 1, 1935.

◈ ◈ ◈

I KNOW to banish anger altogether from one's breast is a difficult task. It cannot be achieved through pure, personal effort. It can be done only by God's grace.

—*Harijan*: Nov. 19, 1938.

◈ ◈ ◈

HE who trifles with truth cuts at the root of *ahimsa*. He who is angry is guilty of *ahimsa*.

—*Young India*: Oct. 21, 1926.

◈ ◈ ◈

ANGER and intolerance are the twin enemies of correct understanding. —*Harijan*: June 7, 1942.

Anarchy

THOUGH anarchy is every time better than slavery it is a state which I would not only have

no hand in consciously bringing into being but which I am by nature unfitted to bring about.

—*Young India*: Aug. 27, 1925.



Anglo-Indians

THOUGH you have got Indian blood of which you need be proud—you need not be ashamed of that—I know when you receive a reminder of it you are pained.

—*Young India*: April 6, 1925.

IF you cast in your lot with the masses of India from which you have sprung there is nothing but hope for you, me and even for Government to whom you think you are bound to be loyal.

You can become a bridge so that all Indians and all Englishmen may cross to and fro without either feeling injured or hurt or feeling any degree of inconvenience. But if you want to aspire after the heights of Simla, well those heights are unattainable and therefore poverty must be your lot, and also the lot of India. An important community like the Anglo-Indians, brave, resourceful, you are going to perdition simply because you would not see the plain truth, but persist in an impossible attempt. In this process you are cutting yourselves away from the masses. Thus you have been ostracised by Indians and Europeans both. I would therefore ask you to shed this aping habit, to think for the masses, merge yourselves into the masses so that they can be lifted and we can show to the world a beautiful specimen of Indian humanity in which all races can blend and mingle, each retaining its special admirable characteristics, each keeping every bit of what is best in it. That is your privilege, if you will exercise it.

—*Young India*: April 13, 1925.

Animals

IF our sense of right and wrong had not become blunt, we would recognise that animals had rights, no less than men. This education of the heart is the proper function of humanitarian leagues. I know that the lower creation groans under the arrogant lordship of man. He counts no cruelty too repulsive when he wants to satisfy his appetite, whether lawful or unlawful.

—*Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi*: April 13, 1915.

◈ ◈ ◈

IF the beasts had intelligent speech at their command, they would state a case against man that would stagger humanity. I can understand the shooting of wild beasts which come to annoy us. But I have found no cogent reasons advanced for wasting treasures upon organising parties for satisfying man's thirst for blood.

—*Young India*: Jan. 13, 1920.

◈ ◈ ◈

I DO believe that all God's creatures have the right to live as much as we have. Instead of prescribing the killing of the so-called injurious fellow-creatures of ours as a duty, if men of knowledge had devoted their gift to discovering ways of dealing with them otherwise than by killing them, we would be living in a world befitting our status as men—animals endowed with reason and the power of choosing between good and evil, right and wrong, violence and non-violence, truth and untruth. I prefer to be called a coward or a fool or wrose, to denying for the sake of being considered a wise man what I believe to be a fundamental truth of life. Marvellous as the progress of physical sciences undoubtedly is, it only humbles us and enables us to know that we know hardly anything of the mysteries of Nature. In the spiritual realm, we make little or no progress. The physical has over-whelmed the spiritual in us. We hardly like to own the latter's existence. And yet the question of killing and non-killing, of man's relation to his human fellow-

creatures, belongs to the spiritual realm. Its proper solution will surely revolutionize our thought, speech and action. Both my intellect and heart refuse to believe that the so-called noxious life has been created for destruction by man. God is good and wise. A good and wise God cannot be so bad and so unwise as to create to no purpose. It is more conducive to reason to own our ignorance and assume that every form of life has a useful purpose which we must patiently strive to discover. I verily believe that man's habit of killing man on the slightest pretext has darkened his reason and he gives himself liberties with other life which he would shudder to take if he really believed that God was a God of Love and Mercy. Anyway though for fear of death I may kill tigers, snakes, fleas, mosquitoes and the like, I ever pray for illumination that will shed all fear of death and thus refusing to take life know the better way for

" Taught by the Power that pities me
I learn to pity them."

—*Harijan*: Jan. 9, 1937.

I AM not opposed to the progress of science as such On the contrary the scientific spirit of the West commands my admiration and if that admiration is qualified, it is because the scientist of the West takes no note of God's lower creation. I abhor vivisection with my whole soul. I detest the unpardonable slaughter of innocent life in the name of science and humanity so-called, and all the scientific discoveries stained with innocent blood I count as of no consequence. If the circulation of blood theory could not have been discovered without vivisection, the human kind could well have done without it. And I see the day clearly drawing when the honest scientist of the West, will put limitations upon the present methods of pursuing knowledge. Future measurements will take note not merely of the human family but of all that lives and even as we are slowly but surely discovering that it is an error to suppose

that Hindus can thrive upon the degradation of a fifth of themselves or that people of the West can rise or live upon the exploitation and degradation of the eastern and African nations, so shall we realise in the fullness of time, that our dominion over the lower order of creation is not for their slaughter, but for their benefit equally with ours. For I am as certain that they are endowed with a soul as that I am. —*Young India*: Dec. 17, 1925.



IT is an arrogant assumption to say that human beings are lords and masters of the lower creation. On the contrary, being endowed with greater things in life, they are trustees of the lower animal kingdom.

—*Young India*: March 13, 1926.

Animal Sacrifices

I HAVE heard it argued that since the stopping of animal sacrifices people have lost the warlike spirit. There were animal sacrifices enough in Europe before Christianity. Europe does not seem to have lost its warlike spirit because of the stopping of degrading and debasing animal sacrifices. I am no worshipper of warlike spirit, but I know that warlike spirit is not to be cultivated by the slaughter, in a terribly cruel manner, of helpless, innocent, unresisting dumb fellow creatures.

—*Young India*: Nov. 21, 1929.



IT is defaming God to offer animal sacrifices in temples. What God wants, if He can be said to want anything, is the sacrifice made by a humble and contrite heart.

—*Harijan*: April 5, 1942.

Art

WHO can deny that much that passes for science and art to-day destroys the soul instead of uplifting it and instead of evoking the best in us panders to our basest passions?

—*Young India*: Aug. 11, 1927.

FEW people who have devoted themselves to art are known to have achieved unique blending of devotion to art and pure and blameless life. We have somehow accustomed overselves to the belief that art is independent of the purity of private life. I can say with all the experience at my command that nothing could be more untrue. As I am nearing the end of my earthly life, I can say that purity of life is the highest and truest art. The art of producing good music from a cultivated voice can be achieved by many, but the art of producing that music from the harmony of a pure life is achieved very rarely.

—*Harijan* : Feb. 19, 1938.

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'HOW is it,' asked Ramchandran, 'that many intelligent and eminent men, who love and admire you, hold that you consciously or unconsciously have ruled out of the scheme of national regeneration all considerations of Art ?' 'I am sorry,' replied Gandhiji, 'that in this matter I have been generally misunderstood. There are two aspects of things,—the outward and the inward. It is purely a matter of emphasis with me. The outward has no meaning except in so far as it helps the inward. All true Art is thus the expression of the soul. The outward forms have value only in so far as they are the expression of the inner spirit of man.'

Ramachandran hesitatingly suggested : 'The great artists themselves have declared, that Art is the translation of the urge and unrest in the soul of the artist into words, colours, shapes, etc. 'Yes', said Gandhiji, 'Art of that nature has the greatest possible appeal for me. But I know that many call themselves as artists, and are recognised as such, and yet in their works there is absolutely no trace of soul's upward urge and unrest.'

'Have you any instance in mind ?' 'Yes,' said Gandhiji, 'take Oscar Wilde. I can speak of him, as I was in England at the time he was being much discussed and talked about.'

'I have been told,' put in Ramachandran, 'that Oscar Wilde was one of the greatest literary artists of modern times.'

'Yes, that is just my trouble. Wilde saw the highest Art simply in outward forms and therefore succeeded in beautifying immorality. All true Art must help the soul to realise its inner self. In my own case, I find that I can do entirely without external forms in my soul's realisation. I can claim, therefore, that there is truly sufficient Art in my life, though you might not see what you call works of Art about me. My room may have blank walls; and I may even dispense with the roof, so that I may gaze out upon the starry heavens overhead that stretch in an unending expanse of beauty. What conscious Art of man can give me the panoramic scenes that open out before me, when I look up to the sky above with all its shining stars? This, however, does not mean that I refuse to accept the value of productions of Art, generally accepted as such, but only that I personally feel how inadequate these are compared with the eternal symbols of beauty in Nature. These productions of man's Art have their value only so far as they help the soul onward towards self-realisation.'

'But the artists claim to see and to find Truth through outward beauty,' said Ramchandran. 'Is it possible to see and find Truth in that way?'

'I would reverse the order,' Gandhiji immediately answered, 'I see and find beauty in Truth or through Truth. All Truths, not merely true ideas, but truthful faces, truthful pictures, or songs, are highly beautiful. People generally fail to see Beauty in Truth, the ordinary man runs away from and becomes blind to the beauty in it. Whenever men begin to see Beauty in Truth, then true Art will arise.'

Ramachandran then asked, 'But cannot Beauty be eparated from Truth, and Truth from Beauty?'

'I should want to know exactly what is Beauty', Gandhiji replied. 'If it is what people generally understand by that word, then they are wide apart. Is a woman with fair features necessarily beautiful?' 'Yes', replied Ramachandran without thinking.

'Even' asked Bapu, continuing his question, 'if she may be of an ugly character?'

Ramachandran hesitated. Then he said, 'But her face in that case cannot be beautiful. It will always be the index of the soul within. The true artist with the genius of perception will produce the right expression.'

'But here you are begging the whole question,' Gandhiji replied, 'You now admit that mere outward form may not make a thing beautiful. To a true artist only that face is beautiful which, quite apart from its exterior, shines with the Truth within the soul. There is then, as I have said, no Beauty apart from Truth. On the other hand, Truth may manifest itself in forms which may not be outwardly beautiful at all. Socrates, we are told, was the most truthful man of his time and yet his features are said to have been the ugliest in Greece. To my mind he was beautiful, because all his life was a striving after Truth, and you may remember that his outward form did not prevent Phidias from appreciating the beauty of Truth in him, though as an artist he was accustomed to see Beauty in outward forms also!'

'But Bapuji,' said Ramachandran eagerly, 'the most beautiful things have often been created by men whose own lives were not beautiful.'

'That', said Gandhiji, 'only means that Truth and Untruth often co-exist; good and evil are often found together. In an artist also not seldom the right perception of things, and the wrong co-exist. Truly beautiful creations come when right preception is at work. If these moments are rare in life they are also rare in Art.'

All this set Ramachandran thinking hard. If only truthful or good things can be beautiful, how can things without a moral quality be beautiful ? ', he said, half to himself and half aloud. Then he asked the question, ' Is there truth, Bapuji, in things that are neither moral nor immoral in themselves ? For instance, is there truth in a sunset or a crescent moon that shines amid the stars at night ? '

' Indeed ', replied Gandhiji, ' these beauties are truthful, inasmuch as they make me think of the Creator at the back of them. How also could these be beautiful, but for the Truth that is in the centre of creation ? When I admire the wonder of a sunset or the beauty of the moon my soul expands in worship of the Creator. I try to see Him and His mercies in all these creations. But even the sunsets and sunrises would be mere hindrances, if they did not help me to think of Him. Anything which is a hindrance to the flight of the soul, is a delusion and a snare ; even, like the body, which often does hinder you in the path of salvation.'

' I am grateful,' exclaimed Ramachandran, ' to hear your views on Art, and I understand and accept them. Would it not be well for you to set them down for the benefit of the younger generation in order to guide them aright ? '

' That ', replied Gandhiji with a smile, ' I could never dream of doing, for the simple reason that it would be an impertinence on my part to hold forth on Art. I am not an art student, though these are my fundamental convictions. I do not speak or write about it, because I am conscious of my own limitations. That consciousness is my only strength. Whatever I might have been able to do in my life has proceeded more than anything else out of the realisation of my own limitations. My functions are different from the artist's, and I should not go out of my way to assume his position.'

'So, Bapuji, Truth is the main thing,' said Ramachandran, resuming the previous day's conversation, 'Beauty and Truth are not separate aspects of the same thing.'

'Truth', repeated Gandhiji with greater emphasis, is the first thing to be sought for, and Beauty and Goodness will then be added unto you. Jesus was, to my mind, a supreme artist, because he saw and expressed Truth; and so was Muhammad, the *Koran* being the most perfert composition in all Arabic literature,—at any rate, that is what scholars say. It is because both of them strove first for Truth, that the grace of expression naturally came in; and yet neither Jesus nor Muhammad wrote on Art. That is the Truth and Beauty I crave for, live for and would die for.' —*Young India*: Nov. 13, 1924.

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TRUE art takes note not merely of form but also of what lies behind. There is an art that kills and an art that gives life. True art must be evidence of happiness, contentment and purity of its authors.

—*Young India*: Aug. 11, 1921.

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Beauty

TRUE beauty consists in purity of heart.

—*My Experiments with Truth*: Page 38.

Beggary

MY friendship for them must be a sorry affair if I could be satisfied with a large part of humanity being reduced to beggary. Little do my friends know that my friendship for the paupers of India has made me hard hearted enough to contemplate their utter starvation with equanimity in preference to their utter reduction to beggary. My *Ahimsa* would not tolerate the idea of giving a free meal to a healthy person who had not worked for it in some

honest way, and if I had the power I would stop every *Sadavrat* where free meals are given. It has degraded the nation and it has encouraged laziness, idleness, hypocrisy and even crime. Such misplaced charity adds nothing to the wealth of the country, whether material or spiritual, and gives a false sense of meritoriousness to the donor. How nice and wise it would be if the donor were to open institutions where they would give meals under healthy, clean surroundings to men and women who would work for them. I personally think that the spinning wheel or any of the processes that cotton has to go through will be an ideal occupation. But if they will not have that, they may choose any other work, only the rule should be, 'No labour, no meal.' —*Young India*: Aug. 13, 1925.

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THE grinding poverty and starvation with which our country is afflicted is such that it drives more and more men every year into the ranks of the beggars, whose desperate struggle for bread renders them insensible to all feelings of decency and self-respect. And our philanthropists, instead of providing work for them and insisting on their working for bread, give them alms.—*My Experiments with Truth*: Page 530

Bhangi

THE ideal *bhangi* of my conception would be a Brahmin *par-excellence*, possibly even excel him. It is possible to envisage the existence of a *bhangi* without a Brahmin. But without the former the latter could not be. It is the *bhangi* who enables society to live. A *bhangi* does for society what a mother does for her baby. A mother washes her baby of the dirt and insures his health. Even so the *bhangi* protects and safeguards the health of that entire community by maintaining sanitation for it. The Brahmin's duty is to look after the sanitation of the soul, the *bhangi's* that of the body of society. But there is a difference in practice; the Brahmin generally does not live up to his duty, the *bhangi* does willy-nilly no doubt. Society

is sustained by several services. The *bhangi* constitutes the foundation of all services.

And yet our woe begone Indian society has branded the *bhangi* as a social pariah, set him down at the bottom of the scale, held him fit only to receive kicks and abuse, a creature who must subsist on the leavings of the caste-people and dwell on the dung-heap. He is without a friend, his very name has become a term of reproach. This is shocking. It is perhaps useless to seek the why and wherefore of it. I certainly am unaware of the origin of the inhuman conduct, but I know this much that by looking down upon the *bhangi* we—Hindus, Mussalmans, Christians and all—have deserved the contempt of the whole world. Our villages have to-day become seats of dirt and insanitation and the villagers come to an early and untimely death. If only we had given due recognition to the status of the *bhangi* as equal to that of a Brahmin as in fact and justice he deserves, our villages to-day no less than their inhabitants would have looked a picture of cleanliness and order. We would have to large extent been free from the ravages of a host of diseases which directly spring from our uncleanliness and lack of sanitary habits.

I, therefore, make hold to state without any manner of hesitation of doubt that not till the invidious distinction between the Brahmin and the *bhangi* is removed, will our society enjoy health, prosperity and peace, and be happy.

What qualities should such an honoured servant of society exemplify in his person? In my opinion an ideal *bhangi* should have a thorough knowlegde of the principles on sanitation. He should know how a right kind of latrine is constructed, and the correct way of cleaning it. He should know how to overcome and destroy the odour of excreta and the various disinfectants to render them innocuous. He should likewise know the process of converting night-soil and urine into manure.

But that is not all. My ideal *bhangi* would know the quality of night-soil and urine. He would keep a close watch on these and give a timely warning to the individual concerned. Thus, he will give a timely notice of the results of his examination of the excreta. That presuppposes a scientific knowledge of the requirements of his profession. He would likewise be an authority on the subject of disposal of night-soil in small villages as well as big cities and his advice and guidance in the matter would be sought for and freely given to society. It goes without saying that he would have the usual learning necessary for reaching the standard here laid down for his profession. Such ideal *bhangi* while deriving his livelihood from his occupation, would approach it only as a sacred duty. In other words he would not dream of amassing wealth out of it. He would consider himself responsible for the proper removal and disposal of all the dirt and night-soil within the area which he serves and regard the maintenance of healthy and sanitary condition within the same as the *summum bonum* of his existence. —*Harijan* : Nov. 28, 1936.

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THE *bhangi* has been the most despised of the *Harijans* because his work has been regarded as the most degrading. But we forget that our mothers did that very work whilst we were babies innocent of all cleanliness. If that work was ignoble the *bhangi's* would be ignoble but if it was noble the *bhangi's* work is also noble. But our mothers cleaned our filth because we were their babies, because they could not do otherwise, because they were wrapped up in us and adored their ownselves in us. Their work was thus selfish. The volunteer *bhangi's* work is unselfish and so nobler than that of mothers. And if I revere my mother and therefore the whole of womankind, is it not clear that I should adore the volunteer *bhangi* even more ?

—*Harijan* : Feb. 19, 1938

Birth and Death

BIRTH and death are not two different states, but they are different aspects of the same state. There is as little reason to deplore the one as there is to be pleased over the other.

—*Young India*: Nov. 20, 1924.

Births and Rebirths

I AM a believer in previous births and rebirths. All our relationships are the result of the *sanskars* we carry from our previous births. God's laws are inscrutable and are the subject of endless search. No one will fathom them.

—*Harijan*: Aug. 18, 1940.

Birth Control

THERE can be no two opinions about the necessity of birth control. But the only method handed down from ages past is self-control or *Brahmacharya*. It is an infallible sovereign remedy doing good to those who practise it. And medical men will earn the gratitude of mankind, if instead of devising artificial means of bith control they will find out the means of self-control. The union is meant not for pleasure but for bringing forth progeny. And union is a crime when the desire for progeny is absent.

Artificial methods are like putting a premium upon vice. They make man and woman reckless. And respectability that is being given to the methods must hasten the dissolution of the restraints that public opinion puts upon one. Adoption of artificial methods must result in imbecility and nervous prostration. The remedy will be found to be worse than the disease. It is wrong and immoral to seek to escape the consequences of one's acts. It is good for a person who over-eats to have an ache and a fast. It is bad for him to indulge his appetite and then escape the consequence by taking tonics or other medicine. It is still worse for a person to indulge

in his animal passions and escape the consequences of his acts. Nature is relentless and will have full revenge for any such violation of her laws. Moral results can only be produced by moral restraints. All other restraints defeat the very purpose for which they are intended. The reasoning underlying the use of artificial methods is that indulgence is a necessity of life. Nothing can be more fallacious. Let those who are eager to see the births regulated explore the lawful means devised by the ancients and try to find out how they can be revived. An enormous amount of spade-work lies in front of them. Early marriages are a fruitful source of adding to the population. The present mode of life has also a great deal to do with the evil of unchecked procreation. If these causes are investigated and dealt with, society will be morally elevated. If they are ignored by impatient zealots and if artificial methods become the order of the day, nothing but moral degradation can be the result. A society that has already become enervated through a variety of causes will become still further enervated by the adoption of artificial methods. Those men, therefore, who are lightheartedly advocating artificial methods cannot do better than study the subject afresh, stay their injurious activity and popularise *Brahmacharya* both for the married and the unmarried. That is the only noble and straight method of birth control.

—*Young India* : March 12, 1924.

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I AM afraid that advocates of birth control take it for granted that indulgence in animal passion is a necessity of life and in itself a desirable thing. The solicitude shown for the fair sex is most pathetic. In my opinion it is an insult to the fair sex to put up her case in support of birth control by artificial methods. As it is, man has sufficiently degraded her for his lust, and artificial methods,

no matter how well-meaning the advocates may be, will still further degrade her. I know that there are modern women who advocate these methods. But I have little doubt that the vast majority of women will reject them as inconsistent with their dignity. If man means well by her, let him exercise control over himself. It is not she who tempts. In reality man being the aggressor is the real culprit and the tempter.

—*Young India* : April 2, 1925.

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'YOU seem to regard a beautiful function as something objectionable. Two animals are nearest to the divine when they are going to create new life. There is something very beautiful in the act,' said the *Swami.*

'Here again you are labouring under a confusion,' said Gandhiji. 'The creation of a new life is nearest the divine, I agree. All I want is that one should approach that act in a divine way. That is to say, man and woman must come together with no other desire than that of creating a new life. But if they come together merely to have a fond embrace, they are nearest the devil Man unfortunately forgets that he is nearest the divine, hankers after the brute instinct in himself and becomes lesss than the brute.'

'But why must you cast aspersion on the brute?'

'I do not. The brute fulfills the law of his own nature. The lion in his majesty is a noble creature and he has a perfect right to eat me up, but I have none to develop paws and pounce upon you. Then I lower myself and become worse than the brute.'

—*Harijan* : Sept. 7, 1935.

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BIRTH CONTROL to me is a dismal abyss. It amounts to playing with unknown forces. Assuming that birth control by artificial aids is justifiable under certain conditions, it

seems to be utterly impracticable of application among the millions. It seems to me to be easier to induce them to practise self-control than control by contraceptives. This little globe of ours is not a toy of yesterday. It has not suffered from the weight of over-population through its age of countless millions. How can it be that the truth has suddenly dawned up on some people that it is in danger of perishing of shortage of food unless birth-rate is checked through the use of contraceptives.

—*Harijan* : Sept. 14, 1935.

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Once the idea that the only and grand function of the sexual organ is generation, possesses man and woman, union for any other purpose they will hold as criminal waste of the vital fluid and consequent excitement caused to man and woman as an equally criminal waste of precious energy. It is now easy to understand why the scientists of old have put such great value upon the vital fluid and why they have insisted upon its strong transmutation into the highest form of energy for the benefit of society. They boldly declare that one who has acquired a perfect control over his or her sexual energy strengthens the whole being, physical, mental and spiritual and attains powers unattainable by any other means.

—*Harijan* : Dec. 12, 1935.

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THE greatest harm, however, done by the propaganda lies in its rejection of the old ideal and substitution in its place of one which, if carried out, must spell the moral and physical extinction of the race. The horror with which ancient literature has regarded the fruitless use of the vital fluid was not a superstition born of ignorance. What shall we say of a husbandman who will sow the finest seed in his possession on stony ground or of that owner of a field who will receive in his field rich with fine soil good seed under

conditions that will make it impossible for it to grow ? God has blessed man with seed that has the highest potency and woman with a field richer than the richest earth to be found anywhere on this globe. Surely it is criminal folly for man to allow his most precious possession to run to waste. He must guard it with a care greater than he will bestow upon the richest pearls in his possession. And so is a woman guilty of criminal folly who will receive the seed in her life-producing field with the deliberate intention of letting it run to waste. Both he and she will be judged guilty of misuse of the talents given to them and they will be dispossessed of what they have been given. Sex urge is a fine and noble thing. There is nothing to be ashamed of in it. But it is meant only for the act of creation. Any other use of it is a sin against God and humanity. Contraceptives of a kind there were before and there will be hereafter, but the use of them was formerly regarded as sinful. It was reserved for our generation to glorify vice by calling it virtue. The greatest disservice protagonists of contraceptives are rendering to the youth of India is to fill their minds with what appears to me to be wrong ideology. Let the young men and women of India who hold her destiny in their hands beware of this false god and guard the treasure with which God has blessed them and use it, if they wish, for the only purpose for which it is intended.

—*Harijan* : March 28, 1936.

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THE protagonists of contraceptives have almost set up self-indulgence as their ideal. Self-indulgence obviously can never be an ideal. There can be no limit to the practice of an ideal. But unlimited self-indulgence, as everybody would admit, can only result in certain destruction of the individual or the race concerned. Hence self-control alone can be our ideal, and it has been so regarded from the earliest times.

—*Harijan* : Nov. 12, 1936.

IT is my faith based on my experience that bodily and mental health increases in the same ratio as bodily and mental chastity. Nor is it to be wondered at. A substance that is capable of producing such a wonderful being as man cannot but, when properly conserved, be transmuted into matchless energy and strength. Anyone can test for himself the truth of this observation of the *shastras* for himself by personal experience. And the rule holds good in respect of woman no less than man. The real difficulty, however, is that we vainly expect to be free from outward manifestations of lust, while harbouring it in our minds, with the result that physically and mentally we become utter wrecks, and our lives, in the words of the *Gita*, become a living lie or hypocrisy personified. *Harijan*: May 20, 1937.

Bluntness

BLUNTNESS is better than put up courtesy.

—*Young India*: April 13, 1925.

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Boycott of British Goods

IT is hardly necessary now to demonstrate the futility not to say the violent nature, of boycott of British cloth or better still British goods as so many patriots have suggested. I am considering the boycott purely from the point of view of India's good. All British goods do not harm us. Some goods such as English books we need for our intellectual or spiritual benefit. As regards cloth, it is not merely British cloth that harms us, but all foreign cloth, and for that matter to a lesser extent even mill-made cloth injures us. Boycott brought about anyhow of British cloth cannot yield the same results as such boycott brought about by hand spinning and *Khaddar*. This necessitates exclusion at least of all foreign cloth. The exclusion is not intended as a punishment. It is a necessity of national existence.

—*Young India*: Dec. 26, 1924.

LET me not be misunderstood. The Congress has a perfect right to boycott British goods, if it so wishes. But as the most representative assembly in India, it has no right to expose itself to ridicule by using threats which it cannot carry into effect.

—*Young India*: Jan. 5, 1928.

Brahmacharya

[The following is Mahadev Desai's translation of an article I wrote on this delicate subject in Nayajivan of 25th May 1924. I gladly publish it in Young India as I have before me many letters from the other parts of India on the same subject. The stray thoughts collected together in the article might be of some help to those who are earnestly striving for a pure life. My inquireres have been all Hindus and naturally the article is addressed to them. The last paragraph is the msot important and operative part. The names Allah or God carry with them the same potency. The idea is to realise the presence of God in us. All sins are committed in secrecy. The moment we realise that God witnesses even our thoughts we shall be free. M.K.G.]

A FRIEND asks: 'What is Brahmacharaya ? Is it possible to practise it to perfection ? If possible, do you do so.'

The full and proper meaning of Brahmacharya is search of Brahman. Brahman pervades every being and can therefore be searched by diving into and realising the inner self- The realiation is impossible without complete control of the senses. Brahmacharaya thus means control in thought word and action, of all the senses at all times and in all places.

A man or a woman completely practising Brahmacharya is absolutely free from passion. Such a one therefore lives nigh unto God, is Godlike.

I have no doubt that it is possible to practise such Brahmacharaya in thought, word and action to the fullest extent. I am sorry to say that I have not yet reached that perfect state of Brahmacharaya, though I am every moment of my life striving to reach it. I have not given up hope of

reaching that state in this very body. I have gained control over the body. I can be master of myself during my waking hours. I have fairly succeeded in learning to control my tongue. But I have yet to cover many stages in the control of my thoughts. They do not come and go at my bidding. My mind is thus constantly in a state of insurrection against itself.

In my waking moments, however, I can stop my thoughts, from colliding with one another. I may say that in the waking state the mind is secure against the approach of evil thoughts. But in the hours of sleep, control over the thoughts is much less. When asleep, the mind would be swayed by all sorts of thoughts, by unexpected dreams, and by desire for things done and enjoyed by the flesh before. Such thoughts or dreams when unclean are followed by the usual consequences. Whilst such experiences are possible a person cannot be said to be free from all passion. The deviation is, however, diminishing, but has not yet ceased. If I had complete mastery over my thoughts I should not have suffered from the diseases of pleurisy, dysentery and appendicitis that I did during the last ten years. I believe that a healthy soul should inhabit a healthy body. To the extent, therefore, that the soul grows into health and freedom from passion, to that extent the body also grows into that state. This does not mean that a healthy body should be necessarily strong in flesh. A brave soul often inhabits a lean body. After a certain stage the flesh diminishes in a proportion to the growth of the soul. A perfectly healthy body may be very fleshless. A muscular body is often heir to many an ill. Even if it is apparently free from disease, it is not immune from infections, contagions and the like. A perfectly healthy body, on the contrary, is proof against all these. Incorruptible blood has the inherent virtue of resisting all infections.

Such an equipoise is, indeed difficult of attainment.

Otherwise I should have reached it, because my soul is witness to the fact that I would spare no pains to attain to this perfect state. No outward obstacle can stand between me and that state. But it is not easy for all, at least for me, to efface past *sanskaras*. But the delay has not in the least dismayed me. For I have a mental picture of that perfect state. I have even dim glimpses of it. The progress achieved fills me with hope, rather than despair. But even if I depart from this body before the hope is fulfilled, I would not think that I had failed. For I believe in rebirth as much as I believe in the existence of my present body. I therefore know that even a little effort is not wasted.

I have said so much about myself for the simple reason that my correspondents and others like them may have patience and self-confidence. The soul is one in all. Its possibilities are therefore the same for every one. With some, it has manifested itself, with others it has yet to do so. Patient striving would carry everyone through and to the same experience.

I have therefore discussed Brahmacharya in its wider meaning. The ordinary accepted sense of Brahmacharya is the control in thought, word and action of animal passion. And it is quite proper thus to restrict its meaning. It has been thought to be very difficult to practise this Brahmacharya. This control of the carnal desire has been so very difficult, has become nearly impossible, because equal stress has not been laid on the control of the palate. It is also the experience of our physicians that a body enfeebled by disease is always a favourite abode of carnal desire, and Brahmacharya by an enfeebled race is difficult to practise naturally.

I have talked above of a lean but healthy body. Let no one understand me to have deprecated physical culture. I have talked of Brahmacharya in its perfect aspect in my very crude language. It is likely therefore to be misunder-

stood. But one who would practise complete control of all the senses must need welcome the waning of the flesh. With the extinction of attachment to the flesh, comes the extinction of the desire to have muscular strength.

But the body of the true Brahmachari is bound to be exceptionally fresh and wiry. This Brahmacharya is something unearthly. He who is not swayed by carnal desire even in his sleep is worthy of all adoration. The control of every other sense shall be 'added unto' him.

—*Young India* : June 5, 1924.

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I PLACE before the readers a few simple rules which are based on the experience not only of myself, but of many of my associates :

(1) Boys and girls should be brought up simply and naturally in the full belief that they are and can remain innocent.

(2) All should abstain from heating and stimulating foods, condiments such as chillies, fatty, and concentrated food such as fritters, sweets and fried substances.

(3) Husband and wife should occupy separate rooms and avoid privacy.

(4) Both body and mind should be constantly and healthily occupied.

(5) Early to bed and early to rise should be strictly observed.

(6) All unclean literature should be avoided. The antidote for unclean thoughts is clean thoughts.

(7) Theatres, cinemas, etc., which tend to stimulate passion should be shunned.

(8) Nocturnal dreams need not cause any anxiety. A cold bath every time for a fairly strong person is the

finest preventive in such cases. It is wrong to say that an occasional indulgence is a safeguard against involuntary dreams.

(9) Above all, one must not consider continence even as between husband and wife to be so difficult as to be practically impossible. On the contrary, self-restraint must be considered to be the ordinary and natural practice of life.

(10) A heartfelt prayer every day for purity makes one progressively pure.

—*Young India*: Oct. 13, 1920.

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I AM being inundated with letters on *Brahmacharya* and means to its attainment. Let me repeat in different language what I have already said or written on previous occasions. *Brahmachārya* is not mere mechanical celibacy, it means complete control over all the senses and freedom from lust in thought, word and deed. As such it is the royal road to self-realisation or attainment of *Brahman*.

The ideal *Brahmachari* has not to struggle with sensual desire or desire for procreation; it never troubles him at all. The whole world will be to him one vast family, he will centre all his ambition in relieving the misery of mankind and the desire for procreation will be to him as gall and wormwood. He who has realised the misery of mankind in all its magnitude will never be stirred by passion. He will instinctively know the fountain of strength in him, and he will ever persevere to keep it undefiled. His humble strength will command respect of the world, and he will wield an influence greater than that of the sceptred monarch.

But I am told that this is an impossible ideal, that I do not take count of the natural attraction between man and woman. I refuse to believe that the sensual affinity

referred to here can be at all regarded as natural; in that case the deluge would soon be over us. The natural affinity between man and woman is the attraction between brother and sister, mother and son or father and daughter. It is that natural attraction that sustains the world. I should find it impossible to live, much less carry on my work, if I did not regard the whole of womankind as sisters, daughters or mothers. If I looked at them with lustful eyes, it would be the surest way to perdition.

Procreation is a natural phenomenon indeed, but within specific limits. A transgression of those limits imperils womankind, emasculates the race, induces disease, puts a premium on vice, and makes the world ungodly. A man in the grip of the sensual desire is a man without moorings. If such a one were to guide society, to flood it with his writings and men were to be swayed by them, where would society be? And yet we have the very thing happening to-day. Supposing a moth whirling round a light were to record the moments of its fleeting joy and we were to imitate it regarding it as an exemplar, where would we be? No, I must declare with all the power I can command that sensual attraction even between husband and wife is unnatural. Marriage is meant to cleanse the hearts of the couple of sordid passions and take them nearer to God. Lustless love between husband and wife is not impossible. Man is not a brute. He has risen to a higher state after countless births in brute creation. He is born to stand, not to walk on all fours or crawl. Bestiality is as far removed from manhood as matter from spirit.

In conclusion I shall summarise the means to its attainment.

The first step is the realisation of its necessity. The next is gradual control of the senses. A *Brahmachari*

must needs control his palate. He must eat to live, and not for enjoyment. He must see only clean things and close his eyes before anything unclean. It is thus a sign of polite breeding to walk with one's eyes towards the ground and not wandering about from object to object. A *Brahmachari* will likewise hear to nothing obscene or unclean, smell no strong, stimulating things. The smell of clean earth is far sweeter than the fragrance of artificial scents and essences. Let the aspirant to *Brahmacharya* also keep his hands and feet engaged in all the waking hours in healthful activity. Let him also fast occasionally.

The third step is to have clean companions—clean friends and clean books.

The last and not the least is prayer. Let him repeat *Ramanama* with all his heart regularly every day, and ask for divine grace.

None of these things are difficult for an average man or woman. They are simplicity itself. But their very simplicity is embarrassing. Where there is a will, the way is simple enough; men have not the will for it and hence vainly grope. The fact that the world rests on the observance, more or less, of *Brahmacharya* or restraint means that it is necessary and practicable.

—*Young India*: April 29, 1926.

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WHEN your passions threaten to get the better of you go down on your knees and cry out to God for help. *Ramanama* is an infallible help.

—*Young India*: Jan. 23, 1927.

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LET every aspirant after a pure life take from me that an impure thought is often as powerful in undermining the body as an impure act. Control over thought is a long,

painful and laborious process. But I am convinced that no time, no labour and no pain is too much for the glorious result to be reached. The purity of thought is possible only with a faith in God bordering on definite experience.

—*Young India* : Aug. 25, 1927.

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THE third among our observations is *Brahmacharya*. As a matter of fact all observances arise from Truth, and are there to subserve Truth. The man, who is wedded to Truth and worships Truth alone, proves unfaithful to her, if he applies his talents to anything else. How then can he minister to the senses ? A man, whose activities are wholly consecrated to the realisation of Truth, which requires utter selflessness, can have no time for the selfish purpose of rearing children and running of a household. We have not had a single example of any one realising Truth though self-indulgence

Again, if we look at it from the standpoint of *Ahimsa* (Non-violence) we find that the fulfilment of *Ahimsa* is impossible without purity. *Ahimsa* means Universal Love. If a man gives his love to one woman, or a woman to one man, what is there left for all the world besides ? It simply means : ' We two first, and the devil take all the rest of them.' As a faithful wife must be prepared to sacrifice her all for the sake of her husband, and a faithful husband for the sake of his wife, it is clear that such persons cannot rise to the height of Universal Love, or look upon all mankind as kith and kin. For they have created a boundary wall round their love. The larger their family, the farther are they from Universal Love. Hence one who would obey the law of *Ahimsa* cannot marry, not to speak of gratification outside the martial bond.

Then what about people who are already married ? Would they never be able to realise Truth ? Can they never offer up their all at the altar of humanity ? There is a way

out for them. They can behave as if they were not married. Those who have enjoyed this happy condition will be able to bear me out. Many have to my knowledge successfully tried the experiment. If the married couple can think of each other as brother or sister, they are freed for universal service. The very thought that all the women in the world are one's sisters, mothers or daughters would at once ennoble a man and snap all his chains. The husband and wife do not loose anything here, but only add to their resources and even to their family. Their love becomes free from the impurity of lust and so grows stronger. With the disappearance of this impurity, they can serve each other better, and the occasions for quarrel between them become fewer. There is more room for quarrels, where the love is selfish and bounded.

When once we have grasped these fundamental ideas, a consideration of the physical benefits of chastity becomes a matter of secondary importance. How foolish it is intentionally to dissipate vital energy in sensual enjoyment? It is a grave misuse to fritter away for physical gratification that which is given to man and woman for the full development of their bodily and mental powers. Such misuse is the root cause of many a disease.

Brahmacharya is to be observed in thought, word and deed. This applies to all observances. We are told in the *Gita* and our experience corroborates the remark, that the foolish man, who appears to control his body, but is nursing evil thoughts in his mind, makes a vain effort. It is harmful to suppress the body if the mind is at the same time allowed to go astray. Where the mind wanders, the body must follow sooner or later. It is necessary at this stage to appreciate one distinction. It is one thing to allow the mind to harbour impure thoughts. It is a different thing altogether if it strays among them in spite of ourselves. Victory will be ours in the end, if we non-co-operate with the mind

in this evil process. We experience every moment of our life that while the body is subject to our control, the mind is not. Hence the body must be immediately taken in hand, and then we must put forth a constant endeavour to bring the mind under control. We can do nothing more, nothing less. If we give way to the mind, the body and the mind will pull different ways, and we shall be false to ourselves. Body and mind may be said to go together, so long as we continue to resist the approach of every evil thought.

The observance of *Brahmacharya* has been believed to be very difficult, almost impossible. Trying to find a reason for this belief, we see that the term *Brahmacharya* has been understood in a narrow sense. Mere control of animal passion has been thought to be tantamount to observing *Brahmacharya*. I feel that this conception is incomplete and wrong. *Brahmacharya* is the control of all the organs of sense. He who attempts to control only one organ, and allows all the others free play, is bound to find his effort futile. To hear suggestive stories with the ears, to see suggestive sights with the eyes, to taste stimulating food with the tongue, to touch exciting things with the hands, and then at the same time to try to control the only remaining organ is like putting one's hands in a fire, and then trying to escape burns. He, therefore, who is resolved to control the one must be likewise determined to control the rest. I have always felt that harm has been done by the narrow definition of *Brahmacharya*. If we practise simultaneous self-control in all directions, the attempt is scientific and easy of success. Perhaps the palate is the chief sinner. Hence we have assigned to its control a separate place among the observances.

Let us remember the root meaning of *Brahmacharya*. *Brahmacharya* means *charya* or course of conduct adapted to the search of *Brahman* or Truth. From this etymological meaning arises the special meaning, *viz.* control of all the senses. We

must forget the incomplete definition which restricts itself to the sexual aspect only.

—*Young India* : Sept. 3, 1931.

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AN innocent youth is a priceless possession not to be squandered away for the sake of a momentary excitement, miscalled pleasure.

—*Harijan* : Sept. 21, 1935.

IF the mind hankered after satisfaction of the flesh and the body resisted, there must be tremendous waste of vital energy leaving the body thoroughly exhausted.

But self-restraint never accrues to the faint-hearted. It is the beautiful fruit of watchfulness and ceaselness effort in the form of prayer and fasting. The prayer is not vain repetition nor fasting mere starvation of the body. Prayer has to come from the heart which knows God by faith, and fasting is abstinence from evil or injurious thought, activity or food. Starvation of the body when the mind thinks of a multiplicity of dishes is worse than useless.

—*Harijan* : April 10, 1937.

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CONTROL over the organ of generation is impossible without proper control over all the senses. They are all inter-dependent. Mind on the lower plane is included in the senses. Without control over the mind mere physical control, even if it can be attained for a time, is of little or no use.

—*Harijan* : June 13, 1936.

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MY darkest hour was when I was in Bombay, a few months ago. It was the hour of my temptation. Whilst I was asleep I suddenly felt as though I wanted to see a woman. Well a man who had tried to rise superior to

the sex-instinct for nearly 40 years was bound to be intensely pained when he had this frightful experience. I ultimately conquered the feeling, but I was face to face with the blackest moment of my life and if I had succumbed to it, it would have meant my absolute undoing. I was stirred to the depths because strength and peace come from a life of continence. Many Christian friends are zealous of the peace I possess. It comes from God who has blessed with the strength to battle against temptation.

—*Harijan* : Dec. 26, 1936.

RESTRAINT never ruins one's health. What ruins one's health is not restraint but outward suppression. A really self-restrained person grows every day from strength to strength and from peace to more peace. The very first step in self-restraint is the restraint of thoughts.

—*Harijan* : Oct. 28, 1937.

THERE should be a clear line between the life of a *Brahmachari* and one who is not. The resemblance that there is between the two is only apparent. The distinction ought to be clear as daylight. Both use their eyesight, but whereas the *Brahmachari* uses it to see the glories of God, the other uses it to see the frivolity around him. Both use their ears, but whereas the one hears nothing but praises of God, the other feasts his ears upon ribaldry. Both often keep late hours, but whereas one devotes them to prayer, the other fritters them away in wild and wasteful mirth. Both feed the inner man, but the one only to keep the temple of God in good repair, while the other gorges himself and makes the sacred vessel a stinking gutter. Thus both live as the poles apart, and the distance between them will grow and not diminish with the passage of time.

—*My Experiments With Truth* : Page 259.

Bravery

THE brave meet death with a smile on their lips, but they are circumspect all the same.

—*Young India* : Oct. 13, 1921.

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Bravery is not a quality of the body, it is of the soul.. I have seen cowards encased in tough muscle, and rare courage in the frailest body. I have seen big bulky and muscular Zulus bowing before an English lad and turning tail if they saw a loaded revolver pointed at them. I have seen Emily Hobhouse with a paralytic body exhibiting courage of the highest order. She was the one noble woman who kept up the drooping spirits of brave Boer generals and equally brave Boer women. The weakest of us physically must be taught the art of facing dangers and giving a good account of ourselves.

—*Young India* : Oct. 17, 1925.

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STRENGTH of numbers is the delight of the timid. The valiant of spirit glory in fighting alone.

And the valour of the spirit cannot be achieved without Sacrifice, Determination, Faith and Humility.

—*Young India :* June 17, 1926.

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A WARRIOR loves to die, not on a sick-bed, but on the battle-field.

—*Young India* : Dec. 30, 1926.

I DO not want any cowardice in our midst. The heroism of *ahimsa* cannot be developed from cowardice.

Bravery is essential to both *himsa* and *ahimsa*. In fact it is even more essential in the latter for *ahimsa* is nothing if it is not the acme of bravery.

—*Young India* : Jan. 30, 1929.

A BRAVE man always gives credit to the other party for its *bona fides*.

— *Young India* : Mar. 19, 1931

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THERE is no bravery greater than a resolute refusal to bend the knee to an earthly power, no matter how great and without bitterness of spirit and in the fulness of faith that the spirit alone lives, nothing else does.

—*Harijan* : Oct. 15, 1938.

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Bread-Labour

"WHAT is your view on what Tolstoy calls 'Bread-labour ?' Do you really earn your living by your bodily labour ?"

Strictly speaking bread-labour is not a word of Tolstoy's coining. He took it from another Russian writer Bondarif, and it means that everyone is expected to perform sufficient body-labour in order to entitle him to it. It is not therefore necessary to earn one's living by bread-labour, taking the word in its broader sense. But everyone must perform some useful body-labour.

For me at the present moment spinning is the only body-labour I give. It is a mere symbol. I do not give enough body-labour. That is also one of the reasons why I consider myself as living upon charity. But I also

believe that such men will have to be found in every nation who will give themselves body, soul and mind to it and for their sustenance throw themselves on the mercy of their fellow men, that is, on God.

—*Young India* : Nov. 5, 1925.

THERE seems to be some confusion about the principle of bread-labour. It is never opposed to social service. Intelligent bread-labour is any day the highest form of social service. For what can be better than that a man should by his personal labour add to the useful wealth of the country ? 'Being' *is* 'doing.'

The adjective 'intelligent' has been prefixed to 'labour' in order to show that labour to be social service must have that definite purpose behind. Otherwise every labourer can be said to render social service. He does in a way, but what is meant here is something much more than that. A person who labours for the general good of all serves society and is worthy of his hire. Therefore, such bread-labour is not different from social service. What the vast mass of mankind does for self or at best for family, a social servant does for general good.

—*Harijan* : June 1, 1935.

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Brahma created His people with the duty of sacrifice laid upon them and said, 'By this do you flourish. Let it be the fulfiller of all your desire.'...'He who eats without performing this sacrifice eats stolen bread,'—thus says the *Gita*. 'Earn thy bread by the sweat of thy brow,' says the *Bible*. Sacrifices may be of many kinds. One of them may well be bread-labour. If all laboured for their bread and no more, then there would be enough food and enough leisure for all. Then there would be no cry of over-population, no disease, and no such misery as

we see around. Such labour will be the highest form of sacrifice. Men will no doubt do many other things either through their bodies or through their minds, but all this will be labour of love, for the common good. There will be then no rich and no poor, none high and none low, no touchable and no untouchable.

This may be an unattainable ideal. But we need not, therefore, cease to strive for it. Even if without fulfilling the whole law of sacrifice, that is, the law of our being, we performed physical labour enough for our daily bread, we should go a long way towards the ideal.

If we did so, our wants would be minimised, our food would be simple. We should then eat to live, not live to eat. Let anyone who doubts the accuracy of this proposition try to sweat for his bread, he will derive the greatest relish from the productions of his labour, improve his health and discover that many things he took were superfluities.

May not men earn their bread by intellectual labour? No. The needs of the body must be supplied by the body. 'Render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's,' perhaps applies here well.

Mere mental, that is, intellectual labour is for the soul and is its own satisfaction. It should never demand payment. In the ideal state, doctors, lawyers and the like will work solely for the benefit of society, not for self. Obedience to the law of bread-labour will bring about a silent revolution in the structure of society. Man's triumph will consist in substituting the strugle for existence by the struggle for mutual service. The law of the brute will be replaced by the law of man.

Return to the villages means a definite voluntary recognition of the duty of bread-labour and all it connotes. But says the critic, 'Millions of India's childern are to-day living in the villages and yet they are living a life of semi-

starvation.' This, alas, is but too true. Fortunately we know that theirs is not voluntary obedience. They would perhaps shirk body-labour if they could, and even rush to the nearest city if they could be accommodated in it. Compulsory obedience to a master is a state of slavery, willing obedience to one's father is the glory of sonship. Similarly compulsory obedience to the law of bread-labour breeds poverty, disease and discontent. It is a state of slavery. Willing obedience to it must bring contentment and health. And it is health which is real wealth, not pieces of silver and gold. The Village Industries Association is an experiment in willing bread-labour.

—*Harijan* : June 29, 1935

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SOME of the simplest things that Gandhiji has been saying and writing seem to puzzle and perplex people who ask him to explain what he could possibly have meant. One of these is Gandhiji's insistence on bread-labour. It is the simplest of propositions to understand that if everyone earned his bread by the sweat of his brow there would be no exploitation and no over work. But the puzzle to some is that most people do not do so. The lawyer who earns his thousands a month and guineas an hour does no body-labour nor do many other professional people of his kind. But says Gandhiji to the puzzled one : 'Why worry about those who do not do body-labour? I have never imagined that every man on earth will earn his bread by the sweat of his brow, but I have simply enunciated the golden rule. Are you prepared to do it ? If you are, you need not be jealous of the man who is not prepared to do it or cannot do it. I may not be able to earn what fruit and milk I eat by mere body-labour, but that means that I am to be pitied, the rule is not affected. Only a few people can observe *Brahmacharya* but should they, therefore, be jealous of the millions who

canno t? The latter may be pitied, rather than be envied.' M. D.

—*Harijan* : Aug. 3, 1935.

THE law, that to live man must work, first came home to me upon reading Tolstoy's writing on bread-labour. But even before that I had begun to pay homage to it after reading Ruskin's *Unto This Last.* The divine law, that man must earn his bread by labouring with his own hands, was first stressed by a Russian writer named T. N. Bondarif. Tolstoy advertised it, and gave it wider publicity. In my view, the same principle has been set forth in the third chapter of the *Gita*, where we are told, that he who eats without offering sacrifice eats stolen food. Sacrifice here can only mean bread-labour.

Reason too leads us to an identical conclusion. How can a man, who does not do body-labour, have the right to eat ? ' In the sweat of thy brow shall thou eat thy bread,' says the *Bible.* A millionaire cannot carry on for long, and will soon get tired of his life, if he rolls in his bed all day long, and is even helped to his food. He therefore induces hunger by exercise, and help himself to the food he eats. If every one, whether rich and poor, has thus to take exercise in some shape or form, why should it not assume the form of productive, *i.e.* bread labour? No one asks the cultivator to take breathing exercise or to work his muscles. And more than nine tenths of humanity lives by tilling the soil. How much happier, healthier and more peaceful would the world become, if the remaining tenth followed the example of the over—whelming majority, at least to the extent of labouring enough for their food ! And many hardships, connected with agriculture, would be easily redressed, if such people took a hand in it. Again invidious distinctions of rank would be abolished, when every one without exception acknowledged the obligation of bread-labour. It is

common to all the *varnas*. There is a world-wide conflict between capital and labour, and the poor envy the rich. If all worked for their bread, distinctions of rank would be obliterated; the rich would still be there, but they would deem themselves only trustees of their property, and would use it mainly in the public interest.

Bread-labour is a veritable blessing to one who would observe Non-violence, worship Truth, and make the observance of *brahmacharya* a natural act. This labour can truly be related to agriculture alone. But at present at any rate, everybody is not in a position to take to it. A person can therefore spin or weave, or take up carpentry or smithery, instead of tilling the soil, always regarding agriculture however to be the ideal. Every one must be his own scavenger. Evacuation is as necessary as eating, and the best thing would be for every one to dispose of his own waste. If this is impossible, each family should see to its own scavenging. I have felt for years, that there must be something radically wrong, where scavenging has been made the concern of a separate class in society. We have no historical record of the man, who first assigned the lowest status to this essential sanitary service. Whoever he was, he by no means did us a good. We should from our very childhood, have the idea impressed upon our minds that we are all scavengers, and the easiest way of doing so is, for every one who has realised this, to commence bread-labour as a scavenger. Scavenging, thus intelligently taken up, will help one to a true appreciation of the equality of man.

—*From Yervada Mandir :* Page 50.

British Empire

NO empire intoxicated with red wine of power and plunder of weaker races has yet lived long in this world, and this British Empire, which is based upon organised exploitation of physically weaker races of the earth and upon a

continuous exhibition of brute force, cannot live if there is a just God ruling the universe.

—*Young India* : Feb. 23, 1922.



WHEREVER you turn in India you encounter pitfalls. To me every institution—be it the most philanthropic—run by and in the name of the Empire in India has an unmistakable taint about it. That we run to and hug most or some of them is no test of their goodness. It is a test of our helplessness, short-sightedness or selfishness. We have not the courage to sacrifice much in order to save ourselves from criminal participation in sustaining an Empire which is based on fraud and force, and whose chief, if not one aim is to perpetuate the policy of ever-growing exploitation of the so-called weaker races of the earth.

—*Young India* : Dec. 13, 1928.

British Government

THE British Government is never and nowhere entirely or even chiefly laid on force. It does make an honest attempt to secure the good-will of the governed. But it does not hesitate to adopt unscrupulous means to compel the consent of the governed.

It has not gone beyond the 'Honesty is the best policy' idea. It therefore bribes you into consenting to its will by awarding titles, medals and ribbons, by giving you employment, by its superior financial ability to open for its employees avenues for enriching themselves and finally when these fail, it resorts to force.

—*Young India* : June 30, 1920.

I MUST dare say that the Mogul and the Maratha Governments were better than the British, in that the nation as a whole was not so emasculate or so impoverished as it is to-day. We were not the *Pariahas* of the Mogul or the Maratha Empire. We are the *Pariahas* of the British Empire.

—*Young India* : June 22, 1921.

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WHAT severer condemnation can be pronounced upon the British Government than that, for the commercial greed of the British nation, it has emasculated a whole people ?

—*Young India* : Nov. 17, 1920.

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IT is not so much British guns that are responsible for our subjection as our voluntary co-operation.

—*Young India* : Feb. 9, 1921.

British Political Institutions

I QUESTION this claim to exclusive political sense that the English arrogate to themselves. It is one of the greatest superstitions of the age and the surprise to me is that even the most level-headed among the English sometimes succumb to it. There is much in British political institutions that I admire. But I am no fetish worshipper. I do not believe that they are the paragon of perfection or that they must be adopted by India at any price. The English have not been able to make a perfect success of them even in their own country, much less to demonstrate that they are the best model for the whole world to adopt. There are Englishmen who admit that the Mother of Parliaments has not fulfilled all the expectations that were entertained of her.

—*Young India* : Mar. 28, 1929.

WHAT is excellent in British political institutions is there for the whole world to see and copy. The British need not come all the way to India as rulers to teach us political wisdom. Whatever is worth adopting for India must come to her through the process of assimilation, not forcible superimposition. For instance, the Chinese possess the cunning of the hand in painting which is all their own. It is there for the whole world to admire and imitate. You would not expect the Chinese to come and take possession of England to teach to her the Chinese fine arts!

—*Young India* : Mar. 28, 1929

British Rule in India

I LONG for freedom from the English yoke. I would pay any price for it. I would accept chaos in exchange for it. For the English peace is the peace of the grave. Anything would be better than this living death of a whole people. This satantic rule has well nigh ruined this fair land materially, morally and spiritually.

—*Young India* : Jan. 12, 1928.

IT is clear that the riches derived from the tillers of the soil are not a voluntary contribution or a contribution compelled for their benefit. The villagers are not affected by the Pax Britannica so-called; for they were untouched even by the invasions of Timur or Nadirshah. They will remain untouched by anarchy if it comes. But in order that this enormous contribution may be exacted without resistance, violence has been organised by the British Government on a scale unknown before and manipulated in so insidious a manner as not to be easily seen or felt as such. British rule has appeared to me to be a perfect personification of violence. There are snakes that by their very appearance paralyse their victims. They do not need to make any further demonstration of their power. Even so, I am sorry to have to

say, has the British power worked upon us in India. Frightfulness is not a word of Indian coinage. It was coined by a British judge in order to bring vividly to light the meaning of Jalianwala Massacre. And we are promised a multiple, if we dare lift up our heads and say, 'We will have no more of this loot that has bled India dry.'

Let us, too, understand how organised violence works and is on that account far more harmful than sporadic, thoughtless, sudden outburst. Ordered violence hides itself often behind camouflage and hypocrisy as we see them working through the declarations of good intentions, commissions, conferences and the like, or even through measures conceived as tending to the public benefit but in reality to the benefit of the wrongdoer. Greed and deceit are often the offspring as they are equally often the parents of violence. Naked violence repels like the naked skeleton shorn of flesh, blood and the velvety skin. It cannot last long. But it persists fairly long when it wears the mask of peace and progress so-called.

Such awe-inspiring violence concealed under a 'golden lid' begets the violence of the weak which in its turn works secretly and sometimes openly.

—*Young India* : Feb. 6, 1930.

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ENGLAND will never make any advance so as to satisfy India's aspriations till she is forced to it. British rule is no philanthropic job, it is a terribly earnest business proposition worked out from day to day with deadly precision. The coating of a benevolence that is periodically given to it merely prolongs the agony.

—*Young India* : Feb. 28, 1929.

MY personal faith is absolutely clear. I cannot intentionally hurt anything that lives, much less fellow human

beings, even though they may do the greatest wrong to me and mine. Whilst, therefore, I hold the British rule to be a curse, I do not intend harm to a single Englishman or to any legitimate interest he may have in India.

I must not be misunderstood. Though I hold the British rule in India to be a curse, I do not, therefore, consider Englishmen, in general to be worse than any other people on earth. I have the privilege of claiming many Englishmen as dearest friends. Indeed, much that I have learnt of the evil of British rule is due to the writings of frank and courageous Englishmen who have not hesitated to tell the unpalatable truth about that rule.

And why do I regard the British rule as a curse?

It has impoverished the dumb millions by a system of progessive exploitation and by a ruinously expensive military and civil administration which the country can never afford.

It has reduced us politically to serfdom. It has sapped the foundations of our culture. And, by the policy of cruel disarmament, it has degraded us spiritually. Lacking the inward strength, we have been reduced, by all but universal disarmament, to state bordering on cowardly helplessness.

—*Young India* : Mar. 12, 1930.

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ALIEN rule is like a foreign matter in an organic body. Remove the poison and the body will at once start recuperating. We do not want the freedom of India, if it is to be bought at the sacrifice of the lives of others—if it is to be bought by spilling the blood of the rulers. But if any sacrifice can be made by the nation, by ourselves, to win that freedom, then you will find that we will not hesitate to

give a Ganges full of blood to flow in India in order to vindicate the freedom that has been so long delayed.

(*From a speech to the Independent Labour Party, London.*)

—*Young India* : Oct. 15, 1930.

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Q. Don't you think there is fear of the different communities violently quarrelling among themselves when the British withdraw from India?

A. I have compared the British rule to a wedge and no sooner the wedge is removed than the divided parts will unite. But even if we continue to fight I should think it a godsend. A man who broods on evil is as bad as a man who does evil, if he is no worse, and so if we are prevented from running at one another's throats simply because of the superimposed force of alien rule, the sooner that force is removed the better. We should fight harder for a time but we should unite better ultimately.

—*Young India* : Oct. 22, 1931.

Buddhism

YOU do not know, perhaps, that one of my sons, the eldest boy, accused me of being a follower of Buddha, and some of my Hindu countrymen also do not hesitate to accuse me of speaking Buddhistic teachings under the guise of Sanatana Hinduism. I sympathise with my son's accusations and the accusations of my Hindu friends. And sometimes I feel even proud of being accused of being a follower of Buddha, and I have no hesitation in declaring in the presence of this audience that I owe a great deal to the inspiration that I have derived from the life of the Enlightened One.

It is my deliberate opinion that the essential part of the teachings of Budddha now forms an integral part of Hinduism. It is impossible for Hindu India to-day

to retrace her steps and go behind the great reformation that Gautama effected in Hinduism. By his immense sacrifice, by his great renunciation and by the immaculate purity of his life, he left an indelible impress upon Hinduism, and Hinduism owes an internal debt of gratitude to that great Teacher. And if you will also forgive me for saying so and if you will also give me the permission to say so, I would venture to tell you that what Hinduism did not assimilate of what passes as Buddhism to-day was not an essential part of Buddha's life and his teachings.

It is my fixed opinion that Buddhism or rather the teaching of Buddha found its full fruition in India, and it could not be otherwise, for Gautama was himself a Hindu of Hindus. He was saturated with the best that was in Hinduism, and he gave life to some of the teachings that were buried in the *Vedas* and which were overgrown with weeds. His great Hindu spirit cut in its way through the forest of words, meaningless words, which had overlaid the golden truth that was in the *Vedas*. He made some of the words in the *Vedas* yield a meaning to which the men of his generation were utter strangers, and he found in India the most congenial soil. And wherever Buddha went, he was followed by and surrounded not by non-Hindus but Hindus, those who were themselves saturated with the *Vedic* laws. But Buddha's teaching like his heart was all-expanding and all-embracing and so it has survived his own body and swept across the face of the earth. And at the risk of being called a follower of Buddha I claim this achievement as a triumph of Hinduism. Buddha never rejected Hinduism, but he broadened its base. He give it a new life and new interpretation. But here comes the point where I shall need your forgiveness and your generosity, and I want to submit to you that the teaching of Buddha was not assimilated in its fullness whether it was in Ceylon, or in Burma, or in China or in Tibet.

You and those who call themselves Buddhists outside India have no doubt taken in a very large measure the teaching of Buddha, but when I examine your life and when I cross-question the friends from Ceylon, Burma, China or Tibet, I feel confounded to find so many inconsistencies between what I have come to understand as the central fact of Buddha's life and your own practice, and if I am not tiring you out, I would like hurriedly to run through three prominent points that just now occurred to me. The first is the belief in an all-prevading Providence called God. I have heard it contended times without number and I have read in books also claiming to express the spirit of Buddhism that Buddha did not believe in God. In my humble opinion such a belief contradicts the very central fact of Buddha's teaching. In my humble opinion the confusion has arisen over his rejection and just rejection of all the base things that passed in his generation under the name of God. He undoubtedly rejected the notion that a being called God was actuated by malice, could repent of His actions, and like the kings of the earth could possibly be open to temptations and bribes and could possibly have favourites. His whole soul rose in mighty indignation against the belief that a being called God required for His satisfaction the living blood of animals in order that He might be pleased—animals who were His own creation. He, therefore, reinstated God in the right place and dethroned the usurper who for the time being seemed to occupy that White Throne. He emphasised and re-declared the eternal and unalterable existence of the moral government of this universe. He unhestitatingly said that the Law was God Himself.

God's laws are eternal and unalterable and not separate from God Himself. It is an indispensable condition of His very perfection. And hence the great confusion that Buddha disbelieved in God and simply believed in the moral law, and because of this confusion about God Himself, arose the confusion about the proper understanding of the great word *Nirvana*. *Nirvana* is undoubtedly not utter extinctiuo.

So far as I have been able to understand the central fact of Buddha's life, *Nirvana* is utter extinction of all that is base in us, all that is corrupt and corruptible in us. *Nirvana* is not like the black, dead peace of the grave but the living peace, the living happiness of a soul which is conscious of itself, and conscious of having found its own abode in the heart of the Eternal.

The third point is the low estimation which the idea of sanctity of all life came to be held in its travels outside India. Great as Buddha's contribution to humanity was in resorting God to His eternal place, in my humble opinion greater still was his contribution to humanity in his exacting regard for all life, be it ever so low. I am aware that his own India did not rise to the height that he would fain have seen India occupy. But the teaching of Buddha, when it became Buddhism and travelled outside, came to mean that the sacredness of animal life had not the sense that it had with an ordinary man. I am not aware of the exact practice and belief of Ceylonese Buddhism in this matter, but I am aware what shape it has taken in Burma and China. In Burma especially the Burmese Buddhists will not kill a single animal, but do not mind others killing the animals for them and dishing the carcases for them for their food. Now, if there was any teacher in the world who insisted upon the inexorable law of cause and effect it was inevitably Gautama, and yet my friends, the Buddhists outside India, would, if they could, avoid the effects of their own acts.

—*Young India* : *Nov.* 24, 1927.

Bureaucracy

IT is contrary to my nature to believe in the depravity of human feelings. But there is so much evidence about me of the depravity of the bureaucratic mind that it will stop at anything to gain its end.

—*Young India* : Oct. 20, 1921.

Business

COMMERCIAL bodies can never be democratic.

—*Young India* : Oct. 1, 1925

IT is wrong to think that business is incompatible with ethics. I know that it is perfectly possible to carry one's business profitably and yet honestly and truthfully. The plea that business and ethics never agree is advanced only by those who are actuated by nothing higher than narrow self-interest. He who will serve his own ends will do so by all kinds of questionable means, but he who will earn to serve the community will never sacrifice truth or honesty. You must bear in mind that you have the right to earn as much as you like but not the right to spend as much as you like. Anything that remains after the needs of a decent living are satisfied belongs to the community.

—*Harijan* : May 4, 193[illegible].

I DO not hold dishonest practices in business to be warranted or excusable. The principle of unconditional honesty is as binding in this as in any other field of life, and it is up to a business man never to compromise his principle no matter what it may cost him. In the end, of course, honesty pays, though that can hardly be a consideration for observing it. One has a perfect right to fix and regulate the scale of prices that he shall charge from a particular set of customers, but it must be done according to a clear fixed principle and not out of mere opportunism or immoral expediency. There should be in it no room for fraud, sharp practice or finesse, to bamboozle the simple, unsuspecting customer.

—*Harijan* : Mar. 13, 1937.

Calamity

BY nature I am so framed that every calamity moves me irrespective of the people whom it may overtake.

—*Harijan :* S ept. 22, 1940.

Capital & Labour

IN the struggle between capital and labour, it may be generally said that more often than not the capitalists are in the wrong box. But when labour comes fully to realise its strength, I know it can become more tyrannical than capital. The millowners will have to work on the terms dictated by labour, if the latter could command intelligence of the former. It is clear, however, that labour will never attain to that intelligence. If it does, labour will cease to be labour and become itself the master. The capitalists do not fight on the strength of money alone. They do possess intelligence and tact.

Swaraj as conceived by me does not mean the end of king-ship. Nor does it mean the end of capital. Accumulated capital means ruling power. I am for the establishment of right relations between capital and labour, etc. I do not wish for the supremacy of the one over the other. I do not think there is any natural antagonism between them. The rich and the poor will always be with us. But their mutual relations will be subject to constant change. France is a republic, but there are all classes of men in France.

—*Young India :* Jan. 8, 1925.

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I HAVE always said that my ideal is that capital and labour should supplement and help each other. They should be a great family living in unity and harmony, capital not only looking to the material welfare of the labourers but their moral welfare also,—capitalists being trustees for the welfare of the labouring classes under them.

—*Young India* : Aug. 20, 1928.

TRUE social economics will teach us that the working man, the clerk and the employer are parts of the same indivisible organism. None is smaller or greater than the other. Their interests should be not conflicting but identical and interdependent.

—*Young India* : May 3, 1928

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ALL capitalists, according to some, are born ogres. But there need be no such inherent antipathy between the two. It is an erroneous notion. If the capitalists are apt to be proud of their wealth, the working men are apt to be proud of their numerical strength. We are liable to be swayed and intoxicated by the same passion as the capitalists, and it must be our prayer that both may be free from that passion.

—*Young India :* Mar. 26, 1931.

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NO doubt capital is lifeless, but not capitalists, who are amenable to conversion.

—*Harijan :* May 8, 1937.

Caste and Varna

'IN your Hinduism do you basically include the caste system ?'

'I do not. Hinduism does not believe in caste. I would obliterate it at once. But I believe in *varnadharma* which is the law of life. I believe that some people are born to teach and some to defend and some to engage in trade and agriculture and some to do manual labour, so much so that these occupations become hereditary. The law of *varna* is nothing but the law of conservation of energy. Why should my son not be a scavenger if I am one ?'

'Indeed ? Do you go so far ?'

'I do, because I hold a scavenger's profession in no way inferior to a clergyman's.'

'I grant that, but should Lincoln have been a wood-chopper rather than President of the U.S.A.?'

'But why should not a wood-chopper be a President of the United States? Gladstone used to chop wood.'

'But he did not accept it as his calling.'

'He would not have been worse off if he had done so. What I mean is, one born a scavenger must earn his livelihood by being a scavenger, and then do whatever else he likes. For a scavenger is as worthy of his hire as a lawyer or your President. That, according to me, is Hinduism. There is no better communism on earth, and I have illustrated it with one verse from the *Upanishads* which means: God pervades all—animate and inanimate. Therefore renounce all and dedicate it to God and then live. The right of living is thus derived from renunciation. It does not say, 'When all do their part of the work I too will do it.' It says, 'Don't bother about others, do your job first and leave the rest to HIM.' *Varnadharma* acts even as the law of gravitation. I cannot cancel it or its working by trying to jump higher and higher day by day till gravitation ceases to work. That effort will be vain. So is the effort to jump over one another. The law of *varna* is the antithesis of competition which kills.'

(*Conversation between Gandhiji and an American clergyman*)

—*Harijan*: Mar. 6, 1937

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AS for caste, I have frequently said that I do not believe in caste in the modern sense. It is an excrescence and a handicap on progress. Nor, do I believe in inequalities between human beings. We are all absolutely equal. But equality is of souls and not bodies. Hence, it is a mental state. We need to think of, and to assert, equality because we see great inequalities in the physical world. We have to realise equality in the midst of this apparent external inequality. Assumption of superiority by any person over any other is a sin against God and man. Thus caste, in so far as it connotes distinctions in status, is an evil.

I do, however, believe in *varna* which is based on hereditary occupations. *Varnas* are four to mark four universal occupations,—imparting knowledge, defending the defenceless carrying on agriculture and commerce, and performing service through physical labour. These occupations are common to all mankind, but Hinduism having recognised them as the law of our being, has made use of it in regulating social relations and conduct. Gravitation affects us all, whether one knows its existence or not. But scientists who knew the law have made it yield results that have startled the world. Even so, has Hinduism startled the world by its discovery and application of the law of *varna*. When Hindus were seized with inertia, abuse of *varna* resulted in innumerable castes, with unnecessary and harmful restrictions as to intermarriage and inter-dining. The *varna* has nothing to do with these restrictions. People of different *varnas* may inter-marry and inter-dine. These restrictions may be necessary in the interest of chastity andhygiene. But a *Brahman* who marries a *Shudra* girl, or *vice versa*, commits no offence against the law of *varna*. —*Young India* : Jan. 4, 1931.

Cause

NO cause can survive internal difficulties if they are indefinitely multiplied. Yet there can be no surrender in the matter of principles for the avoidance of splits. You cannot promote a cause when you are undermining it by surrendering its vital parts. —*Young India :* Nov. 24, 1920.

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A CAUSE has the best of success, when it is examined and followed on its own merits. Measures must always in a progressive society be held superior to men who are after all imperfect instruments working for their fulfilment.

—*Young India* : July 13, 1921.

Ceremonies

I do not believe in ceremonies except to the extent that they awaken in us a sense of duty.

—*Young India* : June 12, 1928.

Chaos vs Misrule

CHAOS means no rule, no order. Rule or order can come, does come, out of no rule or no order, but never directly out of misrule or disorder masquerading under the sacred name of rule or order.

If I were compelled to choose between this rule and violence I would give my vote for the latter though I will not, I could not, assist a fight based on violence. It would be a matter for me of Hobson's choice. The seeming quiescence of to-day is a dangerous form of violence kept under suppression by greater violence or rather readiness for it. Is it not better than those, who, out of a cowardly fear of death or dispossession, whilst harbouring violence refrain from it, should do it and win freedom from bondage or die gloriously in the attempt to vindicate their birthright?

My own position and belief are clear and unequivocal. I neither want the existing rule nor chaos. I want true order established without having to go through the travail of chaos. I want this disorder to be destroyed by non-violence, *i. e.*, I want to convert the evil-doers. My life is dedicated to that task. And what I have written in the previous paragraphs directly flows from my knowledge of the working of non-violence which is the greatest force known to mankind. My belief in its efficacy is unshakeable so is my belief unshakeable in the power of India to gain her freedom through non-violent means and no other. But this power of hers cannot be evoked by suppressing truth or facts, however ugly they may for the moment appear to be. God forbid that India should have to engage in a sanguinary duel before she learns the lesson of non-violence in its fulness. But if that intermediate stage, often found to be necessary, is to be her lot, it will have to be faced as a stage inevitable in her march towards freedom and certainly preferable to the existing order which is only so-called, but which is like a whited sepul-

chre hiding undiluted violence underneath.

—*Young India* : Mar. 1, 1928.

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WE are so very much fear-stricken that a severance of the British connection means to us violence and chaos. Well, I want to make myself clear once more. Votary as I am of non-violence, if I was given a choice between being a helpless witness to chaos and perpetual slavery, I should unhesitatingly say that I would far rather be witness to chaos in India, I would far rather be witness to chaos in India, I would far rather be witness to Hindus and Musalmans doing one another to death than that I should daily witness our gilded slavery. To my mind golden shackles are far worse than iron ones, for one easily feels the irksome and galling nature of the latter and is prone to forget the former. If, therefore, India must be in chains, I would they were of iron rather than of gold or other precious metals.

—*Young India* : Jan. 16, 1920.

Character

THE foundation of Satyagraha as of nation building is undoubtedly self-purification, self-dedication, selflessness. Let each one ask oneself, 'How then can I purify myself in terms of the nation' ? Rectitude of private character is surely the beginning of the structure. If my private character is foul, I am like 'a sounding brass and tinkling cymbal.' If then I am not right inside, I must this very instant purge myself and be a fit vessel for dedication. Government cannot help me or interfere with me here. I must be the sole author of my making or undoing.

—*Young India* : April 7, 1927.

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NO religion which is narrow and which cannot satisfy the test of reason will survive the coming reconstruction of society in which the values will have changed and

character not possession of wealth, title or birth will be the test of merit. —*Harijan* : Mar. 8, 1942.

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THOUGH the external may have its use, constituted as I am, I have all my life thought of growth from within. External appliances are perfectly useless if there is no internal reaction. When a body is perfect within, it becomes impervious to external adverse influences and is independent of external help. Moreover when the internal organs are sound they automatically attract external help. Hence the proverb God helps those who help themselves. If therefore we would all work to bring about internal perfection we need not take up any other activity at all. Sept. 4, 1924.

—*Young India* :

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AS a splendid palace deserted by its inmates looks like a ruin, so does a man without character, all his material belongings notwithstanding.

—*Satyagraha in South Africa* : P. 356.

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ALL our learning or recitation of the *Vedas*, correct knowledge of Sanskrit, Latin, Greek and what not, will avail us nothing, if they do not enable us to cultivate absolute purity of heart. The end of all knowledge must be building up of character. —*Young India* : Sept. 8, 1927.

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ALL your scholarship, all your study of Shakespeare and Wordsworth would be in vain, if at the same time you do not build your character, and attain mastery over your thoughts and actions. When you have attained self-mastery and learnt to control your passions, you will not utter notes of despair. You cannot give your hearts and profess poverty of action. To give one's heart is to give all. You must, to start with, have hearts to give. And this you can do if you will cultivate them.

—*Young India* :

BUT character cannot be built with mortar and stone. It cannot be built by other hands than your own. The Principal and the Professors cannot give you character from the pages of books. Character building comes from their very lives, and, really speaking, it must come from within yourselves.

—*Gandhiji in Ceylon* : P. 85.



PURITY consists first of all in possessing a pure heart but what there is in the heart really comes out also and is shown in outward acts and outward behaviour. And a boy who wants to keep his mouth pure, will never utter a bad word. Of course, that is quite clear. But he neither will put anything into his mouth that will cloud his intellect, cloud his mind, and damage his friends also.

—*Gandhiji in Ceylon* : P. 95.



A CHIVALROUS boy would always keep his mind pure, his eyes straight, and his hands unpolluted. You do not need to go to any school to learn these fundamental maxims of life, and if you will have this triple character with you, you will build on a solid foundation.

—*Gandhiji in Ceylon* : P. 105.



A MAN of character will make himself worthy of any position he is given.

—*Young India* : Sep. 9, 1920.



THERE are no two opinions about the fact that intellect rather than riches will lead. It might equally be admitted by the correspondent that the heart rather than the intellect will eventully lead. Character, not brains, will count at the crucial moment.

—*Young India* : Sep. 19, 1921.

PURITY of character and salavation depend on purity of heart.

—*Young India* : Mar. 15, 1921.



PUT all your knowledge, learning and scholarship in one scale and truth and purity in the other and the latter will by far outweigh the other. The *miasma* of moral impurity has to-day spread among our schoolgoing children and like a hidden epidemic is working havoc among them. I therefore appeal to you, boys and girls, to keep your minds and bodies pure. All your scholarship, all your study of the scriptures will be in vain if you fail to translate their teachings into your daily life. I know that some of the teachers too do not lead pure and clean lives. To them I say that even if they impart all the knowledge in the world to their students but inculcate not truth and purity among them, they will have betrayed them and instead of raising them set them on the downward road to perdition. Knowledge without character is a power for evil only, as seen in the instances of so many 'talented thieves' and 'gentlemen rascals' in the world.

—*Young India* : Feb. 21, 1929.



CHARACTER alone will have effect on the masses. Masses will not argue. They will simply want to know who are the men who go to them. If those men have credentials, the masses will listen to them; if they have no credentials, the masses will not listen.

—*Young India* : Dec. 29, 1933.

Charkha

I PRESENT you with the SPINNING WHEEL and suggest to you that on it depends India's economic salvation. It is no sacrifice to learn a beautiful art and to be able to clothe the naked at the same time.

—*Young India* : Jan. 19, 1920.

WITHOUT a cottage industry the Indian peasant is doomed. He cannot maintain himself from the produce of the land. He needs a supplementary industry. Spinning is the easiest, the cheapest and the best.

The Queens of Europe before Europe was caught in Satan's trap, spun yarn and considered it a noble calling. The very words, spinster and wife, prove the ancient dignity of the art of spinning and weaving. 'When Adam delved and Eve span, who was then a gentleman, also reminds one of the same fact. Not on the clatter of arms depends the revival of her prosperty and true independence. It depends most largely upon reintroduction, in every home of the music of the spinning wheel. It gives sweeter music and is more profitable than the execrable harmonium, coucertina, and the accordion.

I know that there are friends who laugh at this attempt to revive this great art. They remined me that, in these days of mills, sewing-machines or typewriters, only a lunatic can hope to succeed in reviving the rusticated spinning wheel. These friends forget that the needle has not yet given place to the sewing machine nor has the hand lost its cunning in spite of the typewriter. There is not the slightest reason why the spinning wheel may not co-exist with the spinning mill even as the domestic kitchen co-exists with the hotels. Indeed typewriters and sewing machines may go, but the needle and the reed pen will survive. The mills may suffer destruction. The spinning wheel is a national necessity. I would ask sceptics to go to the many poor homes where the spinning wheel is again supplementing their slender resources and ask the inmates whether the spinning wheel has not brought joy to their homes.

—*Young India* : Aug. 18, 1920.

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AGRICUTURE and hand-spinning are two lungs of the national body. They must be protected against consumption at any cost.

—*Young India* : July 13, 1921.

NO one has ever said that spinning can be a means of livelihood except to the very poor. It is intended to restore spinning to its ancient position as a universal industry auxiliary to agriculture and resorted to by agriculturists during those months of the year when agricultural operations are suspended as a matter of course and cultivators have otherwise little to do. For the present all people alike are invited to devote their leisure to spinning with a view to bringing about a complete boycott of foreign cloth in course of the present year. No one asks an able-bodied labourer who can earn twelve annas a day to give up his work in order to take to spinning. However, people are so poor in many parts of the country that a daily wage of even three annas a day would be a veritable boon to them and enable them to tide over bad seasons. The spinning wheel is capable of being applied as a complete insurance against famines and droughts. Three annas again is only a most cautious and conservative estimate.

—*Young India* : Aug. 4, 1921

Restoration of *charkha* automatically solves that difficult problem of enforced emigration. Land alone cannot support the poor peasantry of India even if there was no assessment to be paid.

—*Young India* : Aug. 25, 1921.



ATTACKS on hand-spinning notwithstanding, I cling to the belief that *Swaraj* is unattainable without the beautiful art becoming universal in India. The reasoning applied to the proposition is incredibly simple. India cannot live unless her homes become self-supporting. They cannot become so unless they have a supplementary

occupation. It will, therefore, not avail if all our cloth was manufactured in our mills. If hand-spinning became universal, every home would get a share of the crores and without any complicated machinery. And India is able to manufacture all her own cloth. It is understood that, when spinning becomes universal, the millions of weavers and lacs of carders will revert to their original occupation.

This is the economic aspect of hand-spinning.

It will save our women from forced violation of their purity. It will, as it must, do away with begging as a means of livelihood. It will remove our enforced idleness. It will steady the mind. And I verily believe that, when millions take to it as a sacrament, it will turn our faces Godward.

This is the moral aspect of spinning.

And when it has become universal and traffic in foreign cloth has become a thing of the past, it is the surest sign that India is earnest, sober, and believes in the non-violent and religious character of her struggle.

At present, outsiders do not believe in our ability to boycott foreign cloth and to manufacture enough for our requirements by hand-spining and hand-weaving.

But when it becomes an established fact, India's opinion too will become an irresistible force, and if necessary, she can then, but not till then resort to Civil Disobedience in order to bend a recalcitrant Government to its will.

This is the political aspect.

—*Young India* : Sep. 22, 1921.

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IN my loneliness, it is my only infallible friend and comforter. May it be so to the reader.

—*Young India* : Sep. 4, 1924.

THE winter of despair can only be turned into the sunshine of hope for the millions only through the life-giving wheel—the *charkha*.

—*Young India* : Aug. 27, 1925.

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ITS message is one of simplicity, service of mankind, living so as not to hurt others, creating an indissoluble bond between the rich and the poor, capital and labour the prince and the peasant.

—*Young India* : Sep. 17, 1925.

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THE greatest of my activities is the *charkha*. I hold it to be the best part of my service—social, political and spiritual. For it includes these branches of service. My invitation to all to spin if only for half an hour daily for the sake of the starving millions of this land makes the movement at once both political and spiritual.

He who spins before the poor inviting them to do likewise serves God as no one else does.

—*Young India* : Sep. 24, 1925.

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IT is the one thing that can bring a ray of sunshine into the dark and dilapidated dungeon of the half-starved peasantry.

—*Young India* : Mar. 11, 1926.

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FOR me nothing in the political world is more important than the spinning-wheel. I can recall many occasions when I have postponed other matters to make room for a discussion on the spinning wheel as the central part of our economics or politics.

—*Young India* : April 19, 1926.

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I think of the poor of India every time that I draw a thread on the wheel. The poor of India to-day have lost faith in God, more so in the middle classes or the rich. For a person suffering from the pangs of hunger, and

desiring nothing but to fill his belly, his belly is his God. To him anyone who gives him bread is his master. Through him he may even see God. To give alms to such persons, who are sound in all their limbs, is to debase oneself and them. What they need is some kind of occupation, and the occupation that will give employment to millions can only be hand-spinning. But I can instil my faith in the potency of hand-spinning in the minds of the toilers of India not by making speeches but only by spinning myself. Therefore, I have described my spinning as a penance or sacrament. And, since I believe that where there is pure and active love for the poor there is God also, I see God in every thread that I draw on the spinning-wheel.

—*Young India* : Mar. 20, 1926.

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I MAY repeat that I would to-day discard the spinning-wheel if someone shows a better and more universal political programme than hand-spinning. But up to this time I have been shown none. I am anxious to know if there is any.

—*Young India* : Feb. 17, 1927.

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DO you know the daily income per head of our country ? Our economists say that it is one anna and six pies, though even that is misleading. If someone were to work out the average depth of a river as four feet from the fact that the river was six feet deep in certain places and two feet in others, and proceeded to ford it, would he not be drowned ? That is how statistics mislead. The average income is worked out from the figures of the income of the poor man as also of the Viceroy and the millionaires. The actual income will therefore be hardly three pice per head. Now, if I supplement that income by even three pice with the help of the *charkha*, am I not right in calling the *charkha* my Cow of Plenty ? Some people attribute

superhuman powers to me, some say I have an extraordinary character. God alone knows what I am. It is also possible to disagree about the efficacy of *satyagraha*, but I do not think there is any reason for disagreement on these obvious facts about the *charkha*. If someone convinces me to-day that there is no poverty in India that there are few in India who starve for want of even a few pice a day, I shall own myself to have been mistaken and shall destroy the spinning-wheel.

—*Young India* : Feb. 17, 1927.

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LITTLE is it realised even by the best workers that the message of the wheel means a complete revolution in the national life. Its successful delivery means a solidly-knit, well-organised, well-disciplined, self-restrained, self-contained, self-respecting, industrious and prosperous nation, no member of which, willing and ready to work, ever need starve.

Regular spinning for half an hour daily is no strain and it should be a joy to be able to renew from day to day through the wheel a vital contact with the millions of paupers.

—*Young India* : Aug. 8, 1929.

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THERE is a world of difference between spinning for sacrifice and spinning for recreation. I would advise you to observe a religious silence while spinning. It would give you spiritual peace and if you make it a point always to spin at a particular fixed hour, it will automatically regulate your other appointments too and help you to a well-ordered life.

IT is the symbol of the nation's prosperity and therefore freedom. It is a symbol not of commercial war but of commercial peace. It bears not a message of illwill towards the nations of the earth but of good-will and sel-

help. It will not need the protection of a navy threatening world's peace and exploiting its resources, but it needs the religious determination of millions to spin their yarn in their own homes as to-day they cook their food in their own homes. I may deserve the curses of posterity for many mistakes of omission and commission, but I am confident of earning its blessings for suggesting a revival of the *charkha*. I stake my all on it. For every revolution of the wheel spins peace, good-will and love. And with all that, inasmuch as the loss of it brought about India's slavery, its voluntary revival with all its implications must mean India's freedom.

—*Young India* : Dec. 8, 1921.

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I SEE a vital connection between the *charkha* and non-violence. Even as certain minimum qualifications are indispensable in a soldier in arms, so are certain other and even opposite qualifications indispensable in a non-violent soldier, *i e.*, a *satyagrahi*. One of these latter is adequate skill in spinning and its anterior processes. A *satyagrahi* occupies himself in productive work. There is no easier and better productive work for millions than spinning. What is more, it has been an integral part of the non-violent programme since its commencement. Civilisation based on non-violence must be different from that organised for violence. Let not Congressmen trifle with this fundamental fact. I repeat what I have said a thousand times that, if millions spun for *Swaraj* and in the spirit of non-violence, there will probably be no necessity for civil disobedience. It will be a constructive effort such as the world has not witnessed before. It is the surest method of converting the enemy.

—*Harijan* : Dec. 2, 1939.

Chivalry

I SHOULD never think of reaping *Swaraj* out of British defeat. It would be anything but chivalry. Mine is, there-

fore, not misplaced. Chivalry is a vital part of *ahimsa*. *Ahimsa* without it is lame, it cannot work.

—*Harijan* : July 28, 1940.

Children

CHILDREN inherit the qualities of the parents, no less than their physical features. Environment does play an important part, but the original capital on which a child starts in life is inherited from its ancestors. I have also seen children successfully surmounting the efforts of an evil inheritance. That is due to purity being an inherent attribute of the soul.

—*My Experiments with Truth* : Page 381.

Christianity

INDIA of the near future stands for perfect toleration of all religions. Her spiritual heritage is simple living and high-thinking. I consider Western christianity in its practical working a negation of Christ's Christianity. I cannot conceive Jesus, if he was living in the flesh in our midst, approving of modern Christian organisations, public worship or modern ministry. If Indian christians will simply cling to the Sermon on the Mount, which was delivered not merely to the peaceful disciples but a groaning world, they would not go wrong, and they would find that no religion is false, and that if all live according to their lights and in the fear of God, they would not need to worry about organisations, forms of worship and ministry. The Pharisees had all that, but Jesus would have none of it, for they were using their office as a cloak for hypocrisy and worse. Co-operation with forces of Good and Non-co-operation with forces of Evil are the two things we need for a good and pure life, whether it is called Hindu, Muslim or Christian.

The message of Jesus, as I understand it, is contained in his Sermon on the Mount unadulterated and taken

as a whole, and even in connection with the Sermon on the Mount, my own humble interpretation of the message is in many respects different from the orthodox. The message, to my mind, has suffered distortion in the West. It may be presumptuous for me to say so, but as a devotee of truth, I should not hesitate to say what I feel. I know that the world is not waiting to know my opinion on Christianity.

—*Young India* : Mar. 23, 1926.

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DR. CRANE, an American clergyman, wanted to understand Gandhiji's attitude towards Christianity, as he had heard divers representations made about it, and he also wanted a simple statement regarding Gandhiji's attitude to religion in general.

'I shall certainly give you my reaction to Christianity,' said Gandhiji. Even when I was 18, I came in touch with good Christians in London. Before that I had come in touch with what I used then to call 'beef and beer-bottle Christianity,' for these were regarded as the indispensable criteria of a man becoming a Christian, with also a third thing, namely adoption of a European style of dress. Those Christians were parodying St. Paul's teaching—'Call thou nothing unclean.' I went to London, therefore, with that prejudice against Christianity. I came across good Christians there who placed the Bible in my hands. Then I met numerous Christians in South Africa, and I have since grown to this belief that Christianity is as good and as true a religion as my own. For a time I struggled with the question, 'Which was the true religion out of those I knew?' But ultimately I came to the deliberate conviction that there was no such thing as only one true religion and every other false. There is no religion that is absolutely perfect. All are equally imperfect or more or less perfect, hence the

conclusion that Christianity is as good and true as my own religion. But so also about Islam or Zoroastrianism or Judaism.

I therefore do not take as literally true the text that Jesus is the only begotten Son of God. God cannot be the exculsive Father and I cannot ascribe exclusive divinity to Jesus. He is as divine as Krishna or Rama or Mahomed or Zoroaster. Similarly I do not regard every word of the Bible as the inspired word of God even as I do not regard every word of the *Vedas* or the *Koran* as inspired. The SUM TOTAL of each of these books is certainly inspired but I miss that inspiration in many of the things taken individually. The *Bible* is as much a book of religion with me as the *Gita* and the *Koran.*

[With this he pointed to the two or three editions of the *Koran* with also a copy of the *Bible* lying on bamboo-shelf in front of him. He had read numerous commentaries on the *Bible*, but had not read many commentaries on the *Koran*, and that is why there was more than one edition now in front of him.]

'Therefore,' said he, 'I am not interested in weaning you from Christianity and making you a Hindu, and I would not relish your designs upon me, if you had any, to convert me to Chritianity ! I would also dispute your claim that Christianity is the ONLY true religion. It is also a true religion, a noble religion, and along with other religions it has contributed to raise the moral height of mankind. But it has yet to make a greater contribution. After all, what are 2,000 years in the life of a religion? Just now Christianity comes to yearning mankind in a tainted form. Fancy Bishops supporting slaughter in the name of Christianity!'

'But,' asked Dr. Crane, 'when you say that all religions are true, what do you do when there are conflicting counsels ?'

'I have no difficulty,' said Gandhiji, 'in hitting upon the truth, because I go by certain fundamental maxims. Truth is superior to everything and I reject what conflicts with it. Similarly that which is in conflict with non-violence should be rejected. And on matters which can be reasoned out, that which conflicts with Reason must also be rejected.'

'In matters which can be reasoned out?'

'Yes, there are subjects where Reason cannot take us far and we have to accept things on faith. Faith then does not contradict Reason but transcends it. Faith is a kind of sixth sense which works in cases which are without the purview of Reason. Well, then, given these three criteria, I can have no difficulty in examining all claims made on behalf of a religion. Thus to believe that Jesus is the only begotten Son of God is to me against Reason, for God can't marry and beget children. The word 'son' there can only be used in a figurative sense. In that sense everyone who stands in the position of Jesus is a begotten son of God. If a man is spiritually miles ahead of us we may say that he is in a special sense the son of God, though we are all children of God. We repudiate the relationship in our lives, whereas his life is a witness to that relationship.'

'Then you will recognize degrees of divinity. Would you not say that Jesus was the most divine?'

'No, for the simple reason that we have no data. Historically we have more data about Mahomed than anyone else because he was more recent in time. For Jesus there is less data and still less for Buddha, Rama and Krishna; and when we know so little about them, is it not preposterous to say that one of them was more divine than another? In fact even if there were a great deal of data available, no judge should shoulder the burden of sifting all the evidence, if only for this reason

that it requires a highly spiritual person to guage the degree of divinity of the subjects he examines. To say that Jesus was 99 per cent divine, and Mahomed 50 per cent, and Krishna 10 per cent, is to arrogate to oneself a function which really does not belong to man.'

—*Harijan* : Mar. 6, 1937.

Civil Disobedience

I HAVE found that it is our first duty to render voluntary obedience to law, but whilst doing that duty I have also seen that when law fosters untruth it becomes a duty to disobey it. How may this be done? We can do so by never swerving from truth and suffering the consequences of our disobedience. That is Civil Disobedience. No rules can tell us how this disobedience may be done and by whom, when and where, nor can they tell us which laws foster untruth. It is only experience that can guide us, and it requires time and knowledge of facts.

—*Young India* : Sep. 13, 1919.

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IN Civil Disobedience the resister sufiers the consequences of disobedience. This was what Daniel did when he disobeyed the law of the Medes and Persians. That is what John Bunyan did and that is what the ryots have done in India from times immemorial. It is the law of our being. Violence is the law of the beast in us. Self-suffering, *i. e.*, civil resistance, is the law of the man in us. It is rarely that the occasion for civil resistance arises in a well-ordered state. But when it does it becomes a duty that cannot be shirked by one who counts his honour, *i.e.*, conscience, above everything.

—*Young India* : Oct. 21, 1921.

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THOUGHTLESS disobedience means disruption of society.

—*Young India* : Oct. 19, 1921.

CIVIL disobedience is not a state of lawlessness and licence; but presupposes a law-abiding spirit combined with self-restraint. —*Young India* : Nov. 17, 1921.

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SUBMISSION to the state law is the price a citizen pays for his personal liberty. Submission, therefore, to a state wholly or largely unjust is an immoral barter for liberty. A citizen who thus realises the evil nature of a state is not satisfied to live on its sufferance, and therefore appears to the others who do not share his belief to be a nuisance to a society whilst he is endeavouring to compel the state, without commiting a moral breach to arrest him. Thus, considered, civil resistance is a most powerful expression of a soul's anguish and an eloquent protest against the continuance of an evil state. Is not this the history of all reform ? Have not reformers, much to the disgust of their fellows, discarded even innocent symbols associated with an evil practice ?

—*Young India* : Nov. 10, 1921.

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DISOBEDIENCE to be civil has to be absolutely non-violent, the underlying principle being the winning over of the opponent by suffering, *i. e.*, love.

—*Young India* : Nov. 3, 1921.

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PURE Civil Disobedience must not be carried beyond the point of breaking the unmoral laws of the country. Breach of the laws to be civil assumes the strictest and willing obedience to the gaol discipline, because disobedience of a particular rule assumes a willing acceptance of the sanction provided for its breach. And immediately a person quarrels both with the rule and the sanction for its breach, he ceases to be civil and lends himself to the precipitation of chaos and anarchy. A civil resister is, if one may be permitted such a claim for him, a philanthropist and a friend of the state. An anarchist is an enemy of the state and is, therefore, a misanthrope.

—*Young India* : Dec. 15, 1921.

CIVIL Disobedience is a preparation for mute suffering. Its effect is marvellous though unperceived and gentle.

—*Young India* : Dec. 22, 1921.

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TO expect me to give up the preaching of Civil Disobedience is to ask me to give up preaching peace, which would be tantamount to ask me to commit suicide.

—*Young India* : Dec. 29, 1921.

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CIVIL Disobedience has to be civil in more senses than one. There can be no bravado, no impetuousness about it. It has to be an ordered, well-thought-out, humble offering.

—*Young India* : July 10, 1924.

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CIVIL Disobedience means capacity for unlimited suffering, without the intoxicating excitement to killing.

—*Young India* : Nov. 27, 1924.

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PREPARATION for Civil Disobedience means discipline, self-restraint, a non-violent but resisting spirit, cohesion and above all scrupulous and willing obedience to the known laws of God and such laws of man as are in furtherance of God's laws.

—*Young India* : Dec. 26, 1924.

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CIVIL resistance to wrong is not a new doctrine or practice with me. It is a life-long belief and a life-long practice. To prepare the country for civil resistance is to prepare it for non-violence. To prepare the country for non-violence is to organise it for constructive work, which to me is synonymous with the spinning-wheel.

—*Young India* : Aug. 6, 1925.

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CIVIL Disobedience asks for and needs not a single farthing for its support. It needs and asks for stout hearts with a faith that will not flinch from any danger and will shine the brightest in the face of severest trial. Civil Disobedience is a terrifying synonym for suffering.

But it is better often to understand the terrible nature of a thing if people will truly appreciate its benignant counterpart. Disobedience is a right that belongs to every human being and it becomes a sacred duty when it springs from civility or, which is the same thing, love.

—*Young India* : April 1, 1926.



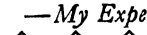
ALL Civil Disobedience is a part or branch of Satyagraha but all Satyagraha is not Civil Disobedience.

—*Young India* : July 14, 1927.

Civility

EXPERIENCE has taught me that civility is the most difficult part of Satyagraha. Civility does not here mean the mere outward gentleness of speech cultivated for the occasion, but an inborn gentleness and desire to do the opponent good. These should show themselves in every act of a Satyagrahi.

—*My Experiments with Truth* : P. 536.



INCIVILITY should be answered not by incivility but by a dignified and calm endurance of all suffering in the name of God.

—*Young India* : May 8, 1930.

Class War

I CAN, most decidedly, avoid class war if only the people will follow the non-violent method. By the non-violent method we seek not to destroy the capitalist, we seek to destroy capitalism. We invite the capitalist to regard himself as a trustee for those on whom he depends for the making, the retention and the increase of his capital. Nor need the worker wait for his conversion. If capital is power, so is work. Either power can be used destructively or creatively. Either is dependent on the other. Immediately the worker realises his strength, he is in a position to become

a co-sharer with the capitalist instead of remaining his slave. If he aims at becoming the sole owner, he will most likely be killing the hen that lays the golden eggs. Inequalities in intelligence and even opportunity will last till the end of time. A man living on the banks of a river has any day more opportunity of growing crops than one living in an arid desert. But if inequalities stare us in the face the essential equality too is not to be missed. Every man has an equal right to the necessaries of life even as birds and beasts have. And since every right carries with it a corresponding duty and the corresponding remedy for resisting any attack upon it, it is merely a matter of finding out the corresponding duties and remedies to vindicate the elementary fundamental equality. The corresponding duty is to labour with my limbs and the corresponding remedy is to non-co-operate with him who deprives me of the fruit of my labour. And if I would recognise the fundamental equality, as I must, of the capitalist and the labourer, I must not aim at his destruction. I must strive for his conversion. My non-co-operation with him will open his eyes to the wrong he may be doing. Nor need I be afraid of someone else taking my place when I have non-co-operated. For I expect to influence my co-worker so as not to help the wrong-doing of his employer. This kind of education of the mass of workers is no doubt a slow process, but, as it is also the surest, it is necessarily the quickest. It can be easily demonstrated that destruction of the capitalist must mean destruction in the end of the worker and as no human being is so bad as to be beyond redemption, no human being is so perfect as to warrant his destroying him whom he wrongly considers to be wholly evil.

—*Young India* : Mar. 26, 1931.

Cleanliness

IT is a superstition to consider that vast sums of money are required for effecting sanitary reform. We must modify western methods of sanitation to suit our requirements. And as my patriotism is inclusive and admits of no enemity

or ill-will, I do not hesitate, in spite of my horror of western materialism, to take from the West what is beneficial for me.

—*Young India*: Dec. 26, 1924.

INDEED sanitary work must be regarded as the foundation of all volunteer training.

—*Young India*: Jan. 1, 1925.

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Q. DON'T you have anything like antipathy for filth and dirt?

A. I have no antipathy against dirty people, but I have a horror of dirt. I should not eat out of a dirty plate nor touch a dirty spoon or kerchief. But I believe in removing dirt to its proper place, where it ceases to be dirt.

—*Harijan*: May 11, 1939.

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DURING my wanderings nothing has been so painful to me as to observe our insanitation throughout the length and breadth of the land. I do not believe in the use of force for carrying out reforms, but when I think of the time that must elapse before the ingrained habits of millions of people can be changed, I almost reconcile myself to compulsion in this the most important matter of insanitation. Several diseases can be directly traced to insanitation. Hookworm for instance is such a direct result. Not a single human being who observes the elementary principles of sanitation need suffer from hookworm. The disease is not even due to poverty. The only reason is gross ignorance of the first principles of sanitation.

'Cleanliness is next to godliness.' We can no more gain God's blessings with an unclean body than with an unclean mind. A clean body cannot reside in an unclean city.

Let us not put off everything till *Swaraj* is attained and thus put off *Swaraj* itself. *Swaraj* can be had only by brave and clean people. Whilst the Government has to answer for a lot, I know that the British officers are not responsible for our insanitation. Indeed if we gave them free scope in this matter, they would improve our habits at the point of the sword. They do not do so because it does not pay. But they would gladly welcome and encourage any effort towards improved sanitation. In this matter Europe has much to teach us. We quote with pride a few texts from Manu or if we are Musalmans from the *Quran*. We do not carry even these into practice. Europeans have deduced an elaborate code of sanitation from the principles laid down in these books. Let us learn these from them and adapt them to our needs and habits. How I would love to see not ornamental but useful sanitary associations whose members will deem it a privilege to take up the broom, the shovel and the bucket. Here is great national work for school-boys, school girls and collegiates all over India.

—*Young India*: Nov. 19, 1925.

Coercion

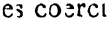
WE may not use compulsion even in the matter of doing a good thing. Any compulsion will ruin the cause.

—*Young India*: April 17, 1930.



THERE can be no coercion in *Swaraj*. A non-co-operator or his associate who uses coercion has no apology whatsoever for his criminality.

—*Young India*: Nov. 24, 1921.



CONVERSION is our motto, not coercion. Coercion is an offspring of violence. Conversion is a fruit of non-violence and love.

—*Young India*: Mar. 26, 1931

Commonsense

COMMONSENSE is the realised sense of proportion.

—*Young India*: July 4, 1929.

Communism

INDIA does not want Bolshevism. The people are too peaceful to stand anarchy. They will bow the knee to any one who restores so-called order.

—*Young India*: Nov. 24, 1921.

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I AM yet ignorant of what exactly Bolshevism is. I have not been able to study it. I do not know whether it is for the good of Russia in the long run. But I do know that in so far as it is based on violence and denial of God, it repels me. I do not believe in short-violent cuts to success. Those Bolshevik friends who are bestowing their attention on me should realise that however much I may sympathise with and admire worthy motives, I am an uncompromising opponent of violent methods even to serve the noblest of causes. There is therefore really no meeting ground between the school of violence and myself. But my creed of non-violence not only does not preclude me but compels me even to associate with anarchists and all those who believe in voilence. But that association is always with the sole object of weaning them from what appears to me to be their error. For experience convinces me that permanent good can never be the outcome of untruth and voilence. Even if my belief is a fond delusion, it will be admitted that it is a fascinating delusion.

—*Young India*: Dec. 11, 1924.

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Q. WHAT is your opinion about the social economics of Bolshevism and how far do you think they are fit to be copied by our country?

A. I must confess that I have not yet been able fully to understand the meaning of Bolshevism. All that I know

is that it aims at the abolition of the institution of private property. This is only an application of the ethical ideal of non-possession in the realm of economics and if the people adopted this ideal of their own accord or could be made to accept it by means of peaceful persuasion there would be nothing like it. But from what I know of Bolshevism it not only does not preclude the use of force but freely sanctions it for the expropriation of private property and maintaining the collective state ownership of the same. And if that is so I have no hesitation in saying that the Bolshevik regime in its present form cannot last for long. For it is my firm conviction that nothing enduring can be built on violence. But be that as it may there is no questioning the fact that the Bolshevik ideal has behind it the purest sacrifice of countless men and women who have given up their all for its sake, and an ideal that is sanctified by the sacrifices of such master spirits as Lenin cannot go in vain : the noble example of their renunciation will be emblazoned for ever and quicken and purify the ideal as time passes.

—*Young India* : May. 1, 1920.

Q. WHAT in your opinion ought to be the basis of India's future economic constitution ? What place will such institutions as savings banks, insurance companies, etc., have in it ?

A. According to me the economic constitution of India, and for the matter of that, the world should be such that no one under it should suffer from want of food and clothing. In other words everybody should be able to get sufficient work to enable him to make two ends meet. And this ideal can be universally realised only if the means of production of elementary necessaries of life remain in the control of the masses. These should be freely available to all as God's air and water are or ought to be ; they should not be made a vehicle of traffic for the exploitation

of others. Their monopolization by any country, nation or group of persons would be unjust. The neglect of this simple principle is the cause of the destitution that we witness to-day not only in this unhappy land but other parts of the world too. It is this evil that the *Khadi* movement is calculated to remedy. Savings banks and insurance companies will be there even when the economic reforms suggested to me have been effected but their nature will have undergone a complete transformation. Savings banks to-day in India though a useful institution do not serve the very poorest. As for our insurance companies they are of no use whatsoever to the poor. What part they can play in an ideal scheme of reconstruction such as I have postulated is more than I can say. The function of savings banks ought to be to enable the poorest to husband their hard-earned savings and to subserve the interest of the country generally. Though I have lost faith in most Government institutions, as I have said before, savings banks are good so far as they go but unfortunately to-day their services are available only to the urban section of the community and so long as our gold reserves are located outside India they can hardly be regarded as trustworthy institutions. In the event of a war all these banks may become not only utterly useless but even a curse to the people inasmuch as the Government will not scruple to employ the funds held by these banks against the depositors themselves. No Government institution can be depended upon to remain loyal to the interest of the people in emergency, if they are not controlled by and not run in the interests of the people. So long therefore as this primary condition is absent banks are in the last resort additional links to keep the people in chains. They may be regarded as an unavoidable evil and therefore to be suffered to exist but it is well to understand where we are in respect even of such harmless-looking institutions.

—*Young India* : Nov. 15, 1928.

I HAD made the working man's cause my own long before any of the young communists here were born. I spent the best part of my time in South Africa working for them, I used to live with them, and shared their joys and sorrows. You must therefore understand why I claim to speak for labour. I expect at least courtesy from you if nothing else. I invite you to come to me and discuss things with me as frankly as you can.

You claim to be Communists, but you do not seem to live the life of communism. I may tell you that I am trying my best to live up to the ideal of communism in the best sense of the term. And communism does not, I fancy, exclude courtesy. I am amongst you to-day, within a few minutes I will leave you. But if you want to carry the country with you, you ought to be able to react on it by reasoning with it. You cannot do so by coercion. You may deal destruction to bring the country round to your view. But how many will you destroy? Not tens of millions. You may kill a few thousands if you had millions with you. But to-day you are no more than a handful. I ask you to convert the Congress if you can and to take charge of it. But you cannot do so by bidding goodbye to the elementary rules of courtesy. And there is no reason why you should be lacking in ordinary courtesy, when it is open to you to give the fullest vent to your views, when India is tolerant enough to listen patiently to anyone who can talk coherently.

The truce has done no harm to the labourers. I claim that none of my activities has ever harmed the workers, nor can ever harm them. If the Congress sends its representative to the Conference, they will press for no *Swaraj* other than the *Swaraj* for workers and peasants. Long before the Communist Party came into existence the Congress had decided that that *Swaraj* would have no meaning which was not the *Swaraj* for workers and peasants. Perhaps none of you workers here gets less than a monthly wage of Rs. 20 but

I am working for winning *Swaraj* not only for you but for those toiling and unemployed millions who do not get even a square meal a day and have to scratch along with a piece of stale *roti* and a pinch of salt. But I do not want to deceive you; I must warn you that I do not bear any ill to the capitalists. I can think of doing them no harm. But I want, by means of suffering, to awaken them to their sense of duty. I want to melt their hearts and get them to render justice to their less fortunate brethren. They are human beings, and my appeal to them will not go in vain. The history of Japan reveals many an instance of self-sacrificing capitalists. During the last *Satyagraha*, quite a number of capitalists went in for considerable sacrifice, went to jail and suffered. Do you want to estrange them? Don't you want them to work with you for the common end?

—*Young India*: Mar. 26, 1931.

Q. HOW to dispossess people of ill-gotten gains—which is what the Socialists are out to do?

A. Who is to judge what gains or riches are ill-gotten or well-gotten? God alone can judge, or a competent authority appointed both by the 'haves' and the 'have nots' can judge. Not anyone and everyone. But if you say that ALL property and possession is theft, all must give up property and wealth. Have we given it up? Let US make a beginning expecting the rest to follow. For those who are convinced that their own possessions are ill-gotten, there is of course no other alternative but to give them up.

—*Harijan*: Ang. 1, 1936.

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Q. IS not the Congress veering round to communism?

A. Has it ? I do not see it. But if it does, and if it is not the Russian model, I do not mind it. For what does communism mean in the last analysis ? It means a classless society—an ideal that is worth striving for. Only I part company with it when force is called to aid for achieving it. We are all born equal, but we have all these centuries resisted the Will of God. The idea of inequality, of 'high and low' is an evil, but I do not believe in eradicating evil from the human breast at the point of the bayonet. The human breast does not lend itself to that means.

—*Harijan* : Mar. 13, 1937.

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VIOLENCE is no monopoly of any one party. I know Congressmen who are neither socialists nor communists but who are frankly devotees of the cult of violence. Contrariwise, I know socialists and communists who will not hurt a fly but who believe in the universal ownership of instruments of production. I rank myself as one among them.

—*Harijan* : Dec. 10, 1938.

ALL your literature that I have studied clearly says that there is no independence without resort to force. I know that there is a body of communists that is slowly veering round to non-violence. I would like you to make your position absolutely plain and above board. I have it from some of the literature that passes under the name of communist literature that secrecy, camouflage and the like are enjoined as necessary for the accomplishment of the communist and especially as communism has to engage in an unequal battle against capitalism which has organised violence at its beck and call.

—*Harijan* : Dec. 10, 1938.

I MAY say that communists have not made much headway yet in India, and I somehow feel that the character of our people will not easily lend itself to communist methods.

—*Harijan*: April 13, 1940.

'WHAT do you think of communism? Do you think it would be good for India?'

'Communism of the Russian type, that is communism which is imposed on a people, would be repugnant to India. I believe in non-violent communism,' answered Gandhiji.

'But communism in Russia is against private property. Do you want private property?'

'If communism came without any violence, it would be welcome. For then no property would be held by any body except on behalf of the people and for the people. A millionaire may have his millions, but he will hold them for the people. The state could take charge of them whenever they would need them for the common cause.'

'Is there any difference of opinion between you and Jawaharlal in respect of Socialism?'

'There is, but it is a difference in emphasis. He perhaps puts an emphasis on the result, whereas I put on the means. Perhaps, according to him, I am putting an over-emphasis on non-violence, whereas he, though he believes in non-violence, would want to have Socialism by other means, if it was impossible to have it by non-violence. Of course my emphasis on non-violence becomes one of principle. Even if I was assured that we could have independence by means of violence, I should refuse to have it. It won't be real independence.'

'But do you think the English will leave India to you and go back peacefully as a result of your non-violent agitation?'

'I do think so.'

'What is the basis of your belief?'

'I have my faith in God and His Justice.'

The friend seemed to be deeply impressed. He took the words down and said: 'You are more Christian than we so-called Christians. I will write these words down in block letters.'

'You must,' said Gandhiji, 'otherwise God would not be the God of Love but the God of violence.' (M. D.)

—*Harijan*: Feb. 13, 1937

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I HAVE claimed that I was a socialist long before those I know in India had avowed their creed. But my socialism was natural to me and not adopted from any books. It came out of my unshakable belief in non-violence. No man could be actively non-violent and not rise against social injustice, no matter where it occurred. Unfortunately Western socialists have, so far as I know, believed in the necessity of violence for enforcing socialistic doctrines.

I have always held that social justice, even unto the least and the lowliest, is impossible of attainment by force. I have further believed that it is possible by proper training of the lowliest by non-violent means to secure redress of the wrongs suffered by them. That means is non-violent non-co-operation. At times non-co-operation becomes as much a duty as co-operation. No one is bound to co-operate in one's own undoing or slavery. Freedom received through the effort of others, however benevolent, cannot be retained when such effort is withdrawn. In other words, such freedom is not real freedom. But the lowliest can feel its glow as soon as they learn the art of attaining it through non-violent non-co-operation.

—*Harijan*: April 20, 1940.

ALL Communists are not bad, as all Congressmen are not angels. I have, therefore, no prejudice against Communists, as such.

Their philosophy, as they have declared it to me, I cannot subscribe to.

—*Harian* : Jan. 26, 1941.

Commnunal Pacts

FREEDOM will not come through parliamentary effort. Therefore communal pacts, while they are good if they can be had, are valueless unless they are backed by the union of hearts, without which there can be no peace in the land.

—*Harijan* : Jan. 25, 42.

Complexion

IT is a law of nature that the skin of races living near the equator should be black And if we believe that there must be beauty in everything fashioned by nature, we would not only steer clear of all narrow and one-sided conceptions of beauty, but we in India would be free from the improper sense of shame and dislike which we feel for our own complexion if it is anything but fair.

—*Satyagraha in South Africa* : Page 19.

Compromise

A SATYAGRAHI never misses, can never miss a chance of compromise on honourable terms, it being always assumed that in the event of failure he is ever ready to offer battle. He needs no previous preparation, his cards are always on the table. Suspension or continuation of battle is one and the same thing to him. He fights or refrains to gain precisely the same end. He dare not always

distrust his opponents. On the contrary he must grasp the hand of friendship whenever there is the slightest protest.

—*Young India* : April 16, 1931.

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BUT all my life through, the very insistence on truth has taught me to appreciate the beauty of compromise. I saw in later life that this spirit was an essential part of Satyagraha. It has often meant endangering my life and incurring the displeasure of friends. But truth is hard as adamant and tender as a blossom.

—*My Experiments with Truth* : Page 184.

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HUMAN life is a series of compromise, and it is not always easy to achieve in practice what one has found to be true in theory. Take this very simple case. The principle is that all life is one and we have to treat the sinner and saint alike, as the *Gita* says we have to look with an equal eye on a learned *Pandit* and a dog and a dog-eater. But here I am. Though I have not killed the snake, I know I have been instrumental in killing it. I know that I should not have done so. I know, besides, that snakes are *kshetrapals* (guardians of the field), and therefore too, I should not have helped in killing it. But as you see I have not been able to avoid it. But it is no use my thinking that I CANNOT avoid it. I do not give up the principle which is true for all time that all life is one, and I pray to God that He may rid me of the fear of snakes and enable me to achieve the non-violence necessary to handle snakes as we handle other domestics. Take another instance, again a very simple one. I know that as a villager and as one who has made it his business to promote village crafts, I must use a village-made razor, but you see that

I am using a foreign one. (Gandhiji was actually having a shave when these teachers arrived). I might have got a village-made razor, if I had written to friends to procure one for me. But I thought I must help the village barber, no matter what kind of razor he used. I therefore decided to cultivate him, and put up with his dirty clothes and uncouth instruments. But on one thing I could not possibly compromise. He said he would not shave *Harijans* on the same terms as he was prepared to shave me, and I had to do without his services. Now you find me having a shave with a foreign razor, though it is open to me to procure a village-made one. Here there is obviously an indefensible compromise. And yet there is an explanation. I have been sticking on to a set of shaving tackle given me by a loving sister, whose gift I could not resist, and whose feelings I could not hurt by rejecting the foreign razor and insisting on having a village-made one. But there it is, compromise is there. I do not commend it for imitation. We must be prepared to displease the dearest ones for the sake of principle.

There are eternal principles which admit of no compromise, and one must be prepared to lay down one's life in the practice of them. Supposing someone came and asked you to give up your religion and to embrace another at the point of the sword, would you do it? Supposing someone were to compel you to drink wine or eat beef, or tell a lie, would you not rather lay down your life than yield to the coercion? No. A principle is a principle, and in no case can it be watered down because of our incapacity to live it in practice. We have to strive to achieve it, and the striving should be conscious, deliberate and hard.

I am not in the habit of losing co-workers. I go a long way with them in winning their affection and retaining it. But there does come a limit beyond which

my compromise does not and cannot and should not go. No compromise is worth the name which endangers chances of success.

—*Harijan* : Nov. 18, 1939.

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COMPROMISE is a part and parcel of my nature. I will go to the Viceroy fifty times, if I feel like it. I went to Lord Reading whilst Non-co-operation was going on. I would not only go to the Viceroy when invited but I would even seek opportunities to go to him, if necessary. You must know that, if I do so, I do it in order to strengthen our cause and not weaken it. It happened so with General Smuts. At the last moment I telephoned to him. He put the receiver down in anger but I thrust myself on him. As a result he relented and I was in a stronger position. To-day we are friends. I could not have fought the Dutch and the English without love in my heart for them, and without a readiness for compromise. But my compromises will never be at the cost of the cause or of the country.

—*Harijan* : Mar. 3, 1940.

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ALL compromise is based on give and take, but there can be no give and take on fundamentals. Any compromise on fundamentals is a surrender. For it is all give and no take.

—*Harijan* : Mar. 30, 1940.

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MY life is made up of compromises, but they have been compromises that have brought me nearer the goal.

—*Harijan* : May 4, 1940.

Congress

WE would have been nowhere if there had been no Congress to agitate for the rights of people.

—*Young India* : Dec. 31, 1919.

I DO not consider the Congress as a party oragnisation, even as the British Parliament, though it contains all parties, and has one party or the other dominating it, from time to time, is not a party organisation.

—*Young India* : April 28, 1920.

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A TRUE Congressman is a true servant. He ever gives, ever wants service. He is easily satisfied so long as his own comfort is concerned. He is always content to take a back seat. He is never communal or provincial.

His country is his paramount consideration. He is brave to a fault because he has shed all earthly ambition, fear of Death itself. And he is generous because he is brave, forgiving because he is humble and conscious of his own failings and limitations.

If such Congressmen are rare, *Swaraj* is far off and we must revise our creed. The fact that we have not got *Swaraj* as yet is proof presumptive that we have not as many true Congressmen as we want.

—*Young India* : Nov. 19, 1925.

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THE Congress is no preserve of any single individual. It is a democratic body with, in my opinion, the widest intelligent franchise the world has ever seen. For it gives statutory recognition to the dignity of labour. I wish it was the sole test. It accommodates all shades of opinion save violence and untruth.

—*Young India* : June 25, 1925.

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THE Congress does not prescribe to anybody his religion. It is a sensitive barometer from time to time registering the variation in the temperament of politically-minded India. No Congressman is bound to act contrary to his political religion.

—*Young India* : Oct. 8, 1925.

IT is a gross superstition to believe that one cannot serve effectively without the Congress prestige at one's back.

—*Young India* : July 17, 1924.

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THE Congress is the power-house from which all the power for all the work is to be derived. If the power-house is rotten, the whole national work must be necessarily so.

—*Young India* : Jan. 10, 1929.

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WE are a nation passing through the valley of humiliation. So long as we have not secured our freedom we have not the least excuse at the annual stock-taking season for amusements, riotous or subdued. It is a week of serious business, introspection and heart searching, it is a week for evolving national policies and framing programmes for giving battle to a power perhaps the strongest and the most vicious the world has ever seen. I submit that it is impossible to do clear thinking or to evolve programmes political, social, economic, and educational in the midst of distraction, noise, rush and a lavish display of boisterous amusements fit enough for a children's pantomime, entirely out of place as an appendage to a deliberative assembly intent on preparing for a grim life and death struggle.

—*Young India* : Jan. 10, 1929.

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NO man, however great, be he even a *Mahatma*, is indispensable for a nation conscious of itself and bent upon freedom. Even as the whole is always greater than its part, the Congress which claims to represent the nation is always greater than its greatest part. To be a living organisation it must survive its most distinguished members.

—*Young India* : Oct. 3, 1929.

THE Congress is the only truly national political organisation in the country. It is the oldest of its kind. It has had the services of the most distinguished sons and daughters of the nation. It is admittedly the most powerful organisation in the land. It ought not to be difficult for such a body to expand itself and find its flag flying in every village.

—*Young India* : Oct. 10, 1929.

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THE Congress is not an organisation to enunciate theories, but to anticipate national wants and wishes, and forge practical sanctions for their fulfilment.

—*Young India* : Jan. 9, 1930.

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THE Congress is essentially and pre-eminently a *Kisan* organisation. It also endeavours to represent the *Zamindars* and the propertied classes, but only to the extent that he interests of the *Kisans* are not prejudiced thereby. The Congress is nothing if it does not represent the *Kisans*.

—*Young India :* Aug. 13, 1931.

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IT is not right to say that the Congress is a Hindu organisation. What is the Congress to do if Muslisms would not care to go into it? The Congress is based on adult franchise, and any adult Hindu or Musalman can join the Congress. No community is excluded. Ask the Muslim friends who are members of the Congress, and they will tell you that they have not come to grief by having joined the Congress. I ask you therefore not to suspect that the Congress is a Hindu organisation. I ask every one of you to join the Congress and to take charge of it. But one cannot take charge of it by force. It can be done only by willing service. Ever since the Congress was started, those who have served it have had charge of it. And yet the

Congress does not belong only to them, does not stand only for them, it belongs to and stands for all. It is the *Swaraj* Government in embryo. Its prestige is ever so much superior to that of the British Government, and the Congress President is greater than the Viceroy. Only monied people and men in high places know the Viceroy. One needs a motor-car to reach the Viceregal House. But the poorest man knows the Congress President (at present Sardar Vallabhai) and can walk up to him. The Sardar has dedicated himself to the service of the country, and he who serves the poor is great in the eyes of God. If you want to be in power under *Swaraj*, I invite you to assume the reins of the Congress now by joining it in large numbers. It is the most powerful organisation in the country, join it. We will welcome you.

—*Young India* : April 16, 1931.

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THE Congress is composed of ordinary mortals. They share the virtues and vices of the nation which they seek to represent. But after all is said and done, it will not be denied that it is the oldest political organisation in the country, it is the most representative ; it has drawn to itself the best talent in the country, it has the highest amount of sacrifice to its credit. Above all it is the one organisation that has offered the greatest resistance to foreign rule and exploitation.

—*Harijan*: June 18, 1938.

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LET us understand the functions of the Congress. For internal growth and administration, it is as good a democratic organisation as any to be found in the world. But this democratic organisation has been brought into being to fight the greatest Imperialist Power living. For this external work, therefore, it has to be likened to an army. As such it ceases to be democratic. The central authority possesses

plenary powers enabling it to impose and enforce discipline on the various units working under it. Provincial organisations and Provincial Parliamentary Boards are subject to the central authority.

It has been suggested that, whilst my thesis holds good when there is active war in the shape of the civil resistance going on, it cannot whilst the latter remains under suspension. But suspension of civil disobedience does not mean suspension of war. The latter can only end when India has a constitution of her own making. Till then the Congress must be in the nature of an army. Democratic Britain has set up an ingenious system in India which, when you look at it in its nakedness, is nothing but a highly organised efficient military control. It is not less so under the present Goverment of India Act. The Ministers are mere puppets so far as the real control is concerned. The collectors and the police who 'sir' them to-day, may at a mere command from the Governors, their real masters, unseat the Ministers, arrest them and put them in a lock-up. Hence it is that I have suggested that the Congress has entered upon office not to work the Act in the manner expected by the framers, but in a manner so as to hasten the day of substituting it by a genuine Act of India's own coining.

Therefore the Congress conceived as a fighting machine, has to centralize control and guide every department, and every Congressman, however highly placed, and expects unquestioned obedience. The fight cannot be fought on any other terms.

They say this is Fascism, pure and simple. But they forget that Fascism is the naked sword. Under it Dr. Khare should lose his head. The Congress is the very antithesis of Fascism, because it is based on non-violence pure and undefiled. Its sanctions are all moral. Its authority is not derived from the control of panoplied blackshirts.

Under the Congress regime Dr. Khare can remain the hero of Nagpur, and the students and citizens of Nagpur, and for that matter other places, may execrate me or/and the Working Committee without a hair of the demonstrators' heads being touched so long as they remain non-violent. That is the glory and strength of the Congress—not its weakness. Its authority is derived from that non-violent attitude. It is the only purely non-violent political organization of importance, to my knowledge, throughout the world. And let it continue to be the boast of the Congress that it can command the willing and hearty obedience from its followers, even veterans like Dr. Khare, so long as they choose to belong to it.

—*Harijan* : Aug. 6, 1938.

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THE Congress endeavours to represent all communities. It is not by design, but by the accident of Hindus being politically more conscious than the others, that the Congress contains a majority of Hindus. As history proves the Congress is a joint creation of Muslims, Christians, Parsis, Hindus, led by Englishmen, be it said to the credit of the latter. And the Congress, in spite of all that may be said to the contrary, retains that character. At the present moment a Muslim divine is the unquestioned leader of the Congress and for the second time becomes its President. The constant endeavour of Congressmen has been to have as many members as possible drawn from the various communities, and therefore the Congress has entered into pacts for the purpose of securing national solidarity. It cannot, therefore, divest itself of that function, and therefore, although I have made the admission that the Hindu Mahasabha or a similar Hindu organisation can properly have communal settlements, the Congress cannot and must not plead incapacity for entering into political pacts so long as it commands general confidence.

—*Harijan* : Feb. 24, 1940.

THE Congress claims to be the custodian of all interests even of English interests, in so far as they would regard India as their home and not claim any interests in conflict with those of the dum millions.

—*Young India* : Oct. 15, 1931.

Conscience.

THERE are times when you have to obey a call which is the highest of all, *i. e.*, the voice of conscience even though such obedience may cost many a bitter tear, and even more, separation from friends, from family, from the state to which you may belong from all that you have held as dear as life itself. For this obedience is the law of our being.

—*Young India* : Mar. 18, 1919.

IN matters of conscience, the law of majority has no place.

—*Young India* : Aug. 4, 1920.

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THERE is a higher court than courts of Justice and that is the court of conscience. It supercedes all other courts.

—*Young India* : Dec. 15, 1921.

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THE human voice can never reach the distance that is covered by the still small voice of conscience.

The only tyrant I accept in this world is the still voice within.

—*Young India* : Mar. 2, 1922.

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A CORRESPONDENT says in effect, "Do you know what you have done by continually harping on conscience. I find youngsters and grown-up people talking utter

nonsense under cover of conscience. What is more, youngsters have become impudent and grown-up people unscrupulous ; can you not prevent this mischief? If you cannot, please withdraw the word from use and stop the drivel that is being said in the name of that sacred but much abused word. Pray tell us who has a conscience ? Do all have it ? Do cats have a conscience when they hunt to death poor mice ?"

I must confess that the charge is not without substance. But he has presented only the dark side. Every virtue has been known to be abused by the wicked. But we do not on that account do away with virtue. We can but erect safe-guards against abuse. When people cease to think for themselves and have everything regulated for them, it becomes necessary at times to assert the right of individuals to act in defiance of public opinion or law which is another name for public opinion. When individuals so act, they claim to have acted in obedience to the conscience.

I entirely agree with the correspondent that youngsters as a rule must not pretend to have conscience. It is a quality or state acquired by laborious training. Wilfulness is not conscience. A child has no conscience. The correspondent's cat does not go for the mouse in obedience to the call of conscience. It does so in obedience to its nature. Conscience is the ripe fruit of strictest discipline. Irresponsible youngsters therefore who have never obeyed anything or anybody save their animal instinct have no conscience, nor therefore have all grown-up people. The savages for instance have to all intents and purposes no conscience. Conscience can reside only in a delicately tuned breast. There is no such thing therefore as mass conscience as distinguished from the conscience of individuals. It is safe therefore to say that when a man makes everything a matter of conscience, he is a stranger to it. It is a truthful saying that 'conscience makes cowards of us all.' A conscientious man hesitates to assert himself, he is always

humble, never boisterous, always compromising, always ready to listen, ever willing, even anxious, to admit *mistakes.*

The correspondent is needlessly agitated. What does it matter that fifty thousand people say they act or refrain for conscience's sake ? The world has no difficulty in distinguishing between conscience and an arrogant or ignorant assumption of it. Such men would have acted in similar circumstances exactly as they would under cover of conscience. The introduction of conscience into our public life is welcome even if it has taught a few of us to stand up for human dignity and rights in the face of the heaviest odds. These acts will live for ever, whereas those done under shams are like soap-bubbles enjoying a momentary existence.

—*Young India* : Aug. 21, 1924.

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I DO not want any patronage, as I do not give any. I am a lover of my own liberty and so I would do nothing to restrict yours. I simply want to please my own conscience, which is God.

—*Young India* : Jan. 6, 1927.

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WHAT must count with a public servant is the approbation of his own conscience. He must be like a rudderless vessel who, leaving the infallible solace of his own conscience, ever seeks to please and gain the approbation of public. Service must be its own and sole reward.

—*Young India* : April 2, 1931.

Consistency

CONSTANT development is the law of life, and a man who always tries to maintain his dogmas in order to *appear* consistent drives himself into a false position.

—*Young India* : Sep. 21, 1928.

THERE is a consistency that is wise and a consistency that is foolish. A man who in order to be consistent would go bare-bodied in the hot sun of India and sunless Norway in mid-winter would be considered a fool and would lose his life in the bargain.

—*Young India*: April 4, 1929.

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CHANGE is a condition of progress. An honest man cannot afford to observe mechanical consistency when the mind revolts against anything as an error.

—*Young India*: Dec. 19, 1929.

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I MUST admit my many inconsistencies. But since I am called 'Mahatma', I might well endorse Emerson's saying that, 'foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds.' There is, I fancy a method in my inconsistencies. In my opinion there is a consistency running through seeming inconsistencies, as in nature there is a unity running through the seeming diversity.

—*Young India*: Feb. 13, 1930.

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MY so-called inconsistencies are no inconsistencies to those who understand, be it only intellectually, the implications of non-violence.

—*Young India*: April 24, 1931.

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I MAKE no hobgoblin of consistency. If I am true to myself fom moment to moment, I do not mind all the inconsistencies that may be flung in my face.

—*Harijan*: Nov. 9, 1934.

Constituent Assembly

PANDIT Jawaharlal Nehru has compelled me to tudy, among other things, the implications of a Constituent

Assembly. When he first introduced it in the Congress resolutions, I reconciled myself to it because of my belief in his superior knowledge of the technicalities of democracy. But I was not free from scepticism. Hard facts have, however, made me a convert and, for that reason perhaps, more enthusiastic than Jawaharal himself. For I seem to see in it a remedy, which Jawaharlal may not, for our communal and other distempers, besides being a vehicle for mass political and other education.

The more criticism I see of the scheme, the more enamoured I become of it. It will be the surest index to the popular feeling. It will bring out the best and the worst in us. Illiteracy does not worry me. I would plump for unadulterated adult franchise for both men and women, i. e., I would put them all on the register of voters. It is open to them not to exercise it if they do not wish to. I would give separate vote to the Muslims; but, without giving separate vote, I would, though reluctantly, give reservation, if required, to every real minority according to its numerical strength.

Thus the Constituent Assembly provides the easiest method of arriving at a just solution of the communal problem. Today we are unable to say with mathematical precision who represents whom. Though the Congress is admittedly the oldest representative organisation on the widest scale, it is open to political and semi-political organisations to question, as they do question, its overwhelmingly representative character. The Muslim League is undoubtedly the largest organisation representing Muslims, but several Muslim bodies—by no means all insignificant—deny its claim to represent them. But the Constituent Assembly will represent all communities in their exact proportion. Except it there is no other way of doing full justice to rival claims. Without it there can be no finality to communal and other claims.

Again the Constituent Assembly alone can produce

a constitution indigenous to the country and truly and fully representing the will of the people. Undoubtedly such a constitution will not be ideal, but it will be real, however imperfect it may be in the estimation of the theorists or legal luminaries. Self-government to be self-government has merely to reflect the will of the people who are to govern themselves. If they are not prepared for it, they will make a hash of it. I can conceive the possibility of a people fitting themselves for right government through a series of wrong experiments, but I cannot conceive a people governing themselves rightly through a government imposed from without, even as the fabled jackdaw could not walk like a peacock with feathers borrowed from his elegant companion. A diseased person has a prospect of getting well by personal effort. He cannot borrow health from others.

The risks of the experiment are admitted. There is likely to be impersonation. Unscrupulous persons will mislead the illiterate masses into voting for wrong men and women. These risks have to be run, if we are to evolve something true and big. The Constituent Assembly, if it comes into being—as I hope it will—as a result of an honourable settlement between us and the British people, the combined wit of the best men of the two nations will produce an Assembly that will reflect fairly, truly the best mind of India. Therefore the success of the experiment at the present stage of India's history depends upon the intention of the British statesmen to part with power without engaging India in a deadly unorganised rebellion. For I know that India has become impatient. I am painfully conscious of the fact that India is not yet ready for non-violent civil disobedience on a mass scale. If, therefore, I cannot persuade the Congress to await the time when non-violent action is possible, I have no desire to live to see a dog-fight between the two communities. I know for certain that if I cannot discover a method of non-violent action or

inaction to the satisfaction of the Congress and there is no communal adjustment, nothing on earth can prevent an outbreak of violence resulting for the time being in anarchy and red ruin. I hold that it is the duty of all communities and Englishmen to prevent such a catastrophe.

The only way out is a Constituent Assembly. I have given my own opinion on it, but I am not tied down to the details. When I was nearly through with this article, I got the following wire from Syed Abdulla Brelvi : "Cosiderable misapprehensions among minorities (about) Constituent Assembly. Strongly urge clarification details, franchise, composition, methods arriving decision." I think I have said sufficient in the foregoing to answer Syed Saheb's question. By minorities he has Muslims principally in mind as represented by the Muslim League. If once the proposition that all communities desire a charter of independence framed by a Constituent Assembly and that they will not be satisfied with anything else, is accepted, the settling of details surely becomes easy. Any other method must lead to an imposed constitution mostly undemocratic. It would mean an indefinite prolongation of imperialistic rule sustained by the help of those who will not accept the fully democratic method of a Constituent Assembly.

The principal hindrance is undoubtedly the British Government. If they can summon a Round Table Conference as they propose to do after the war, they can surely summon a Constituent Assembly subject to 'safeguards to the satisfaction of minorities. The expression satisfaction of minorities' may be regarded as vague. It can be defined beforehand by agreement. The question thus resolves itself into whether the British Government desire to part with power and open a new chapter in their own history. I have already shown that the question of the Princes is a red herring across the path. European interests are absolutely safe so long as

they are not in conflict with the interests of India. I think this expression finds place in the Irwin-Gandhi Pact.

Look at the question from any standpoint you like, it will be found that the way to democratic *Swaraj* lies only through a properly constituted Assembly, call it by whatever name you like. All resources must, therefore, be exhausted to reach the Constituent Assembly before direct action is thought of. A stage may be reached when direct action may become the necessary prelude to the Constituent Assembly. That stage is not yet.

—*Harijan* : Nov. 25, 1939.

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I BELIEVE personally that it is the most satisfactory method of procedure; but do not forget that I preserve an open mind on the matter. If some people hold that there are other forms of procedure which are more representative, I am willing to be convinced. Today I say that the assembly should be elected on adult franchise, but here again my mind is open to alternative proposals provided these proposals have the backing of representative men.

—*Harijan* : May 18, 1940.

Constructive Programme

NATURE abhors a vacum. Therefore, construction must keep pace with destruction. Even if all the titled friends gave up their titles, and if schools, courts and Councils were entirely deserted, and being thus embarrassed the Government abdicated in our favour, and if we had no constructive work to our credit, we could not conduct *Swaraj*. We should be entirely helpless. I often wonder whether it is sufficiently realised that our movement is not one for mere change of personnel but for change of the system and the methods.

—*Young India* : May 8, 1924.

WHAT unfortunately I notice throughout my wanderings is that many Congressmen do not care so much for constructive work as for excitement and work that will bring them into prominence without costing them such labour, if any at all. This mentality has to be changed, before we can have a steady supply of workers. Everywhere I am surrounded by healthy-looking intelligent volunteers who spare no pains to make me comfortable and who under the impulse of service do not mind working day and night. If they could but be induced to transfer this devotion to a person who really does not need all that volume of service and who is more often than not embarrassed by such attention, to the cause which he represents, the problem is solved.

—*Young India* : May 16, 1929.

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I KNOW that many have refused to see any connection between the constructive programme and civil disobedience. But for one who believes in non-violence it does not need hard thinking to realise the essential connection between the constructive programme and civil disobedience for *Swaraj*. I want the reader to mark the qualification. Constructive programme is not essential for local civil disobedience for specific relief as in the case of Bardoli. Tangible common grievance restricted to a particular locality is enough. But for such an indefinable thing as *Swaraj* people must have previous training in doing things of All-India interest. Such work must throw together the people and their leaders whom they would trust implicitly. Trust begotten in the pursuit of continuous constructive work becomes a tremendous asset at the critical moment. Constructive work therefore is for a non-violent army what drilling, etc. is for an army designed for bloody warfare. Individual civil disobedience among an unprepared people and by leaders not known to or trusted by them is of no avail, and mass civil disobedience is an impossiblity. The more therefore the

progress of the constructive programme, the greater is there the chance for civil disobedience. Granted a perefectly non-violent atmosphere and a fulfilled constructive programme I would undertake to lead a mass civil disobedience struggle to a successful issue in the space of a few months.

—*Young India* : June 9, 1930.

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Q. WHAT is the relation between constructive work and *Ahimsa* ? Why are they so intimately connected ?

A. Well, I think it is obvious enough that Hindu-Muslim unity, prohibition and abolition of untouchability,—are impossible without non-violence. Remains only the spinning wheel. How does it become the symbol of non-violence ? As I have already explained, the essential thing is the spirit in which you regard it, the attributes you invest it with. It is no quinine pill which has certain inherent properties in it, apart from what you think about it. The spinning wheel has no such inherent property. Take the Gayatri *mantra*. It cannot have the same effect on non-Hindus as it has on me, nor can the *Kalema* have the same reaction on me as it has on the Muslims. Even so the spinning wheel in itself has nothing which can teach *ahimsa* or bring *Swaraj*. But you have to think it with those attributes and it is transformed. Its obvious value is the service of the poor, but that does not necessarily mean that it should be a symbol of non-violence or an indispensable condition for *Swaraj*. But we since 1920 connected the wheel with *Swaraj* and non-violence.

Then there is the programme of self-purification with which the spinning wheel is again intimately connected Coarse homespun signifies simplicity of life and therefor purity.

Without the spinning wheel, without Hindu-Muslim unity and without the abolition of untouchability there can be no civil disobedience. Civil disobedience pre-supposes

willing obedience of our self-imposed rules, and without it civil disobedience would be a cruel joke.

—*Harijan*: July 13, 1939.

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IT is any day superior to civil disobedience. Civil disobedience without the backing of constructive effort is neither civil nor non-violent. Those who do constructive work merely for the sake of civil disobedience look at things topsyturvy.

—*Harijan*: April 6, 1940.

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A CORRESPONDENT writes:

"What are the qualities that you intend to inculcate in people by laying stress on the constructive programme? What are the qualifications necessary for a constructive worker in order to make his work effective?"

The constructive programme is a big undertaking including a number of items: (1) Hindu-Muslim or communal unity; (2) Removal of untouchability; (3) Prohibition; (4) Khadi; (5) Other village industries; (6) Village sanitation; (7) New or basic education; (8) Adult education; (9) Uplift of women; (10) Education in hygiene and health; (11) Propagation of Rashtrabhasha; (12) Cultivating love of one's own language; (13) Working for economic equality. This list can be supplemented if necessary, but it is so comprehensive that I think it can be proved to include items appearing to have been omitted.

The reader will see that it is the want of all these things that is responsible for our bondage. He will also see that the constructive programme of the Congress is not supposed to include all the items. That is understood to include only four items, or rather six, now that the Congress has created the All India Village Industries Association and the Basic Education Board.

But we have to go further forward, we have to stabilise and perfect *ahimsa*, and so have to make the constructive programme as comprehensive as possible. There should be no room for doubt that, if we can win *Swaraj* purely through non-violence, we can also retain it through the same means. In the fulfilment of the constructive programme lies the non-violent attainment of *Swaraj*.

The items I have mentioned are not in order of importance. I have put them down just as they came to my pen. Generally I talk of *khadi* only nowadays, because millions of people can take their share in this work, and progress can be arithmetically measured. Communal unity and the removal of untouchability cannot be thus assessed. Once they become part of daily life, nothing need be done by us as individuals.

Let us now glance at the various items. Without Hindu-Muslim, *i.e.* communal unity we shall always remain crippled. And how can a crippled India win *Swaraj*? Communal unity means unity between Hindus, Sikhs, Mussalmans, Christians, Parsis, Jews. All these go to make Hindutsan. He who neglects any of these communities does not know constructive work.

As long as the curse of untouchability pollutes the mind of the Hindu, so long is he himself an untouchable in the eyes of the world, and an untouchable cannot win non-violent *Swaraj*. The removal of untouchability means treating the so-called untouchables as one's own kith and kin. He who does treat them so must be free from the sense of high and low, in fact free from all wrong class-sense. He will regard the whole world as one family. Under non-violent *Swaraj* it will be impossible to conceive of any country as an enemy country.

Pure *Swaraj* is impossible of attainment by people who have been of or who are slaves of intoxicating drinks and drugs. It must never be forgotten that a man

in the grip of intoxicants is generally bereft of the moral sense.

Everyone now may be said to believe that without khadi there is no just and immediate solution of the problem of the starvation of our millions. I need not therefore dilate upon it. I would only add that in the resuscitation of *khadi* lies the resuscitation of the ruined village artisans. *Khadi* requisites (wheels, looms, etc.) have to be made by the village carpenter and blacksmith. For unless these requisites are made in the village it cannot be self-contained and prosperous.

The revival of *khadi* presupposes the revival of all other village industries. Because we have not laid proper stress on this, khadi-wearers see nothing wrong in using other articles which are foreign or mill-made. Such people may be said to have failed to grasp the inner meaning of *khadi*. They forget that by establishing the Village Industries Association the Congress has placed all other village industries on the same level as *khadi*. As the solar system will be dark without the sun, even so will the sun be lustreless without the heavenly bodies. All things in the universe are interdependent. The salvation of India is impossible without the salvation of villages.

If rural reconstruction were not to include rural sanitation, our villages would remain the muck-heaps that they are today. Village sanitation is a vital part of village life and is as difficult as it is important. It needs a heroic effort to eradicate age-long insanitation. The village worker who is ignorant of the science of village sanitation, who is not a successful scavenger, cannot fit himself for village service.

It seems to be generally admitted that without the new or basic education the education of millions of children in India is well-nigh impossible. The village worker has, therefore, to master it and become a basic education teacher himself.

Adult education will follow in the wake of basic education as a matter of course. Where this new education has taken root, the children themselves become their parents' teachers. Be that as it may, the village worker has to undertake adult education also.

Woman is described as man's better half. As long as she has not the same rights in law as man, as long as the birth of a girl does not receive the same welcome as that of a boy, so long we should know that India is suffering from partial paralysis. Suppression of woman is a denial of *ahimsa*. Every village worker will, therefore, regard every woman as his mother, sister or daughter as the case may be, and look upon her with respect. Only such a worker will command the confidence of the village people.

It is impossible for an unhealthy people to win *Swaraj*. Therefore we should no longer be guilty of the neglect of the health of our people. Every village worker must have a knowledge of the general principles of health.

Without a common language no nation can come into being. Instead of worrying himself with the controversy about Hindi-Hindustani and Urdu, the village worker will acquire a knowledge of the *rashtrabhasha*, which should be such as can be understood by both Hindus and Muslims.

Our infactuation for English has made us unfaithful to provincial languages. If only as penance for this unfaithfulness the village worker should cultivate in the villagers a love of their own speech. He will have equal regard for all the other languages of India, and will learn the language of the part where he may be working, and thus be able to inspire the villagers there with a regard for their own speech.

The whole of this programme will, however, be a structure on sand if it is not built on the solid foundation of economic equality. Economic equality must never be

supposed to mean possession of an equal amount of wordly goods by everyone. It does mean, however, that everyone will have a proper house to live in, sufficient and balanced food to eat, and sufficient *khadi* with which to cover himself. It also means that the cruel inequality that obtains today will be removed by purely non-violent means. This question, however, requires to be separately dealt with.

—*Harijan* : Aug. 18, 1940.

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BELIEVE me that *Swaraj* will be delayed in proportion to our failure and half-heartedness in carrying out the different items of the constructive programme. It is impossible to attain *Swaraj* non-violently unless there is self-purification. —*Harijan* : July 28, 1940

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IF we wish to achieve *Swaraj* through truth and non-violence, gradual but steady building up from the bottom upwards by constructive effort is the only way. This rules out the deliberate creation of an anarchical state for the overthrow of the established order in the hope of throwing up from within a dictator who would rule with a rod of iron and produce order out of disorder.

—*Harijan :* Jan. 18, 1942.

Contentment

MAN falls from the pursuit of the ideal of plain living and high thinking the moment he wants to multiply his daily wants. History gives ample proof of this. Man's happiness really lies in contentment.

He who is discontented, however, much he possesses becomes a slave to his desires. All the sages have declared from the housetops that the man can be his own worst enemy as well as his best friend. To be free or to be a slave lies in his own hands.

—*Harijan :* Feb. 1, 1942.

Conversion

I WOULD not only not try to convert but would not even secretly pray that anyone should embrace my faith. My prayer would always be that Imam Saheb should be a better Mussalman, or become the best he can. Hinduism with its message of *Ahimsa* is to me the most glorious religion in the world, as my wife to me is the most beautiful woman in the world, but others may feel the same about their own religion. Cases of real honest conversion are quite possible. If some people for their inward satisfaction and growth change their religion let them do so.

—*Young India* : June 27, 1927

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I HOLD that proselytising under the cloak of humanitarian work is, to say, the least, unhealthy. It is most certainly resented by the people here. Religion after all is a deeply personal matter. It touches the heart. Why should I change my religion because a doctor who professes Christianity as his religion has cured me of some disease or why should the doctor expect or suggest such a change whilst I am under his influence ? Is not medical relief its own reward and satisfaction ? Or why should I whilst I am in a missionary educational institution have Christian teaching thrust upon me ? In my opinion these practices are not uplifting and give rise to suspicion if not even secret hostility. The methods of conversion must be like Caesar's wife above suspicion. Faith is not imparted like secular subjects. It is given through the language of the heart. If a man has a living faith in him, it spreads its aroma like the rose its scent. Because of its invisibility, the extent of its influence is far wider than that of the visible beauty of the colour of the petals.

I am, then, not against conversion. But I am against the modern methods of it. Conversion nowadays has become a matter of business, like any other. I remember

having read a missionary report saying how much it cost per head to convert and then presenting a budget for "the next harvest."

Yes, I do maintain that India's great faiths are all sufficing for her. Apart from Christianity and Judaism, Hinduism and its offshoots, Islam and Zoroastrianism are living faiths. No one faith is perfect. All faiths are equally dear to their respective votaries. What is wanted therefore is living friendly contact among the followers of the great religions of the world and not a clash among them in the fruitless attempt on the part of each community to show the superiority of its faith over the rest. Through such friendly contact, it will be possible for us all to rid our respective faiths of short-comings and excresceness.

It follows from what I have said above that India is in no need of conversion of the kind I have in mind. Conversion in the self-purification, self-realisation is the crying need of the times. That however is not what is ever meant by proselytising. To those who would convert India, might it not be said, "Physician heal thyself?"

—*Young India* : April 23, 1931.

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SURELY conversion is a matter between man and his Maker who alone knows His creatures' hearts. And conversion without a clean heart is, in my opinion, a denial of God and religion. Conversion without cleanliness of heart can only be a matter for sorrow, not joy, to a godly person.

—*Harijan* : Dec. 9, 1936.

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CONVERSION without conviction is a mere change and not conversion which is a revolution in one's life.

—*Harijan* : Mar. 29, 1942.

Convictions

ONE needs to be slow to form convictions, but once

formed they must be defended against the heaviest odds.

—*Young India* : Oct. 7, 1926.

Councils

LET us not mistake reformed councils, more law courts and even governorships for real freedom or power. They are but subtler methods of emasculation.

—*Young India* : Sept. 22, 1920.

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I KNOW for certain that it is not legal subtleties, discussions on academic justice or resolutions of Councils and Assemblies that will give us what we want.

Councils are no factories for making stout hearts. And freedom is miasma without stout hearts to defend it.

—*Young India* : Dec. 15, 1921.

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TO enter the Councils is to submit to the vote of the majority, *i.e.*, to co-operate. If then we want to stop the machinery of Government, as we want to, until we get justice in the Khilafat and the Punjab matters, we must put our whole weight against the Government and refuse to accept the vote of the majority in the Councils, because it will neither represent the wish of the country nor our own which is more to the point on a matter of principle. A minister who refuses to serve is better than one who serves under protest. Service under protest shows that the situation is not intolerable.

—*Young India* : July 14, 1920.

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THE legislatures, central and provincial, are like other institutions powerful and tempting devices for draining India of whatever she has still left.

—*Young India* : April 10, 1930.

THE legislatures are but a pawn in the game of exploitation. Ostrich-like we hide our heads in the sand and refuse to see what is plain as a pikestaff to the onlooker.

—*Young India* : May 1, 1930.

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I DO not deny that legislatures are a great temptation, almost like liquor booths. They hold out opportunities to self-seekers and job-hunters. But no congressman, can go with that sordid object.

—*Harijan* : May 1, 1937.

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THE boycott of the legislatures, let me tell you, is not an eternal principle like that of truth or non-violence. My opposition to them has considerably lessened, but that does not mean that I am going back on my former position. The question is purely one of strategy, and I can only say what is most needed at a particular moment. Am I the non-co-operator I was in 1920? Yes, I am the same non-co-operator. But it is forgotten that I was a co-operator too in the sense that I non-co-operated for co-operation, and even then I said that if I could carry the country forward by co-operation I should co-operate. I have now advised going to the legislatures not to offer co-operation but to demand co-operation.

—*Harijan* : May 1, 1937.

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I HAVE always held that parliamentary programme at all times is the least part of a nation's activity. The most important and permanent work is done outside.

—*Harijan* : Jan. 25, 1942.

Courage

COURAGE has never been known to be matter of muscle, it is a matter of the heart. The toughest muscle

has been known to tremble before an imaginary fear. It was the heart that set the muscle a trembling.

—*Young India* : July 16, 1931.

Courtesy

WHEN restraint and courtesy are added to strength, the latter becomes irresistible.

—*Young India* : Jan 19, 1922.

COURTESY should not be mistaken for flattery nor impudence for fearlessness.

—*Young India* : June 12, 1924.

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INTOLERANCE, discourtesy, harshness are not only against Congress discipline and code of honour, they are taboo in all good society and are surely contrary to the spirit of democracy.

—*Harijan* : Aug. 14, 1937.

Cow

IT must be an article of faith for every Hindu, that the cow can only be saved by Mussalman friendship. Let us recognise frankly, that complete protection of the cow depends purely upon Mussalman good-will. It is as impossible to bend the Mussalmans to our will, as it would be for them to bend us to theirs. We are evolving the doctrine of equal and free partnership. We are fighting Dyerism—the doctrine of frightfulness.

Cow protection is the dearest possession of Hindu heart. It is the one concrete belief common to all Hindus. No one who does not believe in cow protection, can possibly be a Hindu. It is a noble belief. Cow protection means brotherhood between man and beast. It is a noble sentiment that must grow by patient toil and *tapasya*. It cannot be imposed upon any one. To

carry cow protection at the point of the sword, is a contradiction in terms. *Rishis* of old are said to have performed penance for the sake of the cow. Let us follow in the foot-steps of the *Rishis*, and ourselves do a penance, so that we may be pure enough to protect the cow and all that the doctrine means and implies.

—*Young India* : Mar. 16, 1920.

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FOR me the cow is the purest type of sub-human life. She pleads before us on behalf of the whole of sub-human species for justice to it at the hands of man, the first among all that lives. She seems to speak to us through her eyes (let the reader look at them with my faith), "you are not appointed over us to kill us and eat our flesh or otherwise ill-treat us, but to be our friend and guardian."

—*Young India* : June 26, 1924.

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WHEN I see a cow, I do not see an animal to be eaten. It is for me a poem of pity. I worship it and I shall defend its worship against the whole world.

—*Young India* : Aug. 28, 1924.

COW protection includes, the protection and service oi both man and bird and beast. It presupposes a thorough eschewal of violence. A Hindu, if he is true Hindu, may not raise his hand against a Mussalman or an Englishman to protect the cow.

—*Young India :* May 7, 1925.

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AN untouchable may cry and raise a protest, a Hindu or Mussalman may raise a protest and even break heads to settle a grievance. But the cow is entirely at our mercy. She consents to be led to slaughter, and to be

embarked for Australia and gives her progeny to carry whatever burden we want it to carry, in sun or rain.

—*Young India* : May 7, 1925.

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THE cow means not merely the animal, the giver of milk and innumerable other things to India, but it means also the helpless, the downtrodden and the poor.

—*Young Indi* : July 7, 1927

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HINDUISM believes in the oneness not of merely all human life but in the oneness of all that lives. Its worship of the cow is, in my opinion, its unique contribution to the evolution of humanitarianism. It is a practical application of the belief in the oneness and, therefore, sacredness of all life. The great belief in transmigration is a direct consequence of that belief.

—*Young India* : Oct. 20, 1927.

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THE poverty of the cow is reflected in the poverty of the people.

—*Young India* : Oct. 24, 1929.

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ISLAM in India cannot make a better gift to the Hindus than this voluntary self-denial. And I know enough of Islam to be able to assert that Islam does not compel cow-slaughter and it does compel its followers to spare and respect to the full the feelings of their neighbours whenever it is humanly possible.

—*Young India* ; Jan. 5, 1928.

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THE cow is an object of worship and veneration to millions in India. I count myself among them.

—*Harijan* : Mar. 13, 1937.

Q. SHOULD the Mussalmans have the freedom to kill cows ?

A. As a Hindu, a confirmed vegetarian, and a worshipper of the cow whom I regard with the same veneration as I regard my mother (alas no more on this earth) I maintain that Muslims should have full freedom to slaughter cows, if they wish, subject of course to hygienic restrictions and in a manner not to wound the susceptibilities of their Hindu neighbours. Fullest recognition of freedom to the Muslims to slaughter cows is indispensable for communal harmony, and is the only way of saving the cow. In 1921 thousands of cows were saved by the sole and willing efforts of Muslims themselves. In spite of the black clouds hanging over our heads, I refuse to give up the hope that they will disperse and that we shall have communal peace in this unhappy land. If I am asked for proof, I must answer that my hope is based on faith and faith demands no proof.

—*Harijan* : April 27, 1940.

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MOTHER cow is in many ways better than the mother who gave us birth. Our mother gives us milk for a couple of years and then expects us to serve her when we grow up. Mother cow expects from us nothing but grass and grain. Our mother often falls ill and expects service from us. Mother cow rarely falls ill. Hers is an unbroken record of service which does not end with her death. Our mother when she dies means expenses of burial or cremation. Mother cow is as useful dead as when she is alive. We can make use of every part of her bones of her body—her flesh, her intestines, her horns and her skin. Well I say this not to disparage the mother who gives us birth, but in order to show you the substantial reasons for my worshipping the cow.

—*Harijan* : Sept. 15, 1940.

Cowardice

COWARDS can never be moral.

—*Young India* : June 22, 1921.

BULLIES are always to be found where there are cowards.

Cowardice is perhaps the greatest vice from which we suffer and is also possibly the greatest violence, certainly far greater than bloodshed and the like that generally go under the name of violence. For it comes from want of faith in God and ignorance of His attributes. But I am sorry that I have not the ability to give the knowledge and the advice that the correspondent would have me to give on how to dispel cowardice and other vices. But I can give my own testimony and say that a heartfelt prayer is undoubtedly the most potent instrument that man possesses for overcoming cowardice and all other bad old habits. Prayer is an impossibility without a living faith in the presence of God within.

—*Young India* : Dec. 20, 1928.

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NON-VIOLENCE and cowardice go ill together. I can imagine a fully armed man to be at heart a coward. Possession of arms implies an element of fear, if not cowardice. But true non-violence is an impossibility without the possession of unadulterated fearlessness.

—*Harijan* : July 15, 1939.

Creeds

ARE creeds such simple things like the clothes which a man can change at will and put on at will ? Creeds are such for which people live for ages and ages.

—*Young India* : July 21, 1921.

WHEN anything assumes the strength of a creed it becomes self-sustained and derives the needed support from within.

—*Young India* : Jan. 19, 1928.

CRITICISM of public man is a welcome sign of public awakening. It keeps workers on the alert.

—*Young India* : May 9, 1921.

ALL criticism is not intolerance.

—*Young India* : Feb. 12, 1925.

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HEALTHY well-informed, balanced criticism is the azone of public life. A most democratic Minister is likely to go wrong without ceaseless watch from the public.

—*Harijan* : Nov. 13, 1925.

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THROUGHOUT my life I have gained more from my critic friends than from my admirers, especially when the criticism was made in courteous and friendly language.

—*Young India* : Oct. 27, 1927.

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I CAN profit by criticism never by praise.

—*Young India* : April 25, 1929.

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IT is good to see ourselves as others see us. Try as we may, we are never able to know ourselves fully as we are, especially the evil side of us. This we can do only if we are not angry with our critics but will take in good heart whatever they might have to say.

—*Harijan* : Mar. 6, 1937.

Criticism

DO not judge others. Be your own judge and you will be truly happy. If you will try to judge others, you are likely to burn your fingers.

—*Harijan* : July 28, 1940.

Crowd Indian

AN Indian crowd is the most managable and docile in the world. But it needs previous preparation. But when we have not had it, it is the wisest thing not to bring together crowds.

—*Young India*: Oct. 27, 1920.

Culture

CULTURE of the mind must be subservient to the heart.

—*Gandhiji in Ceylon* : Page 146.

NO culture can live, if it attempts to be exclusive. There is no such thing as pure Aryan culture in existence today in India. Whether the Aryans were indigenous to India or were unwelcome intruders, does not interest me much. What does interest me is the fact that my remote ancestors blended with one another with the utmost freedom and we of the present generation are a result of that blend. Whether we are doing any good to the country of our birth and the tiny globe which sustains us or whether we are a burden, the future alone can show.

—*Harijan* : May 9, 1936.

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CULTURE without labour, or culture which is not the fruit of labour, would be ' Vomitoria ' as a Roman Catholic writer says. The Romans made indulgence a habit, and were ruined. Man cannot develop his mind by simply writing and reading or making speeches all day long.

—*Harijan* : Aug. 1, 1936.

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A NATION'S culture resides in the hearts and in the soul of its people.

—*Harijan* : Jan. 28, 1939.

Cunning

I BELIEVE that cunning is not only morally wrong but also politically inexpedient, and have therefore always discountenanced its use even from the practical standpoint.

—*Satyagraha in South Africa* : Page 318.

Custom

WE must gladly give up custom that is against reason, justice, and religion of the heart. We must not ignorantly cling to bad custom and part with it when we must, like a miser parting with his ill-gotten hoard out of pressure and expedience.

—*Young India* : Feb. 9, 1921.

D

Darshan

LOVE that is satisfied with touching the feet of its hero and making noise at him is likely to be comeparasitical. Such love ceases to be a virtue and after a time becomes a positive indulgence and therefore a vice.

—*Young India* : Oct. 20, 1920.

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I HAVE a horror of touching-the-feet devotion. It is wholly unnecessary as a mark of affection, it may easily be degrading. It interferes with free and easy movement, and I have been hurt by the nails of the devotees cutting into the flesh. The performance has often taken more than fifteen minutes to pass through a crowd to a platform only a few yards from the farthest end.

—*Young India* : Sept. 5, 1929.

Death

FEAR of death makes us devoid both of valour and religion. For want of valour is want of religious faith.

—*Young India* : April 11, 1919.

WHY should we be upset when children or young men or old men die ? Not a moment passes when some one is not born or is not dead in this world. We should feel the stupidity of rejoicing in a birth and lamenting a death. Those who believe in the soul—and what Hindu, Musalman or Parsi is there who does not ?—know that the soul never dies. The souls of the living as well as of the dead are all one. The eternal processes of creation and destruction are going on ceaselessly. There is nothing in it for which we might give ourselves up to joy or sorrow. Even if we extend the idea of relationship only to our countrymen and take all the births in the country as taking place in our own family, how many births shall we celebrate ? If we weep for all the deaths in our country, the tears in our eyes would never dry. This train of thought should help us to get rid of all fear of death.

India, they say, is a nation of philosophers; and we have not been unwilling to appropriate the compliment. Still, hardly any other nation becomes so helpless in the face of death as we do. And in India again, no other community perhaps betrays so much of this helplessness as the Hindus. A single birth is enough for us to beside ourselves with ludicrous joyfulness. A death makes us indulge in orgies of loud lamentation which condemn the neighbourhood to sleeplessness for the night. If we wish to attain *Swaraj*, and if having attained it, wish to make it something to be proud of, we must perfectly renounce this unseemly fright. —*Young India* : Oct. 13, 1921.

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DEATH, which is an eternal verity, is revolution, as birth and after is slow and steady evolution. Death is as necessary for man's growth as life itself.

—*Young India* : Feb. 2, 1922.

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LIFE persists in the face of death.

—*Young India* : Oct. 23, 1924.

DEATH is at any time blessed but it is twice blessed for a warrior who dies for his cause, i. e. truth. Death is no fiend, he is the truest of friends. He delivers us from agony. He helps us against ourselves. He ever gives us new chances, new hopes. He is like sleep a sweet restorer. Yet it is customary to mourn when a friend dies. The custom has no operation when the death is that of a martyr. —*Young India* : Dec. 20, 1926.

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WHAT a comforting thought it is to think of death, whenever it comes, as a wise plan in the economy of nature? If we could realise this law of our being and be prepared for death as a welcome friend and deliverer we should cease to engage in the frantic struggle for life. We shall cease to want to live at the cost of other lives and in contempt of all considerations of humanity. Such realization is impossible without a due conception of the definite and grave limitations of the body and an abiding faith in God and His unchangeable Law of Karma. —*Young India* : May 12, 1927.

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AS Hindus we ought to be the least affected by the thought of death, since from the very cradle we are brought up on the doctrines of the spirit and the transitoriness of the body. —*Young India* : Oct. 18, 1928.

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OUR scriptures tell us, that childhood, old age and death are incidents only to this perishable body of ours and that man's spirit is eternal and immortal. That being so, why should we fear death? And where there is no fear of death there can be no sorrow over it either. —*Young India* : Dec. 13, 1928.

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I WANT you all to shed the fear of death, so that when the history of freedom comes to be written, the

names of the boys and girls of national schools and colleges may be mentioned therein as those who died not doing violence but in resisting it, no matter by whom committed. The strength to kill is not essential for self-defence; one ought to have the strength to die. When a man is fully ready to die he will not even desire to offer violence. Indeed I may put it down as a self-evident proposition that the desire to kill is in inverse proportion to the desire to die. And history is replete with instances of men who by dying with courage and compassion on their lips converted the hearts of their violent opponents. —*Young India* : Jan. 23, 1930.

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IT is as clear to me as daylight that life and death are but phases of the same thing, the reverse and obverse of the same coin. In fact tribulation and death seem to me to present a phase far richer than happiness or life. What is life worth without trials and tribulation, which are the salt of life. The history of mankind would have been a blank sheet without these individuals. What is *Ramayana* but a record of the trials, privations and penances of Rama and Sita. The life of Rama, after the recovery of Sita, full of happiness as it was, does not occupy even a hundredth part of the epic. I want you all to treasure death and suffering more than life and to appreciate their cleansing and purifying character. —*Young India* : Mar. 12, 1930.

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I AM fatalist enough to believe that no one can put off the hour of death when it has struck. Not the greatest medical assistance available has saved kings and emperors, from the Jaws of Death. —*Harijan* : Sept. 19, 1936.

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IT is foolish to think that by fleeing one can trick the dread god of death. Let us treat him as a beneficient angel rather than as a dread god. We must

face and welcome him whenever he comes.

—*Harijan* : July 6, 1940.

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LET us not die before the inevitable hour comes as it must come to every one of us, war or no war.

—*Harijan* : July 6, 1940.

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FOR many years I have accorded intellectual assent to the proposition that death is only a big change in life and nothing more, and should be welcome whenever it arrives. I have deliberately made a supreme attempt to cast out from my heart all fear whatsoever including the fear of death. Still I remember occasions in my life when I have not rejoiced at the thought of approaching death as one might rejoice at the prospect of the meeting a long lost friend. Thus man often remains weak notwithstanding all his efforts to be strong, and knowledge which stops at the head and does not penetrate into the heart is of but little use in the critical times of living experience. Then again the stength of the spirit within mostly evaporates when a person gets and accepts support from outside. A *Satyagrahi* must be always on his guard against such temptations.

—*Satyagraha in South Africa* : Page 286.

Death Duties

IN this of all countries in the world possession of inordinate wealth by individuals should be held as a crime against Indian humanity. Therefore the maximum limit of taxtion of riches beyond a certain margin can never be reached. In England, I understand, they have already gone as far as 70 per cent. of the earnings beyond a prescribed figure. There is no reason why India should not go to a much higher figure. Why should there not be death duties? Those sons of millionaires who are of age and yet inherit their parents' wealth, are losers for the very inheritance. The nation thus becomes a double loser. For

the inheritance should rightly belong to the nation. And the nation loses again in that the full faculties of the heirs are not drawn out, being crushed under the load of riches.

—*Harijan* : July 31, 1937.

Death Sentence

I DO regard death sentence as contrary to *ahimsa*. Only He takes life who gives it. All punishment is repugnant to *ahimsa*. Under a State governed according to the principles of *ahimsa*, therefore, a murderer would be sent to a penitentiary and there given every chance of reforming himself. All crime is a kind of disease and should be treated as such.

—*Harijan* : Mar. 19, 1937.

Debt

HE who repays a debt deserves no praise. In fact if he fails to do so, he may be liable to prosecution.

—*Harijan* : May 21, 1938.

Deception

ULTIMATELY a deceiver only deceives himself.

—*My Experiments With Truth* : Page 430.

Defeat

HEROES are made in the hour of defeat. Success is, therefore, well described as a series of glorious defeats.

—*Young India* : Jan. 15, 1925.

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DEFEAT cannot dishearten me. It can only chasten me.

—*Young India* : July 3, 1924.

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IT is the spirit that defies defeat.

—*Young India* : Sept. 27, 1928.

THE word 'defeat' is not to be found in my dictionary, and everyone who is selected as a recruit in my army may be sure that there is no defeat for a *Satyagrahi.*

—*Harijan* : Mar. 30, 1940.

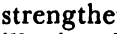


A SOLDIER cannot plead difficulties in defence of his defeat. —*Harijan* : Nov. 10, 1939.

Democracy

IN some respects, popular terrorism is more antagonistic to the growth of the democratic spirit than the Governmental. For the latter strengthens the spirit of democracy whereas the former kills it. Dyerism has evoked a yearning after freedom as nothing else has. But internal dyersim representing as is will, terrorism by a majority will establish an aligarchy such as stifle the spirit of all free discussion and conduct.

—*Young India* : Feb. 23, 1921.



INTOLERANCE is itself a form of violence and an obstacle to the growth of a true democratic spirit.

—*Young India* : Sept. 29, 1921.



WHAT Non-co-operation is fighting among other things is the spirit of patronage. We must have the liberty to do evil before we learn to do good. Even liberty must not be forced upon us. The democratic spirit demands that a most autocratic minister must yield to a people's will or resign office. —*Young India* : Oct. 25, 1921.



THE highest form of freedom carries with it the greatest measure of discipline and humility. Freedom that comes from discipline and humility cannot be denied, unbridled licence is a sign of vulgarity injurious alike to self and one's neighbours. —*Young India* : June 3, 1926.

ANY secrecy hinders the real spirit of democracy.

—*Young India* : Sept. 16, 1926.

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THE spirit of democracy is not a mechanical thing to be adjusted by abolition of forms. It requires change of the heart.

—*Young India* : Mar. 16, 1927.

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THERE is no human institution but has its dangers. The greater the institution the greater the chances of abuse. Democracy is a great institution and therefore it is liable to be greatly abused. The remedy therefore is not avoidance of democracy but reduction of possibility of abuse to a minimum.

—*Harijan :* May 7, 1931.

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A POPULAR state can never act in advance of public opinion. If it goes against it, it will be destroyed. Democracy disciplined and enlightened is the first thing in the world. A democracy prejudiced, ignorant, superstitious will, land itself in chaos and may be self-destroyed.

—*Harijan :* July 20, 1931.

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A NATION that runs its affairs smoothly and effectively without much state interference is truly democratic. Where such a condition is absent, the form of Government is democratic in name.

—*Harijan* : Jan. 11, 1936.

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IN theory, a leader of democracy holds himself at the beck and call of the public. It is but right that he should do so. But he dare not do so at the sacrifice of the duty imposed upon him by the public.

—*Harijan* : Oct. 9, 1937.

DEMOCRACY of the west is, in my opinion, only so-called. It has germs in it, certainly, of the true type. But it can only come when all violence is eschewed and malpractices disappear. The two go hand in hand. Indeed malpractice is a species of violence. If India is to evolve the true type, there should be no compromise with violence or untruth. Ten million men and women on the Congress register with violence and untruth in their breasts would not evolve real democracy or bring *Swaraj*. But I can conceive the possibility of ten thousand Congressmen and women who are cent per cent. true, and free from having to carry the burden of innumerable doubtful companions bringing *Swaraj*. —*Harijan*: Sept. 3, 1938.

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DEMOCRACY must in essence, therefore, mean the art and science of mobilising the entire physical, economic and spiritual resources of all the various sections of the people in the service of the common good of all.

Service of the family has been the motive behind all our activities hitherto. We must now learn to broaden our outlook so as to include in our ambit the service of the people as a whole.

We are familiar with several conceptions of village work. Hitherto it has mostly meant propaganda in the villages to inculcate upon the village masses a sense of their rights. Sometimes it has also meant conducting welfare activity among them to ameliorate their material condition. But the village work that I have now come to place before you consists in educating the villager in his duties.

Rights accrue automatically to him who duly performs his duties. In fact the right to perform one's duties is the only right that is worth living for and dying for. It covers all legitimate rights. All the rest is grab under one guise or another and contains in it seeds of *himsa*.

The *Swaraj* of my conception will come only when all of us are firmly persuaded that our *Swaraj* has got to be won, worked and maintained through truth and *ahimsa* alone. True democracy or the *Swaraj* of the masses can never come through untruthful and violent means, for the simple reason that the natural corollary to their use would be to remove all opposition through the suppression or extermination of the antagonists. That does not make for individual freedom. Individual freedom can have the fullest play only under a regime of unadulterated *ahimsa*.

We cannot afford to have discord in our midst if we are to educate the people. We must all speak with one voice. If we want to weld the various sections into one people and that is the *sine qua non* of democracy, we may not, in rendering service, make any distinction between those who took part in our struggle and those who did not.

—*Harijan :* May 27, 1939.

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A BORN democrat is a born disciplinarian. Democracy comes naturally to him who is habituated normally to yield willing obedience to all laws, human or divine. I claim to be a democrat both by instinct and training. Let those who are ambitious to serve democracy qualify themselves by satisfying first the acid test of democracy. Moreover, a democrat must be utterly selfless. He must think and dream not in terms of self or party but only of democracy. Only then does he acquire the right of civil disobedience. I do not want anybody to give up his convictions or to suppress himself. I do not believe that a healthy and honest difference of opinion will injure our cause. But opportunism, camouflage or patched up compromises certainly will. If you must dissent, you should take care that your opinions voice your innermost convictions and are not intended merely as a convenient party cry.

Today our democracy is choked by our internecine strife. We are torn by dissensions—dissensions between Hindus and Mussalmans, Brahmins, and non-Brahmins, Congressmen and non-Congressmen. It is no easy task to evolve democracy out of this mobocracy. Let us not make confusion worse confounded by further introducing into it the virus of sectionalism and party spirit.

I value individual freedom but you must not forget that man is essentially a social being. He has risen to this present status by learning to adjust his individualism to the requirements of social progress. Unrestricted individualism is the law of the beast of the jungle. We have learnt to strike the mean between individual freedom and social restraint. Willing submission to social restraint for the sake of the well-being of the whole society, enriches both the individual and the society of which one is a member.

—*Harijan :* May 27, 1939.

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Q. WHY do you say, "Democracy can only be saved through non-violence ? " (The questioner was an American friend).

A. Because democracy, so long as it is sustained by violence, cannot provide for or protect the weak. My notion of democracy is that under it the weakest should have the same opportunity as the strongest. That can never happen except through non-violence. No country in the world today shows any but patronising regard for the weak. The weakest, you say, go to the wall. Take your own case. Your land is owned by a few capitalist owners. The same is true of South Africa. These large holdings cannot be sustained except by violence, veiled if not open. Western democracy, as it functions today, is diluted Nazism or Fascism. At best it is merely a cloak to hide the Nazi and the Fascist tendencies of imperialism. Why is there the war today, if it is not

for the satisfaction of the desire to share the spoils? It was not through democratic methods that Britain bagged India. What is the meaning of South African democracy? Its very constitution has been drawn to protect the white man against the coloured man, the natural occupant. Your own history is perhaps blacker still, in spite of what the Northern States did for the abolition of slavery. The way you have treated negro presents a discreditable record. And it is to save such democracies that the war is being fought! There is something very hypocritical about it. I am thinking just now in terms of non-violence and trying to expose violence in its nakedness.

India is trying to evolve true democracy, i. e. without violence. Our weapons are those of *Satyagraha* expressed though the *Charkha*, the village industries, primary education through handicrafts, removal of untouchability, communal harmony, prohibition, and non-violent organisation of labour as in Ahmedabad. These mean mass effort and mass education. We have big agencies for conducting these activities. They are purely voluntary, and their only sanction is service of the lowliest.

This is the permanent part of the non-violent effort. From this effort is created the capacity to offer non-violent non-co-operation and civil disobedience which may culminate in mass refusal to pay rent and taxes. As you know, we have tried non-co-operation and civil disobedience on a fairly large scale and fairly successfully. The experiment has in it promise of a brilliant future. As yet our resistance has been that of the weak. The aim is to develop the resistance of the strong. Your wars will never ensure safety for democracy. India's experiment can and will, if the people come up to the mark or, to put it another way, if God gives me the necessary wisdom and strength to bring the experiment to fruition.

—*Harijan*: May 18, 1940.

DEMOCRACY is not a state in which people act like sheep. Under democracy individual liberty of opinion and action is jealously guarded. —*Harijan* : May 7, 1942.

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IF we want to cultivate a true spirit of democracy, we cannot afford to be intolerant. Intolerance betrays want of faith in one's cause. —*Harijan* : May 24, 1942.

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EVOLUTION of democracy is not possible if we are not prepared to hear the other side. We shut the doors of reason when we refuse to listen to our opponents or having listened make fun of them. If intolerance becomes a habit, we run the risk of missing the truth. Whilst with the limits that nature has put upon our understanding, we must act fearlessly according to the light vouchsafed to us, we must always keep an open mind and be ever ready to find that what we believed to be truth was, after all untruth. This openness of mind strengthens the truth in us and removes the dross from it if there is any. —*Harijan* : May 31, 1942.

Dhurna

WE must refrain from sitting *Dhurna*, we must refrain from crying 'shame, shame' to anybody, we must not use any coercion to persuade our people to adopt our way. We must guarantee to them the same freedom we claim for ourselves. —*Young India* : Feb. 9, 1921.

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I CALL it 'barbarity', for it is a crude way for using coercion. It is also cowardly because one who sits *Dhurna* knows that he is not going to be trampled over. It is difficult to call the practice violent, but it is certainly worse. If we fight our opponent, we at least enable him to return the blow. But when we challenge him to walk over us, knowing that he will not, we place him in a most awkward and humiliating position. —*Young India* : Feb. 2, 1922.

Diagnosis

A TRUE diagnosis is three-fourth's the remedy.

—*Harijan* : June 24, 1939.

Difference

HONEST differences are often a healthy sign of progress.

Young India : July 17, 1920.

Disease

A PATIENT can ill afford to conceal his disease. If he does so he becomes his own enemy.

—*Young India* : Feb. 2, 1928.

Discipline

DISCIPLINE knows no rank. A king who knows its value submits to his page in matters where he appoints him as the sole judge. —*Young India* : Dec. 4, 1925.

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THERE is no deliverance and no hope without sacrifice, discipline and self-control. Mere sacrifice without discipline will be unavailing. —*Young India* : Jan. 9, 1926.

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A TRUE soldier does not argue, as he marches, how success is going to be ultimately achieved. But he is confident that if he only plays his humble part well, somehow or other the battle will be won. It is in that spirit that every one of us should act. It is not given to us to know the future. But it is given to everyone of us to know how to do our own part well. Let us then do that which we know is possible for us if we only will.

—*Young India* : May 17, 1927.

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THERE will have to be rigid and iron discipline before we achieve anything great and enduring, and that discipline will not come by mere academic argument and appeal to reason and logic. Discipline is learnt in the school of adversity. —*Young India* : June 24, 1928.

LET it not be said that we are a people incapable of maintaining discipline. Indiscipline will mean disaster, and make one like me who is pinning to see *Swaraj* in his lifetime perish in sorrow and grief.

—*Young India* : Mar. 12, 1931.

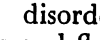


WE cannot learn discipline by compulsion.

—*Young India* : Dec. 20, 1931.

DISCIPLINE is to disorder what bulwarks and embankments are to storms and floods.

—*Young India* : May 14, 1931.



NO reliance can be placed upon an organization which is not able to exercise effective control over its members. Imagine an army whose soldiers, under the false belief that they are advancing the common cause, adopt measures in defiance of those taken by the headquarters. Such action may well spell defeat.

—*Harijan* : Oct. 21, 1939.



IN the coming struggle, if it must come, no half-hearted loyalty will answer the purpose. Imagine a general marching to battle with doubting, ill-prepared soldiers. He will surely march to defeat. I will not consciously make any such fatal experiment. This is not meant to frighten Congressmen. If they have the will, they will not find any instructions difficult to follow. Correspondents tell me that though they have no faith in me or the *Charkha*, they ply the latter for the sake of discipline. I do not understand this language. Can a general fight on the strength of soldiers who, he knows, have no faith in him ? The plain meaning of this language is that the correspondents believe in mass action but do not believe in the connection I see between it and the *Charkha* etc., if the action is to be non-violent. They

believe in my hold on the masses, but they do not believe in the things which I believe have given me that hold. They merely want to exploit me and will grudgingly pay the price which my ignorance or obstinacy (according to them) demands. I do not call this discipline. True discipline gives enthusiastic obedience to instructions even though they do not satisfy reason. A volunteer exercises his reason when he chooses his general, but after having made the choice, he does not waste his time and energy in scanning every instruction and testing it on the envil of his reason before following it. He is "not to reason why."

—*Harijan* : Mar. 3, 1940.

Divide and Rule

IN the first place they (differences) are grossly exaggerated in transmission to the West. In the second place, they are hardened during foreign control. Imperial rule means divide *et impera*. They must therefore melt with the withdrawal of the frigid foreign rule and the introduction of the warmth giving sunshine of real freedom.

—*Young India* : July 2,1931.

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AFTER all the discovery that India is governed by the 'divide and rule' policy was made in the first instance not by an Indian but if I am not mistaken, by an Englishman. . It was either the late Allen Ocatvius Hume or George Yule who taught us that the empire was based upon a policy of divide and rule. Nor need we be surprised at or resent it. Imperial Rome did no otherwise. British did no otherwise with Boers. By a system of favouritism it sought to divide the Boer ranks. The Government of India is based upon distrust. Distrust involves favouritism and favouritism must breed division. There are frank Englishmen enough who have owned this fact.

—*Young India* : Aug. 12, 1926.

WE will continue to be divided so long as the wedge of foreign rule remains there, and sinks deeper and deeper. That is the way of the wedge. But take out the wedge and split parts will instantly come together and unite.

—*Young India* : Nov. 5, 1931.

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I HAVE no doubt that if British rule which divides us by favouring one or the other as it suits the Britishers were withdrawn to-day, Hindus and Muslims would forget their quarrels and live like brothers which they are. But supposing the worst happened and we have a civil war, it would last for a few days or months and we would settle down to business. —*Young India* : Nov. 19, 1931.

Doubt

DOUBT is invariably the result of want or weakness of faith.

—*My Experiments With Truth* : Page 558.

Dowry System

THE parents should so educate their daughters that they would refuse to marry a young man who wanted a price for marrying and would rather remain spinsters than be party to the degrading terms. The only honourable terms in marriage are mutual love and mutual consent.

—*Young India* : Jan. 15, 1927.

Drink Evil

YOU will not be deceived by the specious argument that India must not be made sober by compulsion, and that those who wish to drink must have facilities provided for them. The State does not cater for the vices of its people. We do not regulate and license houses of ill-fame. We do not provide facilities for thieves to indulge their propensity for thieving. I hold drink to be more damnable than thieving and perhaps even prostitution. Is it not often the parent of both ? —*Young India* : Feb. 23, 1922.

WHAT about the education of the children ? may be the question asked. I venture to suggest to you that it is a matter of deep humiliation for the country to find its children educated from the drink revenue. We shall deserve the curse of posterity, if we do not wisely decide to stop the drink evil, even though we may have to sacrifice the education of our children. But we need not. I know many of you have laughed at the idea of making education self-supporting by introducing spinning in our schools and colleges. I assure you that it solves the problem of education as nothing else can. The country cannot bear fresh taxation. Even the existing taxation is unbearable. Not only must we do away with the opium and the drink revenue but the other revenue has also to be very considerably reduced, if the ever-growing poverty of the masses is to be combated in the near future

—*Young India* : Jan. 12, 1925.

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DRUGS and drink are the two arms of the devil with which he strikes his helpless slaves into stupefaction and intoxication. —*Young India* : April 12, 1926.

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IN India there can be no reason for any referendum because drink and drug habit are universally recognised as a vice. Drink is not a fashion in India as it is in the West. To talk therefore of a referendum in India is to trifle with the problem.

—*Young India* : April 22, 1926.

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THERE is as much flaw in the argument that it is an interference with the right of the people as there would be in the argument that the laws prohibiting theft interfere with the right of thieving. A thief steals all earthly possessions, a drunkard steals his own and his neighbour's honour.

—*Young India* : Jan. 6, 1927.

INDIA is the most promising country in the world for carrying out total prohibition for the simple reason that addiction to drink is not considered respectable or fashionable and is confined only to a certain class of people.

—*Young India* : June 23, 1927.

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I HAVE not hesitated to give my opinion, that it was a wicked thing for the Imperial Government to have transferred this the most immoral source of revenue to the provinces and to have thus made this tainted revenue the one source for defraying the cost of the education of Indian youth. —*Young India* : Sept. 8, 1927.

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I VENTURE to submit that prosecutions are the smallest and the destructive part of prohibition. I suggest that there is a larger and constructive side to prohibition. People drink because of the conditions to which they are reduced. It is the factory labourers and others that drink. They are forlorn, uncared for, and they take to drink. They are no more vicious by nature than teetotallers are saints by nature. The majority of people are controlled by their enviornment. —*Young India* : Sept. 8, 1927.

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WHATEVER may be true of countries with cold climates I am sure that in a climate like ours there is no need for drink whatsoever. Nothing but ruin stares a nation in the face that is a prey to the drink habit. History records that empires have been destroyed through that habit. We have it in India that the great community to which Shri Krishna belonged was ruined by that habit. The monstrous evil was undoubtedly one of the contributory factors in the fall of Rome. If therefore you will live decently you will shun this evil whilst there is yet time.

—*Young India* : April 11, 1929.

I HOLD drinking spirituous liquors in India to be more criminal than the petty thefts which I see starving men and women committing and for which they are prosecuted and punished. I do tolerate very unwillingly it is true and helplessly because of want of full realisation of the law of love a moderate system of penal code. And so long as I do, I must advocate the summary punishment of those who manufacture the fiery liquid and those even who will persist in drinking it notwithstanding repeated warnings. I do not hesitate forcibly to prevent my children from rushing into fire or deep waters. Rushing to red water is far more dangerous than rushing to raging furnace or flooded stream. The latter destroys only the body, the former destroys both body and soul. —*Young India* : Aug. 8, 1929.

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IT is a revenue which must be sacrificed and whilst it lasts, it should be held as sacrosanct and be wholly dedicated to the purpose of eradicating the drink evil. But today it is being utilised for educating our children with the result that a tremendous barrier has been put against this necessary temperance legislation. People are made to think that they will not be able to educate their children if this revenue stops. If things go on unchecked like this a whole nation might have to perish. If the evil spreads, it may be too late to undertake legislation.

—*Young India* : April 11, 1929.

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WHEN Satan comes disguised as a champion of liberty, civilization, culture and the like, he makes himself almost irresistible. —*Young India* : July 11, 1929.

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RUSHING to red water is far more dangerous than rushing to raging furnace or flooded stream. The latter destroys only the body, the former destroys both body and soul. —*Young India* : Aug. 8, 1929.

THE drink curse has desolated many a labourer's home. There is no halfway house between drunkeness and prohibition. Well-to-do men may pretend to be moderate. But there is no such thing as moderation possible among labourers. —*Young India* : Oct. 31, 1929.

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DRINK and drugs sap the moral well-doing of those who are given to this habit. Foreign cloth undermines the economic foundations of the nation and throws millions out of employment. The distress in each case is felt in the home and therefore by the women. Only those women who have drunkards as their husbands know what havoc the drink devil works in homes that once were orderly and peace giving. —*Young India* : April 10, 1930.

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ALCOHOL excites the nerves and narcotics deaden the sense of right and wrong. —*Young India* : July 25, 1931.

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WHY are you so uncharitable to those who drink ? asked an English student.

A Because I am charitable to those who suffer from the effect of the curse.

—*Young India* : Nov. 12, 1931

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IF I was appointed dictator for one hour for all India, the first thing I would do would be to close without compensation all the liquor shops, destroy all the toddy palms such as I know them in Gujrat, compel factory owners to produce humane conditions for their workmen and open refreshment and recreation rooms where these workmen would get innocent drinks and equally innocent amusements. I would close down the factories if the owners pleaded want of funds. Being a teetotaller, I would retain my sobriety in spite of the possession of one hour's dictatorship and therefore arrange for, the examination of my European friends and diseased persons who may be in medical need of brandy

and the like at State expense by medical experts and where necessary they would receive certificates which would entitle them to obtain the prescribed quantity of the fiery waters from certified chemists. The rule will apply *mutatis mutandis* to intoxicating drugs.

For the loss of revenue from drinks, I would straightway cut down the military expenditure and expect the Commander-in-Chief to accommodate himself to the new condition in the best way he can. The workmen left idle by the closing of factories, I would remove to model farms to be immediately opened as far as possible in the neighbourhood of the factories unless I was advised during that brief hour that the State would profitably run the factories under the required conditions and therefore take over from the owners. —*Young India* : June 25, 1931.

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PURE *Swaraj* is impossible of attainment by people who have been or who are slaves of intoxicating drinks and drugs. It must never be forgotten that a man in the grip of intoxicants is generally bereft of the moral sense.

—*Harijan* : Aug. 18, 1940.

Dumb Millions

ALL the 24 hours of the day I am with them. They are my first care and last, because I recognise no God except the God that is to be found in the hearts of the dumb millions. They do not recognise His presence ; I do. And I worship the God that is Truth or Truth which is God through the service of these millions

—*Harijan* : Mar. 11, 1939.

Duty

EVERY mistake of the Government helps. Every neglect of duty on our part hinders.

—*Young India* : Mar. 2, 1922.

DUTY will be merit when debt becomes a donation,

—*Young India* : Mar. 18, 1926.

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IF we all discharge our duties, rights will not be far to seek. If leaving duties unperformed we run after rights, they will escape us like a Will O' The Wisp. The more we pursue them the farther will they fly. The same teaching has been embodied by Krishna in the immortal words : *Action alone is thine.* Leave thou the fruits severely alone. Action is duty ; fruit is the right.

—*Young India* : Dec. 25, 1927.

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PERFORMANCE of one's duty should be independent of public opinion. I have all-along held that one is bound to act according to what to one appears to be right even though it may appear wrong to others. And experience has shown that that is the only correct course. I admit that there is always a possibility of one's mistaking right for wrong and *vice versa* but often one learns to recognise wrong only through unconscious error. On the other hand if a man fails to follow the light within for fear of public opinion or any other similar reason he would never be able to know right from wrong and in the end lose all sense of distinction between the two. That is why the poet has sung :

The pathway of love is the ordeal of fire,

The shrinkers turn away from it.

The pathway of *ahimsa*, that is of love one has often to tread all alone. —*Young India* : Oct 4, 1928.

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A MAN can give up a right, but he may not give up a duty without being guilty of a grave dereliction. Unpopularity and censure are often the lot of a man who wants to speak and practise the truth. I hold it to be the bounden duty of a *Satyagrahi* openly and freely to express his opinions

which he holds to be correct and of benefit to the public even at the risk of incurring popular displeasure and worse. So long as I believe my views on *ahimsa* to be correct, it would be a sin of omission on my part not to give expression to them. —*Young India* : Oct. 18, 1928.

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A SOLDIER never worries as to what shall happen to his work after him, but thinks only of the immediate duty in front of him. —*Young India* : Sept. 26, 1929.

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OUR people have not yet acquired the habit of doing their duty without persistent reminders even as we need the loud call of the temple bell to remind us that there is God watching over us and summoning us to prayer.

—*Young India* : Feb. 21, 1929

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EVERY duty performed confers upon one certain rights. Whilst the exercise of every right carries with it certain corresponding obligations. And so the never ending cycle of duty and right goes ceaselessly on.

—*Young India* : Aug. 22, 1929.

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DUTY well done undoubtedly carries rights with it, but a man who discharges his obligations with an eye upon privileges generally discharges them indifferently and often fails to attain the rights he might have expected, or when he succeeds in gaining them they turn out to be burdens.

—*Young India* : Oct. 10, 1929.

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RIGHTS accrue automatically to him who duly performs his duties. In fact the right to perform one's duties is the only right that is worth living for and dying for. It covers all legitimate rights. All the rest is grab under one guise or another and contains in it seeds of *himsa*.

—*Young India* : Dec. 27, 1930.

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East and West

[The following is an extract from a letter addressed by Gandhiji to a friend in India in 1909.]

(1) There is no impassable barrier between East and West.

(2) There is no such thing as Western or European civilization, but there is a modern civilization which is purely material.

(3) The people of Europe, before they were touched by modern civilization, had much in common with the people of the East; anyhow the people of India, and even today Europeans who are not touched by modern civilization, are far better able to mix with Indians than the offspring of that civilization.

(4) It is not the British people who are ruling India, but it is modern civilization, through its railways, telegraph, telephone and almost every invention which has been claimed to be a triumph of civilization.

(5) Bombay, Calcutta and the other chief cities of India are the real plague spots.

(6) If British rule were replaced to-morrow by Indian rule based on modern methods, India would be no better, except that she would be able then to retain some of the money that is drained away to England; but then India would only become a second or fifth nation of Europe or America.

(7) East and West can only really meet when the West has thrown overboard modern civilization, almost in its entirety. They can also seemingly meet when East has also adopted modern civilization, but that meetign would be an armed truce, even as it is between, sa'ʎ Germany and England both of which nations are living in the Hall of Death in order to avoid being devoured the one by the other.

(8) It is simply impertinence for any man or any body of men to begin or to contemplate reform of the whole world. To attempt to do so by means of highly artificial and speedy locomotion, is to attempt the impossible.

(9) Increase of material comforts, it may be generally laid down, does not in any way whatsoever conduce to moral growth.

(10) Medical science is the concentrated essence of black magic. Quackery is infinitely preferable to what passes for high medical skill.

(11) Hospitals are the instruments that the Devil has been using for his own purpose, in order to keep his hold on his kingdom. They perpetuate vice, misery and degradation and real slavery. I was entirely off the track when I considered that I should receive a medical training. It would be sinful for me in any way whatsoever to take part in the abominations that go on in the hospitals. If there were no hospitals for venereal diseases, or even for consumptives we should have less consumption, and less sexual vice amongst us.

(12) India's salvation consists in unlearning what she has learnt during the past fifty years. The railways, telegraphs, hospitals, lawyers, doctors, and such like have all to go, and the so-called upper classes have to learn to live consciously and religiously and deliberately the simple peasant life, knowing it to be a life giving true happiness.

(13) India should wear no machine-made clothing whether it comes out of European mills or Indian mills.

(14) England can help India to do this and then she will have justified her hold on India. There seems to be many in England today who think likewise.

(15) There was true wisdom in the sages of old having so regulated society as to limit the material condition of the people : the rude plough of perhaps five thousand

years ago is the plough of the husbandman today. Therein lies salvation. People live long under such conditions in comparative peace much greater than Europe has enjoyed after having taken up modern activity, and I feel that every enlightened man, certainly every Englishman, may, if he chooses, learn this truth and act according to it.

It is the true spirit of passive resistance that has brought me to the above almost definite conclusions. As a passive resister, I am unconcerned whether such a gigantic reformation, shall I call it, can be brought about among people who find their satisfaction from the present mad rush. If I realize the truth of it, I should rejoice in following it, and therefore I could not wait until the whole body of people had commenced. All of us who think likewise have to take the necessary step, and the rest, if we are in the right, must follow. The theory is there : our practice will have to approach it as much as possible. Living in the midst of the rush, we may not be able to shake ourselves free from all taint. Everytime I get into a railway car or use a motor-bus, I know that I am doing violence to my sense of what is right. I do not fear the logical result on that basis. The visiting of England is bad, and any communication between South Africa and India by means of ocean-grey-hounds is also bad and so on. You and I can, and may outgrow these things in our present bodies, but the chief thing is to put our theory right. You will be seeing there all sorts and conditions of men. I, therefore, feel that I should no longer withhold from you what I call the progressive step I have taken mentally. If you agree with me, then it will be your duty to tell the revolutionaries and every body else that the freedom they want, or they think they want, is not to be obtained by killing people or doing violence, but by setting themselves right and by becoming and remaining truly Indian. Then the British rulers will be servants and not masters. They

will be trustees, and not tyrants, and they will live in perfect peace with the whole of the inhabitants of India. The future, therefore, lies not with the British race, but with the Indians themselves, and if they have sufficient self-abnegation and abstemiousness, they can make themselves free this very moment, and when we have arrived in India at the simplicity which is still ours largely and which was ours entirely until a few years ago, it will still be possible for the best Indians and the best Europeans to see one another throughout the length and breadth of India and act as the leaven. When there was no rapid locomotion, teachers and preachers went on foot, from one end of the country to the other, braving all dangers, not for recruiting their health (though all that followed from their tramps), but for the sake of humanity. Then were Benares and other places of pilgrimage the holy cities, whereas to-day they are an abomination.

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"I do not hold for one moment," Gandhiji exclaimed, "that East and West cannot combine. I think the day is coming when East must meet West, or West meet East, but I think the social evolution of the West to-day lies in one channel, and that of the Indian in another channel. The Indians have no wish to-day to encroach on the social institutions of the Europeans in South Africa. (Cheers) Most Indians are natural traders. There are bound to be trade jealousies and those various things that come from competition. I have never been able to find a solution of this most difficult problem, which will require the broad-mindedness and spirit of justice of the Government of South Africa to hold the balance between conflicting interests.

—(*From a farewel speech at Durban*) : July 18, 1914.

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I WOULD heartily welcome the Union of East and West provided it is not based on brute-force.

—*Young India* : Oct. 1, 1931.

Eating

ONE should eat not in order to please the palate, but just to keep the body going. When each organ of sense subserves the body and through the body the soul, its special relish disappears, and then alone does it begin to function in the way nature intended it to do.

—*My Experiments With Truth* : Page 393.

Economics

TRUE economics never militates against the highest ethical standard, just as all true ethics to be worth its name must at the same time be also good economics. An economics that inculcates Mammon worship, and enables the strong to amass wealth at the expense of the weak, is a false and dismal science. It spells death. True economics, on the other hand, stands for social justice, it promotes the good of all equally including the weakest, and is indispensable for decent life.

—*Harijan* : Oct. 9, 1937.

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EVEN though I am a layman, I make bold to say that the so-called laws laid down in books on economics are not immutable like the laws of Medes and Persians, nor are they universal. The economics of England are different from those of Germany. Germany enriched herself by bounty-fed beet sugar. England enriched herself by exploiting foreign markets. What was possible for a compact area is not possible for an area 1,900 miles long and 1,500 miles broad. The economics of a nation are determined by its climatic, geological and temperamental conditions. The Indian conditions are different from the English in all these essentials. What is meat for England is in many cases poison for India. Beef tea in the English climate may be good, it is poison for the hot climate of religious India. Fiery whisky in the north of the British Isles may be a necessity, it renders an Indian unfit for work

or society. Fur coats in Scotland are indispensable, they will be an intolerable burden in India. Free trade for a country which has become industrial, whose population can and does live in cities, whose people do not mind preying upon other nations and therefore sustain the biggest navy to protect their unnatural commerce, may be economically sound (though, as the reader perceives, I question its morality). Free trade for India has proved her curse and held her in bondage.

—*Young India*: Dec. 9, 1921.

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I MUST confess that I do not draw a sharp or any distinction between economics and ethics. Economics that hurt the moral well-being of an individual or a nation are immoral and therefore sinful. Thus the economics that permit one country to prey upon another are immoral. It is sinful to buy and use articles made by sweated labour. It is sinful to eat American wheat and let my neighbour the grain dealer starve for want of custom.

—*Young India*: Oct. 13, 1921.

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APPLICATION of the laws of economics must vary with varying conditions.

—*Young India*: July 2, 1931.

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INDEED, economics that ruins one's health is false, because money without health has no value. Only that economy is true which enables one to conserve one's health. The whole of the initial programme of village reconstruction is, therefore, aimed at true economy, because it is aimed at promoting the health and vigour of the villagers.

—*Harijan*: Mar. 1, 1935.

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IMITATION of English economics will spell our ruin.

—*Young India*: June 21, 1919.

DOES economic progress clash with real progress ? By economic progress, I take it, we mean material advancement without limit and by real progress we mean moral progress, which again is the same thing as progress of the permanent element in us. The subject may therefore be stated thus : Does not moral progress increase, in the same proportion as material progress ? know that this is a wider proposition than the one before us. But I venture to think that we always mean the large one even when we lay down the smaller. For we know enough of science to realize that there is no such thing as perfect rest or repose in this visible universe of ours. If, therefore, material progress does not clash with moral progress, it must necessarily advance the latter Nor can we be satisfied with the clumsy way in which sometimes those who cannot defend the large proposition put their case. They seem to be obsessed with the concrete case of thirty millions of India, stated by the late Sir William Wilson Hunter to be living on one meal a day. They say that, before we can think or talk of their moral welfare, we must satisfy their daily wants With these they say, material progress spells moral progress. And then is taken a sudden jump; what is true of thirty millions is true of the universe. They forget that hard cases make bad law. I need hardly say to you how ludicrously absurd this deduction would be. No one has ever suggested that grinding pauperism can lead to anything else than moral degradation. Every human being has a right to live and therefore to find the wherewithal to feed himself and where necessary to clothe and house himself. But for this very simple performance we need no assistance from economists or their laws.

'Take no thought for the morrow' is an injunction which finds an echo in almost all the religious scriptures of the world. In well-ordered society the securing of one's livelihood should be and is found to be the easiest

thing in the world. Indeed, the test of orderliness in a country is not the number of millionaires it owns, but the absence of starvation among its masses. The only statement that has to be examined is, whether it can be laid down as a law of universal application that material advancement means moral progress.

Now let us take a few illustrations. Rome suffered moral fall when it attained high material affluence. So did Egypt and so perhaps most countries of which we have any historical record. The descendants and kinsmen of the royal and divine Krishana too fell when they were rolling in riches. We do not deny to the Rockefellers and the Carnegies possession of an ordinary measure of morality but we gladly judge them indulgently. I mean that we do not even expect them to satisfy the highest standard of morality. With them material gain has not necessarily meant moral gain. In South Africa, where I had the privilege of associating with thousands of our countrymen on most intimate terms, I observed almost invariably that the greater the possession of riches, the greater was their moral turpitude. Our rich men, to say the least, did not advance the moral struggle of passive resistance as did the poor. The rich men's sense of self-respect was not so much injured as that of the poorest. If I were not afraid of treading on dangerous ground, I would even come nearer home and show how that possession of riches has been a hindrance to real growth. I venture to think that the scriptures of the world are far safer and sounder treatises on laws of economics than many of the modern text-books. The question we are asking ourselves this evening is not a new one. It was addressed of Jesus two thousand years ago. St. Mark has vividly described the scene. Jesus is in his solemn mood. He is earnest. He talks of eternity. He knows the world about him. He is himself the greatest economist of his time. He succeeded in economising time and space—he transcended them. It is to

him at his best that one comes running, kneels down, and asks; Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life. And Jesus said unto him: 'Why callest thou me good. There is none good but one, *i.e*, God. Thou knowest the commandments. Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal. Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother.' And he answered and said unto him : ' Master, all these have I observed from my youth.' Then Jesus beholding him loved him and said unto him : 'One thing thou lackest. Go thy way, sell whatever thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shall have treasure in heaven—come, take up the cross and follow me.' And he was sad at that saying and went away grieved—for he had great possession. And Jesus looked round about and said unto his disciple : 'How hardly shall they, that have riches enter into the kingdom of God.' And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again and said unto them, 'Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God. It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God !' Here you have an eternal rule of life stated in the noblest words the English language is capable of producing. But the disciples nodded unbelief as we do even to this day. To him they said as we say to-day : 'But look how the law fails in practice. If we sell all and have nothing, we shall have nothing to eat. We must have money or we cannot even be reasonably moral.' So they state their case thus :—And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves : 'Who then can be saved.' And Jesus looking upon them said : 'With men it is impossible, but not with God, for with God all things are possible.' Then Peter began to say unto him : 'Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee.' And Jesus answered and said : 'Verily I say unto you there is no man that has left house or brethren or sisters, or father

or mother, or wife or children or lands for my sake and Gospel's but he shall receive one hundredfold, now in this time houses and brethren and sisters and mothers and children and land, and in the world to come, eternal life. But many that are first shall be last and the last, first.' You have here the result or reward, if you prefer the term, of following the law. I have not taken the trouble of copying similar passages from the other non-Hindu scriptures and I will not insult you by quoting, in support of the law stated by Jesus, passages from the writings and sayings of our own sages, passages even stronger, if possible, than the Biblical extracts I have drawn your attention to. Perhaps the strongest of all the testimonies in favour of the affirmative answer to the question before us are the lives of the greatest teachers of the world. Jesus, Mahomed, Buddha, Nanak, Kabir, Chaitanya, Shankara, Dayanand, Ramakarishna were men who exercised an immense influence over, and moulded the character of, thousands of men. The world is the richer for their having lived in it. And they were all men who deliberately embraced poverty as their lot.

I should not have laboured my point as I have done, if I did not believe that, in so far as we have made the modern materialistic craze our goal, so far are we going down hill in the path of progress. I hold that economic progress in the sense I have put it is antagonistic to real progress. Hence the ancient ideal has been the limitation of activities promoting wealth. This does not put an end to all material ambition. We should still have, as we have always had, in our midst people who make the pursuit of wealth their aim in life. But we have always recognised that it is a fall from the ideal. It is a beautiful thing to know that the wealthiest among us have often felt that to have remained voluntarily poor would have been a higher state for them. That you cannot serve God and Mammon is an economic truth of the

highest value. We have to make our choice. Western nations are to-day groaning under the heal of the monster god of materialism. Their moral growth has become stunted. They measure their progress in £. *s. d.* American wealth has become the standard. She is the envy of the other nations. I have heard many of our countrymen say that we will gain American wealth but avoid its methods. I venture to suggest that such an attempt, if it were made, is foredoomed to failure. We cannot be 'wise,' temperate and furious' in a moment. I would have our leaders teach us to be morally supreme in the world. This land of ours was once, we are told, the abode of the gods. It is not possible to conceive gods inhabiting a land which is made hideous by the smoke and the din of mill chimneys and factories and whose roadways are traversed by rushing engines, dragging numerous cars crowded with men who know not for the most part what they are after, who are often absent-minded, and whose tempers do not improve by being uncomfortably packed like sardines in boxes and finding themselves in the midst of utter strangers, who would oust them if they could and whom they would, in their turn, oust similarly. I refer to these things because they are held to be symbolical of material progress. But they add not an atom to our happiness. This is what Wallace, the great scientist, has said as his deliberate judgment:—

> In the earliest records which have come down to us from the past, we find ample indications that general ethical considerations and conceptions, the accepted standard of morality, and the conduct resulting from these, were in no degree inferior to those which prevail to-day.

In a series of chapters he then proceeds to examine the position of the English nation under the advance in wealth it has made He says : 'This rapid growth of wealth and increase of our power over Nature put too great a strain upon our crude civilisation, on our superficial Christianity, and it was accompanied by various forms of social immorality almost as amazing and unprecedented.' He then shows how factories have risen on the corpses of men,

women and children, how, as the country has rapidly advanced in riches, it has gone down in morality. He shows this by dealing with insanitation, life destroying trades, adulteration, bribery and gambling. He shows how with the advance of wealth, justice has become immoral, deaths from alcoholism and suicide have increased, the average of premature births, and congenital defects has increased and prostitution has become an institution. He concludes his examination by these pregnant remarks :—

> The proceedings of the divorse courts show other aspects of the result of wealth and leisure, while a friend who had been a good deal in London society assured me that, both in country houses and in London, various kinds of orgies were occasionally to be met with, which would hardly have been surpassed in the period of the most dissolute emperors. Of war, too, I need say nothing. It has always been more or less chronic since the rise of the Roman Empire ; but there is now undoubtedly a disinclination for war among all civilized peoples. Yet the vast burden of armaments taken together with the most pious declaration in favour of peace, must be held to show an almost total absence of morality as a guiding principle among the governing classes.

Under the British aegis we have learnt much, but it is my firm belief that there is little to gain from Britain in intrinsic morality, that if we are not careful, we shall introduce all the vices that she has been a prey to owing to the disease of materialism. We can profit by that connection only if we keep our civilization, and our morals straight *i.e.*, if, instead of boasting of the glorious past, we express the ancient moral glory in our own lives and let our lives bear witness to our boast. Then we shall benefit her and ourselves. If we copy her because she provides us with rulers, both they and we shall suffer degradation. We need not be afraid of ideals or of reducing them to practice even to the uttermost. Ours will only then be a truly spiritual nation when we shall show more truth than gold, greater fearlessness than pomp of power and wealth, greater charity than love to self. If we will but clean our houses, our palaces and temples of the attributes of wealth and show in them the attributes of morality, we can offer battle to any combinations of hostile forces without having to carry the

burden of a heavy militia. Let us seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, and the irrevocable promise is that everything will be added unto us. These are real economics. May you and I treasure them and enforce them in our daily life.

[*A lecture delivered by Gandhiji at a meeting of the Muir Central College Economics Society Allahabad*, on Dec. 22, 1916.]

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WHAT is economically wrong cannot be religiously right. In other words, if a religion cuts at the very fundamentals of economics it is not a true religion but only a delusion. My critic on the other hand believes that this view is opposed to the teachings of our ancient scriptures. I, at least, am not aware of a single text in opposition to this view nor do I know of any religious institution that is being maintained in any part of the world today in antagonism to the elementary principles of economics. As for nature, any one who has eyes can see, that it always observes the principle that I have stated. For instance, if it has implanted in its creation the instinct for food it also produces enough food to satisfy that instinct from day to day. But it does not produce a jot more. That is nature's way. But man, blinded by his selfish greed, grabs and consumes more than his requirements in defiance of nature's principle, in defiance of the elementary and immutable moralities of non-stealing and non-possession of other's property and thus brings down no end of misery upon himself and his fellow-creatures. To turn to another illustration, our *Shastras* have enjoined that the Brahman should give knowledge as charity without expecting any material reward for it for himself. But they have at the same time conferred upon him the privilege of asking for and receiving alms and have laid upon the other sections of the community the duty of giving alms, thus uniting religion and economics in a common bond of harmony. The reader will be able to find further instances of this kind for himself. The religious

principle requires that the debit and credit sides of one's balance sheet should be perfectly square. That is also the truest economics and therefore true religion. Whenever there is any discrepancy between these two it spells bad economics and makes for unrighteousness. That is why the illustrious author of the *Gita* has defined *yoga* as balance or "evenness." But the majority of mankind do not understand this use of economics to subserve religion; they want it only for amassing "profits" for themselves. Humanitarian economics, on the other hand, for which I stand, rules out "profits" altogether. But it rules out "deficit" no less for the simple reason that it is utterly impossible to safe-guard a religious institution by following a policy of dead loss. —*Young India* : Nov. 3, 1927.

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VILLAGE economics is different from industrial economics. Human economics is not the same as that of exploitation or mere dead matter.

—*Young India* : June 11, 1931.

Education

PURITY of personal life is the one indispensable condition for building up a sound education.

—*Young India* : Sept. 8, 1927

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LITERARY training by itself is not of much account. Remember that unlettered persons have found no difficulty in ruling over large states. President Kruger could hardly sign his own name.

—*Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi* : Page 213.

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LITERARY education is of no value, if it is not able to build up a sound character.

—*Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi* : Page 214.

WE have lost much of our self-respect, on account of being too much Europeanised. We think and speak in English. Thereby, we impoverish our vernaculars, and estrange the feelings of the masses. A knowledge of English is not essential to the service of our Motherland.

—*Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi* : page 110.



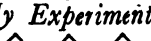
I HAVE always felt that the true text book for the pupil is his teacher.

—*My Experiments With Truth* : Page 412.



CHILDREN take in much more and with less labour through their ears than through their eyes.

—*My Experiments With Truth* : Page 412.



IT is possible for a teacher situated miles away to affect the spirit of the pupils by his way of living. It would be idle for me, if I were a liar, to teach boys to tell the truth. A cowardly teacher would never succeed in making his boys valiant, and a stranger to self-restraint could never teach his pupils the value of self-restraint. I saw, therefore, that I must be an eternal object-lesson to the boys and girls living with me. They thus became my teachers, and I learnt I must be good and live straight, if only for their sake. I may say that the increasing discipline and restraint I imposed on myself at Tolstoy Farm was mostly due to those wards of mine.

—*My Experiments With Truth* : Page 414.



IT has always been my conviction that Indian parents who train their children to think and talk in English from their infancy betray their children and their country. They deprive them of the spiritual and social heritage of the nation, and render them to that extent unfit for the service of the country.

—*My Experiments With Truth* : Page 414.

I HAVE heard it said that after all it is English-educated India which is leading and which is doing all the thing for the nation. It would be monstrous if it were otherwise. The only education we receive is English education. Surely we must show something for it. But suppose that we had been receiving during the past fifty years education through our vernaculars, what should we have to-day? We should have to-day a free India, we should have our educated men, not as if they were foreigners in their own land but speaking to the heart of the nation; they would be working amongst the poorest of the poor, and whatever they would have gained during the past 50 years would be a heritage for the nation. Today even our wives are not the sharers in our best thought. Look at Professor Bose and Professor Ray and their brilliant re-searches. Is it not a shame that their researches are not the common property of the masses?

—*Young India*: Feb. 4, 1920.

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ENGLISH is a language of international commerce, it is the language of diplomacy, and it contains many a rich literary treasure, it gives us an introduction to Western thought and culture. For a few of us, therefore, a knowledge of English is necessary. They can carry on the departments of national commerce and international diplomacy, and for giving to the nation the best of Western literature, thought and science. That would be the legitimate use of English. Whereas today English has usurped the dearest place in our hearts and dethroned our mother-tongues. It is an unnatural place due to our unequal relations with Englishmen. The highest development of the Indian mind must be possible without a knowledge of English. It is doing violence to the manhood and specially the womanhood of India to encourage our boys and girls to think that an entry into the best society is impossible without a knowledge of English. It is too

humiliating a thought to be bearable. To get rid of the infactuation for English is one of the essentials of *Swaraj*.

—*Young India* : July 12, 1920.

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I HAVE never been able to make a fetish of literary training. My experience has proved to my satisfaction that literary training by itself adds not an inch to one's moral height and that character-building is independent of literary training. I am firmly of opinion that the Government schools have unmanned us, rendered us helpless and Godless They have filled us with discontent and providing no remedy for the discontent, have made us despondent. They have made us what we were intended to become—clerks and interpreters. —*Young India* : June 1, 1921.

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SO many strange things have been said about my views on national education, that it would perhaps not be out of place to formulate them before the public.

In my opinion the existing system of education is defective, apart from its association with an utterly unjust Government, in three most important matters :

(1) It is based upon foreign culture to the almost entire exclusion of indigenous culture.

(2) It ignores the culture of the heart and the hand and confines itself simply to the head.

(3) Real education is impossible through a foreign medium.

Let us examine the three defects. Almost from the commencement, the text books deal, not with things the boys and the girls have always to deal with in their homes, but things to which they are perfect strangers. It is not through the text-books, that a lad learns what is right and what is wrong in the home life. He is never taught to have any pride in his surroundings. The

higher he goes, the farther he is removed from his home, so that at the end of his education he becomes estranged from his surroundings. He feels no poetry about the home life. The village scenes are all a sealed book to him. His own civilization is presented to him as imbecile, barbarous, superstitious and useless for all practical purposes. His education is calculated to wean him from his traditional culture. And if the mass of educated youths are not entirely denationalised, it is because the ancient culture is too deeply embedded in them to be altogether uprooted even by an education adverse to its growth. If I had my way, I would certainly destroy the majority of the present text-books and cause to be written text-books which have a bearing on and correspondence with the home life, so that a boy as he learns may react upon his immediate surroundings.

Secondly, whatever may be true of other countries, in India at any rate where more than eighty per cent. of the population is agricultural and another 10 per cent. industrial, it is a crime to make education merely literary and to unfit boys and girls for manual work in after life. Indeed I hold that, as the larger part of our time is devoted to labour for earning our bread, our children must from their infancy be taught the dignity of such labour. Our children should not be so taught as to despise labour. There is no reason why a peasant's son, after having gone to a school, should become useless, as he does become, as agricultural labourer. It is a sad thing that our schoolboys look upon manual labour with disfavour, if not contempt. Moreover, in India, if we expect, as we must, every boy and girl of school-going age to attend public schools, we have not the means to finance education in accordance with the existing style, nor are millions of parents able to pay the fees that are at present imposed. Education to be universal must therefore be free. I fancy that, even under an ideal system of government, we shall not be able to

devote two thousand million rupees which we should require for finding education for all the children of school-going age. It follows, therefore, that our children must be made to pay in *labour* partly or wholly for all the education they receive. Such universal labour to be profitable can only be (to my thinking) hand-spinning and hand-weaving. But for the purposes of my proposition, it is immaterial whether we have spinning or any other form of labour, so long as it can be turned to account. Only, it will be found upon examination, that on a practical, profitable and extensive scale, there is no occupation other than the processes connected with cloth-production which can be introduced in our schools throughout India.

The introduction of manual training will serve a double purpose in a poor country like ours. It will pay for the education of our children and teach them an occupation on which they can fall back in after-life, if they choose, for earning a living. Such a system must make our children self-reliant. Nothing will demoralise the nation so much as that we should learn to despise labour.

One word only as to the education of the heart. I do not believe that this can be imparted through books. It can only be done through the living touch of the teacher. And, who are the teachers in the primary and even secondary schools? Are they men and women of faith and character? Have they themselves received the training of the heart? Are they even expected to take care of the permanent elements in the boys and girls placed under their charge? Is not the method of engaging teachers for lower schools an effective bar against character? Do the teachers get even a living wage? And we know that the teachers of primary schools are not selected for their patriotism. They only come who cannot find any other employment.

Finally, the medium of instruction. My views on this point are too well known to need re-stating. The foreign medium has caused brain-fag, put an undue strain upon the nerves of our children, made them crammers and imitators, unfitted them for original work and thought, and disabled them for filtrating their learning to the family or the masses. The foreign medium has made our children practically foreigners in their own land. It is the greatest tragedy of the existing system. The foreign medium has prevented the growth of our vernaculars. If I had the powers of a despot, I would today stop the tuition of our boys and girls through a foreign medium, and require all the teachers and professors on pain of dismissal to introduce the change forthwith. I would not wait for the preparation of text-books. They will follow the change. It is an evil that needs a summary remedy.

My uncompromising opposition to the foreign medium has resulted in an unwarranted charge being levelled against me of being hostile to foreign culture or the learning of the English language. No reader of *Young India* could have missed the statement often made by me in these pages, that I regard English as the language of international commerce and diplomacy, and therefore consider its knowledge on the part of some of us as essential. As it contains some of the richest treasures of thought and literature, I would certainly encourage its careful study among those who have linguistic talents and expect them to translate those treasures for the nation in its vernaculars.

Nothing can be farther from my thought than that we should become exclusive or erect barriers. But I do respectfully contend that an appreciation of other cultures can fitly follow, never precede, an appreciation and assimilation of our own. It is my firm opinion that no culture has treasurers so rich as ours has. We have not known it, we have been made even to deprecate its study and depreciate its value. We have almost ceased to live it. An

academic grasp without practice behind it is like an embalmed corpse, perhaps lovely to look at but nothing to inspire or ennoble. My religion forbids me to belittle or disregard other cultures, as it insists under pain of civil suicide upon imbibing and living my own.

—*Young India* : Sept. 1, 1921.

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NATIONAL education to be truly national must reflect the national condition for the time being.

—*Young India*: Mar. 12, 1925.

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THE greatest drawback of the present system of education is that it does not bear the stamp of reality, that the children do not react to the varying wants of the country. True education must correspond to the surrounding circumstances or it is not a healthy growth.

—*Young India* : Mar. 12, 1925.

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IT is an education which, if it has given us a few self-sacrificing patriots, has also produced many more men who have been willing accomplices with the Government in holding India in bondage. —*Young India* : Dec. 23, 1926.

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THE correspondent seems to think that I decry the use of even learning English, which I have never done. That the English speaking Indians have rendered immense service to the country nobody can deny, but unfortunately it is equally undeniable that further progress is being blocked by us English-speaking Indians refusing to learn the language of the masses and to work amongst them in accordance with methods best suited to them.

—*Young India*: Feb. 17, 1927.

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WHAT is literary training worth of if it cramp and confine us at a critical moment in national life ? Knowledge and literary training are no recompense for emasculation.

—*Young India* : June 21, 1928.

AMONG the many evils of foreign rule this blighting imposition of a foreign medium upon the youth of the country will be counted by history as one of the greatest. It has sapped the energy of the nation, it has shortened the lives of the pupils. It has estranged them from the masses, it has made education unnecessarily expensive. If this process is still persisted in, it bids fair to rob the nation of its soul. The sooner, therefore, educated India shakes itself free from the hypnotic spell of the foreign medium, the better it would be for them and the people.

—*Young India* : July 5, 1928.



EVERY time that I am obliged to speak in the English language before an audience of my countrymen, I feel humiliated and ashamed. —*Young India* : Jan. 13, 1927.



EDUCATION should be so revolutionized as to answer the wants of the poorest villager instead of answering those of an imperial exploiter.

—*Harijan* : Aug. 21, 1937.

I MUST not be understood to decry English or its noble literature. The columns of *Harijan* are sufficient evidence of my love of English. But the nobility of its literature cannot avail the Indian nation any more than the temperate climate of the scenery of England can avail her. India has to flourish in her own climate, and scenery, and her own literature, even though all the three may be inferior to the English climate, scenery and literature. We and our children must build on our own heritage. If we borrow another, we impoverish our own. We can never grow on foreign victuals. I want the nation to have the treasures contained in that language, and for that matter the other languages of the world, through its own vernaculars. —*Harijan* : Dec. 6, 1936.

I HOLD that true education of the intellect can only come through a proper exercise and training of the bodily organs, *e.g.*, hands, feet, eyes, ears, nose *etc.* In other words an intelligent use of the bodily organs in a child provides the best and quickest way of developing his intellect. But unless the development of the mind and body goes hand in hand with a corresponding awakening of the soul, the former alone would prove to be a poor lop-sided affair. By spiritual training I mean education of the heart. A proper and all-round development of the mind, therefore, can take place only when it proceeds *pari passu* with the education of the physical and spiritual faculties of the child. They constitute an indivisible whole. According to this theory, therefore it would be a gross fallacy to suppose that they can be developed piecemeal or independently of one another.

—*Harijan* : April 17, 1937.

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MAN is neither mere intellect, nor the gross animal body, nor the heart or soul alone. A proper and harmonious combination of all the three is required for the making of the whole man and constitutes the true economics of education. —*Harijan* : Dec. 19, 1938.

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THE craze for ever-changing text-books is hardly a healthy sign from the educational stand-point. If text-books are treated as a vehicle for education, the living word of the teacher has very little value. A teacher who teaches from text books does not impart originality to his pupils. He himself becomes a slave of text books and has no opportunity or occasion to be original. It therefore seems that the less text books there are the better it is for the teacher and his pupils. Text books seem to have become an article of commerce. Authors and publishers who make writing and publishing a means of making money are interested in a frequent change of text books. In many cases teachers and examiners are themselves authors of

text books. It is naturally to their interest to have their books sold. The selection board is again naturally composed of such people. And so the vicious circle becomes complete. And it becomes very difficult for parents to find money for new books every year. It is a pathetic sight to see boys and girls going to school loaded with books which they are ill able to carry. The whole system requires to be thoroughly examined. The commercial spirit needs to be entirely eliminated and the question approached solely in the interest of the scholars. It will then probably be found that 75 per cent. of the text books will have to be consigned to the scrap-heap. If I had my way, I would have books largely as aids to teachers rather than for the scholars. Such text books as are found to be absolutely necessary for the scholars should circulate among them for a number of years so that the cost can be easily borne, by middle class families. The first step in this direction is perhaps for the State to own and organise the printing and publishing of text books. This will act as an automatic check on their unnecessary multiplication.

—*Harijan*: Sept. 9, 1939.

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LITERARY training does not always mean expansion of the intellect. Primarily it is a matter of memorising. A letter is imprinted on the brain in the same way as any other picture. But literary training is more than mere reading.

—*Harijan*: April 5, 1942.

Effort

I KNOW that there is a school of philosophy which teaches complete inaction and futility of all effort. I have not been able to appreciate that teaching, unless, in order to secure verbal agreement, I were to put my own interpretation on it. In my humble opinion, effort *is* necessary for one's own growth. It has to be irrespective of results. *Ramanama* or some equivalent is necessary, not for the sake

of repetition, but for the sake of purification, as an aid to effort, for direct guidance from above. It is, therefore, never a substitute for effort. It is meant for intensifying and guiding it in proper channel.

—*Young India* : Oct. 21, 1926.

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IT is for us to make the effort. The result is always in God's hands. —*Young India* : Mar. 12, 1931.

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PROVIDENCE has its appointed hour for everything. We cannot command results; we can only strive.

—*Harijan* : May 6, 1939.

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GLORY lies in the attempt to reach one's goal and not in reaching it. —*Harijan* : April 5, 1942.

Embarrassment

IT is contrary to my creed to embarrass Governments or anybody else. This does not however mean that certain acts of mine may not result in embarrasment. But I should not hold myself responsible for having caused embarrassment when I resist the wrong of a wrong-doer by refusing assistance in his wrong-doing.

—*Young India* : April 28, 1920.

Englishmen

AS the elephant is powerless to think in the terms of the ant, in spite of the best intentions in the world, even so is the Englishman powerless to think in the terms of, or legislate for the Indian.

—*My Experiments With Truth* : Page 301.

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ENGLISHMEN have an amazing capacity for self-deception. —*Young India* : Dec. 20, 1920.

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THE average Englishman is haughty, he does not understand us, he considers himself to be a superior being. He thinks that he is born to rule us. He relies upon his

forts or his gun to protect himself. He despises us. He wants to compel co-operation, *i. e.*, slavery. Even him we have to conquer, not by bending the knee, but remaining aloof from him, but at the same time not hating him nor hurting him. It is cowardly to molest him. If we simply refuse to regard ourselves as his slaves and pay homage to him, we have done our duty. A mouse can only shun the cat. He cannot treat with her till she has filled the points of her claws and teeth. At the same time, we must show every attention to those few Englishmen who are trying to cure themselves and fellow Englishmen of the disease of race superiority. —*Young India* : July 12, 1921.

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Q. WHAT is your own real attitude towards the English and your hope about England?

A. My attitude towards the English is one of utter friendliness and respect. I claim to be their friend, because it is contrary to my nature to distrust a single human being or to believe that any nation on earth is incapable of redemption. I have respect for Englishmen, because I recognise their bravery, their spirit of sacrific for what they believe to be good for themselves, their cohesion and their powers of vast organisation. My hope about them is that they will at no distant date retrace their steps, revise their policy of exploitation of undisciplined and ill-organised races and give tangible proof that India is an equal friend and partner in the British Commonwealth to come. Whether such an event will ever come to pass will largely depend upon our own conduct. That is to say, I have hope of England because I have hope of India. We will not for ever remain disorganised and imitative. Beneath the present disorganisation, demoralisation and lack of initiative I can discover organisation, moral strength and initiative forming themselves. A time is coming when England will be glad of India's friendship and India will disdain to reject the proferred hand because it has once despoiled her. I know that I have nothing to offer in proof

of my hope. It is based on an immutable faith. And it is a poor faith that is based on proof commonly called.

—*Young India* : Mar. 29, 1925.

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THERE is no room for Englishmen as masters. There is room for them if they will remain as friends and helpers.

—*Young India* : Feb. 11, 1926.

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MY enemity is not against them, it is against their rule. I seem to be born to be an instrument to compass the end of that rule. But if a hair of an English head was touched I should feel the same grief as I should over such a mishap to my brother. I say to them as a friend, 'Why will you not understand that your rule is ruining this country? It has got to be destroyed even though you may pound us to powder or drown us.' —*Young India* : April 3, 1930.

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ENGLISHMEN are sportsmen. They have ample sense of humour. They can hit hard and take a beating also in good grace. —*Harijan* : Aug. 6, 1938.

Error

WHENEVER I see an erring man, I say to myself I have also erred; when I see a lustful man I say to myself, so was I once; and in this way I feel kinship with every one in the world and feel that I cannot be happy without the humblest of us being happy.

—*Young India* : June 7, 1920

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AN error does not become truth by reason of multiplied propagation, nor does truth become error because nobody will see it. —*Young India* : Dec. 17, 1921.

EVEN as wisdom often comes from the mouths of babes, so does it often come from the mouths of old people. The golden rule is to test everything in the light of reason and experience, no matter from whom it comes.

—*Young India* : Dec. 25, 1921.

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TO err is human and it must be held to be equally human to forgive if we, though being fallible, would like rather to be forgiven than punished and reminded of our misdeeds. —*Young India* : Nov. 18, 1920.

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THE only virtue I want to claim is Truth and Non-violence. I lay no claim to superhuman powers. I want none. I wear the same corruptible flesh that the weakest of my fellow beings wears, and am therefore as liable to err as any. My services have many limitations, but God has up to now blessed them in spite of the imperfections.

—*Young India* : Feb. 16, 1922.

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CONFESSION of error is like a broom that sweeps away dirt and leaves the surface cleaner than before.

—*Young India* : Feb. 16, 1922.

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NEVER has man reached his destination by persistence in deviation from the straight path.

—*Young India* : Feb. 16, 1922.

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ERROR can claim no exemption even if it can be supported by the scriptures of the world.

—*Young India* : Feb. 26, 1925.

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A MAN of truth must ever be confident, if he has also equal need to be diffident. His devotion to truth

demands the fullest confidence. His consciousness of the fallibility of human nature must make him humble and therefore ever ready to retrace his steps immediately he discovers his error. It makes no difference to his confidence that he has previously made Himalayan blunders. His confession and penance make him, if anything, stronger for future action. Discovery of errors makes the votary of truth more cautious of believing things and forming conclusions, but once he has made up his mind, his confidence must remain unshaken. His errors may result in men's reliance upon his judgments being shaken, but he must not doubt the truth of his position once he has come to a conclusion. It should further be borne in mind that my errors have been errors of calculation and judging men, not in appreciating the true nature of truth and *ahimsa* or in their application. Indeed these errors and my prompt confessions have made me surer, if possible, of my insight into the implications of truth and *ahimsa*. For I am convinced that my action in suspending Civil Disobedience at Ahmadabad, Bombay and Bardoli has advanced the cause of India's freedom and world's peace. I am convinced that because of the suspensions we are nearer *Swaraj* than we would have been without, and this I say in spite of despair being written in thick black letters on the horizon. —*Young India* : Sept. 10, 1925.

I CLAIM to be a simple individual liable to err like any other fellow mortal. I own, however, that I have humility enough to confess my errors and to retrace my steps. —*Young India* : May 6, 1926.

TO err is human ; it is noble after discovery to correct the error and determine never to repeat it.

—*Harijan* : April 13, 1935

TO err, even, grievously is human. But it is human only if there is a determination to mend the error and not to repeat it. The error will be forgotten if the promise is fully redeemed. —*Harijan* : Feb. 6, 1937.

I CLAIM to have no infallible guidance or inspiration So far as my experience goes, the claim to infallibility on the part of a human being would be untenable, seeing that inspiration too can come only to one who is free from the action of pairs of opposites, and it will be difficult to judge on a given occasion whether the claim to freedom from pairs of opposites is justified. The claim to infallibility would thus always be a most dangerous claim to make. This however does not leave us without any guidance whatsoever. The sum-total of the experience of the sages of the world is available to us and would be for all time to come. —*Young India* : Jan. 24, 1931.

WHEN Non-co-operation was in full swing, and when during the course of the struggle I confessed to an error of judgment, a friend innocently wrote to me : 'Even if it was an error, you ought not to have confessed it. People ought to be encouraged to believe that there is at least one man who is infallible. You used to be looked upon as such. Your confession will now dishearten them.' This made me smile and also made me sad. I smiled at the correspondent's simpleness. But the very thought of encouraging people to believe a fallible man to be infallible was more than I could bear.

A knowledge of one as he is can always do good to the people, never any harm. I firmly believe that my prompt confession of my errors have been all to the good for them. For me at any rate they have been a blessing.

—*Harijan* : July 17, 1937

IT is easier not to do a thing at all than to cease doing it, even as it is easier for a life abstainer to remain teetotaller than for a drunkard or even a temperate man to abstain. To remain erect is infinitely easier than to rise from a fall. —*Harijan* : Dec. 1, 1938.

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ALL sins are committed in secrecy. The moment we realise that God witnesses even our thoughts we shall be free. —*Harijan* : Jan. 17, 1939.

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I BELIEVE that if in spite of the best of intentions one is led into committing mistakes, they do not really result in harm to the world or for the matter of that any individual. God always saves the world from the consequences of unintended errors of men who live in fear of Him. —*Young India* : Jan. 3, 1939.

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IT is my firm belief that not one of my known errors was wilful. Indeed what may appear to be an obvious error to one may appear to another as pure wisdom.

—*Young India* : Jan. 3, 1939.

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THERE is no defeat in the confession of one's error. The confession itself is a victory —*Harijan* : May 27, 1939.

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IT is best to own the error. It is sure to add to our strength. Error ceases to be error when it is corrected.

Young India : Mar. 2, 1940.

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Q. IS not the realisation of one's error and the resolve never to repeat it a penance in itself? Is any further penance necessary ?

A. Realisation of an error, which amounts to a fixed resolve never to repeat it, is enough penance. One casts

away his evil habits as a snake casts off his skin, and thus purifies himself. Such self-purification is itself complete penance But he who gets into the habit of committing errors cannot easily shed it. For all such, penance in its accepted sense, if undertaken with discrimination, is likely to be a great help. —*Harijan* : Sept. 15, 1940.

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I AM always ready to correct my mistakes. A full and candid admission of one's mistake should make one proof against its repetition. A full realization of one's mistake is also the highest form of expiation. —*Harijan* : April 6, 1940.

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I HAVE always held that it is only when one sees one's own mistakes with a convex lens, and does just the reverse in the case of others, that one is able to arrive at a just relative estimate of the two.

—*My Experiments With Truth* : Page 575.

Evil

A MAN who broods on evil is as bad as a man who does evil, if he is no worse. —*Young India* : Jan. 1, 1921.

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IT is easier for the average man to run away from evil than to remain in it and still remain unaffected by it. Many men can shun grog-shops and remain teetotallers, but not many can remain in these pestilential places and avoid the contagion. —*Young India* : Aug. 6, 1925.

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FOR me the fight is never with individuals it is ever with their manners and their measures.

—*Young India* : Dec. 31, 1931.

Exaggeration

A CAUSE can only lose by exaggeration.

—*Young India* : July 21, 1921.

Exercise

NO matter what amount of work one has, one should always find some time for exercise, just as one does for one's meals. It is my humble opinion that, far from taking away from one's capacity for work, it adds to it.

—*My Experiments With Truth*: Page 287.

Expediency

I HAVE a horror of the word 'expediency' because of its bad odour. As a rule, expediency is often opposed to morality and does not exclude the use of violence.

—*Young India* : Dec. 12, 1921.

Experiments

He who would go in for novel experiments must begin with himself. That leads to a quicker discovery of truth, and God always protects the honest experimenter.

—*My Experiments With Truth*: Page 376.

Exploitation

EXPLOITATION of the poor can be extinguished not by affecting the destruction of a few millionaires, but by removing the ignorance of the poor and teaching them to non-co-operate with their exploiters That will convert the exploiters also. I have even suggested that ultimately it will lead to both being equal partners. Capital as such is not evil ; it is its wrong use that is evil. Capital in some form or other will always be needed.

—*Harijan* : July 28, 1940.

F

Faith

I DO not claim to know definitely that all conscious thought and action on my part is directed by the Spirit. But on an examination of the greatest steps that I have taken in my life, as also of those that may be regarded as the least. I think it will not be improper to say that all of them were directed by the Spirit.

I have not seen Him, neither have I known Him. I have made the world's faith in God my own, and as my faith is ineffaceable. I regard that faith as amounting to experience. However, as it may be said that to describe faith as experience is to temper with truth, it may perhaps be more correct to say that I have no word for characterizing my belief in God.

—*My Experiments With Truth* : Page 341.

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INDEED one's faith in one's plans and methods is truly tested when the horizon before one is the blackest.

—*Young India* : April 3, 1924.

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FAITH knows no disappointment.

—*Young India* : July 24, 1924.

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THERE is no cause for despondency for a man who has faith and resolution. —*Young India* : Aug. 14, 1924.

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IT is poor faith that needs fair wheather for standing firm. That alone is true faith that stands the foulest weather. —*Young India* : Nov. 20, 1924.

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IT is a poor faith that is based on proof commonly called. —*Young India* : Jan. 29, 1925.

ONE'S faith has got to be bright and intelligent before it can enkindle faith in others.

—*Young India* : Oct. 22, 1925.

BLIND enthusiasm and blind faith can lead to no lasting good. —*Young India* : Oct. 22, 1925.

IT is faith that steers us through stormy seas, faith that moves mountains and faith that jumps across the ocean. That faith is nothing but a living, wide-awake consciousness of God within. He who has achieved that faith wants nothing. —*Young India* : Sept. 24, 1925.

THE more I live the more I realise how much I owe to faith and prayer which is one and the same thing for me. And I am quoting an experience not limited to a few hours, or days or weeks, but extending over an unbroken period of nearly 40 years. I have had my share of disappointments, uttermost darkness, counsels of despair, counsels of caution, subtlest assaults of pride; but I am able to say that my faith—and I know that it is still little enough by no means as great as I want it to be,—has ultimately conquered every one of these difficulties up to now. If we have faith in us, if we have a prayerful heart, we may not tempt God, may not make terms with him. We must reduce ourselves to a cipher.

—*Young India* : Dec. 22, 1928.

WANT of faith is the father of an innumerable brood of doubts. —*Young India* : Feb. 21, 1929.

FAITH cannot be given by anybody. It has to come from within. —*Young India* : April 17, 1930.

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THAT faith is of little value which can flourish only in fair whether. Faith in order to be of any value has to survive the severest trials. Your faith is a whited sepulchre if it cannot stand against the calumny of the whole world. —*Young India* : April 25, 1929.

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AN M. B. B. S. from Mandalay sends a string of questions of which the first is :

"You once expressed your opinion in the pages of *Young India* that faith begins where reason ends. Then I expect you will call it faith, if a person believes in a thing for which he can give no reasons. Is it not then clear that faith is believing unreasonably ? Do you think it truth or justice if anybody believed in anything unreasonable ? I think it is folly to believe in that way. I do not know what your barrister mind will call it. If you think like me I hope you will call faith as nothing but folly."

If the worthy doctor will excuse my saying so, there is in his question a clear failure to understand my meaning. That which is beyond reason is surely not unreasonable. Unreasonable belief is blind faith and is often superstition. To ask anybody to believe without proof what is capable of proof would be unreasonable as for instance asking an intelligent person to believe without the proof that the sum of the angles of a triangle is equal to two right angles. But, for an experienced person to ask another to believe without being able to prove that there is God is humbly to confess his limitations and to ask another to accept in faith the statement of his experience. It is merely a question of that person's credibility. In ordinary matters of life we accept in faith the word of persons on whom

we choose to rely although we are often cheated. Why may we not then in matters of life and death accept the testimoney of sages all the world over that there is God and that He is to be seen by following Truth and Innocence (non-violence) ? It is at least as reasonable for me to ask my correspondent to have that faith in this universal testimony as it would be for him to ask me to take his medicine in faith even though many a medicineman might have failed me. I make bold to say that without faith this world would come to nought in a moment. True faith is appropriation of the reasoned experience of people whom we believe to have lived a life purified by prayer and penance. Belief, therefore, in prophets or incarnations who have lived in remote ages is not an idle superstition but a satisfaction of an inmost spiritual want. The formula, therefore I have humbly suggested for guidance is rejection of every demand for faith where a matter is capable of present proof and unqestioned acceptance on faith of that which is itself incapable of proof except through personal exprience.

—*Young India* : 14, July 1927.

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A MAN without faith is like a drop thrown out of the ocean bound to perish. Every drop in the ocean shares its majesty and has the honour of giving us the ozone of life. —*Harijan* : April 25, 1936.

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WORK without faith is like an attempt to reach the bottom of a bottomless pit. —*Harijan* : Oct. 30, 1936.

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DR. MOTT : What affords you the greatest hope and satisfaction ?

Gandhiji : Faith in myself born of Faith in God.

Dr. Mott : In moments when your heart may sink within you, you hark back to this faith in God.

Gandhiji : Yes. That is why I have always described myself as an irrepressible optimist.

—*Harijan* : Dec. 26, 1936.

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FAITH can be turned into knowledge by experience, and it can come only through the heart and not by the intellect. The intellect, if anything, acts as a barrier in matters of faith. —*Harijan* : June 18, 1938.

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THE greater the difficulties, the greater should be our faith. —*Harijan* : April 6, 1940.

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REASON is a poor thing in the midst of temptations. Faith alone can save us. Reason *appears* to be on the side of those who indulge in drink and free love. The fact is that reason is blurred on such occasions. It follows the instinct. Don't lawyers ranged on opposite sides make reason appear to be on their side ? And yet one of them must be wrong, or it may be that both are. Hence faith in the rightness of one's moral position is the only bulwark against the attack of reason.

There is no such thing as absolute morality for all times. But there is a relative morality which is absolute enough for imperfect mortals that we are. Thus, it is absolutely immoral to drink spirituous liquors except as medicine, in medicinal doses and under medical advice. Similarly, it is absolutely wrong to see lustfully any woman other than one's wife. Both these positions have been proved by cold reason. Counter arguments have always been advanced. They have been advanced against the very existence of God the sum of all that is. Faith that transcends reason is our only Rock of Ages. My faith has saved me and is still saving some from pitfalls. It has never betrayed me. It has never been known to betray anyone.

—*Harijan* : Dec. 23, 1939.

I FANCY I see the distinction between you and me. You, as a Westerner, cannot subordinate reason to faith. I, as an Indian, cannot subordinate faith to reason even if I will You tempt the Lord God with your reason; I won't. As the *Gita* says: *God is the fifth, or the unknown, deciding factor.*

—*Harijan* : Oct. 23, 1939.

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FAITH is the function of the heart. It must be enforced by reason. The two are not antagonistic as some think. The more intense one's faith is, the more it whets one's reason. When faith becomes blind it dies.

—*Harijan* : April 6, 1940.

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I AM a man of faith. My reliance is solely on God. One step is enough for me The next step He will make clear to me when time for it comes.

My faith is not a sham but a reality greater than the fact that I am penning these lines.

—*Harijan* : Oct. 20, 1940.

Fasting

A MIND consciously unclean cannot be cleaned by fasting, modifications in diet have no effect on it. The concupiscence of the mind cannot be rooted out except by intense self-examination, surrender to God and lastly, grace. But there is an intimate connection between the mind and the body, and the carnal mind always lusts for delicacies and luxuries. To obviate this tendency dietetic restrictions and fasting would appear to be necessary. The carnal mind, instead of controlling the senses, becomes their slave, and therefore the body always needs clean non-stimulating foods and periodical fasting.

—*My Experiments With Truth* : Page 403.

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A MAN emerging from a long fast should not be in a hurry to regain lost strength, and should also put a

curb on his appetite. More caution and perhaps more restraint are necessary in breaking a fast than in keeping it. —*My Experiments With Truth* : Page 422.

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A HARTAL brought about voluntarily and without pressure is a powerful means of showing popular disapproval, but fasting is even more so. When people fast in a religious spirit and thus demonstrate their grief before God, it receives a certain response. Hardest hearts are impressed by it. Fasting is regarded by all religions as a great discipline. Those who voluntarily fast become gentle and purified by it. A pure fast is a very powerful prayer. It is no small thing for lakhs of people voluntarily to abstain from food and such a fast is a *Satyagrahi* fast. It ennobles individuals and nations. In it there should be no intention of exercising undue pressure upon the Government. But we do observe that like so many other good acts this one of fasting too is sometimes abused. In India we often see beggars threatening of fast, fasting, or pretending to fast, until they receive what they ask for. This is *duragrahi* fasting and the person so fasting degrades himself and it will be the proper thing to let such people fast. It is false kindness to give anything under pressure of such fasting. If it were to be otherwise, fasting may be resorted to even for securing unlawful demands. Where it is a question of determining the justice or otherwise of a particular act there is no room for any other force but that of reason regulated by the voice of conscience. —*Young India* : May 7, 1919.

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THERE is nothing so powerful as fasting and prayer that would give us the requisite discipline, spirit of self-sacrifice, humility and resoluteness of will without which there can be no real progress.

—*Young India* : Mar. 31, 1920.

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IN two or three cases, volunteers visited villagers, and

on the parents hesitating to withdraw their children from Government schools, sat *dhurana* and fasted until the bewildered parents had complied with their request. I told the workers that even this kind of pressure bordered on violence, for we had no right to make people conform to our opinion by fasting. One may conceivably fast for enforcing one's right but not for imposing one's opinion on another.

—*Young India* : Dec. 8, 1921

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I KNOW that the mental attitude is everything. Just as a prayer may be merely a mechanical intonation as of a bird, so may a fast be a mere mechanical torture of the flesh. Such mechanical contrivances are valueless for the purpose intended. Again, just as a mechanical chant may result in the modulation of voice, a mechanical fast may result in purifying the body. Neither will touch the soul within.

But a fast undertaken for fuller self-expression, for attainment of the spirit's supremacy over the flesh, is a most powerful factor in one's evolution.

—*Young India* : Feb. 16, 1922.

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ALL fasting and all penance must as far as possible be secret. But my fasting is both a penance and a punishment, and a punishment has to be public. It is penance for me and punishment for those whom I try to serve, for whom I love to live and would equally love to die. They have unintentionally sinned against the laws of the Congress, though they were sympathisers if not actually connected with it. —*Young India* : Feb. 16, 1922.

(In connection with Chauri Chaura Riots)

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FASTING in *Satyagraha* has well-defined limits. You cannot fast against a tyrant, for it will be a species of violence done to him. You invite penalty from him for disobedience of his orders but you cannot inflict on yourselves

penalties when he refuses to punish and renders it impossible for you to disobey his orders so as to compel infliction of penalty. Fasting can only be resorted to against a lover, not to extort rights but to reform him, as when a son fasts for a father who drinks. My fast at Bombay and then at Bardoli was of that character. I fasted to reform those who loved me. But I will not fast to reform, say, General Dyer, who not only does not love me but who regards himself as my enemy. Am I quite clear ?"

It need not be pointed out that the above remarks are of a general character. The words 'tyrant' and 'lover' have also a general application. The one who does an injustice is styled 'tyrant.' The one who is in sympathy with you is the 'lover.'

There are two conditions attached to a *Satyagrahi* fasts. It should be against the lover and for his reform, not for extorting rights from him.

I can fast against my father to cure him of a vice, but I may not in order to get from him an inheritance. The beggars of India who sometimes fast against those who do not satisfy them are no more *Satyagrahis* than children who fast against a parent for a fine dress. The former are impudent, the latter are childish. *Young India* : May 1, 1924.

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MY religion teaches me that whenever there is distress which one cannot remove, one must fast and pray.

—*Young India* : Sept. 25, 1924.

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THOUGH almost all my fasts have been undertaken for a moral purpose, being an inveterate diet reformer and a believer in fasting as a cure for many obstinate diseases, I have not failed to note their physical effects. I must, however, confess that I have not made any accurate observations for the simple reason that it was not possible for me to combine the two. I was much too pre-occupied with the moral values to note or mind the physical.

—*Young India* : Dec. 17, 1925.

FROM a layman's and from a purely physical standpoint, I should lay down the following rules for all those who may wish to fast on any account what soever :

1. Conserve your energy both physical and mental from the very beginning.

2. You must cease to think of food whilst you are fasting.

3. Drink as much cold water as you can, with or without soda and salt, but in small quantities at a time (water should be boiled, strained and cooled). Do not be afraid of salt and soda, because most waters contain both these salts in a free state.

4. Have a warm sponge daily.

5. Take an enema regularly during fast. You will be surprised at the impurities you will expel daily.

6. Sleep as much as possible in the open air.

7. Bathing in the morning sun. A sun and air bath is at least as great a purifier as a water bath.

8. Think of anything else but the fast.

9. No matter from what motive you are fasting, during this precious time, think of your Maker, and of your relation to Him and His other creation, and you will make discoveries you may not have even dreamed of.

With apologies to medical friends, but out of the fulness of my own experience and that of fellow-cranks I say without hesitation, fast (1) if you are constipated, (2) if you are anaemic, (3) if you are feverish, (4) if you have indigestion, (5) if you have a head-ache, (6) if you are rehumatic, (7) if you are gouty, (8) if you are fretting and foaming, (9) if you are depressed, (10) if you are overjoyed; and you will avoid medical prescriptions and patent medicines.

Eat *only* when you are *hungry* and when you have laboured for your food. —*Young India* : Dec. 17, 1925.

MY religion says that only he who is prepared to suffer can pray to God. Fasting and prayer are common injunctions in my religion. But I know of this sort of penance even in Islam. In the life of the Prophet I have read that the Prophet often fasted and prayed, and forbade others to copy him. Some one asked him why he did not allow others to do the thing he himself was doing. 'Because I live on food divine,' he said. He achieved most of his great things by fasting and prayer. I learnt from him that only he can fast who has inexhaustible faith in God. The prophet had revelations not in moments of ease and luxurious living He fasted and prayed, kept awake for nights together and would be on his feet at all hours of the night as he received the revelations.

The public will have to neglect my fasts and cease to worry about them. They are a part of my being. I can as well do without my eyes, for instance, as I can without fasts. What the eyes are for outer world, fasts are for the inner. And much as I should like the latest fast to be the very last in my life, something within me tells me that I might have to go through many such ordeals and, who knows, much more trying. I may be wholly wrong. Then the world will be able to write an epitaph over my ashes : 'Well deserved thou fool.' But for the time being my error, if it be one, must sustain me. Is it not better that I satisfy my conscience though misguided, because not perfectly pure, than that I should listen to every voice, be it ever so friendly but by no means infallible ? If I had a *Guru*,— and I am looking for one, I should surrender myself body and soul to him. But in this age of unbelief a true *Guru* is hard to find. A substitute will be worse than useless, often positively harmful. I must therefore warn all against accepting imperfect ones as *Gurus*. It is better to grope in the dark and wade through a million errors to Truth than to entrust oneself to one who " knows not that he knows not." Has a man ever learnt swimming by tying a stone to his neck ?

And who shall lose by erroneous fasting? Of course only myself. But I am public property, it is said. So be it. But I must be taken with all my faults. I am a searcher after truth. My experiments I hold to be infinitely more important than the best equipped Himalayan expeditions. And the results? If the search is scientific, surely there is no comparison between the two. Let me therefore go my way. I shall lose my usefulness the moment I stifle the still small voice within.

—*Young India* : Dec. 19, 1925.

THERE are many forms of *Satyagraha*, of which fasting may or may not be one, according to the circumstances of the case. A friend has put the following poses :

> "A man wants to recover money another owes him. He cannot do so by going to law as he is a non-co-operator, and the debtor in the intoxication of the power of his wealth pays him no heed, and refuses even to accept arbitration.
>
> If in these circumstances, the creditor sits *dhurna* at the debtor's door, would it not be *Satyagraha*? The fasting creditor seeks to injure no one by his fasting. Ever since the golden age of Rama we have been following this method. But I am told you regard this as intimidation. If you do, will you kindly explain?"

I know the correspondent. He has written from the purest motive. But I have no doubt that he is mistaken in his interpretation of *Satyagraha*. *Satyagraha* can never be resorted to for personal gain. If fasting with a view to recovering money is to be encouraged, there would be no end of scoundrels blackmailing people by resorting to the means. I know that many such people are to be met with in the country. It is not right to argue that those who rightly resort to fasting need not be condemned because it is abused in a few cases. Any and every one may not draw his own distinction between fasting—*Satyagraha*—

true and false. What one regards as true *Satyagraha* may very likely be otherwise. *Satyagraha*, therefore, cannot be resorted to for personal gain, but only for the good of others. A *Satyagrahi* should always be ready to undergo suffering and pecuniary loss. That there would not be wanting dishonest people to reap an undue advantage from the boycott of law-courts practised by good people was a contingency not unexpected at the inception of Non-Co-operation. It was then thought that the beauty of Non-Co-operation lay just in taking those risks.

But *Satyagraha* in the form of fasting cannot be undertaken as against an opponent. Fasting can be resorted to only against one's nearest and dearest, and that solely for his or her good.

In a country like India, where the spirit of charity or pity is not lacking, it would be nothing short of an outrage to resort to fasting for recovering money. I know people who have given away money, quite against their will, but out of a false sense of pity. The *Satyagrahi* has therefore to proceed warily in a land like ours. It is likely that some men may succeed in recovering money due to them, by resorting to fasting ; but instead of calling it a triumph of *Satyagraha*, I would call it a triumph of *Duragraha* or violence. The triumph of *Satyagraha* consists in meeting death in the insistence on truth. A *Satyagrahi* is always unattached to the attainment of the object of *Satyagraha* ; one seeking to recover money cannot be so unattached. I am therefore clear that fasting for the sake of personal gain is nothing short of intimidation and the result of ignorance.

—*Young India* : Oct. 7, 1926.

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OF what use is it to force the flesh merely if the spirit refuses to co-operate ? You may starve even unto death but if at the same time the mind continues to hanker after objects of the sense, your fast is a sham and a delusion.

—*Young India* : Oct. 4, 1928.

ONE of the candidates for the *Khadi* service went in one day with his own ailment. He said he was very much prone to anger and he wanted to cleanse himself with fasting. 'I warn you,' said Gandhiji, 'that fasting is not always a penance for sins. Humble surrender to God is the only escape from sin, and all fasting except when it is undertaken to help that surrender is useless. I would suggest a better remedy. Go and apologise to the man you were angry with, ask him to prescribe the penance for you and do that. That will be much better expiation than fasting.' The friend went and did likewise. But what should the man who has been wronged do in this case? Simply forgive? Forgiveness, we have been told, is the ornament of the brave, but what is that forgiveness? Passivity? Taking the blow lying down? Is that the meaning of resisting not evil?

This was the subject of a talk one evening and I summarise it briefly: "This talk of passive non-resistance has been the bane of our national life. Forgiveness is a quality of the soul, and therefore a positive quality. It is not negative. 'Conquer anger,' says Lord Buddha, 'by non-anger.' But what is that 'non-anger?' It is a positive quality and means the supreme virtue of charity or love. You must be roused to this supreme virtue which must express itself in your going to the angry man, ascertaining from him the cause of his anger, making amends if you have given any cause for offence and then bringing home to him the error of his way and convincing him that it is wrong to be provoked. This consciousness of the quality of the soul, and deliberate exercise of it elevate not only the man but the surrounding atmosphere. Of course only he who has that love will exercise it. This love can certainly be cultivated by incessant striving." (M.D.)

—*Young India*: Jan. 11, 1928.

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WE have it in our *shastras* that whenever things go

wrong, good people and sages go in for *tapasya* otherwise known as austerities. Gautama himself, when he saw oppression, injustice and death around him, and when he saw darkness in front of him, at the back of him, and each side of him, went out in the wilderness and remained there fasting and praying in search of light. And if such penance was necessary for him who was infinitely greater than all of us put together how much more necessary is it for us

—*Young India*: April 18, 1929.

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FAST is the last weapon of a *Satyagraha* against loved ones —*Young India*: April 17, 1930.

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STARVATION of the body when the mind thinks of a multiplicity of dishes is worse than useless.

—*Young India*: April 17, 1930.

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THE physical and moral value of fasting is being more and more recognised day by day. A vast number of diseases can be more surely treated by judicious fasting than by all sorts of nostrums including the dreadful injections—dreadful not because of the pain they cause but because of the injurious by-products which often result from their use. More mischief than we are aware of is done by the drug treatment. But not many cases of harm done by fasting can be cited. Increased vitality is almost the universal experience of those that have fasted For real rest for body and mind is possible only during fasting. Suspension of daily work is hardly rest that the overtaxed and overworked digestive apparatus needs in a multitude of cases The moral effect of fasting, while it is considerable, is not so easily demonstrable. For moral results there has to be perfect co-operation from the mind. And there is danger of self-deception. I know of many instances in which fasting undertaken for moral results has been overdone. To a limited extent it is a most valuable agent if the person fasting

knows what he is doing. There was considerable force in the warning given by the Prophet against his disciples copying his fasting over and above the semi-fasts of *Ramzan*. 'My Maker sends me food enough when I fast, not so to you,' said the Prophet. Of what use is a spiritual fast when the spirit hankers more after food, the longer the body is starved ?

—*Young India* : Mar. 28, 1929.

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A PARROT-LIKE repetition of the choicest sentiment and mere starvation of the body would be worse than useless. Prayer and fasting avail where there is a definite consciousness of the presence of God in us, even as we have of friends living under the same roof. Self-deception will not do.

—*Young India* : Aug. 13, 1931.

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THE question asked by the Village Worker's Training School boys was regarding the fasts undertaken by Gandhiji on various occasions. There were those for the redress of public wrongs, as distinguished from fasts undertaken to arouse the conscience of a dear one or an intimate co-worker or those undertaken for self-purification. Some of these are well known, *e. g.*, those undertaken at the time of the mill labourer's strike in Ahmedabad in 1918 ; those that followed the Ahmedabad riots in 1919, which were of a purely self-purificatory character : the Hindu-Muslim Unity fast of 1924 ; and the three *Harijan* fasts of 1932, 1933 and 1934. I need not go into the details of these. But there was one of which few readers are likely to have any knowledge. I at any rate had certainly no definite recollection of it—and which has not been, so far as I remember, recorded anywhere. That was the first occasion of self-suffering in connection with a public movement, and I must share with the readers the details given by Gandhiji on that Sunday morning.

It was in 1913. The Indian Labourers on the South Coast of Natal, from Durban to Isiping went on strike when they came to know of the miners' strike and the marchers' imprisonment. They all knew that the fight had developed into one for their emancipation from the annual poll tax of £3. But they had never been asked to go on strike. For two obvious reasons. For one thing Gandhiji had never intimately known the labourers on the South Coast, and secondly it was physically impossible to maintain the thousands of labourers and it would be most difficult to prevent a breach of the peace. But the news of suffering in one part of the country and in jails spread like wild fire, and there was no stopping these labourers. The Government came down upon them with a heavy hand. All kind of pressure was put upon them to bring them back to work, and the slightest resistance was answered by rifle fire. These events were followed by an enquiry. Gandhiji was prematurely released from jail. When he learnt of these events, he imposed on himself a triple vow of self-suffering to be observed until the £3 tax was abolished: (1) To adopt the labourer's dress, (*i.e.* no head-dress, but only a cloth wrapped round the waist and a *kutra*); (2) To walk barefoot; (3) To have only one meal during the day a meal which during those days consisted of fruits untouched by fire. This penance went on for some months when at last the settlement came and the tax was removed. "I have no doubt," said Gandhiji, "that this penance willingly undertaken and cheerfully gone through had something to do to bringing about the settlement. I do not mean to imply that it had any direct influence upon the Union Government. It is my firm belief that all real penances produce unseen but sure effects. The penance was undertaken for self-purification, for sharing, however humbly in the suffering of the strikers. That was the only way in which I could prayerfully appeal to God."

"The man who performs such penance throws himself wholly and solely on God. He does not undertake such a

penance lightly, never in anger, and not certainly with a view to winning any advantage for himself. Then it must not be against an opponent with whom there is no bond of affection. Then it presupposes personal purity and a living belief in non-violence and truth. Obviously there can be no room for pride in such penance." (M. D.)

—*Harijan* : Dec 12, 1936.

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FASTING is an institution as old as Adam. It has been resorted to for self-purification or for some ends noble as well as ignoble. Buddha, Jesus and Mohammad fasted so as to see God face to face. Ramchandra fasted for the sea to give way for his army of monkeys. Parvati fasted to secure Mahadev himself as her Lord and Master. In my fasts I have but followed these great examples no doubt for ends much less noble than theirs.

—*Harijan* : Mar. 18, 1939.

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FASTING is a potent weapon in the armoury. It cannot be taken by everyone. Mere physical capacity to take it is no qualification for it. It is of no use without a living faith in God. It should never be a mechanical effort nor a mere imitation. It must come from the depth of one's soul. It is therefore always rare. I seem to be made for it. It is noteworthy that not one of my colleagues on the political field has felt the call to fast. And I am thankful to be able to say that they have never resented my fasts. Nor have fellow-members of the *Ashram* felt the call except on rare occasions. They have even accepted the restriction that they may not take penitential fasts without my permission, no matter how urgent the inner call may seem to be.

Thus fasting though a very potent weapon has necessarily very strict limitations and is to be taken only by those who have undergone previous training. And, judged by my standard, the majority of fasts do not at all come

under the category of *Satyagraha* fasts and are, as they are popularly called, hunger-strikes undertaken without previous preparation and adequate thought. If the process is repeated too often, these hunger-strikes will lose what little efficiency they may possess and will become objects of ridicule. —*Harijan* : Mar. 18, 1939

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FAST is in my blood and my bones, I imbibed it with my mother's milk. My mother fasted if someone was ill in the family, she fasted if she was in pain, she fasted in season and out of season. How can I her son do otherwise ? —*Harijan* : April 8, 1939.

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Q. ARE not all fasts violent ? Do I not coerce a friend when I try to prevent him, by means of my fast, from doing a wrong act ?

A. Fasts undertaken according to the rules governing them are truly non-violent. There is no room there for coercion. If a friend of mine is going astray, and if I impose suffering on myself by fasting in order to awaken his better instincts, it can be only out of love. If the friend for whom I fast has no love in him, he will not respond. If he has it and responds, it is all to the good. This is how I would analyse his act: He valued his love for me more than his bad ways. There is a possible risk, I admit, namely that as soon as the effect of the fast is over he would be tempted to go back to his old ways. But then I can fast again. Ultimately the increasing influence of my love will either convert the friend to the extent of weaning him completely from his evil ways, or repeated fasts may lose their novelty, blunt his mind, and make it impervious to my fasting. It is my conviction that a fast undertaken out of genuine love cannot have such an untoward result. But because such a result is not impossible we cannot afford to disregard this pure instrument of

moral reform. The risk, however, makes it clear that he who fasts should be properly qualified, and that it should not be lightly undertaken. —*Harijan* : Sept. 15, 1940.

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I HAVE however been driven to the conclusion that fasting unto death is an integral part of *Satyagraha* programme, and it is the greatest and most effective weapon in its armoury under given circumstance. Not every one is qualified for undertaking it without proper course of training. —*Harijan* : July 26, 1942.

Fate

FATES decide my undertakings for me. I never go to seek them. They come to me almost in spite of me. That has been my lot all my life long, in South Africa as well as ever since my return to India.

—*Young India* : May 7, 1925.

Faults

THERE is no one without faults, not even men of God. They are men of God not because they are faultless, but because they know their own faults, they strive against them, they do not hide them and are ever ready to correct themselves. —*Harijan* : Jan. 28, 1939.

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WHEN we are afraid, it is our *ahimsa* that is at fault. Love and weakness cannot co-exist.

—*Harijan* : July 6, 1940.

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I AM never accustomed to weigh my sins in golden scales. I can atone for them only if I make a mountain of a mole-hill. The reason is simple. Man can never see his faults in proper perspective, and, if he really did so, he would scarcely survive them. The remedy is, therefore, to magnify one's shortcomings.

—*Harijan* : Feb. 1, 1942.

Fear

THERE is only one Being, if Being is the proper term to be used, whom we have to fear, and that is God ? When we fear God, we shall fear no man, no matter how high-placed he may be. And if you want to follow the vow of truth in any shape or form, fearlessness is the necessary consequence. And so you find, in the *Bhagwad Gita*, fearlessness is declared as the first essential quality of a *Brahman*. We fear consequences, and therefore we are afraid to tell the Truth. A man who fears God will certainly not fear any earthly consequences. Before we can aspire to the position of understanding what religion is, and before we can aspire to the position of guiding the destinies of India, do you not see that we should adopt this habit of fearlessness ? or shall we over-awe our countrymen, even as we are over-awed ?

—*Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi* : Page 813.

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FEAR has its use, but cowardice has none. I may not put my finger into the jaws of a snake, but the very sight of the snake need not strike terror into me. The trouble is that we often die many times before death overtakes us.

—*Harijan* : Aug. 25, 1940.

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WHERE there is fear there is no religion.

—*Harijan* : Aug. 25, 1940.

Foreign Cloth

IT revives black memories and is a mark of shame, the East India Company, having forced it on us and is an emblem of slavery.

The poor should not be given these for they ought not to be dead to patriotism, dignity and respect.

—*Young India* : July 28, 1921.

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I FEEL that it was right and wise on the part of the sisters who gave their costly clothing. Its destruction was

the most economical use you could have made of it, even as destruction of plague-infected articles is their most economical and best use. It was a necessary surgical operation designed to avert more serious complaints in the body politic. —*Young India*: Aug. 11, 1921.

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IN burning foreign clothes, we are burning our taste for foreign fineries. The effect upon India would have been equally disastrous, if Japan instead of England had tempted us in the first instance. The motive was to punish ourselves and not the foreigner. We are boycotting not British but all foreign cloth. The one would be meaningless as the other is a sacred duty. The idea of burning springs not from hate but from repentance of our past sins. A moment's reflection must show the writer that burning must make us earnest and thus stimulate, as it has stimulated, fresh manufacture. The disease had gone so deep, that a surgical operation was a necessity. The ill-clad or the naked millions of India need no charity but work that they can easily do in their cottages. Have not the poor any feeling of self-respect or patriotism? Is the gospel of patriotism only for the well-to-do?

—*Young India*: Sept. 15, 1921.

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EVERY yard of foreign cloth, brought into India, is one bit of bread snatched out of the mouths of the starving poor.

—*Young India*: Nov. 13, 1924.

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IT is as much a duty as boycott of foreign waters would be if they were imported to substitute the waters of the Indian rivers. —*Young India*: Dec. 26, 1924.

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IT is I hold the duty of Great Britain to regulate her exports with due regard to the welfare of India, as it is India's to regulate her imports with due regard to her

own welfare. That economics is untrue which ignores or disregards moral values. The extension of the law of non-violence in the domain of economics means nothing less than the introduction of moral values as a factor to be considered in regulating international commerce. And I must confess that my ambition is nothing less than to see international relations placed on a moral basis through India's efforts. I do not despair of cultivation of limited mass non-violence. I refuse to believe that the tendency of human nature is always downward.

—*Young India* : Dec. 26, 1924.

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IT is wrong and immoral for a nation to supply, for instance, intoxicating liquor to those who are addicted to drink. What is true of intoxicants is true of grain or cloth, if the discontinuance of their cultivation or manufacture in the country to which foreign grain or cloth are exported results in enforced idleness or penury. These latter hurt a man's soul and body just as much as intoxication. Depression is but excitement upside down and hence equally disastrous in its results and often more so because we have not yet learnt to regard as immoral or sinful the depression of idleness or penury. —*Young India* : Dec. 26, 1924.

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I CALL the Lancashire trade immoral, because it was raised and is sustained on the ruin of millions of India's peasants. And as one immorality leads to another, the many proved immoral acts of Britain are traceable to this one immoral traffic. If therefore this one great temptation is removed from Britain's path by India's voluntary effort, it would be good for India, good for Britain and, as Britain is today the predominant world power, good even for humanity. —*Young India* : Dec. 26, 1926.

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LANCASHIRE has risen on the ashes of India's

greatest cottage industry and it is sustained by the exploitation of the helpless millions of this land.

—*Young India* : Jan. 23, 1927.

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LANCASHIRE is the Government in substance ; and to grant India effective protection against Lancashire would be almost like committing suicide.

—*Young India* : Jan, 23, 1927.

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INDIA'S pauperism reduces Lancashire to moral bankruptcy. —*Young India* : Jan. 23, 1927.

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Q. WHAT is your opinion about the importation of foreign goods other than cloth into India ? Are there any foreign commodities which you would like to see immediately laid under prohibition ? What do you think should be the nature of India's foreign trade in the future ?

A. I am more or less indifferent with regard to trade in foreign goods other than cloth. I have never been an advocate of prohibition of all things foreign because they are foreign. My economic creed is a complete taboo in respect of all foreign commodities whose importation is likely to prove harmful to our indigenous interests. This means that we may not in any circumstance import a commodity that can be adequately supplied from our own country. For instance I would regard it a sin to import Australian wheat on the score of its better quality but I would not have the slightest hesitation in importing oatmeal from Scotland, if an absolute necessity for it is made out, because we do not grow oats in India. In other words I would not countenance the boycott of a single foreign article out of ill-will or a feeling of hatred. Or to take up a reverse case, India produces a sufficient quantity of leather ; it is my duty therefore to wear shoes made out of Indian leather only, even if it is comparatively dearer and of an inferior quality in preference to cheaper and superior

quality foreign leather shoes Similarly I would condemn the introduction of foreign molasses of sugar if enough of it is produced in India for our needs. It will be thus clear from the above that it is hardly possible for me to give an exhaustive catalogue of foreign articles whose importation in India ought to be prohibited. I have simply inculcated the general principle by which we can be guided in all such cases And this principle will hold good in future too so long as the conditions of production in our country remain as they are today.

—*Young India* : Nov. 15 , 1928.

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I WANT you to pledge yourselves not before me but before your God that henceforth you are not going to use any foreign cloth, that you are going to give up foreign clothes in your possession, that you will burn them even as you burn rags in your possession which may require to be disinfected, even as a drunkard who suddenly becomes teetotaller empties his cupboard and destroys every bottle of brandy and whisky in his possession, no matter what it might have cost him. You will count no cost too great against the cause, the liberty and honour of your country.

—*Young India* : Mar. 14, 1929.

Forgiveness

TO forgive is not to forget. The merit lies in loving in spite of the vivid knowledge that the one that must be loved is not a friend. There is no merit in loving an enemy when you forget him for a friend.

—*Young India* : June 23, 1920.

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I BELIEVE that non-violence is infinitely superior to violence, forgiveness is more manly than punishment. Forgiveness adorns a soldier But abstinence is forgiveness only when there is the power to punish : it is meaningless when it pretends to proceed from a helpless

creature. A mouse hardly forgives a cat when it allows itself to be torn to pieces by her.

—*Young India* : Aug. 11, 1920.

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TO err is human and it must be held to be equally human to forgive if we, though being falliable, would like rather to be forgiven than punished and reminded of our deeds. —*Young India* : Nov. 18, 1920.

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FORGIVENESS is a quality of the soul, and therefore a positive quality. It is not negative.

—*Young India* : Jan. 12, 1928.

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THE weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong.

—*Young India* : Dec. 16, 1929.

Foreign Medium Of Instruction

I AM certain that the children of the nation, that receive instruction in a tongue other than their own, commit suicide. It robs them of their birth right. A foreign medium means an undue strain upon the youngsters, it robs them of all originality. It stunts their growth and isolates them from their home.

English is a language of international commerce; it is the language of diplomacy, and it contains many a rich literary treasure, it gives us an introduction to Western thought and culture. For a few of us, therefore, a knowledge of English is necessary They can carry on the departments of national commerce and international diplomacy, and for giving to the nation the best of Western literature, thought and science. That would be the legitimate use of English. Whereas today English has usurped the dearest place in our hearts and dethroned our mother-tongues. It is an unnatural place due to our unequal relations with Englishmen. The highest deve-

lopment of the Indian mind must be possible without a knowledge of English. It is doing violence to the manhood, and specially the womanhood of India, to encourage our boys and girls to think that an entry into the best society is impossible without a knowledge of English. It is too humiliating a thought to be bearable. To get rid of the infatuation for English is one of the essentials of *Swaraj*. —*Young India* : Feb. 2, 1921.

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TILAK and Ram Mohan would have been far greater men if they had not had the contagion of English learning. I am opposed to make a fetish of English education. I don't hate English education. When I want to destroy the Government, I don't want to destroy the English language but read English as an Indian nationalist would do. Ram Mohan and Tilak (leave aside my case) were so many pigmies who had no hold upon the people compared with Chaitanya, Shankar, Kabir and Nanak. Ram Mohan and Tilak were pigmies before these giants. What Shankar alone was able to do, the whole army of English knowing men can't do. I can multiply instances. Was Guru Govind a product of English education ?

—*Young India* : April 13, 1921.

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ENGLISH education has emasculated us, constrained our intellect, and the manner of imparting this education has rendered us effeminate. We want to bask in the sunshine of freedom, but the enslaving system emasculates our nation. Pre-British period was not a period of slavery. We had some sort of *Swaraj* under Moghul rule. In Akbar's time the birth of a Pratap was possible and in Aurangzeb's time a Shivaji could flourish. Has 150 years of British rule produced any Partap and Shivaji?

—*Young India* : April 13, 1921.

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A FRIEND asks me to give my considered view on the value of English education and explain my talk on the

sands at Cuttack. I have not read the report of the talk. But I gladly respond to the friend's wish.

It is my considered opinion that English education in the manner it has been given has emasculated the English-educated Indian, it has put a severe strain upon the Indian students' nervous energy, and has made of us imitators. The process of the displacing the vernacular has been one of the saddest chapters in the British connection. Ram Mohan Roy would have been a greater reformer and Lokmanya Tilak would have been a greater scholar, if they had not to start with the handicap of having to think in English and transmit their thoughts chiefly in English. Their effect on their own people, marvellous as it was, would have been greater if they had been brought up under a less unnatural system. No doubt they both gained from their knowledge of the rich treasures of English literature. But these should have been accessible to them through their own vernaculars. No country can become a nation by producing a race of translators. Think of what would have happened to the English if they had not an authorised version of the *Bible*. I do believe that Chaitanya, Kabir, Nanak, Guru Govind Singh, Shivaji and Pratap were greater than Ram Mohan Roy and Tilak. I know that comparisons are odious. All are great in their own way.

But judged by the results, the effect of Ram Mohan and Tilak on the masses is not so permanent or far-reaching as that of the others more fortunately born. Judged by the obstacles they had to surmount, they were giants; and both would have been greater in achieving results if they had not been handicapped by the system under which they received their training. I refuse to believe that the Raja and the Lokmanya could not have thought the thoughts they did without a knowledge of the English language. Of all the superstitions that affect India, none is so great as that a knowledge of the English language is

necessary for imbibing ideas of liberty and developing accuracy of thought. It should be remembered that their has been only one system of education before the country for the past fifty years, and only one medium of expression forced on the country. We have, therefore, no data before us to what we would have been but for the education in the existing schools and colleges. This, however, we do know that India to-day is poorer than fifty years ago, less able to defend herself, and her children have less stamina. I need not be told that that is due to the defect in the system of government. The system of education is its most defective part. It was conceived and born in error, for the English rulers honestly believed the indigenous system to be worse than useless. It has been nurtured in sin, for the tendency has been to dwarf the Indian body, mind and soul. —*Young India* : Dec. 16, 1921

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AMONG the many evils of foreign rule, this blighting imposition of a foreign medium upon the youth of the country will be counted by History as one of the greatest. It has sapped the energy of the nation, it has shortened the lives of the pupils. It has estranged them from the masses, it has made education unnecessarily expensive. If this process is still persisted in, it bids fair to rob the nation of its soul. The sooner, therefore, educated India shakes itself free from the hypnotic spell of the foreign medium, the better it would be for them and the people.

—*Young India* : June 5, 1928.

Frankness

A 'NO' uttered from deepest conviction is better and greater than a 'yes' merely uttered to please, or what is worse, to avoid trouble.

—*Young India* : Mar. 17, 1927.

Fraud

FRAUD itself is a species of violence.

—*Young India* : Mar. 20, 1930

FORCE always includes fraud, non-violence always excludes it. —*Harijan* : Oct. 13, 1937.

Freedom

FREEDOM is never dear at any price. It is the breath of life. What would a man not pay for living.

—*Harijan* : Dec. 10, 1938.

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FREEDOM received through the effort of others, however benevolent, cannot be retained when such effort is withdrawn. In other words, such freedom is not real ıreedom. —*Harijan* : April 20, 1940.

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FREEDOM'S battles are not fought without paying heavy prices. Just as man would not cherish the thought of living in a body other than his own, so do nations not like to live under other nations however noble and great the latter may be. —*Harijan* : Aug. 18, 1940.

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INDIVIDUAL freedom alone can make a man voluntarily surrender himself completely to the service of society? If it is wrested from him, he becomes an automaton and society is ruined. No society can possibly be built on a denial of individual freedom. It is contrary to the very nature of man. Just as a man will not grow horns or a tail so he will not exist as man if he has no mind of his own. In reality even those who do not believe in the liberty of the individual believe in their own modern editions of Chenghiz Khan retain their own.

—*Harijan* : Feb. 1, 1942.

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MY conception of freedom is no narrow conception. It is co-extensive with the freedom of man in all his majesty. —*Harijan* : June 7, 1942.

Freedom of India

SPEAKING with a full sense of responsibility over my shoulders I know the tremendous consequences of civil disobedience and of no-tax campaign in a vast country like this,—a country which has undisciplined masses,—but a man who is mad as I am now after freedom, a man who is hungry after freedom,—and a real hunger for freedom is infinitely more painful than hunger for mere bread,—has got to take tremendous risks, to stake everything that he has in order to gain that precious freedom, and it is because I am hungry for that freedom,—although I am on the threshold of death, I want to see *Swaraj* whilst I have still breath in me that I want to take all those risks. But at the same time I want to take every precaution and therefore I shall plead with the Government and the powers that be, and shall ask them to come to their senses.—*Young India* : March 14, 1929.

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FREEDOM is not worth having if it does not connote freedom to err and even to sin. If God Almighty has given the humblest of His creatures the freedom to err, it passes my comprehension how human beings, be they ever so experienced and able, can delight in depriving other human beings of that precious right.—*Young India* : March 12, 1931.

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I LIVE for India's freedom and would die for it, because it is part of truth. —*Young India* : April 3, 1924.

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THERE is no freedom for India so long as one man, no matter how highly placed he may be, holds in the hollow of his hands the life, property and honour of millions of human beings. It is an artificial, unnatural and uncivilised institution. The end of it is an essential preliminary to *Swaraj*. —*Young India* : Nov. 13, 1924.

IF we want to cultivate a true spirit of democracy, we cannot afford to be intolerant. Intolerance betrays want of faith in one's cause. —*Young India* : Feb. 2, 1922.



THE spirit of democracy which we want to spread throughout India cannot be spread by violence whether verbal or physical, whether direct, indirect or threatened.
—*Young India* : Feb. 23, 1922.



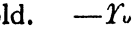
DEMOCRACY is not a state in which people act like sheep. Under democracy, individual liberty of opinion and action is jealously guarded.—*Young India* : Mar. 2, 1922.



I WORK for India's freedom because my *Swadeshi* teaches me that being born in it and having inherited her culture, I am fittest to serve *her* and *she* has a prior claim to my service. But my patriotism is not exclusive ; it is calculated not only not to hurt any other nation but to benefit all in the true sense of the word. India's freedom as conceived by me can never be a menance to the world.
—*Young India* : April 3, 1924.



LET the youth of India realise that the death of Lalaji can only be avenged by regaining her freedom. Freedom of a nation cannot be won by solitary acts of heroism even though they may be of the true type, never by heroism so-called. The temple of freedom requires the patient, intelligent and constructive effort of tens of thousands of men and women, young and old. —*Young India* : Dec. 27, 1928.



I SHALL strive for a constitution, which will release India from all thraldom and patronage, and give her, if need be, the right to sin. I shall work for an India, in which the poorest shall feel that it is their country in whose making

they have an effective voice ; an India in which there shall be no high class and low class of people, an India in which all communities shall live in perfect harmony. There can be no room in such India for the curse of untouchability, or the curse of intoxicating drinks and drugs. Women will enjoy the same rights as men. Since we shall be at peace with all the rest of the world, neither exploiting, nor being exploited, we should have the smallest army imaginable. All interests not in conflict with the interests of the dumb millions will be scrupulously respected, whether foreign or indigenous. Personally, I hate distinction between foreign and indigenous. This is the India of my dreams for which I shall struggle at the next Round Table Conference. I may fail, but if I am to deserve the confidence of the Congress, my principals, I shall be satisfied with nothing less.

—*Young India* : Sept. 10, 1931.

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WE must be content to die if we cannot live as free men and women. —*Young India* : Jan. 5, 1922.

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WE seek arrest because the so-called freedom is slavery. We are challenging the might of this Government because we consider its activity to be wholly evil. We want to overthrow the Government. We want to *compel* its submission to the people's will. We desire to show that the Government exists to serve the people, not the people the Government. Free life under the Goveroment has become intolerable, for the price exacted for the retention of freedom is unconscionably great. Whether we are one or many, we must refuse to purchase freedom at the cost of our self-respect or our cherished convictions. I have known even little children become unbending when an attempt has been made to cross their declared purpose, be it ever so flimsy in the estimation of their parents.

—*Young India* : Dec. 15, 1921.

INDIA'S freedom must revolutionise the world's outlook upon Peace and War. Her impotence affects the whole of mankind. —*Young India* : Sept. 17, 1925.

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IT is true indeed that India's progress in the direction I desire seems to have come to a pause but I think that it only seems so. The little seed that was sown in 1920 has not perished. It is, I think, taking deep root. Presently it will come out as a stately tree.

—*Young India* : Sept. 17, 1925.

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NO man is indispensable for the evolution of this great and ancient land of *Dharma*. Let India live though a hundred Gandhis have to perish. —*Young India* : Oct. 18, 1925.

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SELF-EXPRESSION and self-government are not things which may be either taken from us by any body or which can be given us by anybody. It is quite true that if those who happen to hold our destinies, or seem to hold our destinies in their hands, are favourably disposed, are sympathetic, understand our aspirations, no doubt it is then easier for us to expand. But after all self-government depends entirely upon our own internal strength, upon our ability to fight against the heaviest odds. Indeed, self-government which does not require that continuous striving to attain it and to sustain it is not worth the name. I have therefore endeavoured to show both in word and in deed, that political self-government—that is self-government for a large number of men and women,—is no better than individual self-government, and therefore it is to be attained by precisely the same means that are required for individual self-government or self-rule, and so as you know also, I have striven in India to place this ideal before the people in season and out of season, very often much to the disgust of those who are politically minded merely.

—*Young India* : Dec. 1, 1927.

COUNCILS are no factories for making stout hearts. And freedom is miasma without stout hearts to defend it.

—*Young India* : Dec. 15, 1921

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SELF-GOVERNMENT means continuous effort to be independent of government control whether it is foreign government or whether it is national. *Swaraj* government will be a sorry affair if people look up to it for the regulation of every detail of life. —*Young India* : Aug. 6, 1925.

NO paper contribution will ever give us self-government. No amount of speeches will ever make us fit for self-government. It is only our conduct that will fit us for it. —*Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi* : P. 252.

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IF we are to receive self-government, we shall have to take it. We shall never be granted self-government. Look at the history of the British Empire and the British nation ; freedom-loving as it is, it will not be a party to give freedom to a people who will not take it themselves.

—*Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi* : Page 258.

THE object of our non-violent movement, is complete independence for India—not in any mystic sense but in English sense of the term—without any mental reservation. I feel that every country is entitled to it without any question of its fitness or otherwise. As every country is fit to eat, to drink and to breathe, even so is every nation fit to manage its own affairs, no matter how badly. Just as a man with bad lungs will breathe, with difficulty, even so India, because of her ailments may make a thousand mistakes. The doctrine of fitness to govern is a mere eyewash. Independence means nothing more or less than getting out of alien control. —*Young India*: Oct. 15, 1931.

IF I want freedom for my country, believe me, if I can possibly help it, I do not want that freedom in order that I, belonging to a nation which counts one-fifth of the human race, may exploit any other race upon earth, or any single individual. If I want that freedom for my country, I would not be deserving of that freedom if I did not cherish and treasure the equal right of every other race, weak or strong, to the same freedom. —*Young India* : Oct. 1, 1931.

NOT even for the freedom of India would I resort to an untruth. —*Young India* : Aug. 13, 1931.

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MY interest in India's freedom will cease if she adopts violent means, for their fruit will be not freedom but slavery in disguise. And if we have not yet attained our freedom, it is because we have not been non-violent in thought, word and deed.

I live for India's freedom and would die for it, because it is part of Truth. Only a free India can worship the true God. —*Young India* : April 3, 1924.

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THE British people must realise that the Empire is to come to an end. This they will not realise unless we in India have generated power within to enforce our will. The English have paid dearly for their freedom such as it is. They therefore only respect those who are prepared to pay an adequate price for their own liberty.

— *Young India* : Jan. 23, 1930.

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IF we were not under the spell of hypnotism or if we were not being acted upon by that great force inertia, or want of self-confidence, we would find it the most natural thing to breathe the air of freedom which is ours to breathe.

—*Young India* : Mar. 14, 1929.

WE do not seek our independence out of Britain's ruin. That is not the way of non-violence.

—*Harijan* : June 1, 1940.

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I DO not want Britain's humiliation in order to gain India's freedom. Such freedom, if it were attainable, cannot be manfully retained. —*Harijan* : Aug. 4, 1940.

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I CANNOT think of anyone wanting less than Independence for his country if he can get it. No country has ever got it without its people having fought for it.

—*Harijan* : July 6, 1940.

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I WANT to see India free in my lifetime. But God may not consider me fit enough to see the dream of life fulfilled. Then I shall quarrel, not with him but with myself. —*Harijan* : April 13, 1940.

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WHETHER we are one or many, we must refuse to purchase freedom at the cost of our self-respect or our cherished convictions. I have known even little children become unbending when an attempt has been made to cross their declared purpose, be it ever so flimsy in the estimation of their parents. —*Young India* : Dec. 15, 1921.

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FREEDOM'S battles are not fought without paying heavy prices. Just as man would not cherish the thought of living in a body other than his own, so do nations not like to live under other nations however noble and great the latter may be. —*Harijan* : Mar. 16, 1940.

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Q. SUPPOSING India does become free in your lifetime, what will you devote the rest of your years to ?

A. If India becomes free in my lifetime and I have still energy left in me, of course I would take my due share, though outside the official world, in building up the nation on a strictly non-violent basis. —*Harijan* : April 27, 1940.

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THROUGH the deliverance of India, I seek to deliver the so-called weaker races of the earth from the crushing heels of western exploitation in which England is the greatest partner. —*Young India* : Jan. 12, 1928.

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THERE is no perpetual night on God's earth. Ours too will have its ending. Only we must work for it.

—*Young India* : Mar. 11, 1926.

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I WOULD like to see India free and strong so that she may offer herself as a willing and pure sacrifice for the betterment of the world. The individual, being pure, sacrifices himself for the family, the latter for the village, the village for the district, the district for the province, the province for the nation, the nation for all.

—*Young India* : Sept. 17, 1925.

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IN any event India free cannot deny freedom to any son of the soil. It gives one both pain and surprise when I find people feeling anxious about their future under a free India. For me an India which does not guarantee freedom to the lowliest of those born not merely within an artificial boundary but within its natural boundary is not free India. Our fear paralyses our thinking powers, or we should at once know that freedom means a state at any rate somewhat better than the prsent for every honest man or woman. It is exploitors, money-grabbers, pirates and the like who have to fear the advent of freedom.

—*Young India* : Dec. 26, 1929.

LIBERTY is a jilt most difficult to woo and please.

—*Young India* : Feb. 16, 1922.

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WE dare not enter the kingdom of liberty with mere lip homage to Truth and Non-violence.

—*Young India* : Feb. 16, 1922.

IT would be a thousand times better for us to be ruled by a military dictator than to have the dictatorship concealed under sham councils and assemblies. They prolong the agony and increase the expenditure. If we are so anxious to live, it would be more honourable to face the truth and submit to unabashed dictation than to pretend that we are slowly becoming free. There is no such thing as slow freedom. Freedom is like a birth. Till we are fully free, we are slaves. All birth takes place in a moment.

—*Young India* : Mar. 30, 1922.

Free Trade

I AM an out-and-out protectionist. I hold that every country, especially a poor country like India, has every right and is indeed bound to protect its interest, when it is threatened, by all lawful protective measures and to regain by such measures what has been lawfully taken away from it. —*Young India*: Aug. 2, 1928.

Friendship

WHEN a slave salutes a master and a friend salutes a friend, the form is the same in either case, but there is a world of difference between the two, which enables an observer to recognise the slave and the friend at once.

—*Satyagraha in South Africa* : Page 307.

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A REFORMER cannot afford to have close intimacy with him whom he seeks to reform. True friendship

is an identity of souls rarely to be found in this world. Only between like natures can friendship be altogether worthy and enduring. Friends react on one another. Hence in friendship there is very little scope for reform. I am of opinion that all exclusive intimacies are to be avoided, for man takes in vice far more readily than virtue. And he who would be friends with God must remain alone, or make the whole world his friend. —*My Experiments With Truth* : Page 32.

WHENEVER my contacts with strangers have been painful to friends, I have not hesitated to blame them. I hold that believers who have to see the same God in others that they see in themselves, must be able to live amongst all with sufficient detachment. And the ability to live thus can be cultivated, not by fighting shy of unsought opportunities for such contacts, but by hailing them in a spirit of service and withal keeping oneself unaffected by them. —*My Experiments With Truth* : Page 343.

I COULD think of many friends who have been a source of great comfort to me in the midst of trials and disappointments. One who has faith reads in them the merciful providence of God, who thus sweetens sorrow itself. —*My Experiments With Truth* : Page. 439.

SPIRITUAL relationship is far more precious than physical. Physical relationship divorced from spiritual is body without soul.—*My Experiments With Truth* : Page 472.

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INSISTENCE on truth can come into play when one party practises untruth or injustice. Only then can love be tested. True friendship is put to the test only when one party disregards the obligation of friendship. —*Young India :* May 4, 1919.

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THE test of friendship is assistance in adversity, anh that too, unconditional assistance. Co-operation whicd

needs consideration is a commercial contract and not friendship. Conditional co-operation is like adulterated cement which does not bind. —*Young India* : Dec. 10, 1919.

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MY goal is friendship with the world and I can combine the greatest love with the great opposition to wrong.
—*Young India* : Mar. 10, 1920.

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SELF-SUFFERING is the truest test of sincerity.
—*Young India :* Sept 8, 1921.

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IT is the special privilege of a friend to own the other's faults and redeclare his affection in spite of faults.
—*Young India* : April 24, 1924

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FRIENDSHIP presupposes the utmost attention to the feelings of a friend. It never requires consideration.
—*Young India* : May 29, 1924.

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WHY should mere disagreement with my views displease me. If every disagreement were to displease, since no two men agree exactly on all points, life would be a bundle of unpleasent sensations and therefore a perfect nuisance. On the contrary the frank criticism pleases me. For our friendship becomes all the richer for our disagreements. Friends to be friends are not called upon to agree even on most points. Only disagreement must have no sharpness much less bitterness about them.
—*Young India* : Nov. 5, 1925.

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FRIENDSHIP that insists upon agreement on all matters is not worth the name. Friendship to be real must ever sustain the weight of honest differences, how-

ever sharp they may be. —*Young India* : Dec. 1, 1927.

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IF those who love cannot transfer this love to the thing for which I stand, their love is blind and of little value. I do not know if one should live to provide mere enjoyment for friends. Friendship means loving mutual service, and sometimes it is a positive disservice to indulge one's friends and to expose them to temptations. And if there are friends who would spend lavishly for providing luxuries for me, but would not spend for the cause I espouse, it is my clear duty to resist such luxuries. Friends to be friends must first provide me with necessaries of life before they think of indulging me with luxuries, and *Khaddar* work is a vital necessity of life for me more vital than food. —*Young India* : Feb. 24, 1927.

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A FRIENDSHIP which exacts oneness of opinion and conduct is not worth much. Friends have to tolerate one another's ways of life and thought even though they may be different except where the difference is fundamental. —*Harijan* : May 9, 1940.

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THERE can be no friendship between the brave and the effeminate. —*Harijan* : May 23, 1940.

G

Gambling

IN a way it is worse than the plague or the quake. For it destroys the soul within. A person without the soul is a burden upon the earth. No doubt war against gambling is not so simple as war against plague or earthquake distress. In the latter there is more or less co-operation from the sufferers. In the former the sufferers invite and hug their sufferings. To wean the gambler from his vice is like weaning the drunkard from the

drink habit. This war against gambling is therefore an uphill task. —*Harijan* : June 15, 1935.

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I KNOW nothing of horse-racing. I have ever looked upon it with horror for its associations. I know that many men have been ruined on the race course.

But I must confess I have not had the courage to write anything against it. Having seen even an Aga Khan, prelates, viceroys, and those that are considered the best in the land, openly patronising it and spending thousands upon it, I have felt it to be useless to write about it. As a journalist and reformer, my function is to call public attention to these vices about which there is likelihood of public opinion being created. Much as I disapprove of vaccination, I deem it to be waste of effort to draw public attention to the evil. I must own that I had not the courage to bring the drink traffic in the campaign of purification. It has come unsought. The people have taken it up of their own accord.

But betting is, I apprehend, more difficult to deal with than drinking. When vice becomes a fashion and even a virtue, it is a long process to deal with it. Betting is not only fashionable but is hardly regarded as a vice. Not so drinking. Fortunately, it is still the fashion to consider drinking a weakness, if not positively a vice. Every religion has denounced it with more or less vehemence. But betting has escaped much special attention. Let us hope, however, that the vigilant public will find a more innocent recreation than attending the race course, and thus show its disapproval of gambling at the race course. —*Young India* : April 27, 1921.

Gandhism

LET Gandhism be destroyed if it stands for error. Truth and *ahimsa* will never be destroyed, but if Gandhism

is another name for sectarianism it deserves to be destroyed. If I were to know, after my death, that what I stood for had degenerated into sectarianism, I should be deeply pained. We have to work away silently. Let no one say that he is a follower of Gandhi. It is enough that I should be my own follower. I know what an inadequate follower I am of myself, for I cannot live upto the convictions I stand for.

—*Harijan* : Mar. 2, 1940.

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I WOULD ask you to give up the name 'Gandhi ites,' and Gandhism. You may call yourselves *ahimsaites*, if you like, but ' Gandhi-ite ' is meaningless. Gandhi is an erring mortal, a mixture of good and evil, so you cannot go by the name 'Gandhi-ites'. *Ahimsa* is no such adulterated ore, it is pure gold. —*Harijan* : Mar. 2, 1940.

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THEY might kill me but they cannot kill Gandhism. If Truth can be killed, Gandhism can be killed. If non-violence can be killed, Gandhism can be killed. For what is Gandhism but winning *Swaraj* by means of truth and non-violence ? —*Young India* : April 2, 1931.

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THE true method of bestowing affection on me is to copy such actions of mine as may seem to be worthy of imitation. No higher compliment can be paid to a man than to follow him. —*Young India* : Mar. 4, 1919.

Gandhiji Looks At Himself

I AM an erring mortal like you. I have never even in my dream thought that I was a Maha-atma (great soul) and that others were Alpa-atma (little souls). We are all equal before our Maker—Hindus, Musalmans, Parsis, Christians, worshippers of one God.

—*Harijan* : Mar. 30, 1940.

FRIENDS who know me have certified that I am as much a moderate as I am an extremist and as much conservative as I am a radical. Hence perhaps my good fortune to have friends among these extreme type of men. The misture is due, I believe, to my view of *ahimsa.* —*Young India* : April 6, 1931.

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AS for my leadership, I have it, it has not come for any seeking, it is a fruit of faithful service. A man can as little discard such leadership as he can the colour of his skin. And since I have become an integral part of the nation, it has to keep me with all my faults and shortcomings of some of which I am painfully conscious and of many others of which candid critics thanks be to them, never fail to remind me.

—*Young India* : Feb. 13, 1930.

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AS a matter of fact my writings should be cremated with my body. What I have done will endure, not what I have said and written. I have often said recently that even if all our scriptures were to perish, one *mantra* of *Ishopanishad* was enough to declare the essence of Hinduism, but even that one verse will be of no avail if there is no one to live it. Even so what I have said and written is useful only to the extent that it has helped you to assimilate the great principles of truth and *ahimsa.* If you have not assimilated them, my writings will be of no use to you. I say this to you as a *Satyagrahi* meaning every word of it.

—*Harijan* : May 1, 1932.

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I FLATTER myself with the belief that some of my writings will survive me and will be of service to the causes for which they have been written.

—*Harijan* : May 1, 1937.

I HAVE received a cutting, in which I am reported to be credited with being a messenger of God, and I am asked whether I claim to have any special revelation from God. As to this, the latest charge, I must disown it. I pray like every good Hindu. I believe that we can all become messengers of God, if we cease to fear man and seek only God's Truth. I do believe I am seeking only God's Truth and have lost all fear of man. I therefore do feel that God is with the movement of Non-co-operation. I have no special revelation of God's will. My firm belief is that He reveals Himself daily to every human being but we shut our ears to the 'still small voice.' We shut our eyes to the Pillar of Fire in front of us. I *realise* His omnipresence. And it is open to the writer to do likewise.

—*Young India* : May 25, 1921.

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SOME of my correspondents seem to think that I can work wonders. Let me say as a devotee of truth that I have no such gift. All the power I may have comes from God. But He does not work directly. He works through His numberless agencies. In this case it is the Congress. All the prestige that I have is derived from that of the Congress. The latter derives it from its creed. If Congressmen deny the creed of truth and non-violence, the Congress loses prestige. I assure them that my virtues, real or so-called, will not count for anything, if I did not represent the Congress mind.

—*Young India* : Oct. 8, 1924.

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I AM a dreamer. I am, indeed, a practical dreamer. My dreams are not airy nothings. I want to convert my dreams into realities, as far as possible.

—*Harijan* : Nov. 7, 1933.

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I LAY claim to nothing exculsively divine in me.

I do not claim prophetship. I am but a humble seeker after Truth and bent upon finding it. I count no sacrifice too great for the sake of seeing God face to face. The whole of my activity whether it may be called social, political, humanitarian or ethical is directed to that end. And as I know that God is found more often in the lowliest of His creatures than in the high and mighty, I am struggling to reach the status of these. I cannot do so without their service. Hence my passion for the service of the suppressed classes. And as I cannot render this service without entering politics, I find myself in them. Thus I am no master. I am but a struggling, erring humble servant of India and there through of humanity.

There is already enough surperstition in our country. No effort should be spared to resist further addition in the shape of Gandhi worship. Personally I have a horror of all adoration. I believe in adoring virtue apart from the wearer. And that can be done only after the wearer's death. Form is nothing. It is perishable. Virtue persists and incarnates in one person or another. That poor Gonds know nothing of me or my mission. I know I have no power to give any person anything. The very idea of my spirit visiting and possessing any person is repugnant to me. The practice can only do harm and lead to fraud. I urge coworkers to put down the worship the correspondent describes. It is a sin to let simple folk such as the Gonds to be encouraged in the practice of superstition.

—*Young India* : Sept. 11, 1924.

Generalisation

A SEEKER after Truth cannot afford to indulge in generalisation.

Darwin for the greater part of his book *Origin of the Species* has simply massed fact upon fact without any theorising, and only towards the end has formulated his

conclusion which, because of the sheer weight of testimony behind it, becomes almost irresistible. Yes I have criticised even Darwin's generalisation as being unwarranted.

Science tells us that a proposition may hold good in nine hundred ninety-nine cases and yet fail in the thousandth case and thus be rendered untenable as a universal statement. That is why in Jain philosophy so much stress is laid on *Syadvad*. A proposition must not only be able to satisfy the analytical test, but must also be proved conversely by synthesis before its universal validity can be established. —*Harijan* : July 6, 1940.

Generosity

EVEN as justice to be justice has to be generous, generosity in order to justify itself has got to be strictly just.

—*Harijan* : Feb. 24, 1940.

Gita

A FRIEND puts forward the following poser :

The controversy about the teaching of the *Gita*—whether it is *Himsa* (violence) or *Ahimsa* (non-violence) will it seems go on for a long time. It is one thing what meaning we read in the *Gita* or rather we want to read in the *Gita*, it is another what meaning is furnished by an unbiassed reading of it. The question therefore does not present much difficulty to one who implicitly accepts *Ahimsa* as the eternal principle of life. He will say that the *Gita* is acceptable to him only if it teaches *Ahimsa*. A grand book like the *Gita* could, for him, inculcate nothing grander than the eternal religious principle of *Ahimsa*. If it did not, it would cease to be his unerring guide. It would still be worthy of his high regard but not an infallible authority.

In the first chapter we find Arjuna laying down his weapons, under the influence of *Ahimsa*, and ready to die at the hands of the Kauravas. He conjures up a vision of the disaster and the sin involved in *Himsa*. He is overcome with ennui and in fear and trembling exclaims :

" *Oh what a mighly sin we are up to* ! "

Shri Krishna catches him in that mood and tells him : " *Enough of this high philosophy. No one kills or is killed. The soul is immortal and the body must perish Fight then the fight that has come to thee as a matter of duty. Victory or defeat is no concern of thi : Acquit thyself of thy task.*"

In the eleventh chapter the Lord presents a panoramic vision of the Universe and says :

" I am Kala, the Destroyer of the Worlds, the Ancient of the Days ; I am here engaged in my task of destruction of the worlds Kill thou those already killed by me. Give not thyself up to grief."

Himsa and *Ahimsa* are equal before God. But for man what is God's message ? Is it this : ' Fight : for thou art sure to foil thy enemies in the field ?' If the *Gita* teaches *Ahimsa* the first and the eleventh chapters are not consistent with the rest ; at any rate do not support the *Ahimsa* theory. I wish you could find time to resolve, my doubt.

The question put is eternal and everyone who has studied the *Gita* must needs find out his own solution. And, although I am going to offer mine, I know that ultimately one is guided not by the intellect but by the heart. The heart accepts a conclusion for which the intellect subsequently finds the reasoning. Argument follows conviction. Man often finds reason in support of whatever he does or wants to do.

I shall therefore appreciate the position of those who are unable to accept my interpretation of the *Gita*. All I need do is to indicate how I reached my meaning, and what canons of interpretation I have followed in arriving at it. Mine is but to fight for my meaning, no matter whether I win or lose.

My first acquaintance with the *Gita* was in 1889, when I was almost twenty. I had not then much of an inkling of the principle of *Ahimsa*. One of the lines of the Gujarati poet Shamal Bhatta had taught me the principle of winning even the enemy with love, and that teaching had gone deep into me. But I had not deduced the eternal principle of Non-violence from it. It did not for instance cover all animal life. I had before this tasted meat whilst in India. I thought it a duty to kill venomous reptiles like the snake. It is my conviction today that even venomous creatures may not be killed by a believer in *Ahimsa*. I believed in those days in preparing ourselves for a fight with the English. I often repeated a

Gujarati poet's famous doggerel: '*What wonder if Britain rules*!' etc. My meat-eating was as a first step to qualify myself for the fight with the English. Such was my position before I proceeded to England, and there I escaped meat-eating, etc., because of my determination to follow unto death the promises I had given to my mother. My love for truth has saved me from many a pitfall.

Now whilst in England my contact with two English friends made me read the *Gita*. I say 'made me read,' because it was not of my own desire that I read it. But when these two friends asked me to read the *Gita* with them, I was ashamed of my ignorance. The knowledge of my total ignorance of my scriptures pained me. Pride I think was at the bottom of the feeling. My knowledge of Sanskrit was not enough to enable me to understand all the verses of the *Gita* unaided. The friends of course were quite innocent of Sanskrit. They placed before me Sir Edwin Arnold's magnificent rendering of the *Gita*. I devoured the contents from cover to cover and was entranced by it. The last nineteen verses of the second chapter have since been inscribed on the tablet of my heart. They contain for me all knowledge. The truths they teach are the 'eternal verities.' There is reasoning in them but they represent realised knowledge.

I have since read many translations and many commentaries, have argued and reasoned to my heart's content but the impression that the first reading gave me has never been effaced. Those verses are the key to the interpretation of the *Gita*. I would even advise rejection of the verses that may seem to be in conflict with them. But a humble student need reject nothing. He will simply say: 'It is the limitation of my own intellect that I cannot resolve this inconsistency. I might be able to do so in the time to come.' That is how

he will plead with himself and with others.

A prayerful study and experience are essential for a correct interpretation of the scriptures. The injunction that a *Shudra* may not study the scriptures is not entirely without meaning. A *Shudra* means a spiritually uncultured ignorant man. He is more likely than not to misinterpret the *Vedas* and other scriptures. Everyone cannot solve an algebraical equation. Some perliminary study is a *sina qua non.* How ill would the grand truth 'I am *Brahman*' lie in the mouth of a man steeped in sin ! To what ignoble purposes would he turn it ! What a distortion it would suffer at his hands.

A man therefore who would interpret the scriptures must have the spiritual discipline. He must practise the *Yamas* and *Niyams*—the eternal guides of conduct. A superficial practice thereof is useless. The *Shastras* have enjoined the necessity of a *Guru.* But a *Guru* being rare in these days a study of modern books inculcating *Bhakti* has been suggested by the sages. Those who are lacking in *Bhakti,* lacking in faith are ill-qualified to interpret the scriptures. The learned may draw an elaborately learned interpretation out of them, but that will not be true interpretation. Only the experienced will arrive at the true interpretation of the scriptures.

But even for the inexperienced there are certain canons. That interpretation is not true which conflicts with Truth. To one who doubts even Truth, the scriptures have no meaning. No one can contend with him. There is danger for the man who has failed to find *Ahimsa* in the scriptures, but he is not doomed. Truth—*Sat*—is positive; Non-violence is negative. Truth stands for the fact, Non-violence negatives the fact. And yet Non-violence is the highest religion. Truth is self-evident; Non-violenc is its maturest fruit. It is contained in Truth, but as it is not self-evident a man may seek to interpret the Shastras without accepting it. But his acceptance

of Truth is sure to lead him to the acceptance of Non-violence.

Renunciation of the flesh is essential for realising Truth. The sage who realised Truth found Non-violence out of the violence raging all around him and said : Violence is unreal, Non-violence is real. Realisation of Truth is impossible without Non-violence. *Brahmacharya* (celibacy) *Asetya* (non-stealing), *Aparigraha* (non-possession) are means to achieve *Ahimsa. Ahimsa* is the soul of truth. Man is mere animal without it. A seeker after Truth will realise all this in his search for truth and he will then have no difficulty in the interpretation of the *Shastras.*

Another canon of interpretation is to scan not the latter but to examine the spirit. Tulsidas's *Ramayana* is a noble book because it is informed with the spirit of purity, pity and piety. There is a verse in it which brackets drums, *shudras*, fools and women together as fit to be beaten. A man who cites that verse to beat his wife is doomed to perdition. Rama did not only beat his wife, but never even sought to displease her. Tulsidas simply inserted in his poem a proverb current in his days, little dreaming that there would be brutes justifying beating of their wives on the authority of the verse. But assuming that Tulsidas himself followed a custom which was prevalent in his days and beat his wife, what then ? The beating was still wrong. But the *Ramayana* was not written to justify beating of their wives by their husbands. It was written to depict Rama, the perfect man, and Sita, the ideal wife, and Bharat, the ideal of a devoted brother. Any justification incidentally met with therein of vicious customs should therefore be rejected. Tulsidas did not write his priceless epic to teach geography, and any wrong geography that we happen to come across in *Ramayana* should be summarily rejected.

Let us examine the *Gita* in the light of these observations. Self-realization and its means is the theme of the *Gita*, the fight between two armies being but the occasion to expound the theme. You might if you like say that the poet himself was not against war or violence and hence he did not hesitate to press the occasion of a war into service. But a reading of the *Mahabharata* has given me an altogether different impress. The poet Vyasa has demonstrated the futility of war by means of that epic of wonderful beauty. What he asks, if the Kauravas were vanquished? And what if the Pandavas won? How many were left of the victors and what was their lot? What an end Mother Kunti came to? And where are the Yadavas to-day?

Where the description of the fight and justification of violence are not the subject-matter of the epic, it is quite wrong to emphasise those aspects. And if it is difficult to reconcile certain verses with the teaching of Non-violence, it is far more difficult to set the whole of the *Gita* in the framework of violence.

The poet when he writes is not conscious of all the interpretations his composition is capable of. The beauty of poetry is that the creation transcends the poet. The Truth that he reaches in the highest flights of his fancy is often not to be met within his life. The life story of many a poet thus belies his poetry. That the central teaching of the *Gita* is not *Himsa* but *Ahimsa* is amply demonstrated by the subject begun in the second chapter and summarised in the concluding (18th) chapter. The treatment in the other chapters also supports the position. *Himsa* is impossible without anger, without attachment without hatred, and the *Gita* strives to carry us to a state beyond *Sattwa*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*, a state that excludes anger, hatred, etc. But I can, even now picture to my mind Arjuna's eyes red with anger every time he drew the bow to the end of his ear.

It was not in a spirit of *Ahimsa* that Arjuna refused to go to battle. He had fought many a battle before. Only this time he was overcome with false pity. He fought shy of killing his own kith and kin. Arjuna never discussed the problem of killing as such. He did not say he would kill no one, even if he regarded him as wicked. Sri Krishna knows everyone's innermost thoughts and he saw through the temporary infatuation ofArjuna. He therefore told him : "*Thou hast already done the killing. Thou canst not all at once argue thyself into Non-violence. Finish what thou hast already begun.*' If a passenger going in a Scotch Express gets suddenly sick of travelling and jumps out of it, he is guilty of suicide. He has not learnt the futility of travelling or travelling by a railway train. Similar was the case with Arjuna. Non-violent Krishna could give Arjuna no other advice. But to say that the *Gita* teaches violence or justifies war, because advice to kill was given on a particular occasion, is as wrong as to say that *Himsa* is the law of life, because a certain amount of it is inevitable in daily life. To one who reads the spirit of the *Gita*, it teaches the secret of Non-violence, the secret of realising the self through the physical body.

And who are Dhritrashtra and Yudhishthira, and Arjuna? Who is Krishna? Were they all historical characters ? And does the *Gita* describe them as such ? Is it true that Arjuna suddenly stops in the midst of the fight and puts the question to Krishna, and Krishna repeats the whole of the *Gita*— before him ? And which that *Gita* that Arjuna forgot after having exclaimed that his infatuation was gone and which he requested Krishna to sing again, but which he could not, and which therefore he gave in the form *Anugita* ?

I regard Duryodhana and his party as the baser impulses in man, and Arjuna and his party as the higher impulses. The field of battle is our own body. An eternal battle is going on between the two camps and the poet seer

has vividly described it. Krishna is the Dweller within, ever whispering in a pure heart. Like the watch the heart needs the winding of purity ; or the Dweller ceases to speak.

Not that actual physical battle is out of the question. To those who are innocent of Non-violence, the *Gita* does not teach a lesson of despair. He who fears, who saves his skin, who yields to his passions must fight the physical battle whether he will or not ; but that is not his *Dharma. Dharma* is one and one only. *Ahimsa* means *Moksha* and *Moksha* is the realisation of Truth. There is no room here for cowardice. *Himsa* will go on eternally in this strange world. The *Gita* shows the way out of it. But it also shows that escape out of cowardice and despair is not the way. Better far than cowardice is killing and being killed in battle.

If the meaning of the verses quoted by the correspondent is not still clear, I must confess my inability to make it so. Is it agreed that the Almighty God is the Creator, Pretector and Destroyer and ought to be such ? And if He creates, He has undoubtedly the right to destroy. And yet He does not destroy because He does not create. His law is that whatever is born must die, and in that lies His mercy. His laws are immutable. Where should we all be if He changed them capriciously ? —*Young India* : Nov. 12, 1925.

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I MUST tell you in all humility that Hinduism, as I know it, entirely satisfies my soul, fills my whole being, and I find a solace in the *Bhagavad Gita* and *Upanishads* that I miss even in the Sermon on the Mount. Not that I do not prize the ideal presented therein, not that some of the precious teachings in the Sermon on the Mount have not left a deep impression upon me but I must confess to you that when doubts haunt me when disappointments stare me in the face, and when I see no one ray of light on the horizon I turn to the *Bhagavad Gita* and find a verse to comfort me; and I

immediately begin to smile in the midst of overwhelming sorrow. My life has been full of external tragedies and, if they have not left any visible and indelible effect on me, I owe it to the teaching of the *Bhagavad Gita.*

(Form an address to the Missionaries in Calcutta).

—*Young India* : Aug. 6, 1925.

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THE *Gita* is, in my opinion, a very easy book to understand. It does present some fundamental problems which are no doubt difficult of solution. But the general trend of the *Gita* is, in my opinion, unmistakable. It is accepted by all Hindu sects as authoritative. It is free from any form of dogma. In a short compass it gives a complete reasoned moral code. It satisfies both the intellect and the heart. It is thus both philosophical and devotional. Its appeal is universal. The language is incredibly simple.

—*Young India* : Aug. 5, 1927.

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I HAVE not been able to see any difference between the Sermon on the Mount and the *Bhagavad Gita.* What the Sermon describes in a graphic manner, the *Bhagavad Gita* reduces to a scientific formula. It may not be a scientific book in the accepted sense of the term, but it has argued out the law of love--the law of abandon as I would call it—in a scientific manner. The Sermon on the Mount gives the same law in a wonderful language. The *New Testament* gave me comfort and boundless joy, as it came after the repulsion that parts of the *Old* had given me. To-day supposing I was deprived of the *Gita,* and forgot all its contents but had a copy of the Sermon, I should derive the same joy from it as I do from the *Gita.*

—*Young India* : Dec. 22, 1927.

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Let the *Gita* be to you a mine of diamonds, as it has

been to me, let it be your constant guide and friend on life's way. Let it light your path and dignify your labour.

—*Young India* : Feb. 2, 1928.



It has been my endeavour as also that of some companions to reduce to practice the teaching of the *Gita* as I have understood it. The *Gita* has become for us a spiritual reference book. I am aware that we ever fail to act in perfect accord with the teaching. The failure is not due to want of effort, but is in spite of it. Even through the failures we seem to see rays of hope. The accompanying rendering contains the meaning of the *Gita* message which this little band is trying to enforce in its daily conduct.

Again this rendering is designed for women, the commercial class, the so-called *Shudras* and the like, who have little or no literary equipment, who have neither the time nor the desire to read the *Gita* in the original, and yet who stand in need of its support. In spite of my Gujarati being unscholarly, I must own to having the desire to leave to the Gujaratis, through the mother tongue, whatever knowledge I may possess, I do indeed wish that at a time when literary output of a questionable character is pouring in upon the Gujaratis, they should have before them a rendering the majority can understand of a book that is regarded as unrivalled for its spiritual merit and so withstand the overwhelming flood of unclean literature.

This desire does not mean any disrespect to the other renderings. They have their own place. But I am not aware of the claim made by the translators of enforcing their meaning of the *Gita* in their own lives. At the back of my reading there is the claim of an endeavour to enforce the meaning in my own conduct for an unbroken period of 40 years. For this reason I do indeed harbour the wish that all Gujarati men or women wishing to shape their conduct according to the faith, should digest and derive strength from the translation here presented.

My co-workers, too, have worked at this translation. My knowledge of Sanskrit being very limited, I should not have full confidence in my literal translation. To that extent therefore the translation has passed before the eyes of Vinoba, Kaka Kalekar, Mahadev Desai and Kishori Lal Mashruvala.

II

Now about the message of the *Gita*.

Even in 1888-89, when I first became acquainted with the *Gita*, I felt that it was not a historical work but that under the guise of physical warfare, it described the duel that perpetually went on in the hearts of mankind and that physical warfare was brought in merely to make the description of the internal duel more alluring. This preliminary intuition became more confirmed on a closer study of religion and the *Gita*. A study of the *Mahabharta* gave it added confirmation. I do not regard the *Mahabharta* as a historical work in the accepted sense. The *Adiparva* contains powerful evidence in support of my opinion. By ascribing to the chief actors superhuman or subhuman origins, the great Vyasa made short work of the history of kings and their peoples. The persons their in described may be historical, but the author of the *Mahabharta* has used them merely to drive home his religious theme.

The author of the *Mahabharta* has not established the necessity of physical warfare, on the contrary he has proved its futility. He has made the victors shed tears of sorrow and repentance, and has left them nothing but a legacy of miseries.

In this great work the *Gita* is the crown. Its second chapter, instead of teaching the rules of physical warfare, tells us how a perfected man is to be known. In the characteristics of the man of the *Gita*, I do not see any to correspond to physical warfare. Its whole design is inconsistent with the rules of conduct governing the relations

between warring parties.

Krishna of the *Gita* is perfection and right knowledge personified, but the picture is imaginary. That does not mean that Krishna, the adored of his people, never lived. But perfection is imagined. The idea of a perfect incarnation is an aftergrowth.

In Hinduism, incarnation is ascribed to one who has performed some extraordinary service of mankind. All embodied life is in reality an incarnation of God, but it is not usual to consider every living being an incarnation. Future generations pay this homage to one who, in his own generation, has been extraordinarily religious in his conduct. I can see nothing wrong in this procedure ; it takes nothing from God's greatness, and there is no violence done to truth. There is an Urdu saying which means " *Adam is not God but he is spark of the Divine* ." And therefore he who is the most religiously behaved has most of divine spark in him. It is in accordance with this train of thought that Krishna enjoys in Hinduism, the status of the most perfect incarnation.

This belief in incarnation is a testimony of man's lofty spiritual ambition. Man is not at peace with himself till he has become like unto God. The endeavour to reach this state is the supreme, the only ambition worth having. And this is self-realisation. This self-realisation is the subject of the *Gita*, as it is of all scriptures. But its author surely did not write it to establish that doctrine. The object of the *Gita* appears to me to be that of showing the most excellent way to attain self-realisation. That, which is to be found, more or less clearly, spread out here and there in Hindu religious books, has been brought out in the clearest possible language in the *Gita* even at the risk of repetition.

That matchless remedy is renunciation of fruits of action.

This is the centre round which the *Gita* is woven.

This renunciation is the central sun, round which devotion, knowledge and the rest revolve like planets. The body has been likened to a prison. There must be action where there is body. No one embodied being is exempted from labour. And yet all religions proclaim that it is possible for man, by treating the body as the temple of God, to attain freedom. Every action is tainted, be it ever so trivial. How can the body be made the temple of God ? In other words, how can one be free from action, *i.e.*, from the taint of sin ? The *Gita* has answered the question in decisive language : " *By desireless action ; by renouncing fruits of action ; by dedicating all activities to God*, i.e., *by surrendering oneself to Him body and soul.*"

But desirelessness or renunciation does not come for the mere talking about it. It is not attained by an intellectual feat. It is attainable only by a constant heart-churn. Right knowledge is necessary for attaining renunciation. Learned men possess a knowledge of a kind. They may recite the *Vedas* from memory, yet they may be steeped in self-indulgence. In order that knowledge may not run riot, the author of the *Gita* has insisted on devotion accompanying it and has given it the first place. Knowledge, without devotion will be like a misfire. Therefore, says the *Gita*, " *Have devotion, and knowledge will follow.*" This devotion is not mere lip worship, it is wrestling with death. Hence the *Gita's* assessment of the devotee's qualities is similar to that of the sages.

Thus the devotion required by the *Gita* is no soft-hearted effusiveness. It certainly is not blind faith. The devotion of the *Gita* has the least to do with externals. A devotee may use, if he likes, rosaries, forehead marks, make offerings but these things are no test of his devotion. He is the devotee who is jealous of none, who is a fount of mercy, who is without egotism, who is selfless, who treats alike cold and heat, happiness and misery, who is ever forgiving, who is always contented, whose resolutions are firm, who has

dedicated mind and soul to God, who causes no dread, who is not afraid of others, who is free from exultation, sorrow and fear, who is pure, who is versed in action and yet remains unaffected by it, who renounces all fruit, good or bad, who treats friend and foe alike, who is untouched by respect or disrespect, who is not puffed up by praise, who does not go under when people speak ill of him, who loves silence and solitude who has a disciplined reason. Such devotion is inconsistent with the existence at the same time of strong attachments.

We thus see that to be a real devotee is to realise onself. Self-realisation is not something apart. One rupee can purchase for us poison or nectar, but knowledge or devotion cannot buy us either salvation or bondage. These are not media of exchange. They are themselves the thing we want. In other words, if the means and the end are not identical, they are almost so. The extreme of means is salvation. Salvation of the *Gita* is perfect peace.

But such knowledge and devotion, to be true, have to stand the test of renunciation of fruits of action. Mere knowledge of right and wrong will not make one fit for salvation. According to common notions a mere learned man will pass as *a pandit*. He need not perform any service. He will regard it as bondage even to lift a little *lota*. Where one test of knowledge is non-liability for service, there is no room for such mundane work as the lifting of a *lota*.

Or take *Bhakti*. The popular notion of *Bhakti* is soft-heartedness; telling beads and the like and disdaining to do even a loving service, lest the telling of beads etc. might be interrupted. This *Bhakta* therefore leaves the rosary only for eating, drinking and the like, never for grinding corn or nursing patients.

But the *Gita* says: "*No one has attained his goal without action. Even men like Janaka attained salvation through action. If even I were lazily to cease working, the world would perish. How much more necessary then for the people at large is to*

engage in action ?"

While on the one hand it is beyond dispute that all action binds, on the other hand it is equally true that all living beings have to do some work whether they will or no. Here all activity, whether mental or physical, is to be included in the term action. Then how is one to be free from the bondage of action, even though he may be acting ? The manner in which the *Gita* has solved the problem is, to my knowledge, unique. The *Gita* says : "*Do your allotted, work but renounce its fruit—be detached and work—have no desire for reward and work.*"

This is the unmistakable teaching of the *Gita*. He who gives up action falls. He who gives up only the reward rises. But renunciation of fruit in no way means indifference to the result. In regard to every action one must know the result that is expected to follow, the means thereto, and the capacity for it. He, who, being thus equipped, is without desire for the result, and is yet wholly engrossed in the due fulfilment of the task before him, is said to have renounced the fruits of his action.

Again, let no one consider renunciation to mean want of fruit for the renouncer. The *Gita* reading does not warrant such a meaning. Renunciation means absence of hankering after fruit. As a matter of fact he who renounces reaps a thousandfold. The renunciation of the *Gita* is the acid test of faith. He who is ever brooding over result often loses nerve in the performance of his duty. He becomes impatient and then gives vent to anger and begins to do unworthy things; he jumps from action to action, never remaining faithful to any. He who broods over results is like a man given to objects of senses ; he is ever distracted, he says good-bye to all scruples, everything is right in his estimation and he therefore resorts to means fair and foul to attain his end.

From the bitter experiences of desire for fruit the

author of the *Gita* discovered the path of renunciation of fruit, and put it before the world in a most convincing manner. The common belief is that religion is always opposed to material good. "*One cannot act religiously in mercantile and such other matters. There is no place for religion in such pursuits, religion is only for attainment of salvation,*" we hear many worldly wise people say. In my opinion the author of the *Gita* has dispelled this delusion. He has drawn no line of demarcation between salvation and worldly pursuits. On the contrary, he has shown that religion must rule even our worldly pursuits. I have felt that the *Gita* teaches us that what cannot be followed out in day to day practice cannot be called religion. Thus, according to the *Gita*, all acts that are incapable of being performed without attachment are taboo. This golden rule saves mankind from many a pitfall. According to this interpretation murder, lying, dissoluteness and the like must be regarded as sinful and therefore taboo. Man's life then becomes simple, and from that simpleness springs peace.

Thinking along these lines, I have felt that in trying to enforce in one's life the central teaching of the *Gita*, one is bound to follow Truth and *Ahimsa*. When there is no desire for fruit, there is no temptation for untruth or *Himsa*. Take any instance of untruth or violence, and it will be found that at its back was the desire to attain the cherished end. But it may be freely admitted that the *Gita* was not written to establish *Ahimsa*. It was an accepted and primary duty even before the *Gita* age. The *Gita* had to deliver the message of renunciation of fruit. This is clearly brought out as early as the 2nd chapter.

But if the *Gita* believed in *Ahimsa* or it was included in desirelessness, why did the author take a war like illustration? When the *Gita* was written, although people believed in *Ahimsa*, wars were not only not taboo but nobody observed the contradiction between them and *Ahimsa*.

In assessing the implications of renunciation of

fruit, we are not required to probe the mind of the author of the *Gita* as to his limitations of *Ahimsa* and the like. Because a poet puts a particular truth before the world, it does not necessarily follow that he has known or worked out all its great consequences, or that having done so he is able always to express them fully. In this perhaps lies the greatness of the poem and the poet. A poet's meaning is limitless. Like man, the meaning of great writings suffers evolution. On examining the history of languages, we notice that the meaning of important words has changed or expanded. This is true of the *Gita*. The author has himself extended the meanings of some of the current words. We are able to discover this even on a superficial examination. It is possible that in the age prior to that of the *Gita* offering of animals in sacrifice was permissible. But there is not a trace of it in the sacrifice in the *Gita* sense. In the *Gita* continuous concentration on God is the king of sacrifices. The third chapter seems to show that sacrifice chiefly means body labour for service. The third and the fourth chapters read together will give us other meanings for sacrifice but never animal sacrifice. Similarly has the meaning of the word *sannyasa* undergone in the *Gita*, a transformation. The *sannyasa* of the *Gita* will not tolerate complete cessation of all activity. The *sannyasa* of the *Gita* is all work and yet no work. Thus the author of the *Gita* by extending meanings of words has taught us to imitate him. Let it be granted that, according to the letter of the *Gita*, it is possible to say that warfare is consistent with renunciation of fruit. But after 40 years' unremitting endeavour fully to enforce the teaching of the *Gita* in my own life, I have, in all humility felt that perfect renunciation is impossible without perfect observance of *Ahimsa* in every shape and form.

The *Gita* is not an aphoristic work, it is a great religious poem. The deeper you dive into it, the richer the meanings you get. It being meant for the people at

large, there is pleasing repetition. With every age the important words will carry new and expanding meanings. But its central teaching will never vary. The seeker is at liberty to extract from this treasure any meaning he likes so as to enable him to enforce in his life the central teaching.

Nor is the *Gita* a collection of Do's and Don'ts What is lawful for one may be unlawful for another. What may be permissible at one time, or in one place, may not be so at another time, and in another place. Desire for fruit is the only universal prohibition. Desirelessness is obligatory.

The *Gita* has sung the praises of knowledge, but it is beyond the mere intellect, it is essentially addressed to the heart and capable of being understood by the heart. Therefore the *Gita* is not for those who have no faith. The author makes Krishna say :

"*Do not entrust this treasure to him who is without sacrifice, without devotion, without the desire for this teaching and who denies Me. On the other hand, those who will give this precious treasure to My devotees will by the fact of this service assuredly reach Me. And those who being free from malice, will, with faith, absorb this teaching, shall, having attained freedom, live where people of true merit go after death.*" —*Young India* : Aug. 6, 1931.

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TO-DAY the *Gita* is not only my *Bible* or my *Qoran*, it is more than that—it is my mother. I lost my earthly mother who gave me birth long ago ; but this eternal mother has completely filled her place by my side ever since. She have never changed, she has never failed me. When I am in difficulty or distress, I seek refuge in her bosom.

—*Harijan* : Aug. 24, 1939.

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I AM a devotee of the *Gita* and a firm believer in the inexorable Law of *Karma*. Even the least little tripping or stumbling is not without its cause and I have wondered why

one who has tried to follow the *Gita* in thought; word and deed should have any ailment. The doctors have assured me that this trouble of high blood pressure is entirely the result of mental strain and worry. If that is true, it is likely that I have been unnecessarily worrying myself, unnecessarily fretting and secretly harbouring passions like anger, lust, etc. The fact that any event or incident should disturb my mental equilibrium, in spite of my serious efforts, means not that the *Gita* ideal is defective but that my devotion to it is defective. The *Gita* ideal is true for all time, my understanding of it and observance of it is full of flaws. —*Harijan* : Feb. 29, 1936.

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I VERILY believe that one who literally follows the prescription of the Eternal Mother need never grow old in mind. Such a one's body will wither in due course like leaves of a healthy tree, leaving the mind as young and as fresh as ever. —*Harijan* : Feb. 29, 1936.

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I HAVE called it my spiritual dictionary, for it has never failed me in any distress. It is, moreover, a book which is free from sectarianism and dogma. Its appeal is universal. I do not regard the *Gita* as an abstruse book. No doubt learned men can see abstruseness in everything they come across. But in my opinion a man with ordinary intelligence should find no difficulty in gathering the simple message of the *Gita*. —*Harijan* : Dec. 2, 1936.

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I BELIEVE in the *Bible* as I believe in the *Gita*. I regard all the great faiths of the world as equally true with my own. It hurts me to see anyone of them caricatured as they are to-day by their own followers.

—*Harijan* : Dec. 19, 1936.

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THE detachment prescribed by the *Gita* is the hardest thing to achieve, and yet it is so absolutely necessary for

perfect peace and for the vision of both the little self and the greatest self. —*Harijan* : Feb. 6, 1937.

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Q. IS the central teaching of the *Gita* selfless action or non-violence ?

A. I have no doubt that it is *Anasakti*, selfless action. Indeed, I have called my little translation of the *Gita* *Anasakti Yoga*. And *Anasakti* transcends *Ahimsa*. He who would be *anasakti* (selfless) has necessarily to practise non-violence in order to attain the state of selflessness. *Ahimsa* is, therefore, a necessary preliminary, it is included in *anasakti*, it does not go beyond it.

Q. Then does the *Gita* teach *Himsa* and *Ahimsa* both.

A. I do not read that meaning in the *Gita*. It is likely that the author did not write it to inculcate *Ahimsa*, but as a commentator draws innumerable interpretations from a poetic text, even so I interpret the *Gita* to mean that, if its central theme is *Anasakti* it also teaches *Ahimsa*. Whilst we are in the flesh and tread the solid earth, we have to practise *Ahimsa*. In the life beyond there is no *Himsa or Ahimsa*.

Q. But Lord Krishna actually counters the doctrine of *Ahimsa*. For Arjuna utters this pacifist resolve :

Better I deem it, if my kinsmen strike.

To face them weaponless, and bare my breast.

To shaft and spear, than answer blow with blow.

And Lord Krishna teaches him to answer " blow for blow."

A. There I join issue with you. Those words of Arjuna were words of pretentious wisdom. '*Until yesterday, says Krishna to him, 'you fought your kinsmen with deadly weapons without the slightest compunction. Even to-day you would strike if the enemy was a stranger and not your own kith and kin.*'

The question before him was not of non-violence, but whether he should slay his nearest and dearest. (M. D.)

—*Harijan* : Sept. 1, 1940.

God

A struggle which has to be previously planned is not a righteous struggle. In a righteous struggle God Himself plans campaigns and conducts battles A Dharma-Yuddha can be waged only in the name of God, and it is only when the *Satyagrahi* feels quite helpless is apparently on his last legs and finds utter darkness all around him, that God comes to the rescue. God helps when one feels oneself humbler than the very dust under one's feet. Only to the weak and helpless is divine succour vouchsafed.

—*Satyagraha in South Africa* : Page 7.

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THERE are innumerable definitions of God, because His manifestations are innumerable. They overwhelm me with wonder and awe and for a moment stun me. But I worship God as Truth only. I have not yet found Him, but I am seeking after him. I am prepared to sacrifice the things dearest to me in pursuit of this quest Even if the sacrifice demanded be my very life, I hope, I may be prepared to give it.

— *My Experiments with Truth* : Page 4.

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IN the march towards Truth, anger, selfishness, hatred, etc., naturally give way, for otherwise Truth would be impossible to attain. *A man who is swayed by passions may have good enough intentions, may be truthful in word, but he will never find the Truth. A successful search of Truth means complete deliverance from the dual-throng such as of love and hate, happiness and misery.*

—*My Experiments with Truth* : Page 47.

IT may be said that God has never allowed any of my own plans to stand. He has disposed them in His own way. —*My Experiments with Truth* : Page 307.

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I THINK it is wrong to expect certainties in this world where all else but God that is Truth is an uncertainty. All that appears and happens about and around us is uncertain and transient. But there is a supreme being hidden therein as a certainty, and one would be blessed if one would catch a glimpse of that certainty and hitch one's waggon to it. The quest for that Truth is the *summum bonum* of life. —*My Experiments with Truth* : Page 308.

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GOD is witness above and He is just enough to chastise every double dealing. —*Young India* : Feb. 9, 1921.

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IT is the quality of our work which will please God and not quantity. —*Young India* : Jan. 19, 1922.

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A MAN who has the least faith in God and His mercy, which is His Justice cannot hate men, though, at the same time, he must hate their evil ways. But having abundant evil in himself and ever standing in need of charity, he must not hate those in whom he sees evil.

—*Young India* : Jan. 26, 1922.

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I WANT to see God face to face. God I *know* is Truth. For me the only certain means of knowing God is non-violence—*ahimsa*—love. I live for India's freedom and would die for it, because it is a part of Truth. Only a free India can worship the true God. I work for India's freedom because my *Swadeshi* teaches me that being born in t and having inherited her culture, I am fittest to serve *her* aind *she* has a prior claim to my service. But my patriotism

is not exclusive ; it is calculated not only not to hurt any other nation but to benefit all in the true sense of the word. India's freedom as conceived by me can never be a menace to the world. —*Young India* : April 3, 1924.

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My trust is solely in God. And I trust men only because I trust God. If I had no God to rely upon, I should be like Timon, a hater of my species.

—*Young India* : Dec. 4, 1924.

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TO me God is Truth and Love ; God is ethics and morality ; God is fearlessness, God is the source of Light and Life and yet He is above and beyond all these. God is conscience. He is even the atheism of the atheist. For in His boundless love God permits the atheist to live. He is the searcher of hearts. He transcends speech and reason. He knows us and our hearts better than we do ourselves. He does not take us at our word for he knows that we often do not mean it, some knowingly and others unknowingly. He is a personal God to those who need His personal presence. He is embodied to those who need His touch. He is the purest essence. He simply is to those who have faith. He is all things to all men. He is in us and yet above and beyond us : One may banish the word 'God' from the Congress but one has no power to banish the thing itself. What is a solemn affirmation if it is not the same thing as in the name of God. And surely conscience is but a poor and laborious paraphrase of the simple combination of three letters called God. He cannot cease to be because hideous immoralities or inhuman brutalities are committed in His name. He is long-suffering. He is patient but He is also terrible. He is the most exacting personage in the world and the world to come. He metes out the same measure to us that we mete but to our neighbours—men and brutes. With him ignorance is no excuse. And withal He is ever-forgiving for He always gives us the chance to

repent. He is the greatest democrat the world knows, for He leaves us 'unfettered' to make our own choice between evil and good. He is the greatest tyrant ever known, for He often dashes the cup from our lips and under cover of free will leaves us a margin so wholly inadequate as to provide only mirth for himself at our expense. Therefore it is that Hinduism calls it all His sport—*Lila*, or calls it all an illusion—*Maya*. We are *not*, He alone *Is*. And if we will be we must eternally sing His praise and do His will. Let us dance to the tune of His *bansi*—lute, and all would be well. —*Young India*: Mar. 5, 1925.

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THE divine guidance often comes when the horizon is the blackest. —*Young India*: Aug. 27, 1925.

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PERFECTION is the exclusive attribute of God and it is indescribable, untranslatable. I do believe that it is possible for human beings to become perfect even as God is perfect. It is necessary for all of us to aspire after that perfection, but when that blessed state is attained, it becomes indescribable, indefinable.

—*Young India*: Sept. 22, 1927.

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MANKIND is notoriously too dense to read the signs that God sends from time to time. We require drums to be beaten into our ears, before we should wake from our trance and hear the warning and *see* that to lose oneself in all is the only way to find oneself.

—*Young India*: Aug. 25, 1927.

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THOUGH we may know Him by a thousand names, He is one and the same to us all.

—*Young India*: Nov. 25, 1926.

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THERE is an indefinable mysterious Power that pervades everything. I feel it, though I do not see it.

It is this Unseen Power which makes itself felt and yet defies all proof because it is so unlike all that I perceive through my senses. It transcends the senses.

But it is possible to reason out the existence of God to a limited extent. Even in ordinary affairs we know that people do not know who rules or why and how he rules. And yet they know that there is a power that certainly rules. In my tour last year in Mysore I met many poor villages and I found upon inquiry that they did not know who ruled Mysore. They simply said some god ruled it. If the knowledge of these poor people was so limited about their ruler, I, who an infinitely lesser than God, than they, than their ruler, need not be surprised if I do not realise the presence of God, the King of kings. Nevertheless I do feel as the poor villagers felt about Mysore that there is orderliness in the universe, there is an unalterable Law governing everything and every being that exists or lives. It is not a blind law; for no blind law can govern the conduct of living beings; and thanks to the marvellous researches of Sir J. C. Bose, it can now be proved that even matter is life. That Law then which governs our life is God. Law and the Law-giver are one. I may not deny the Law or the Law-giver, because I know so little about It or Him. Even as my denial or ignorance of the existence of an earthly power will avail me nothing, so will not my denial of God and His Law liberate me from its operation; whereas humble and mute acceptance of divine authority makes life's journey easier even as the acceptance of earthly rule makes life under it easier.

I do dimly perceive that whilst everything around me is ever-changing, ever-dying there is underlying all that change a living power that is changeless, that holds altogether, that creates, dissolves and recreates. That informing power or spirit is God. And since nothing else I see merely through the senses can or will persist, He alone is.

And is the power benevolent or malevolent? I see it as purely benevolent. For I can see that in the midst of death life persists, in the midst of untruth truth persists, in the midst of darkness light persists. Hence I gather that God is Life, Truth, Light. He is, Love. He is the Supreme God.

But He is no God who merely satisfies the intellect if He ever does. God to be God must rule the heart and transform it. He must express Himself in even the smallest act of His votary. This can only be done through a definite realisation more real than the five senses can ever perceive. Meanwhile I invite the correspondent to pray with Newman who sang from experience :

Lead, kindly light amidst the encircling gloom,
Lead Thou me on ;
The night is dark and I am far from home,
Lead Thou me on ;
Keep Thou my feet, I do not ask to see
The distant scene ; one step enough for me.

—*Young India* : Oct. 11, 1928.

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IF you would ask Him to help you, you would go to Him in all your nakedness, approach Him without reservations, also without fear or doubts as to how He can help a fallen being like you. He Who has helped millions who have approached Him, is He going to desert you? He makes no exception whatsoever, and you will find that every one of your prayers will be answered. The prayer of even the most impure will be answered. I am telling this out of my personal experience. I have gone through the purgatory. Seek first the Kingdom of Heaven and everything will be added unto you. —*Young India* : March 1, 1929.

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GOD never ordains that only things that we like should happen and things that we do not like should not happen. —*Young India* : Oct. 11, 1928.

THE following is taken from a letter from Bengal :

"I had the privilege to go through your article on birth control with the heading 'A youth's difficulty.'

"With the original theme of your article, I am in full agreement. But, in that article you have expressed in a line your sentiment of God. You have said that it is the fashion nowadays for youngmen to discard the idea of God and they have no *living* faith in a *living* God.

"But may I ask what proof (which must be positive and undisputed) can you put forth regarding the existence of God ? Hindu philosophers or ancient *Rishis*, it seems to me, in their attempt to describe the *Swarupa* or reality of *Ishwara* have at least come to the conclusion that He is indescribable and veiled in *Maya* and so on. In short, they have enveloped God in an impenetrable mist of obscurity and have further complicated, instead of simplifying the complicated question of God. I do not dare deny that a true *Mahatma* like you or Sri Aurobindo, or the Budha and Shankaracharjya of the past may well conceive and realise the existence of such as God Who is far beyond the reach of ordinary human intellect.

"But, what have we (the general mass), whose coarse intellect can never penetrate into the unfathomable deep, to do with such a God if we do not feel his presence in our midst? If He is the Creator and Father of us all, why do we not feel His presence or existence in every beat of our hearts ? If He cannot make His presence felt, He is no God to me. Further, I have the question—if He is the Father of this universe, does He feel the sorrows of His children ? If he feels so, then why did He work havoc and inflict so much misery on His children by the devastating quakes of Bihar and Quetta ? Why did He humiliate an innocent nation—the Abyssinians ? Are the Abyssinians not His sons ? Is He not Allmighty ? Then why could He not prevent these calamities. ? You carried on a non-violent truthful campaign for the independence of my poor Mother India and you implored the help of God. But, I think, that help has been denied to you and that strong force of materialism, which never depends on the help of God, got the better of you and you were humiliated and you have sunk into the background by forced retirement. If there was a God, He would certainly have helped you, for your cause was indeed a deserving one. I need not multiply such instances.

" So, it is not at all surprising that young men of the present day do not believe in God, because thay do not want to make a *supposition* of God—they want a *real living God*. You have mentioned in your article of a living faith in a *living* God. I shall feel highly gratified and I think you will be rendering a great benefit to the young world, if you put forth some positive, undeniable proof of the existence of God. I have the confidence that you will not more *mystify* the already mystified problem, and will throw some definite light on the matter."

I very much fear that what I am about to write will not

remove the mist to which the correspondent alludes.

The writer supposes that I might have realised the existence of a living God. I can lay no such claim. But I do have a living faith in a living God even as I have a living faith in many things that scientists tell me. It may be retorted that what the scientists say can be verified if one followed the prescription given for realising the facts which are taken for granted. Precisely in that manner speak the *Rishis* and the Prophets. They saw anybody following the path they have trodden can realise God. The fact is we do not want to follow the path leading to realisation and we won't take the testimony of eye-witnesses about the one thing that really matters. Not all the achievements of physical sciences put together can compare with that which gives us a living faith in God. Those who do not want to believe in the existence of God do not believe in the existence of anything apart from the body. Such a belief is held to be unnecessary or the progress of humanity. For such persons the weightiest argument in proof of the existence of soul or God is of no avail. You cannot make a person who has stuffed his ears, listen to, much less appreciate, the finest music. Even so can you not convince those about the existence of a living God who do not want the conviction.

Fortunately the vast majority of people do have a living faith in a living God. They cannot, will not, argue about it. For them "It is." Are all the scriptures of the world old women's tales of superstition? Is the testimony of the *Rishis*, and the Prophets to be rejected? Is the testimony of Chaitanya, Ramakrishna Parmahansa, Tukaram, Dhyandeva, Ramdas, Nanak, Kabir, Tulsidas of no value? What about Rammohan Roy, Davendranath Tagore, Vivekanand—all modern men as well educated as the tallest among the living ones? I omit the living witnesses whose evidence would be considered unimpeachable. This belief in God has to be based on faith which transcends reason.

Indeed even the so-called realisation has at bottom an element of faith without which it cannot be sustained. In the very nature of things it must be so. Who can transgress the limitations of His being? I hold that complete realisation is impossible in this embodied life. Nor is it necessary. A living immovable faith is all that is required for reaching the full spiritual height attainable by human beings. God is not outside this earthly case of ours. Therefore exterior proof is not of much avail, if any at all. We must ever fail to perceive Him through the senses, because He is beyond them. We can feel Him, if we will but withdraw ourselves, from the senses. the divine music is incessantly going on within ourselves, but the loud senses drown the delicate music which is unlike and infinitely superior to anything we can perceive or hear with our senses.

The writer wants to know why, if God is a God of mercy and justice. He allows all the miseries and sorrows we see around us. I can give no satisfactory explanation. He imputes to me a sense of defeat and humiliation. I have no such sense of defeat, humiliation or despair. My retirement, such as it is, has nothing to do with any defeat. It is no more and no less than a course of self-purification and self-preparation. I state this to show that things are often not what they seem. It may be that what we mistake as sorrows, injustices and the like are not such in truth. If we could solve all the mysteries of the universe, we would be co-equals with God. Every drop of the ocean shares its glory but is not the ocean. Realising our littleness during this tiny span of life, we close every morning prayer with the recitation of a verse which means: **Misery so-called is no misery nor richs so-called riches. Forgetting (or denying) God is the true misery, remembering (or faith in) God is true riches.** – *Harijan*: June 13, 1940.

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IF God was a capricious person instead of being the changeless and unchangeable living Law, He would in shee

indignation wipe out all those who in the name of religion deny Him and His Law. —*Young India* : July 11, 1929.

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Q. HOW can we serve God when we do not know God?

A. We may not know God, but we know his creation Service of His creation is the service of God.

Q. But how can we serve the whole of God's creation?

A. We can but serve that part of God's creation which is nearest and best known to us. We can start with our next door neighbour. We should not be content with keeping our courtyard clean, we should see that our neighbour's courtyard is also clean. We may serve our family, but may not sacrifice the village for the sake of the family. Our own honour lies in the preservation of that of our own village. But we must each of us understand our own limitations. Our capacity for service is automatically limited by our knowledge of the world in which we live. But let me put it in the simplest possible language. Let us think less of ourselves than our next door neighbour. Dumping the refuse of our courtyard into that of our neighbour is no service of humanity, but disservice. Let us start with the service of our neighbours. —*Harijan* : Aug. 22, 1936.

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A FRIEND inquired if Gandhiji's aim was just humanitarian in sitting down in the village, just serving the villagers as best as he could.

"I am here to serve no one else but myself," said Gandhiji, "to find my own self-realisation through the service of these village folk. Man's ultimate aim is the realisation of God, and all his activities,—social, political, religious,—have to be guided by the ultimate aim of the vision of God. The immediate service of all human beings becomes a necessary part of the endeavour simply because the only way to find God is to see Him in His creation and be one with it. This

can only be done through one's country. I am a part and parcel of the whole, and I cannot find Him apart from the rest of humanity. My countrymen are my nearest neighbours. They have become so helpless, so resourceless so inert that I must concentrate on serving them. If I could persuade myself that I should find Him in a Himalayan cave I would proceed there immediately. But I know that I cannot find Him apart from humanity."

Q. But some comforts may be necessary even from man's spiritual advancement One could not advance himself by identifying himself with the discomfort and squalour of the villager.

"A certain degree of physical harmony and comfort is necessary, but above a certain level it becomes a hindrance instead of help. Therefore the ideal of creating an unlimited number of wants and satisfying them seems to be a delusion and a snare. The satisfaction of one's physical needs, even the intellectual needs of one's narrow self, must meet at a certain point a dead stop, before it degenerates into physical and intellectual voluptuousness. A man must arrange his physical and cultural circumstances so that they do not hinder him in his service of humanity, on which all his energies should be concentrated." —*Harijan* : Aug. 29, 1936.



A PROFESSOR of Islamia College came with a question that was troubling him and troubling many of the present generation—belief in God. What was the basis of his belief if, Gandhiji had it, as he knew he had it ? What was the experience ? "It can never be a matter for argument," said Gandhiji. If you would have me convince others by argument I am floored. But I can tell you this that I am surer of His existence than of the fact that you and I are sitting in this room. That I can also testify that I may live without air and water but not without Him. You may pluck out my eyes, but that cannot kill me. You may chop off my nose, but that will not kill me. But blast my

belief in God, and I am dead. You may call this a superstition, but I confess it is a superstition that I hug even as I used to hug the name of Rama in my childhood when there was any cause of danger or alarm. That was what an old nurse had taught me."

"But you think that supersitition was necessary for you ?"

"Yes, necessary to sustain me."

"That is all right. May I now ask if you had anything like a prophetic vision ?"

"I do not know what you call a vision and whom you will call prophetic. But let me give you an experience in my life. When I announced my fast of 21 days in jail I had not reasoned about it. On retiring to bed the previous night I had no notion that I was going to announce the next morning a fast of 21 days. But in the middle of the night a Voice woke me up and said : 'Go through a fast.' 'How many' ? I asked, '21 days,' was the answer. Now let me tell you that my mind was unprepared for it, disinclined for it. But the thing came to me as clearly as anything could be. Let me tell you one thing more and I have done. Whatever striking things I have done in life I have not done prompted by reason but prompted by instinct—I would say God. Take the Dandi Salt March of 1930. I had not the ghost of a suspicion how the breach of the Salt Law would work itself out. Pandit Motilalji and other friends were fretting and did not know what I would do ; and I could tell them nothing, as I myself knew nothing about it. But like a flash it came, as you know it was enough to shake the country from one end to the other. One last thing. Until the last day I knew nothing about announcing the 6th of April 1919 as a day of fasting and prayer. But I dreamt about it—there was no Voice or Vision as in 1930—And I felt it was just the thing to do. In the morning I shared it with C. R. and announced it to the country you know with

what a wonderfully spontaneous response."

—*Harijan* : May 14, 1938.

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IF one wishes to walk in the fear of God, one should be indifferent about popular praise or blame.

—*Harijan* : May 7, 1940.

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EVERYONE has faith in God though everyone does not know it. For everyone has faith in himself and that multiplied to *n*th degree is God. The sum total of all that lives is God. We may not be God but we are of God even as a little drop of water is of the ocean. Imagine it torn away from the ocean and flung millions of miles away. It becomes helpless torn from its surroundings and cannot feel the might and majesty of the ocean. But if some one could point out to it that it is of the ocean, its faith would revive, it would dance with joy and the whole of the might and majesty of the ocean would be reflected in it.

—*Harijan* : June 3, 1939.

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EVER since its commencement, the world, the wise and the foolish included, has proceeded upon the assumption that, if we are, God is and that, if God is not, we are not. And since belief in God is treated as a fact more definite than the fact that the Sun is. This living faith has solved the largest number of puzzles of life. It has alleviated our misery. It sustains us in life, it is our one solace in death. The very search for Truth becomes interesting, worth while because of this belief. But search for Truth is search for God. Truth is God. God is, because Truth is. We embark upon the search, because we believe that there is Truth and it can be found by diligent search and meticulous observance of the well-known and well-tried rules of the search. There is no record in history of the failure of such search. Even the athiests who have pretended to disbelieve in God have believed in Truth. The trick they

have performed is that of giving God another not a new name; His name are Legion. Truth is the crown of them all.

What is true of God is true, though in a less degree, of the 'assumption of the truth of some fundamental moralities.' As a matter of fact they are implied in the belief in God or Truth. Departure from these has landed the truants in endless misery. Difficulty of practice should not be confused with disbelief. A Himalayan expedition has its prescribed conditions of success.

I do not regard God as a person. Truth for me is God, and God's Law and God are not different things or facts, in the sense that an earthly king and his law are different. God is an idea, Law Himself. Therefore it is impossible to conceive God as breaking the Law. He therefore does not rule our actions and withdraw Himself. When we say He rules our actions, we are simply using human language and we try to limit Him. Otherwise He and His Law abide everywhere and govern everything. Therefore I do not think that He answers in every detail every request of ours, but there is no doubt that He rules our actions, and I literally believe that not a blade of grass grows or moves without His will. This free will we enioy is less than that of a passenger on a crowded deck.

Harijan : Dec. 2, 1939.

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Q.—Do you feel a sense of freedom in your communion with God ?

A.—I do. I do not feel cramped as I would on a board full of passengers. Although I know that my freedom is less than that of a passenger, I appreciate that freedom as I have imbibed through and through the central teaching of the *Gita* that man is the maker of his own destiny in the sense that he has freedom of choice as to the manner in which he uses that freedom. But he is no controller of results. The moment he thinks he is, he comes to grief.

—*Harijan* : March 23, 1940.

NOT every person can know God's will. Proper training is necessary to attain the power to know God's will. —*Harijan* : April 27, 1940.

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IT is through Truth and Non-violence that I can have some glimpse of God. Truth and Non-violence are my God. They are the obverse and reverse of the same coin.
—*Harijan* : July 29, 1940.

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WITH God as our Commander and Infallible Guide where is there cause for any fear ?
—*Harijan* : Aug. 25, 1940.

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MAN is nothing Napoleon planned much and found himself a prisoner in St. Helena. The mighty Kaiser aimed at the crown of Europe and is reduced to the status of a private gentleman. God had so willed it. Let us contemplate such examples and be humble.
—*Young India* : Oct. 9, 1924

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RELIANCE upon the sword is wholly inconsisten with reliance upon God. —*Young India* : Dec. 30, 1925.

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WITH men nothing may be possible, for God nothing is impossible. —*Young India* : Feb. 9, 1926.

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WE are but straws in the hands of God. He alone can blow us where He pleases. We cannot oppose His wish. He has made us all to unite, not to remain apart for ever. —*Young India* : May 15, 1924.

GOD tries His votaries through and through, but never beyond endurance. He gives them strength enough

to go through the ordeal He prescribes for them.

—*Young India* : Feb. 19, 1925.

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IF we can but throw ourselves into His lap as our only Help, we shall come out scatheless through every ordeal that the Government may subject us to. If nothing happens without His permission, where is the difficulty in believing that He is trying us even through this Government ? I would take our complaints to Him and be angry with Him for so cruelly trying us. And He will soothe us and forgive us, if we will but trust Him. The way to stand erect before the tyrant is not to hate him, not to strike him, but to humble ourselves before God and cry out to Him in the hour of agony.

—*Young India* : Dec. 15, 1921

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GOD sometimes does try to the uttermost those whom He wishes to bless. —*Young India* : June 21, 1931.

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OF all my Tamil lessons one proverb at least abides with me as an evergreen. Its literal meaning is, 'God is the only Help for the helpless.' The grand theory of *Satyagraha* is built upon a belief in that truth. Hindu religious literature is full of illustrations to prove the truth.

—*Young India* : Feb. 19, 1925.

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I CAN certainly say though every one else may forsake you, God never forsakes people in distress. When I studied Tamil many years ago, I came across a proverb which I cannot forget. This is it : "Tikkattravannukka Daivamedhune," which means " for those who are helpless, God is the Help."

WE must learn, each one of us, to stand alone. God only is our infallible and eternal guide.

—*Young India* : Sep. 29, 1921.

GOD helps the Helpless, not those who believe they can do something. —*Young India* : Feb. 28, 1922.



A SCAVENGER who works in his service shares equal distinction with a king who uses his gifts in His name and as a mere trustee. Unlike as among us very imperfect beings, in His Durbar the motive rather than the act itself decides its quality. He knowing the intention as much as the act, judges the act according to the intention.

—*Young India* : Nov. 25, 1926.



IN the divine account-books only our actions are noted not what we have read or what we have spoken.

—*Young India* : Jan. 7, 1925.



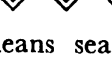
GOD keeps an accurate record of all things good and bad. There is no better accountant on earth.

—*Harijan* : Sept. 21, 1934.



GOD requires the purest sacrifice.

—*Young India* : Feb. 9, 1927.



BRAHMACHARI means searcher after God, one who conducts himself so as to bring himself nearest to God in the least possible time. And all the great religions of the world, however much they may differ, are absolutely one on this fundamental thing that no man or woman with an impure heart can possibly appear before the Great White Throne. —*Young India* : Sept. 8, 1927.



GOD is a very hard taskmaster. He is never satisfied with fire-works display. His mills although they grind surely and incessantly, grind excruciatingly slow, and He

is never satisfied with hasty forfeitures of life. It is a sacrifice of the purest that He demands, and so you and I have prayerfully to plod on, live out the life so long as it is vouchsafed to us to live it.

—*Young India* : Sept. 22, 1927.

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I AM inundated with letters from young men who write frankly about their evil habits and about the void that their unbelief has made in their lives. No mere medical advice can bring them relief. I can only tell them that there is no way but that of surrender to and trust in God and His grace. Let us all utilise this occasion by giving the living religion in our lives the place it deserves. Has not Akhobhagat said—

Live as you will, but so
As to realise God.

—*Young India* : Aug. 28, 1928.

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RAMA-NAM is not for those who tempt God in every way possible and ever expect it to save. It is for those who walk in fear of God, who want to restrain themselves and cannot in spite of themselves

—*Young India* : Jan. 30, 1925.

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NEVER-THELESS there are those who are struck with doubt and despair For them there is the Name of God. It is God's covenant that whoever goes to Him in weakness and helplessness, him He will make strong. 'When I am weak, then I am strong,' as the poet Surdas has sung. Rama is the strength of the weak. This strength is not to be obtained by throwing oneself on His name. Rama is but a synonym of God. You may say God or Allah or whatever other name you like, but the moment you trust naught but Him, you are strong, all disappointment disappears.

—*Young India* : June 1, 1925.

THOSE who put their implicit faith in Him cannot but reach their aims. —*Young India* : Nov. 1, 1925.

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BUT as I am a believer in God, as I never for a moment lose faith in Him, as I content myself with the joy and sorrow that He wills for me, I may feel helpless, but I never lose hope. —*Young India* : Jan. 27, 1927.

Goondaism

EVEN the *goondas* are part of us and therefore they must be handled gently and sympathetically. People generally do not take to *goondaism* for the love of it. It is a symptom of a deeper-seated disease in the body politic. The same law should govern our relations with internal *goondaism* that we apply in our relations with the *goondaism* in the system of Government. And if we have felt that we have the ability to deal with that highly organised *goondaism* in a non-violent manner how much more should we feel the ability to deal with the internal *goondaism* by the same method ? —*Young India* : May 7, 1931.

Government of India

NO conquest by force of arms is worth treasuring, if it is not followed by cultural conquest, if the conquered do not hug their chains and regard the conqueror as their benefactor. The different forts of India are no doubt a continuous reminder of the British might. But the silent conquest of the mind of educated India is a surer guarantee of British stability than the formidable forts.

—*Young India* : Aug. 12, 1926.

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WHEREAS, in truth a Government that is ideal governs the least. It is no self-government that leaves nothing for the people to do. That is pupilage—our present stage. —*Young India* : Aug. 27, 1925.

WE have no King. We have a rule masquerading under the sacred name of law. Rulers are many. They come and go. The rule abides. But it is corrupt, mischievous, soul-destroying rule which has to be ended at any cost. —*Young India* : Feb. 23, 1928.

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THE logical outcome of the Government policy is to Europeanise India and immediately we have become Europeanised, our English masters will gladly hand over the reins of Government to us. We would be welcomed as their willing agents. I can have no interest in that deadly process save to put the whole of my humble weight against it. My *Swaraj* is to keep in tact the genius of our civilisation. I want to write many new things but they must be all written on the Indian slate. I would gladly borrow from the West when I can return the amount with decent interest.

The Councillors want their fares and extras, the ministers their salaries, the lawyers their fees, the suitors the decrees, the parents such education for their boys as would give them status in the present life, the millionaires want facilities for multiplying their millions and the rest their unmanly peace. The whole revolves beautifully round the central corporation. It is a giddy dance from which no one cares to free himself and so, as the speed increases, the exhilaration is the greater. But it is a death-dance and the exhilaration is induced by the rapid heart beat of a patient who is about to expire. —*Young India* : Feb. 9, 1922.

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THE best use we can make of this Government is to ignore its existence and to isolate it as much as possible from our life, believing that contact with it is corrupting and degrading. —*Young India* : Nov. 17, 1921.

Granth Sahib

I HOLD *Granth Sahib* in high reverence. Several parts

of it have passed into our daily speech. So far as my reading of it goes, it inculcates faith, valour and invincible belief in the ultimate triumph of right and justice.

—*Young India* : March 19, 1931.

Greed

TO take what is required may be profitable ; to have more given to you is highly likely to be a burden. To overload a stomach is to court slow death.

—*Harijan* : July 13, 1940.

Guru

I SAY that it is not within me to be anybody's *Guru*. I have always and will always disclaim this title. I, who am in search of a spiritual *Guru*, how can I arrogate to myself the title of a *Guru* ? I cannot even think of being anybody's political *guru* in the sense that I applied the term to the late Mr. Gokhale, for I am but an infant in politics.

To be a *guru* I must be myself flawlessly perfect, which I can never claim to be. —*Young India* : July 27, 1921.

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IF I had a *Guru*, and I am looking for one, I should surrender myself body and soul to him. But in this age of unbelief a true *Guru* is hard to find. A substitute will be worse than useless, often positively harmful. I must therefore warn all against accepting imperfect ones as *Gurus*. It is better to grope in the dark and wade through a million errors to Truth than to entrust oneself to one who "knows not that he knows not." Has a man ever learnt swimming by tying a stone to his neck ?

—*Young India* : Dec. 3, 1925.

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MY conception of a *Guru* is perhaps not of the ordinary. Nothing but perfection will satisfy me. I am in search of

one who, though in the flesh, is incorruptible and unmoved by passion, free from the pairs of opposites, who is Truth and *Ahimsa* incarnate and who will therefore fear none and be feared by none. Every one gets the *Guru* he deserves and strives for. The difficulty of finding the *Guru* I want is thus obvious. But it does not worry me : for it follows from what I have said, that I must try to perfect myself before I meet the *Guru* in the flesh. Till then I must contemplate him in the spirit. My success lies in my continuous, humble, truthful striving. I *know* the path. It is straight and narrow. It is like the edge of a sword. I rejoice to walk on it. I weep when I slip. God's word is : 'He who strives never perishes.' I have implicit faith in that promise. Though therefore from my weakness I fail a thousand times, I will not lose faith but hope that I shall see the Light when the flesh has been brought under perfect subjection as some day it must.

—*Young India* : Jan. 3, 1928.

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I HAVE called Gokhale my political *guru*. But in spiritual matters, I am sorry to say, I have not yet found any one to whom I could completely surrender myself and whose opinion I could implicitly and unquestioningly accept as I could Gokhale's in politics. Perhaps I am not yet ripe for a spiritual *guru* because I believe that the spiritual *guru* comes to you of himself, in fact seeks you out when you are ready for him. —*Young India* : Sept. 20, 1928.

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I BELIEVE in the Hindu theory of *Guru* and his importance in spiritual realization. I think there is a great deal of Truth in the doctrine that true knowledge is impossible without a *Guru*. An imperfect teacher may be tolerable in mundane matters, but not in spiritual matters. only a perfect *gnani* deserves to be enthroned as *Guru*. There must therefore be ceaseless striving after perfection.

For one gets the *Guru* that one deserves. Infinite striving after perfection is one's right. It is one's own reward. The rest is in the hands of God.

—*My Experiments With Truth* : Page 114.

H

Habit

MAN'S destined purpose is to conquer old habits, to overcome the evil in him and to restore good to its rightful place. —*Young India* : Dec. 20, 1928.



WE cannot, in a moment, get rid of habits of a lifetime. —*Harijan* : Oct. 5, 1934.

Hartal

HARTAL is an ancient Indian institution for expressing national sorrow and *hartal* is the best method of marking our strong disapproval of the action of the Government. It is a means, more powerful than monster meetings, of exrpressing national opinion. —*Young India* : May 6, 1919.



HARTAL forcibly brought about cannot be considered *Satyagrahi* hartal. In any thing *Satyagrahi* there should be purity of motive, means and end.

—*Young India* : Jan. 12, 1920.



HARTAL must not be made cheap. It must be used only for rare occasions. —*Young India* : March 10, 1920.

Help

CONDITIONAL assistance is like adulterated cement that does not bind. —*Young India* : Dec. 3, 1919.



HE would be a bad helper who, when hailed to bring a bucketful of water to quench a fire, brought it after even the ashes had been removed.

—*Young India* : Jan. 2, 1922.

WHERE I cannot help, I must resolutely refuse to hinder. —*Young India* : June 25, 1925.

Helplessness

IT is only because we have created a vicious atmosphere of impotence round ourselves that we consider ourselves to be helpless even for the simplest possible things.

—*Young India* : June 20, 1929.

Himalayas

IN these hills, nature's hospitality eclipses all that man can ever do. The enchanting beauty of the Himalayas, their bracing climate and the soothing green that envelopes you leaves nothing more to be desired. I wonder whether the scenery of these hills and the climate are to be sarpassed, if equalled, by any of the beauty spot of the world. After having been for nearly three weeks in the Almoda hills, I am more than ever amazed why our people need to go to Europe in search of health.

—*Young India* : July 11, 1929.

Hinduism

In dealing with the problem of untouchability during the Mardar Tour I have asserted my claim to being a *Sanatani* Hindu with greater emphasis than hitherto, and yet there are things which are commonly done in the name of Hinduism, which I disregard. I have no desire to be called a *Sanatani* Hindu or any other, if I am not such. And I have certainly no desire to steal in a reform or an abuse under cover of a great faith.

It is therefore necessary for me once for all distinctly to give my meaning of *Sanatana* Hinduism. The word *Sonatana* I use in its natural sense.

I call myself a *Sanatani* Hindu, because,

(1) I believe in the *Vedas*, the *Upanishads*, the *Puranas* and all that goes by the name of Hindu scriptures, and therefore in *avataras* and rebirth.

(2) I believe in the *Varnasharama dharma* in a sense in my opinion strictly *Vedic*, but not in its present popular and crude sense.

(3) I believe in the protection of the cow in its much larger sense than the popular.

(4) I do not disbelieve in idol-worship.

The reader will note that I have purposely refrained from using the word divine origin in reference to the *Vedas* or any other scriptures. For I do not believe in the exclusive divinity of the *Vedas*. I believe the *Bible*, the *Koran* and the *Zend Avesta* to be as much divinely inspired as the *Vedas*. My belief in the Hindu scriptures does not require me to accept every word and every verse as divinely inspired. Nor do I claim to have any first-hand knowledge of these wonderful books. But I do claim to know and feel the truths of the essential teaching of the scriptures. I decline to be bound by any interpretation, however learned it may be, if it is repugnant to reason or moral sense. I do most emphatically repudiate the claim (if they advance any such) of the present Shankaracharyas and Shastris to give a correct interpretation of the Hindu scriptures. On the contrary, I believe that our present knowledge of these books is in a most chaotic state. I believe implicitly in the Hindu aphorism, that no one truly knows the *Shastras* who has nor attained perfection in Innocence (*Ahimsa*), Truth (*Satya*) and Self-control (*Brahmacharya*) and who has not renounced all acquisition or possession of wealth. I believe in the institution of *Gurus*, but in this age millions must go without a *Guru*, because it is a rare thing to find a combination of perfect purity and perfect learning. But one need not despair of ever knowing the truth of one's religion, because the fundamentals of Hinduism as of every great religion are unchangeable, and easily understood. Every Hindu believes in God and His Oneness, in rebirth and salvation. But that which distinguishes Hinduism from every other religion is its cow protection, more than its *Varnashrama*.

Varnashrama, is in my opinion, inherent in human nature, and Hinduism has simply reduced it to a science. It does attach to birth. A man cannot change his *varna* by choice. Not to abide by one's *varna* is to disregard the law of heredity. The division, however, into innumerable castes is an unwarranted liberty taken with the doctrine. The four divisions are all-sufficing.

I do not believe that interdining or even intermarriage necessarily deprives a man of his status that his birth has given him. The four divisions define man's calling, they do not restrict or regulate social intercourse. The divisions define duties, they confer no privileges. It is, I hold, against the genius of Hinduism to arrogate to oneself a higher status or assign to another lower. All are born to serve God's creation, a Brahman with his knowlege, a Kshatriya with his power of protection, a Vaishya with his commercial ability and a Shudra with bodily labour. This, however, does not mean that a Brahman, for instance, is absolved from bodily labour, or the duty of protecting himself and others. His birth makes a Brahman predominantly a man of knowlege, the fittest by heredity and training to impart it to others. There is nothing, again, to prevent the *Shudra* from acquiring all the knowledge he wishes. Only, he will best serve with his body and need not envy others their special qualities for service. But a *Brahman* who claims superiority by right of knowledge falls and has no knowledge. And so with the others who pride themselves upon their special qualities. *Varnashrama* is self-restraint and conservation and economy of energy.

Though therefore *Varnashrama* is not affected by interdining or intermarriage, Hinduism does most emphatically discourage interdining and intermarriage between divisions. Hinduism reached the highest limit of self restraint. It is undoubtedly a religion of renunciation of the flesh, so that the spirit may be set free. It is no part of Hindu's duty to dine with his son. And by restricting his choice of

a bride to a particular group, he exercises rare self-restraint. Hinduism does not regard a married state as by any means essential for salvation. Marriage is a 'fall' even as birth is a 'fall.' Salvation is freedom from birth and hence death also. Prohibition against intermarriage and interdining is essential for a rapid evolution of the soul. But this self-denial is no test of *varna*. A *Brahman* may remain a *Brahman*, though he may dine with his *Shudra* brother, if he has not left off his duty of service by knowledge. It follows from what I have said above, that restraint in matters of marriage and dining is not based upon notions of superiority. A Hindu who refuses to dine with another from a sense of superiority misrepresents his *Dharma*.

Unfortunately to-day, Hinduism seems to consist merely in eating and not eating. Once I horrified a pious Hindu by taking toast at a Mussalman's house. I saw that he was pained to see me pouring milk into a cup handed by a Mussalman friend, but his anguish knew no bounds when he saw me taking toast at the Mussalman's hands. Hinduism is in danger of losing its substance, if it resolves itself into a matter of elaborate rules as to what and with whom to eat. Abstemiousness from intoxicating drinks and drugs, and from all kinds of foods, especially meat, is undoubtedly a great aid to the evolution of the spirit, but it is by no means an end in itself. Many a man eating meat and with everybody, but living in the fear of God is nearer his freedom than a man religiously abstaining from meat and many other things, but blaspheming God in every one of his acts.

The central fact of Hinduism however is cow protection. Cow protection to me is one of the most wonderful phenomena in human evolution. It takes the human being beyond his species. The cow to me means the entire subhuman world. Man through the cow is enjoined to realise his identity with all that lives. Why the cow was selected for apotheosis is obvious to me. The cow was in India the best companion. She was the giver of plenty. Not only

did she give milk, but she also made agriculture possible. The cow is a poem of pity. One reads pity in the gentle animal. She is the mother to millions of Indian mankind. Protection of the cow means protection of the whole dumb creation of God. The ancient seer, whoever he was, began with the cow. The appeal of the lower order of creation is all the more forcible because it is speechless. Cow protection is the gift of Hinduism to the world. And Hinduism will live so long as there are Hindus to protect the cow.

The way to protect is to die for her. It is a denial of Hinduism and *Ahimsa* to kill a human being to protect a cow. Hindus are enjoined to protect the cow by their *tapasya*, by self-purification, by self-sacrifice. The present-day cow protection has degenerated into a perpetual feud with the Mussalmans, whereas cow protection means conquering the Mussalmans by our love. A Mussalman friend sent me some time ago a book detailing the inhumanities practised by us on the cow and her progeny ; how we bleed her to take the last drop of milk from her, how we starve her to emaciation, how we ill-treat the calves, how we deprive them of their portion of milk, how cruelly we treat the oxen, how we castrate them, how we beat them, how we overload them. If they had speech, they would bear witness to our crimes against them which would stagger the world. By every act of cruelty to our cattle, we disown God and Hinduism. I do not know that the condition of the cattle in any other part of the world is so bad as in unhappy India. We may not blame the Englishman for this. We may not plead poverty in our defence. Criminal negligence is the only cause of the miserable condition of our cattle. Our *Panjrapoles*, though they are an answer to our instinct of mercy, are a clumsy demonstration of its execution. Instead of being model dairy farms and great profitable national institutions, they are merely depots for receiving decrepit cattle.

Hindus will be judged not by their *tilaks*, not by the correct chanting of *mantras*, not by their pilgrimages, not by their most punctilious observance of rules but by their ability to protect the cow. Whilst professing the religion of cow protection, we have enslaved the cow and her progeny, and have become slaves ourselves.

It will now be understood why I consider myself a Sanatani Hindu. I yield to none in my regard for the cow. I have made the Khilafat cause my own, because I see that through its preservation full protection can be secured for the cow. I do not ask my Mussalman friends to save the cow in consideration of my service. My prayer ascends daily to God Almighty, that my service of a cause I hold to be just may appear so pleasing to Him, that he may change the hearts of the Mussalmans, and fill them with pity for their Hindu neighbours and make them save the animal the latter hold dear as life itself.

I can no more describe my feeling for Hinduism than for my own wife. She moves me as no other woman in the world can. Nor that she has no faults : I daresay, she has many more than I see myself. But the feeling of an indissoluble bond is there. Even so I feel for and about Hinduism with all its faults and limitations. Nothing elates me so much as the music of the *Gita* or the *Ramayana* by Tulsidas, the only two books in Hinduism I may be said to know. When I fancied I was taking my last breath, the *Gita* was my solace. I know the vice that is going on to-day in all the great Hindu shrines, but I love them in spite of their unspeakable failings. There is an interest which I take in them and which I take in no other. I am a reformer through and through. But my zeal never takes me to the rejection of any of the essential things of Hinduism. I have said I do not disbelieve in idol worship. An idol does not excite any feeling of veneration in me. But I think that idol worship is part of human nature. We hanker after symbolism. Why should one be more com-

posed in a church than elsewhere ? Images are an aid to worship. No Hindu considers an image to be God. I do not consider idol worship a sin.

It is clear from the foregoing, that Hinduism is not an exclusive religion. In it there is room for the worship of all the prophets of the world. It is not a missionary religion in the ordinary sense of the term. It has no doubt absorbed many tribes in its fold, but this absorption has been of an evolutionary, imperceptible character. Hinduism tells every one to worship God according to his own faith or *Dharma*, and so it lives at peace with all the religions.

That being my conception of Hinduism, I have never been able to reconcile myself to untouchability. I have always regarded it as an excrescence. It is true that it has been handed down to us from generations, but so are many evil practices even to this day. I should be ashamed to think that dedication of girls to virtual prostitution was a part of Hinduism. Yet it is practised by Hindus in many parts of India. I consider it positive irreligion to sacrifice goats to Kali and do not consider it a part of Hinduism. Hinduism is a growth of ages. The very name, Hinduism, was given to the religion of the people of Hindusthan by foreigners. There was no doubt at one time sacrifice of animals offered in the name of religion. But it is not religion, much less is it Hindu religion. And so also it seems to me that when cow protection became an article of faith with our ancestors, those who persisted in eating beef were ex-communicated. The civil strife must have been fierce. Social boycott was applied not only to the recalcitrants, but their sins were visited upon their children also. The practice which had probably its origin in good intentions hardened into usage, and even verses crept in our sacred books giving the practice a permanence wholly undeserved and still less justified. Whether my theory is correct or not, untouchability is repugnant to reason and

to the instinct of mercy, pity or love. A religion that establishes the worship of the cow cannot possibly countenance or warrant a cruel and inhuman boycott of human beings. And I should be content to be torn to pieces rather than disown the suppressed classes. Hindus will certainly never deserve freedom, nor get it if they allow their noble religion to be disgraced by the retention of the taint of untouchability. And as I love Hinduism dearer than life itself the taint has become for me an intolerable burden. Let us not deny God by denying to a fifth of our race the right of association on an equal footing.

—*Young India* : Sept. 29, 1920.

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LET me for a few moments consider what Hinduism consists of, and what it is that has fired so many saints about whom we have historical record. Why has it contributed so many philosophers to the world ? What is it in Hinduism that had so enthused its devotees for centuries? Did they see untouchability in Hinduism and still enthuse over it ? In the midst of my struggle against untouchability I have been asked by several workers as to the essence of Hinduism. We have no simple *Kalema*, they said, that we find in Islam, nor have we *John*, Chapters 3—16 of the *Bible*. Have we or have we not something that will answer the demands of the most philosophic among the Hindus or the most matter-of-fact among them ? Some have said, and not without good reason, the *Gayatri* answers that purpose. I have perhaps recited the *Gayatri Mantra* a thousand times, having understood the meaning of it. But still it seems to me that it did not answer the whole of my aspirations. Then as you are aware I have, for years past, been swearing by the *Bhagwad Gita*, and have said that it answers all my difficulties and has been my *Kamadhenu*, my guide, my open sesame, on hundreds of moments of doubts and difficulty. I cannot recall a single occasion when it has failed me.

But it is not a book that I can place before the whole of this audience. It requires a prayerful study before the *Kamadhenu* yields rich milk she holds in her udders.

But I have fixed upon one *Mantra* that I am going to recite to you as containing the whole essence of Hinduism. Many of you, I think, know the *Ishopanishad.* I read it years ago with translation and commentary. I learnt it by heart in Yervada Jail. But it did not then captivate me, as it has done during the past few months, and I have now come to the final conclusion that if all the *Upanishads* and all the other scriptures happened all of a sudden to be reduced to ashes, and if only the first verse in the *Ishopanishads* were left intact in the memory of Hindus, Hinduism would live for ever.

Now this *Mantra* divides itself in four parts. The first part is.

All this that we see in this great Universe is pervaded by God. Then come the second and third parts which read together, as I read them :

I divide these into two and translate them thus : *Renounce it and enjoy it.* There is another rendering which means the same thing : *Enjoy what He gives you.* Even so you can divide it into two parts. Then follows the final and most important part, which means : *Do not covet anybody's wealth or possession.* All the other *Mantras* of that ancient *upanishad* are a commentary or an attempt to give us the full meaning of the first *Mantra.* As I read the *Mantra* in the light of the *Gita* or the *Gita* in the light of the *Mantra* I find that the *Gita* is a commentary on the *Mantra.* It seems to me to satisfy the cravings of the socialist and the communist. I venture to suggest to all who do not belong to the Hindu faith that it satisfies their cravings also. And if it is true—and I hold it to be true—you need not

take anything in Hinduism which is inconsistent with or contrary to the meaning of this *Mantra*. What more can a man in the street want to learn than this that the one God and Creator and Master of all that lives pervades the Universe ? The three other parts of the *Mantra* follow directly from the first. If you believe that God pervades everything that He has created you must believe that you cannot enjoy anything that is not given by Him. And seeing that he is the Creator of His numberless children, it follows that you cannot covet anybody's possession. If you think that you are one of His numerous creature, it behoves you to renounce everything and lay it at His feet. That means the act of renunciation of everything is not a mere physical renunciation but represents a second or new birth. It is a deliberate act, not done in ignorance. It is therefore a regeneration. And then since he who holds the body must eat and drink and clothe himself, he must naturally seek all that he needs from Him. And he gets it as a natural reward of that renunciation. As if this was not enough the *Mantra* closes with this magnificent thought : *Do not covet anybody's possession.* The moment you carry out these precepts you become a wise citizen of the world, living at peace with all that lives. It satisfies one's highest aspirations on this earth and hereafter. No doubt it will not satisfy the aspirations of him who does not believe in God and His undisputed sovereignty. It is no idle thing that the Maharaja of Travancore is called *Padmabhadas*. It is a great thought we, know that God himself has taken the title of *Dasanudas* Servant of servants. If all the princes would call themselves servants of God, they would be correctly describing themselves, but they cannot be servants of God unless they are servants of the people. And if *zamindar's* and moined men and all who have possessions would treat themselves as trustees and perform the act of renunciation that I have described, this world would indeed be a blessed world to live in. —*Harijan* : Jan. 30, 1937.

God the Ruler pervades all there is in this Universe. Therefore renounce and dedicate all to Him and then enjoy or use the portion that may fall to thy lot. Never covet anybody's possessions.

Hindu-Muslim Unity

IT consists in our having a common purpose, a common goal and common sorrows. It is best promoted by co-operating to reach the common goal, by sharing one another's sorrows and by mutual toleration.

—*Young India* : Feb. 25, 1920.

DIVIDED, we must ever remain slaves. This unity, therefore, cannot be a mere policy to be discarded when it does not suit us. We can discard it only when we are tired of *Swaraj*. Hindu-Muslim unity must be our creed to last for all time and under all circumstances.

Nor must that unity be a menace to the minorities—the Parsees, the Christians, the Jews or the powerful Sikhs. If we seek to crush any of them, we shall some day want to fight each other. —*Young India* : Dec. 2, 1920.

Every body knows that without unity between Hindus and Mussalmans, no certain progress can be made by the nation. —*Young India* : July 28, 1921.

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THAT unity is strength is not merely a copybook maxim but a rule of life, is in no case so clearly illustrated as in the problem of Hindu-Muslim Unity. Divided we must fall. Any third power may easily enslave India so long as we Hindus and Mussalmans are ready to cut each other's throats. Hindu-Muslim Unity means not unity only between Hindus and Mussalmans but between all

those who believe India to be their home, no matter to what faith they belong. —*Young India* : May 11, 1921.

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WHAT can be more natural than that Hindus and Mussalmans born and bred in India having the same adversities, the same hopes, should be permanent friends, brothers born of the same Mother India? The surprise is that we should fight, not that we should unite.

—*Young India* : Aug. 21, 1924.

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I AM striving to become the best cement between the two communities. My longing is to be able to cement the two with my blood, if necessary.

—*Young India* : Sept. 25, 1924.

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IF the Hindus and the Mussalmans rid themselves of mutual distrust and fear, there is no power that can stop their freedom. We are the makers of our own slavery.

—*Young India* : Jan. 27, 1927.

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WE may think we are living, but disunited we are worse than dead. The Hindu thinks that in quarrelling with the Mussalman he is benefiting Hinduism, and the Mussalman thinks that in fighting a Hindu he is benefiting Islam. But each is ruining his faith. —*Young India* : Jan. 27, 1927.

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IT is a sign of weakness, not of fitness for *Swaraj* to go to the foreign ruling power to arbitrate between us or to enforce the peace between us at the point of the bayonet.

—*Young India* : June 16, 1927.

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IF it could be achieved by giving my life, I have the will to give it and I hope I have the strength for it. I

should with the greatest joy undertake an indefinite fast, as I very nearly did at Delhi, in 1924, if it would melt and change the stony hearts of Hindus and Mussalmans.

—*Young India* : June 16, 1927.

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THIS unity among all is no new love with me. I have treasured it, acted up to it from my youth upward. When I went to London as a mere lad in 1889 I believed in it as passionately as I do now. When I went to South Africa in 1893 I worked it out in every detail of my life. Love so deep seated as it is in me will not be sacrificed even for the realm of the whole world.

—*Young India* : Feb. 20, 1930.

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I HAVE never dreamt that I could win *Swaraj* merely through my effort or assisted only by the Hindus. I stand in need of the assistance of Musalmans, Parsis, Christians, Sikhs, Jews and all other Indians. I need the assistance even of Englishmen. But I know too that all this combined assistance is worthless if I have not one other assistance that is from God. All is vain without His help. And if He is with this struggle no other help is necessary. But to realise His help and guidance in this struggle, I need your blessings, the blessings of all communities.

—*Young India* April 3, 1930.

THE only non-violent solution I know is for the Hindus to let the minority communities take what they like. I would not hesitate to let the minorities govern their country. This is no academic belief. The solution is attended with no risk. For under a free Government the real power will be held by the people.

—*Young India* : April 24, 1930.

LET all of us Hindus, Mussalmans, Parsis, Sikhs, Christians live amicably as Indians, pledged to live and die for our motherland. Let it be our ambition to live as the children of the same mother, retaining our individual faiths and yet being one, like the countless leaves of one tree. —*Young India* : April 23, 1931.

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THAT we have prepared the ground for Hindu-Muslim unity I have not the slightest doubt. During the Khilafat days it seemed to be near accomplishment, and then suddenly our hopes seemed to have been dashed to pieces. But was darkness ever an endless or permanent phenomenon of Nature? Indeed can it exist without light? The deeper the darkness the nearer, I think, is the dawn, the deeper the gloom the nearer is the approach of cheer-giving light. The severest illness is not without its end. If not recovery, death ends the agony. The present agony, for aught we know, is nearing its end. It is deeper because the problem is more keenly realised today then it was during the Khilafat agitation. That agitation had its origin, it may perhaps be truly said, in me. Today though the Hindu Muslim question wears an ugly face it belongs very largely to the people, and therein lies my hope for a permanent peace out of the present wanton violence. People must get tired of mutual slaughter. In 1920-21 we had just a passing glimpse of Hindu Muslim unity as it would be when completely achieved. The effect can never vanish completely, though ugly elements which have come upon the surface may shake one's faith for the moment. Don't say to me that Hindu Muslim unity which was so near in 1921 has receded very far; you will then say the same thing about prohibition, *khadi*, *Swaraj*. But it is not correct to say so. All these things are nearer today for the work done in 1920-21.

—*Harijan* : Dec. 15, 1936.

FOR good or for ill, the two communities are wedded to India, they are neighbours, sons of the soil. They are destined to die here as they are born here. Nature will force them to live in peace if they do not come together voluntarily. —*Harijan* : Oct. 29, 1938.

" WOULD not the march to full responsible government be more rapid, if the Muslims were taken along?" "Of course it would be," replied Gandhiji " Personally I do not want anything which the Muslims oppose. But I have faith that the solution of the Hindu-Muslim tangle will come much sooner than most people expect. I claim to be able to look at the whole position with a detached mind. There is no substance in our quarrels. Points of difference are superficial, those of contact are deep and permanent. Political and economic subjection is common to us. The same climate, the same rivers, the same fields supply both with air, water and food. Whatever, therefore, leaders, Mahatmas and Maulanas may say or do, the masses, when they are fully awakened, will assert themselves and combine for the sake of combating common evils.

" The effect of the Socialist and Communist propaganda too is to bring the masses of both the communities together by emphasizing identity of interests I have my differences with them, but I cannot withhold my admiration for their endeavour to demolish the superstition that keeps the different communities apart." —*Harijan* : Dec. 31, 1938.

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BRITAIN has hitherto held India by producing before the world Indians who want Britain to remain in India as ruler and arbiter between rival claimants. These will always exist. The question is whether it is right for Britain to plead these rivalries in defence of holding India under subjection, or whether she should now recognize the mistake and leave India to decide upon the method of her own government. —*Harijan* : Oct. 21, 1939.

ABSOLUTE protection of the rights of minorities is a greater concern of the Congress than it ever can be of Great Britain. The Congress dare not seek and cannot get justice, if it is not prepared to do itself. To be above suspicion is the only way open to non-violent organisations. But British policy may make a just solution impossible at the present moment. —*Harijan* : Oct. 28, 1939.

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WE must prove to the Muslim countrymen and to the world that the Congress does not want independence at the sacrifice of a single legitimate interest, be it Muslim or other. We may leave no stone unturned to carry the minorities with us. This meticulous care for the rights of the least among us is the *sine qua non* of non-violence.

—*Harijan* : Dec. 2, 1939.

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TIME is a merciless enemy, if it is also a merciful friend and healer. I claim to be amongst the oldest lovers of Hindu-Muslim unity and I remain one even today. I have been asking myself why every whole-hearted attempt made by all including myself to reach unity has failed, and failed as completey that I have entirely fallen from grace and am described by some Muslim papers as the greatest enemy of Islam in India. It is a phenomenon I can only account for by the fact that the third power, even without deliberately wishing it, will not allow real unity to take place. Therefore I have come to the reluctant conclusion that the two communities will come together almost immediately after the British power comes to a final end in India. —*Harijan* : June 21, 1942.

Hindustani

WHAT is Hindustani ? There is no such language apart from Urdu and Hindi Urdu has sometimes been called Hindustani. It means a scientific blend of Hindi and Urdu. There is no such written blend extant. But it is

the common speech of the unlettered millions of Hindus and Muslims living in Northen India. Not being written, it is imperfect, and the written language has taken two different turns tending to widen the difference by each running away from the other. Therefore the word Hindustani means Hindi and Urdu. —*Harijan* : Feb. 1, 1942.

Honour

NO cost is too heavy for the preservation of one's honour, especially religious honour.

—*Young India* : Aug. 11, 1920.

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I WOULD prefer total destruction of myself and my all to purchasing safety at the cost of my manhood.

—*Young India* : May 25, 1921.

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ONE who knows how to die need never fear any harm to her or his honour. —*Young India* : Dec. 15, 1921.

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IT is known by this time that I spare neither friend nor foe when it is a question of departing from the code of honour. —*Young India* : March 2, 1922.

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IT is any day better to stand erect with a broken and bandaged head than to crawl on one's belly, in order to be able to save one's head. —*Young India* : April 2, 1925.

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IMPRISONMENTS, forfeitures deportation, death must all be taken in the ordinary course by those who count honour before everything else.

—*Young India* : May 31, 1928.

Hope

I NEVER give up hope so long as there is the least chance. —*Young India* : July 13, 1921.

IF we had no faith in the ultimate God, we would lose all hope. —*Young India* : May 14, 1931.

Human Nature

THE most practical, the most dignified way of going on in the world is to take people at their word, when you have no positive reason to the contrary. I refuse to believe that the tendency of the human nature is always downward. —*Young India* : Dec. 26, 1926.

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MEN like me cling to their faith in human nature and expect to bend even the haughty English spirit, all appearances to the contrary notwithstanding.

—*Young India* : Feb. 3, 1927.

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I AM more concerned in preventing the brutalisation of human nature than in preventing the sufferings of my own people. I have often gloated over the sufferings of my own people. I know that people who voluntarily undergo a course of suffering raise themselves and the whole of humanity, but I also know that people, who become brutalised in their desperate efforts to get victory over their opponents, or to exploit weaker nations or weaker men not only drag down themselves but mankind also. And, it cannot be a matter of pleasure to me or anyone else to see human nature dragged in the mire. If we are all sons of the same God, and partake of the same divine essence, we must partake of the sin of every person whether he belongs to us or to another race. You can understand how repugnant it must be to invoke the beast in any human being. —*Young India* : Oct. 29, 1931.

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I BELIEVE that the sum-total of the energy of mankind is not to bring us down but to lift us up, and that is the result of the definite, if unconscious, working of the

law of love. The fact that mankind persists shows that the cohesive force is greater than the disruptive force, centripetal force greater than centrifugal. And inasmuch as I know only of the poetry of love, you should not be surprised that I trust the English people. I have often been bitter and I have often said to myself, "When will this camouflage end? When will these people cease to exploit these poor people?" But instinctively I get the reply: "That is the heritage that they have had from Rome." I must conduct myself in accordance with the dictates of the Law of Love, hoping and expecting in the long run to affect the English nature.

—*Young India*: Nov. 11, 1931.

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MAN'S nature is not essentially evil. Brute nature has been known to yield to the influence of love. You must never despair of human nature.

—*Young India*: Nov. 5, 1938.

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HUMAN nature will only find itself when it fully realizes that to be human it has to cease to be beastly or brutal. Though we have the human form, without the attainment of the virtue of non-violence we still share the qualities of our remote reputed ancestor the ourangoutang. —*Harijan*: Oct. 8, 1938.

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MY belief in the capacity of non-violence rejects the theory of permanent inelasticity of human nature.

—*Harijan*: June 7, 1942.

Humility

TAKE water. which in its solid state remains on the earth; it cannot ascend until it is rarefied into steam.

But once it is rarefied into steam it rises up in the sky where at last it is transformed into the clouds which drop down in the form of rain and fructify and bless the earth. We are like water, we have to strive so to rarefy ourselves that all the ego in us perishes and we merge in the infinite to the eternal good of all. —*Young India* : Jan. 12, 1928.

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THE first condition of humaneness is a little humanity and a little diffidence about the correctness of one's conduct and a little re-ceptiveness.

—*Young India* : Sept. 20, 1928.

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HUMILITY cannot be an observance by itself. For it does not lend itself to being deliberately practised. It is, however, an indispensable test of *ahimsa*. In one who has *ahimsa* in him it becomes part of his very nature.

A preliminary draft of the rules and regulations of the *Satyagraha Ashram* was circulated among friends, including the late Sir Gurudas Banerji. He suggested that humility should be accorded a place among the observances. This suggestion could not then be accepted for the same reasons as I am mentioning here.

But although humility is not one of the observances, it is certainly as essential as, and perhaps even more essential, than any one of them. Only it never came to any one by practice. Truth can be cultivated as well as love. But to cultivate humility is tantamount to cultivating hypocrisy. Humility must not be here confounded with mere manners or etiquette. One man will sometimes prostrate himself before another, although his heart is full of bitterness against the latter. This is not humility, but cunning.

A man may repeat *Ramanana*, or tell his beads all the day long, and move in society like a sage; but if he is selfish at heart, he is not meek but only hypocritical.

A humble person is not himself conscious of his humility. Truth and the like perhaps, admit of measurement, but not humility. Inborn humility can never remain hidden, and yet the possessor is unaware of its existence. The story of Vasishtha and Vishvamitra furnishes a very good case in point. Humility should make the possessor *realise* that he is as nothing. Directly one imagines oneself to be something, there is egotism. If a man who keeps observances, who is proud of keeping them, will lose much if not all of their value. And a man who is proud of his virtue often becomes a curse to society. Society will not appreciate it, and he himself will fail to reap any benefit from it. Only a little thought will suffice to convince us that all creatures are nothing more than a mere atom in this universe. Our existence as embodied beings is purely momentary; what are a hundred years in eternity? But if we shatter the chains of egotism, and melt into the ocean of humanity, we share its dignity. To feel that we are something is to set up a barrier between God and ourselves; to cease feeling that we are something is to become one with God. A drop in the ocean partakes of the greatness of its parent, although it is unconscious of it, but it is dried up as soon as it enters upon an existence independent of the ocean. We do not exaggerate when we say that life on earth is a mere bubble.

A life of service must be one of humility. He who would sacrifice his life for others has hardly time to reserve for himself a place in the sun. Inertia must not be mistaken for humility, as it has been in Hinduism. True humility means most strenuous and constant

endeavour entirely directed towards the service of humanity. God is continuously in action without resting for a single moment. If we would serve Him or become one with Him, our activity must be as unwearied as His. There may be momentary rest in store for the drop which is separated from the ocean, but not for the drop in the ocean, which knows no rest. The same is the case with ourselves. As soon as we become one with the ocean in the shape of God, there is no more rest for us, nor indeed do we need rest any longer. Our very sleep is action. For we sleep with the thought of God in our hearts. This restlessness constitutes true test. This never ceasing agitation holds the key to peace ineffable. This supreme state of total surrender is difficult to describe but not beyond the bounds of human experience. It has been attained by many dedicated souls and may be attained by ourselves as well. This is the goal which we of the *Satyagraha Ashram* have set before ourselves; all our observances and activities are calculated to assist us in reaching it. We shall reach it some day all unawares if we have truth in us. —*Yeravda Mandir.*

Humanitarianism

HUMANITARIANISM without knowledge is futile and may even be harmful. —*Harijan*: June 19, 1937.

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MERE learning, mere humanitarianism divorced from actual experience may spell disaster to the cause sought to be espoused. —*Harijan*: July 1, 1939.

Humour

Q. DO you think a sense of humour is necessary in

If I had no sense of humour, I would long ago have committed suicide.

—*Harijan* : Dec. 12, 1928.

Hunger-Strike

THERE should be no hunger-strike on any account. Though there are circumstances conceivable in which a hunger-strike may be justified, hunger-strike in order to secure release or redress of grievances is wrong.

—*Harijan* : April 23, 1938.



HUNGER-STRIKE has positively become a plague. On the slightest pretext some people want to resort to hunger-strike. It is well, therefore, that the Working Committee has condemned the practice in unequivocal terms, so far at least as hunger-strike for discharge from imprisonment is concerned. The Committee should have gone further and condemned also the practice of forcible feeding. I regard forcible feeding as an undue liberty with the human body which is too sacred to be trifled with, even though it belongs to a prisoner. No doubt the State has control over the bodies of its prisoners but never to the extent of killing their soul. That control has well-defined limits. If a prisoner decides to starve himself to death, he should, in my opinion, be allowed to do so. A hunger-strike loses its force and dignity, when it has any, if the striker is forcibly fed. It becomes a mockery if somehow or other sufficient nourishment is poured down the throat, whether through the mouth or nose. Of course, the mind instinctively revolts against feeding through the nose. But I understand that after a few days' practice the process ceases to offend the subject himself. Where a prisoner offers violent resistance the matter becomes difficult. But cases of such resistance are rare. It is not pos-

sible to keep up effective resistance for any length of time. A determined resister will of course die at the very first attempt and thus frustrate it. But such resistance requires great daring and reckless defiance of death. In any case it is my firm conviction that the method of forcible feeding should be abandoned as a relic of barbarism. I know that some prisoners welcome forcible feeding for the empty glory of being regarded as hunger-strikers. Jailors have often told me that such prisoners would deplore stoppage of forcible feeding. I am told that under the existing law jail authorities are bound to resort to forcible feeding if reasoning fails. I would recommend amendments of such legislation if any.

—*Harijan* : Aug. 19, 1939.

I

Ideal

WHEN a man works for an ideal, he becomes irresistible. —*Young India* : July 28, 1920.

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IDEALS must work in practice, otherwise they are not potent. —*Young India* : Jan. 27, 1921.

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THE virtue of an ideal consists in its boundlessness. But although religious ideals must thus from their very nature remain unattainable by imperfect human beings, although by virtue of their boundlessness they may seem ever to recede farther away from us, the nearer we go to them, still they are closer to us than our very hands and feet because we are more certain of their reality and truth than even of our own physical being. This faith in one's ideals alone constitutes true life, in fact it is man's all in all.

—*Harijan* : Dec. 20, 1927.

IF I am to make an ever-increasing approach to my ideal, I must let the world see my weaknesses and failures so that I may be saved from hypocrisy and so that even for very shame I would try my utmost to realise the ideal. The contradiction pointed out by the friend also shows that between the ideal and practice there always must be an unbridgeable gulf. The ideal will cease to be one if it becomes possible to realise it. The pleasure lies in making the effort, not in its fulfilment. For, in our progress towards the goal we even see more and more enchanting scenery. —*Harijan* : July 12, 1937.

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THE reality is always present before me, but my striving is always to reach the ideal. Euclid's straight line exists only in our conception, but we have always to postulate it. We have always to strive to draw a true line corresponding to Euclid's imaginary line.

—*Harijan* : Sept. 8, 1940.

Idleness

PURITY of mind and idleness are incompatible.

—*Harijan* : Oct. 22, 1938.

Idol-Worship

I DO not disbelieve in idol-worship. An idol does not excite any feeling of veneration in me. But I think that idol-worship is part of human nature. We hanker after symbolism. Why should one be more composed in a church than elsewhere ? Images are an aid to worship. No Hindu considers an image to be God. I do not consider idol-worship a sin. —*Young India* : Sept. 29, 1920.

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IDOLATRY is permissible in Hinduism when it sub-

serves an ideal. It becomes a sinful fetish when the idol itself becomes the ideal. —*Young India* : June 21, 1923.

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I AM both an idolator and an iconoclast in what I conceive to be the true sense of the terms. I value the spirit behind idol-worship. It plays a most important part in the uplift of the human race. And I would like to possess the ability to defend with my life the thousands of holy temples which sanctify this land of ours. My alliance with the Musalmans pre-supposes their perfect tolerance for my idols and my temples. I am an iconoclast in the sense that I break down the subtle form of idolatory in the shape of fanaticism that refuses to see any virtue in any other form of worshipping the Diety save one's own. This form of idolatry is more deadly for being more fine and evasive than the tangible and gross form of worship that identifies the Deity with a little bit of a stone or a golden image. —*Young India* : Aug. 28, 1924.

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PROPER worship is not image worship, it is the worship of God in the image. —*Harijan* : Feb. 16, 1935.

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Q. I AM a Hindu student. I have been great friend with a Muslim, but we have fallen out over the question of idol-worship. I find solace in idolworship but I cannot give an answer to my Muslim friend in terms of what may be called convincing. Will you say anything on idolworship in *Harijan* ?

A. My sympathies are both with you and your Muslim friend. I suggest your reading my writings on the question in *Young India* and, if you feel at all satisfied, let your Muslim friend read them too. If your friend has real love for you, he will conquer his prejudice against idol-

worship. A friendship which exacts oneness of opinion and conduct is not worth much. Friends have to tolerate one another's ways of life and thought even though they may be different, except where the difference is fundamental. May be your friend has come to think that it is sinful to associate with you as you are an idolater. Idolatry is bad, not so idolworship. An idolater makes a fetish of his idol. An idolworshipper sees God even in a stone and therefore takes the help of an idol to establish his union with God. Every Hindu child knows that the stone is the famous temple in Benares is not Kashi Vishwanath. But he believes that the Lord of the Universe does reside specially in that stone. This play of the imagination is permissible and healthy. Every edition of the *Gita* on a bookstall has not that sanctity which I ascribe to my own copy. Logic tells me there is no more sanctity in my copy than in any other. The sanctity is in my imagination. But that imagination brings about marvellous concrete results. It changes men's lives. I am of opinion that, whether we admit it or not, we are all idol-worshippers or idolators, if the distinction I have drawn is not allowed. A book, a building, a picture, a carving are surely all images in which God does reside, but they are not God. He who says they are errs. —*Harijan* : March 9, 1940.

Imitation

IMITATION is the sincerest flattery.

—*Young India* : Mar. 21, 1925.

Imprisonment

IF one has committed an offence, he must plead guilty and suffer the penalty. If he has not and is still found guilty, imprisonment for him is no disgrace.

—*Young India* : Mar. 12, 1919.

FOR me, solitary confinement in a prison cell without any breach on my part of the code of Non-co-operation, or private or public morals, will be freedom. For me, the whole of India is a prison, even as the master's house is to his slave. A slave, to be free, must continuously rise against his slavery, and be locked up in his master's cell for his rebellion. The cell-door is the door to freedom. I feel no pity for those who are suffering hardships in the goals of the Government. Innocence under an evil Government must ever rejoice on the scaffold. —*Young India* : Jan. 12, 1920.

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IMPRISONMENTS must not inspire fear in us. Under an unjust Government, imprisonments of innocent men must be regarded as their ordinary lot even as disease is the ordinary state of persons living in insanitary conditions. The Government will cease to imprison us when we cease to fear imprisonments. The Government will cease to exist or (which is the same thing) will reform itself, when its most frightful punishments, even Dyerism, fail to strike us with fear —*Young India* : May, 4, 1921.

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I AM convinced that it is not argument but suffering of the innocent that appeals both to the persecutor and the persecuted. —*Young India* : Dec. 8, 1921.

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WE seek arrest because the so-called freedom is slavery.
—*Young India* : May 15, 1921.

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IMPRISONMENTS, forfeitures, deportations, death must all be taken in the ordinary course by those who count honour before any thing else.
—*Young India* : May 31, 1928.

IN my opinion, the ability to go to jail is of far less consequence than ability and the readiness to observe in their fulness the conditions about Hindu-Muslim-Sikh-Parsi-Christian unity, about untouchability and hand-spun *khadi*. Without a due fulfilment of those conditions, we shall find that all our going to jail is bravado and so much wasted effort. Self-purification is the main consideration in seeking the prison. Embarrassment of the Government is a secondary consideration. It is my unalterable conviction that, even though the Government may not feel embarrassed in any way whatsoever by the incarceration or even execution of an innocent, unknown but a purified person, such incarceration will be the end of that Government. Even a single lamp dispels the deepest darkness. —*Young India* : Feb. 9, 1922.

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JAILS are no gate-way to liberty for the confirmed criminal. They are temples of liberty only for those who are innocence personified. The execution of Socrates made immortality a living reality for us,—not so the execution of countless murderers. There is no warrant for supposing that we can steal *Swaraj* by the imprisonment of thousands of nominally non-violent men with hatred, ill-will and violence raging in their breasts.

—*Young India* : Mar. 2, 1922.

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IMPRISONMENTS, forfeitures, deportations, death must all be taken in the ordinary course by those who count honour before anything else.

—*Young India* : May 31, 1928.

India

I HAVE recognised that the nation has the right,

if it so wills, to vindicate her freedom even by actual violence. Only then India ceases to be the land of my love, though she be the land of my birth, even as I should take no pride in my mother if she went astray.

—*Young India* : Jan. 12, 1920.

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INDIA must learn to live before she can aspire to die for humanity. —*Young India* : Oct. 13, 1921.

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INDIA of the near future stands for perfect toleration of all religions. Her spiritual heritage is simple living and high thinking. —*Young India* : Dec. 12, 1922.

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AS it is, everything in India attracts me. It has everything that a human being with the highest possible aspirations can want. —*Young India* : Feb. 21, 1929.

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AN India prostrate at the feet of Europe can give no hope to humanity. An India awakened and free has a message of peace and goodwill to a groaning world. Congress does not consider India to be a sickly child requiring nursing, outside help, and other props.

—*Young India*: Mar. 12, 1931.

Indian Civil Service

THE Indian Civil Service is the most highly paid service in the world, and that more than a third of the revenue is absorbed by the military service. Imagine the state of a family which has to devote a third of its income for paying its door-keepers.

—*Young India* : June 22, 1921.

THE I.C.S. is not really the Indian Civil Service, it is the E.C S. the English Civil Service. I say this knowing that there are Indians in the service. Whilst India is a subject nation, they cannot but serve the interests of England. But supposing India secures freedom, and supposing able Englishmen are prepared to serve India, then, they would be truly national servants. At the present time, under the name of I.C.S., they serve the exploiting Government. In a free India, Englishmen will come out to India either in a spirit of adventure, or from penance, and willingly serve on a small salary and put up with the rigours of Indian climate instead of being a burden on poor India, whilst they draw inordinately laarge salaries and try to live there in extra English extravagance, and reproduce even the English climate. We would have them as honoured comrades, but if there is even a lurking desire to lord it over us, and behave as a superior race, they are not wanted.

— *Young India* : Nov. 12, 1931.

Indian Civilization

THE true Indian civilisation is in the Indian villages. The modern city civilisation you find in Europe and America, and in a handful of our cities which are copies of the Western cities and which were built for the foreigner, and by him. But they cannot last. It is only the handicraft civilisation that will endure and stand the test of time. But it can do so only if we can correlate the intellect with the hand. The late Madhusudan Das used to say that our peasants and workers had, by reason of working with bullocks, become like bullocks ; and he was right. We have to lift them from the state of the brute to the state of man, and that we can do only by correlating the intellect with the hand. Not until they learn to work

intelligently and make something new every day, not until they are taught to know the joy of work, can we raise them from their low estate. —*Harijan* ; March 30, 1940.

Indian States

THE imperial power has used them as pawns in its game of exploitation.

They are least able to resist the illegitimate and insidious pressure that is brought to bear upon them from time to time. They must therefore realize that the increase of peoples power means decrease of the humiliating influence described by me.

—*Young India* : Nov. 17, 1921.

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THAT Prince is acceptable to me who becomes a Prince among his people's servants. The subjects are the real master. —*Young India* : Jan. 8, 1925.

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IF the states persist in their obstinacy and hug their ignorance of the awakening that has taken place throughout India, they are courting certain destruction. I claim to be a friend of the States. Their service has been an heirloom in my family for the past three generations, if not longer. I am no blind worshipper of antiquity. But I am not ashamed of the heirloom. All the States may not live. The biggest ones can live only if they will recognise their limitations, become servants of their people, trustees of their welfare and depend for their existence not on arms, whether their own or British, but solely on the goodwill of their people. Faithlessness will feed the fire of violence that one feels smouldering everywhere. If the States are badly advised and they rely

upon organised violence for resisting the just demands of their people, ahimsa, so far generated in the country as a means of redressing social injustice, will not protect them. It had grown into a Himalayan oak, it would have passed any test however severe. But sad to confess, it has not gone deep enough into the Indian soil.

—*Harijan* : Sept. 17, 1938.

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CONGRESS non-intervention in the affairs of the States was conceived in 1920 and has been more or less its policy since that time in spite of many on-slaughts made on it. But I see that it has become the fashion in the States to quote against the Congressmen the self-imposed restraint even when there is any attempt to criticise or offer advice or help. It is therefore necessary to examine the implications of non-intervention. It was never regarded as a principle. It was a limitation imposed on itself by the Congress for its own sake and that of the people of the States. The Congress had no sanction behind its resolution regarding the States. Its advice might be ignored, its intervention resented and the people of the States might be harassed without gaining anything. There was certainly a friendly motive behind that policy. It was a wise recognition of the limited capacity of the Congress for doing good. The restraint exercised by the Congress in this and many other ways has given it a prestige and power which it would be unwise for it not to use. Any hesitation in this respect would be like that of the foolish steward who would not use the talents which were placed at his disposal. Up to a point the States are beginning to recognise the power of the Congress be it ever so reluctantly. It is becoming sufficiently clear that the people of the States are looking to the Congress for guidance and help. I think that it

is the duty of the Congress to give them the guidance and help wherever it can. I wish I could convince every Congressman that the prestige and power of the Congress are in exact proportion to its inner purity, its sense of exact justice and its all-round goodwill. If the people of the States feel safe in entrusting their welfare to the Congress, the Princes should feel equally safe in trusting the Congress. All the prestige built up by patient effort of years will certainly be undermined, if the warnings uttered by me to the Congressmen go unheeded.

Even at the risk of tiresome repetition let me say to the people of the States that they must not set much store by the Congress help. It is not enough that they are truthful and non-violent. It is necessary also for them to know their own capacity for suffering. Liberty is a dame exacting a heavy price from her wooers. And unless there are many who are prepared to pay the price, the few enthusiasts that are to be found everywhere would do well to conserve their energy. They will do well to undertake constructive service of the people without having an ambitious political programme. The ability to gain political ends will surely come from constructive service. Wisdom and patience will give them a power which in time will become irresistible.

—*Harijan* : Oct. 1, 1938.



People say that I have changed my view, that I say today something different from what I said years ago. The fact of the matter is that conditions have changed. I am the same. My words and deeds are dictated by prevailing conditions. There has been a gradual evolution in my environment and I react to it as a *Satyagrahi*.

—*Harijan* : Jan. 28, 1939.

THE policy of non-intervention by the Congress was, in my opinion, a perfect piece of statesmanship when the people of the States were not awakened. That policy would be cowardice where there is an all-round awakening among the people of the States and a determination to go through a long course of suffering for the vindication of their just rights. Whenever the Congress thinks it can usefully intervene, it must intervene. —*Harijan* : Jan. 28, 1939.

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I VENTURE to suggest that the best gurantee of their status consists not in the treaties with the British but in the goodwill, contentment and co-operation of their own people and the friendship of the people of non-State India.

—*Harijan* : Aug. 4, 1940.

Individual Freedom

If the individual ceases to count, what is left of society? Individual freedom alone can make a man voluntarily surrender himself completely to the service of society. If it is wrested from him, he becomes an automaton and society is ruined. No society can possibly be built on a denial of individual freedom. It is contrary to the very nature of man. Just as a man will not grow horns or a tail, so he will not exist as man if he has no mind of his own. In reality even those who do not believe in the liberty of the individual believe in their own.

—*Harijan* : Feb. 1, 1942.

Industrialization

A SOCIALIST holding a brief for machinery asked Gandhiji if the Village Industries Movement was not meant to oust all machinery.

" Is not this wheel a machine ?" was the counter question that Gandhiji, who was just then spinning, gave in reply.

" I do not mean this machine, but I mean bigger machinery."

" Do you mean Singer's sewing machine ? That too is protected by the Village Industries Movement, and for that matter any machinery which does not deprive masses of men of the opportunity to labour, but which helps the individual and adds to his efficiency, and which a man can handle at will without being its slave."

" But what about the great inventions ? You would have nothing to do with electricity ?"

" Who said so ? If we could have electricity in every village home, I should not mind villagers plying their implements and tools with the help of electricity. But then the village communities or the State would own power-houses, just as they have their grazing pastures. But where there is no electricity and no machinery, what are idle hands to do ? Will you give them work, or would you have their owners cut them down for want of work ?

" I would prize every invention of science made for the benefit of all. There is a difference between invention and invention. I should not care for the esphixiating gases capable of killing masses of men at a time. The heavy machinery for work of public utility which cannot be undertaken by human labour has its inevitable place, but all that would be owned by the State and used entirely for the benefit of the people. I can have no consideration for machinery which is meant either to enrich the few at the expense of the many, or without cause to displace the useful labour of many.

" But even you as a socialist would not be in favour of an indiscriminate use of machinery. Take printing presses. They will go on. Take surgical instruments. How can one make them with one's hands ? Heavy machinery would be needed for them. But there is no machinery for the cure of idleness, but this," said Gandhiji pointing to his spinning wheel. " I can work it whilst I am carrying on this conversation with you, and am adding a little to the

wealth of the cou try. This machine no one can oust."

—*Harijan* : June 22, 1935.

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DEAD machinery must not be pitted against the millions of living machines represented by the villagers scattered in the seven hundred thousand villages of India. Machinery to be well-used has to help and ease human effort. The present use of machinery tends more and more to concentrate wealth in the hands of a few in total disregard of millions of men and women whose bread is snatched by it out of their mouths. —*Harijan* : Sept. 14, 1935.

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DON'T you see that if India becomes industrialized, we shall need a Nadirshah to find out other worlds to exploit, that we shall have to pit overselves against the naval and military powers of Britian and Japan and America, of Russia and Itlay ? My head reels to think of these rivalries. No, I am clear that whilst this machine age aims at converting men into machines, I am aiming at reinstating man turned machine in his original estate.

—*Harjan* : Nov. 30, 1935.

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A FACTORY employs a few hundreds and renders thousands unemployed. I may produce tons of oil from an oil-mill, but I also drive thousands of oil-men out of employment. I call this destructive energy, whereas production by the labour of millions of hands is constructive and conducive to the common good. Mass production through power driven machinery, even when state-owned, will be of no avail.

But why not, it is asked, save the labour of millions, and give them more leisure for intellectual pursuits. ? Leisure is good and necessary upto a point only. God created man to eat his bread in the sweat of his brow, and I dread the prospect of our being able to produce all that we want, including our food-stuffs out of a conjurer's hat.

—*Harijan* : May 16, 1936

"Are you against large scale production?" Gandhiji answered, "I never said that. This belief is one of the many superstitions about me. Half of my time goes in answering such things. But from scientists I accept better knowledge. Your question is based on loose newspaper reports and the like. What I am against is large scale production of things villagers can produce without difficulty."

Q. Do you think that cottage industries and big industries can be harmonized.

A. Yes, if they are planned so as to help the villages. Key industries, industries which the nation needs, may be centralized. But then I would not choose anything as a 'key industry' that can be taken up by the villages with a little organizing. For instance, I did not know the possibilities of handmade paper. Now I am so hopeful that I believe that every village can produce its own paper, though not for newspapers, etc. Supposing the State controlled paper-making and centralized it, I would expect it to protect all the paper that villages can make.

Q. What is meant by protecting the villages?

A. Protecting them against the inroads of the cities. At one time cities were dependent on the villages. Now it is the reverse. There is no interdependence. Villages are being exploited and drained by the cities.

Q. Don't the villages need a lot of things that the cities produce?

A. I wonder. In any case, under my scheme, nothing will be allowed to be produced by cities which can be equally well produced by the villages. The proper function of cities is to serve as clearing houses for village products.

Q. Can we harmonize cloth-mill activity with hand-loom production?

A. So far as I know, my answer is an emphatic 'no'. All the cloth we need can easily be produced in the villages.

Q. But the number of mills is increasing.

A. That is a misfortune.

—*Harijan* : June 28,1939.

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God forbid that India should ever take to industrialism after the manner of the West. The economic imperialism of a single tiny island kingdom (England) is today keeping the world in chains. If an entire nation of 300 millions took to similar economic exploitation, it would strip the world bare like locusts. Unless the capitalists of India help to avert that tragedy by becoming trustees of the welfare of the masses and by devoting their talents not to amassing wealth for themselves but to the service of the masses in an altruistic spirit, they will end either by destroying the masses or being destroyed by them.

—*Harijan* : Jan. 28, 1939.

Inertia

STRANGE as it may appear, the fact remains that people find the easiest of things often times to be the most difficult to follow. The reason, to borrow a term from the science of physics, lies in our inertia. Physicits tell us that inertia is an essential, and in its own place a most useful quality of matter. It is that alone which steadies the universe and prevents it from flying off at a tangent. But for it the latter would be a chaos of motion. But inertia becomes an incubus and a vice when it ties the mind down to old ruts. —*Harijan* : July 21, 1940.

Inner Voice

THIS ability to hear and obey that Voice gives me what ever power I may have and, has enabled me to render some little service to the country. You will not have me at this time of my life to change my course and listen to any other voice but the Inner. —*Young India* : Jan. 23, 1930.

Q. DOES the Inner Voice mean the 'message of God?'

A The Inner Voice may mean a messsage from God or from the Devil, for both or wrestling in the human breasts. Acts determine the nature of the Voice.

—*Young India* : Feb. 13, 1930.

Instinct

MY instinct has not betrayed me even once.

—*Harijan* : July 20, 1940.

Inter-dependence

SELF-dependence is a necessary ideal so long as and to the extent that it is an aid to one's self-respect and spiritual discipline. It becomes an obsession and a hinderance when it is pushed beyond that limit. On the other hand inter-dependence when it is not inconsistent with one's self-respect is necessary to bring home to man the lesson of humility and the omnipotence of God. One must strike a golden mean between these two extremes. A fanaticism that refuses to discriminate is the negation of all ideal.

—*Young India* : March. 21, 1929.

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Inter-dependence is and ought to be as much the ideal of man asself-sufficiency. Man is a social being. Without inter-relation with society he cannot realise his oneness with the universe or suppress his egotism. His social inter-dependence enables him to test his faith and to prove himself on the touchstone of reality. If man were so placed or could so place himself as to be absolutely above all dependence on his fellow-beings he would become so proud and arrogant as to be a veritable burden and nuisance to the world. Dependence on society teaches him the lesson of humility. That a man ought to be able to satisfy most of his essential

needs himself is obvious ; but it is no less obvious to me that when self-sufficiency is carried to the length of isolating oneself from society it almost amounts to sin. A man cannot become self-sufficient even in respect of all the various operations from the growing of cotton to the spinning of the yarn. He has at some stage or other to take the aid of the members of his family. And if one may take help from one's own family why not from one's neighbours ? Or otherwise what is the significance of the great saying : ' The world is my family ?' —*Young India* : Mar. 21, 1929.

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IT is man's social nature which distinguishes him from the brute creation. If it is his privilege to be independent it is equally his duty to be inter-dependent. Only an arrogant man will claim to be independent of every body else and be self-contained. —*Young India* : April 25, 1929.

Insurance

I DID insure my life in 1901 and a short time after I gave up the policy because I felt that I was distrusting God and making my relatives in whose behalf the policy was taken dependent upon me or the money I might leave them rather than upon God and themselves. The opinion arrived at when I gave up the policy has been confirmed by subsequent experience. —*Young India* : Mar. 14, 1929.

Intentions

BEFORE the throne of the Almighty, man will be judged not by his acts but by his intentions. For God alone reads our hearts. —*Harijan* : Mar. 16, 1940.

Inter-dining

INTERDRINKING, inter-dining, inter-marrying, I hold are not essential for the promotion of the spirit of democracy. I do not contemplale under a most democratic constitution,

universality of manners and customs about eating, drinking and marrying. We shall ever have to seek unity in diversity, and I decline to consider it a sin for a man not to drink or eat with any and every-body. In Hinduism, children of brothers may not intermarry. The prohibition does not interfere with cordiality of relations, probably it promotes healthiness of relationships. In Viashnava households, I have known mothers not dining in the common kitchen, nor drinking from the same pot, without their becoming exclusive, arrogant, or less loving. These are disciplinary restraints which are not in themselves bad. Carried to ridiculous extremes, they may become harmful, and if the motive is one of arrogation of superiority the restraint becomes an indulgence, therefore hurtful. But as time goes forward, and new necessities and occasions arise, the custom regarding inter-drinking, inter-dining, and inter-marrying will require cautious modifications or rearrangement.

—*Young India* : Aug. 12, 1920.

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THIS question of inter-dining is a vexed one and in my opinion no hard and fast rules can be laid down. Personally, I am not sure that inter-dining is a necessary reform. At the same time, I recognise the tendency towards breaking down the restriction altogether. I can find reasons for and against the restriction. I would not force the pace. I do not regard it as a sin for a person not to dine with another nor do I regard it as sinful if one advocates and practises inter-dining. I should, however, resist the attempt to break down the restriction in disregard of the feelings of others. On the contrary, I would respect their scruples in the matter. —*Young India* : April 30, 1925.

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INTER-DINING and inter-caste marriage are in no way essential for the promotion of the spirit of brotherhood or for the removal of untouchability. At the same time, a

super-imposed restriction would undoubtedly stunt the growth of any society, and to link these restrictions to. Varna Dharma or caste is uudoubtedly prejudicial to the freedom of the spirit and would make Varna a drag upon religion.

—*Harijan* : April 29, 38.

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RESTRICTIONS on inter-dining have no vital connection with Varma Dharma. They were, in my opinion hygienic rules in origin. Given a proper confirmation with the rules of cleanliness there should be no scruple about dining with anybody. —*Harijan* : Feb. 13, 1937.

Islam

IF I understand the spirit of Islam properly, it is essentially republican in the truest sense of the term.

—*Young India* : July 21, 1920.

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ISLAM is a noble faith. Trust it and its followers.

—*Young India* : Aug. 4, 1920.

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I DO regard Islam to be a religion of peace in the same sense as Christianity, Budhism and Hinduism are. No doubt there are differences in degree, but the object of these religions is peace. I know the passages that can be quoted from the *Koran* to the contrary. But so is it possible to quote passages from the *Vedas* to the contrary. What is the meaning of imprecations pronounced against the Anryas ? Of course, these passages bear to-day a different meaning, but at one time they did wear a dreadful aspect. What is the meaning of the treatment of untouchables by us Hindus ? Let not the pot call the kettle black. The fact is that we are all growing. I have given my opinion that the followers of Islam are too free with the sword. But that is not due to the teaching of the *Koran*. That is due in

my opinion to the environment in which Islam was born. Christianity has a bloody record against it, not because Jesus was found wanting but because the environment in which it spread was not responsive to his lofty teaching.

These two, Christianity and Islam, are, after all, religions of but yesterday. They are yet in the course of being interpreted. I reject the claim of *Maulvis* to give a final interpretation to the message of Mahomed, as I reject that of the Christian clergy to give a final interpretation to the message of Jesus. Both are being interpreted in the lives of those who are giving these massages in silence and in perfect self-dedication. Bluster is no religion, nor in vast learning stored in capacious brains. The Seat of religion is in the heart. We Hindus, Christians, Musalmans and others have to write the interpretation of our respective faiths with our own crimson blood and not otherwise.—*Young India* : July 10, 1924.

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MY association with the noblest of Mussalmans has taught me to see that Islam has spread not by the power of the sword, but by the prayerful love of an unbroken line of its saints and *fakirs*. Warrant there is in Islam for drawing the sword : but the conditions laid down are so strict that they are not capable of being fulfilled by everybody. Where is the unerring general to order *Jehad* ? Where is the suffering, the love and the purification that must precede the very idea of drawing the sword ? Hindus are at least as much bound by similar restrictions as the Musalmans of India. The Sikhs have their recent proud history to warn them against the use of force. We are too imperfect, too impure and too selfish, as yet to resort to an armed conflict in the cause of God as Shaukat Ali would say. Will a purified India ever need to draw the sword ? —*Young India* : Aug. 14, 1924.

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ISLAM is not a denial of God. It is a passionate avowal of one Supreme Deity. Not even its worst detractors have accused Islam of atheism. —*Young India* : Aug. 21, 1924.

In my writings about Islam I take the same care of its prestige that I do of Hinduism. I apply the same method of interpretation to it that I apply to Hinduism. I no more defend on the mere ground of authority a single text in the Hindu scriptures than I can defend one from the Quran. Every thing has to submit to the test of reason. Islam appeals to people because it appeals also to reason. And in the long run it will be found that any other method would land one in trouble. There are undoubtedly things in the world which transcend reason. We do not refuse to bring them on the anvil of reason but they will not come themselves. By their very nature they defy reason. Such is the mystery of the Deity. It is not inconsistent with reason, it is beyond it.

—*Young India*: March 26, 1925.

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I CERTAINLY regard Islam as one of the inspired religions, and therefore the Holy Quarn as an inspired book and Muhammad as one of the prophets. But even so I regard Hinduism, Christianity, Zoroastrinism as inspired religions. The names of many of them have been already forgotten, for the simple reason that those religions and those prophets related to the particular ages for which and peoples for whom they flourished. Some principal religions are still extant. After a study of those religious to the extent it was possible for me, I have come to the conclusion that, if it is proper and necessary to discover an underlying unity among all religions, a master-key is needed. That master-key is that of truth and non-violence. When I unlock the chest of a religion with this master-key, I do not find it difficult to discover its likeness with other religions. When you look at these religions as so many leaves of a tree they seem so different, but at the trunk they are one. Unless and untill we realize this fundamental unity,

wars in the name of religion will not cease. These are not confined to Hindus and Mussalmans alone. The pages of world history are soiled with the bloody accounts of these religious wars. Religion can be defended only by the purity of its adherents and their good deeds, never by their quarrels with those of other faiths.

—*Harijan* : July 13, 1940.

Institutions

IT is not that I harbour disloyalty towards anything whatsoever, but I do so against all untruth, all that is unjust, all that is evil. This I want to make clear as I do not want to sail under false colours. I remain loyal to an institution so long as that institution conduces to my growth, to the growth of the nation. Immediately I find that the institution instead of conducing to its growth impedes it, I hold it to be my bounden duty to be disloyal to it. —*Young India* : Aug. 13, 1925.

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ALL public institutions are public trust and, those who are in charge of them have often times to harden their hearts and rigorously collect all debts owing to the trust and their charge. Leniency in the management of public trust is a misplaced virtue and may often amount to an unpardonable breach.

—*Young India* : Oct. 8, 1925.

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BUT as I have so often pointed out laws are made by institutions for self preservation not for suicide. When therefore, they hamper their growth they are worse than useless, and must be set aside.

—*Young India* : Oct. 8, 1925.

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EVERYONE joining an institution owes it to obey the rules framed by the management from time to time. When any new rule is found irksome, it is open

to the objector to leave the institution in accordance with the provisions made for resignation. But he may not disobey them whilst he is in.

—*Harijan* : July 13, 1940.

J

Jails

JAILS are no gate-way to liberty for the confirmed criminal. They are temples of liberty only for those who are innocence personified. The execution of Socrates made immortality a living reality for us, not so the execution of countless murderers. There is no warrant for supposing that we can steal *Swaraj* by the imprisonment of thousands of nominally non-violent men with hatred, ill-will and violence raging in their breasts.

—*Young India* : Mar. 2, 1922.

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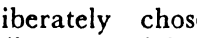
IT is now therefore clear that a civil resister's resistance ceases and his obedience is resumed as soon as he is under confinement. In confinement he claims no privileges because of the civility of his disobedience. Inside the jail by his evemplary conduct he reforms even the criminals surrounding him, he softens the hearts of jailers and others in authority. Such meek behaviour springing from stength and knowledge ultimately dissolves the tyranny of the tyrant. It is for this reason that I claim that voluntary suffering is the quickest and the best remedy for the removal of abuses and injustices.

—*Young India* : Dec. 29, 1921.

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GAOL discipline must be submitted to, until gaol government itself becomes or is felt to be corrupt and immoral. But deprivation of comfort, imposition of restriction and such other inconveniences do not make gaol government corrupt. It becomes that, when prisoners are humiliated or treated with inhumanity as when they

are kept in filthy dens or are given food unfit for human consumption. Indeed, I hope that the conduct of Non-co-operators in the goal will be strictly correct, dignified and yet submissive. We must not regard gaolers and warders as our enemies, but as fellow human beings, not utterly devoid of the human touch. Our gentlemanly behaviour is bound to disarm all suspicion or bitterness. I know that this path of discipline, on the one hand, and fierce defiance, on the other, is a very difficult path, but there is no royal road to *Swaraj*. The country has deliberately chosen the narrow and the straight path. Like a straight line, it is the shortest distance. But even as you require a steady and experienced hand to draw a straight line, so are steadiness of discipline and firmness of purpose absolutely necessary, if we are to walk along the chosen path with an unerring step. —*Young India* : Dec. 15, 1921.



MERE fillings of the jails would not bring India freedom. Even thieves and criminals go to prison, but their prison going has no merit. It is the suffering of the pure and innocent that tells. It is only when the authorities are compelled to put into prison the poorest and the most innocent citizens that a change of heart is forced upon them. A Satyagrahi goes to prison, not to embarras the authorities but to convert them by demonstrating to them his innocence. You should realize that unless you have developed the moral fitness to go to prison which the law of *Satyagraha* demands, your jail going will be useless and will bring you nothing but disappointment in the end. A votary of non-violence must have the capacity to put up with the indignities and hardships of prison life not only without retaliation or anger but with pity in his heart for the perpetrator of those hardships and indignities.

PRISONERS must be treated as defectives and not as criminals to be looked down upon. Warders should cease to be the terrors of prisoners, and the jail officials should be their friends and instructors. —*Harijan*: July 31, 1937.

Jesus Christ

Q. I SHOULD be obliged to hear from you your attitude to the personality of Jesus.

A. I have often made it clear. I regard Jesus as a great teacher of humanity, but I do not regard him as the only begotten son of God. That epithet in its material interpretation is quite unacceptable. Metaphorically we are all begotten sons of God, but for each of us there may be different begotten sons of God in a special sense. Thus for me Chaitanya may be the only begotten son of God.

Q. But don't you believe in the *perfection* of human nature, and don't you believe that Jesus had attained perfection ?

A. I believe in the *perfectibility* of human nature. Jesus came as near to perfection as possible To say that he was perfect is to deny God's superiority to man. And then in this matter I have a theory of my own. Being necessarily limited by the bonds of flesh, we can attain perfection only after dissolution of the body. Therefore God alone is absolutely perfect. When he descends to earth, He of His own accord limits himself. Jesus died on the Cross because he was limited by the flesh. I do not need either the prophecies or the miracles to establish Jesus' greatness as a teacher. Nothing can be more miraculous than the three years of his ministry. There is no miracle in the story of the multitude being fed on a handful of loaves. A magician can create that illusion. But woe wroth the day on which a magician would be hailed as the Saviour

of humanity. As for Jesus raising the dead to life, well I doubt if the men he raised were really dead. I raised a relative's child from supposed death to life, but that was because the child was not dead, and but for my presence there she might have been cremated. But I saw that life was not extinct. I gave her an enema and she was restored to life. There was no miracle about it, I do not deny that Jesus had certain psychic powers and he was undoubtedly filled with the love of humanity. But he brought to life not people who were dead but who were believed to be dead. The laws of nature are changeless, unchangeable, and there are no miracles in the sense of infringement or interruption of Nature's laws. But we limited beings fancy all kinds of things and impute our limitations to God. We may copy God, but not He us. We may not divide Time for Him. Time for Him is eternity. For us there is past, present and future. And what is human life of a hundred years but less than a mere speek in the eternity of Time ? —*Harijan* : April 17, 1937.

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I say in one sentence that for many years I have regarded Jesus of Nazareth as one amongst the mighty teachers that the word has had, and I say this in all humility. I claim humility for this expression for the simple reason that this is exactly what I feel. Of course, Christians claim a higher place for Jesus of Nazareth than as a non-Christian and as a Hindu I have been able to feel. I purposely use the word 'feel' instead of give, because I consider that neither I, nor anybody else can possibly arrogate to himself the claim of giving place to a great man. The great teachers of mankid have had the places not given to them, but the place has belonged to them as a matter of right, a matter of service that they have rendered; but it is given to the lowest and humblest amongst us to feel certain things ahead certain people.

The relation between great teachers and ourselves is somewhat after the style of relation between a husband and wife. It would be a most terrible thing, a tragic thing, if I was to argue out intellectually for myself what place I was to give to my wife in my heart. It is not in my giving, but she takes the place that belongs to her as a matter of right in my heart. It is a matter purely for feeling. Then, I can say that Jesus occupies in my heart the place of one of the great teachers who have made a considerable influence on my life. —*Gandhiji in Ceylon* : Page 146.

Jewellery

I WILL far rather see the race of man extinct than that we should become less than beasts by making the noblest of God's creation the object of our lust.

—*Young India* :July 21, 1921.

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SURELY, it is easy enough to realise that so long as there are millions of men and women in the country starving for want of food because of want of work, the sisters have no warrant for possessing costly jewels for adorning their bodies, or often for the mere satisfaction of possessing them.

—*Young India* : April 5, 1928.

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IN this country of semi-starvation and insufficient nutrition of practically eight per cent. of the people, the wearing of jewellery is an offence to the eye.

—*Harijan*: Dec. 22, 1933.

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The real ornament of woman is her character, her purity. Metal and stones can never be real ornaments. The names of women like Sita and Damyanti have become sacred to us for their unsullied virtue, never for their jewellery, if they wore any. —*Harijan* : June 12, 1934.

Journalism

IN the very first month of *Indian Opinion*, I realized that the sole aim of Journalism should be service. The newspaper press, is a great power, but just as an unchained torrent of water submerges whole country-sides and devastates crops, even so an uncontrolled pen serves but to destroy. If the control is from without, it proves more poisonous than want of control. It can be profitable only when exercised from within. If this line of reasoning is correct, how many of the journals in the world would stand the test? But who would stop those that are useless ? And who should be the judge ? The useful and the useless must, like good and evil generally, go on together, and man must make his choice.

—*My Experiments with Truth* : *Page 349.*

Trial by Juries

I AM unconvinced of the advantages of jury trials over those by judges. In coming to a correct decision, we must not be obsessed by our unfortunate experience of the judiciary here, which in political trials has been found to be notoriously partial to the Government. At the right moment juries have been found to fail even in England. When passions are roused, juries are affected by them and give perverse verdicts. Nor need we assume that they are always on the side of leniency. I have known juries finding prisoners guilty in the face of evidence and even judge's summing up to the contrary. We must not slavishly copy all that is English. In matters where absolute impartiality, calmness and ability to sift evidence and understand human nature are required, we may not replace trained judges by untrained men brought together by chance. What we must aim at is an incorruptible, impartial and able judiciary right from the bottom. I regard village *panchayats* as an institution by itself. But thanks to the degradation of the caste system and the evil influence of the present system

of Government and the growing illiteracy of the masses this ancient and noble institution has fallen into desuetude, and where it has not, it has lost its former purity and hold. It must, however, be revived at any cost, if the villages are not to be ruined. —*Young India* : Aug. 27, 1931.

Justice

ALL the world over a true peace depends not upon gun-powder but upon pure justice. When Government perpetrate injustice and fortify it by the use of arms, such acts are a sign of anger and they add injustice to injustice. If people also become angry by reason of such acts on the part of Government, they resort to violence and the result is bad for both, mutual ill-will increases. But whenever people regard particular acts of Government as unjust and express their strong disapproval by self-suffering, Government cannot help granting redress. This is the way of *Satyagraha.*

—*Young India* : May 9, 1919.

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JUSTICE as between Europeans and Indians is a rare commodity. —*Young India* : August 14, 1924.

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I HAVE said enough in these columns to show that justice is practically unobtainable in the so-called courts of justice in India. —*Young India* Sept. 19, 1929.

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TODAY it is the luxury of the rich and the joy of the gambler. —*Harijan* : Aug. 21, 1937.

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MY experience has shown me that we win justice quickest by rendering justice to the other party.

—*My Experiments with Truth* : Page 225.

K

Law of Karma

Q. IF you believe in the Law of *Karma* then your killing of the calf was a vain attempt to interfere with the operation of that law.

I firmly believe in the law of *Karma*, but I believe too in human endeavour. I regard as the *summum bonum* of life the attainment of salvation through *Karma* by annihilating its effects by detachment. If it is a violation of the Law of *Karma* to cut short the agony of an ailing animal by putting an end to its life, it is no less so to minister to the sick or try to nurse them back to life. And yet if a man were to refuse to give medicine to a patient or to nurse him on the ground of *Karma*, we would hold him to be guilty of inhumanity and *himsa*. Without therefore entering into a discussion about the eternal controversy regarding predestination and free-will, I will simply say here that I deem it to be the highest duty of man to render what (little service he can). (The calf was poisoned at the instruction of Gandhiji when it was in agony and could not be saved from suffering.) — *Young India*: Oct. 18, 1928

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Now to come to the question of renunciation *versus* action: I believe in the doctrine of renunciation but I hold that renunciation should be sought for in and through action. That action is the *sine qua non* of life in the body, that the Wheel of Life cannot go on even for a second without involing some sort of action goes without saying. Renunciation can therefore in these circumstances only mean detachment or freedom of the spirit from action, even while the body is engaged in action. A follower of the path of renunciation seeks to attain it not by refraining from all activity but by carrying it

on in a perfect spirit of detachment and altruism as a pure trust. Thus a man may engage in farming, spinning, or any other activity without departing from the path of renunciation provided one does so merely for selfless service and remains free from the taint of egoism or attachment. It remains for those therefore who like myself hold this view of renunciation to discover for themselves how far the principle of *ahimsa* is compatible with life in the body and how it can be applied to acts of every day life. The very virtue of a *dharma* is that it is universal, that its practice is not the monopoly of the few, but must be the privilege of all. And it is my firm belief that the scope of Truth and *Ahimsa* is world-wide. That is why I find an ineffable joy in dedicating my life to researches in Truth and *Ahimsa* and I invite others to share it with me by doing like-wise. —*Young India* : Oct. 25, 1928.

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I AM a believer in previous births and rebirths. All our relationships are the result of the *sanskars* we carry from our previous births. God's laws are inscrutable and are the subject of endless search. No one will fathom them. —*Harijan* : Aug. 18, 1940.

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SO many things have happened in my life for which I had intense longing, but which I could never have achieved myself. And I have always said to my co-workers that it was in answer to my prayer. I did not say to them it was in answer to my intellectual effort to lose myself in the Divinity in me ! The easiest and the correct thing for me was to say " God has seen me through my difficulty."

> "But that you deserved by your *Karma.* God is Justice and not Mercy. You are a good man and good things happen to you," contended Dr. Fabri.

No fear. I am not good enough for things to happen like that. If I went about with that philosophical conception of *Karma*, I should often come a cropper. My *Karma* would not come to my help. Although I believe in the inexorable Law of *Karma* I am striving to do so many things, every moment of my lif is a strenuous endeavour, which is an attempt to build up more *Karma*, to undo the past and add to the present. It is, therefore, wrong to say that because my past is good, good is happening at present. The past would be soon exhausted and I have to build up the future with prayer. I tell you *Karma* alone is powerless. "Ignite this match," I say to myself, and yet I cannot if there is no co-operation from without. Before I strike the match my hand is paralysed or I have only one match and the wind blows it out. Is it an accident or God or Higher power? Well I prefer to use the language of my ancestors or of children. I am no better than a child. We may try to talk learnedly and of books, but when it comes to brass tacks—when we are face to face with a calamity—we behave like children and begin to cry and pray and our intellectual belief gives no satisfaction! —*Harijan* : Aug. 19, 1939.

Kisan Sabhas

MY opinion is clear-out, having worked among the kisans and labourers all my life. There is nothing constitutionally wrong in the Congress allowing the Kisan Sabhas to work independently nor in allowing the office-bearers of the Kisan Sabhas to be office-bearers of the Congress, for they will come in the usual way. But my study of separate kisan organizations has led me definitely to the conclusion that they are not working for the interests of the kisans but are organized only with a view to capturing the Congress organization. They can do even this by leading the kisans along

the right channels, but I am afraid they are misleading them. If the kisans and their leaders will capture the Congress by doing nothing but authorised Congress work, there is no harm. But if they do so by making false registers, storming meetings and so on, it would be something like Fascism.

"But the main question is whether you want the Kisan Sabhas to strengthen the Congress or to weaken it, to use the kisan organization to capture the Congress or to serve the kisans, whether the Sabha is to be a rival organization working apparently in the name of the Congress or one carrying out the Congress programme and policy. If it is really a rival organization and Congress organization only in name, its strength and energy will be utilized in resisting the Congress and those of the Congress will be utilized in resisting the Kisan Sabha, with the result that the poor kisans will be ground between the two mill-stones.

—*Harijan* : April 23, 1938.

Khaddar

SO long as the taste persists, so long is complete renunciation impossible. And boycott means complete renunciation. We must be prepared to be satisfied with such cloth as India can produce, even as we are thankfully content with such children as God gives us. I have not known a mother throwing away her baby even though it may appear ugly to an outsider. So should it be with the patriotic women of India about Indian manufactures.

—*Young India* : July 6, 1921.

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Q. WHY do you emphasise Khaddar and not Swadeshi ? Is not Swadeshi the principle and Khaddar a mere detail?

A. I do not regard Khaddar to be a detail. Swadeshi is a theoretical term. Khaddar is the concrete and central fact

of Swadeshi. Swadeshi without Khaddar is like the body without life, fit only to receive a decent burial or cremation. The only Swadeshi cloth is Khaddar. If one is to interpret Swadeshi in the language of and in terms of the millions of this country, Khaddar is a substantial thing in Swadeshi like the air we breathe. The test of Swadeshi is not the universality of the use of an article which goes under the name of Swadeshi, but the universality of participation in the production or manufacture of such article. Thus considered mill-made cloth is Swadeshi only in a restricted sense. For, in its manufacture only an infinitesimal number of India's millions can take part. But in the manufacture of Khaddar millions can take part. The more the merrier. With Khaddar, in my opinion, is bound up the welfare of millions of human beings. Khaddar is therefore the largest part of Swadeshi and it is the only true demonstration of it. All else follows from it. India can live, even if we do not use brass buttons or tooth picks made in India. But India cannot live if we refuse to manufacture and wear Khaddar. Khaddar will cease to have this paramount importance when a more profitable employment is discovered for the idle hours of India's millions.

Q. Good Khaddar is costly and the ordinary variety is ugly.

A. I deny that any Khaddar is ugly. Want of the dead-sameness of a machine-made article is not a sign of ugliness, but, it is a sign of life, even as absence of sameness in the millions of leaves of a tree is no sign of its ugliness. As a matter of fact, it is the variety about the leaves which gives a tree its life-like beauty. I can picture a machine-made tree whose every leaf would be absolutely the same size. It would look a ghastly thing, because we have not yet ceased to love the living tree. And, why should the cost of Khaddar, good or bad, worry us if every penny we pay for it goes directly into the pockets of the starving millions? My experience is that in the majority of cases where people

have taken to Khaddar they have revised their tastes a bout dress. Though Khaddar may be dearer per yard than the same quality of Manchester calico, the rejection of superfluous clothing more than balances the extra cost.

—*Young India* : June 17, 1926.

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Khaddar delivers the poor from the bonds of the rich and creates a moral and spiritual bond between the classes and the masses. It restores to the poor somewhat of what the rich have taken from them.

—*Young India* : March 17, 1927.

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KHADDAR economics is wholly different from the ordinary. The latter takes no note of the human factor. The former wholly concerns itself with the human. The latter is frankly selfish, the former necessarily unselfish. Competition and therefore prices are eliminated from the conception of Khaddar. There is no competition between hotels and domestic kitchens. It never enters into the head of the queen of the house to calculate the cost of her labour, the floor space, etc. She simply knows that to conduct the domestic kitchen is as much her duty as it is to bring up children. If she were to count the cost, the logic of facts will irresistibly drive her to the destruction of her kitchen as well as her children. Some have done both. But thank God the cult makes no promise of appreciable increase. It is our innate laziness which prevents us from seeing that we sinned against Indian humanity when we destroyed the domestic wheel. Let us repent of our sin and return to the peace-giving wheel.

—*Young India* : July 16, 1931.

Language

IN one respect all languages are incomplete. Man's reason is limited and language fails him when he begins to

talk of God and Eternity. Human reason controls human speech. It is, therefore, limited, to the extent that reason itself is limited, and in that sense all languages are incomplete. The ordinary rule regarding language is that a language takes shape in accordance with the thoughts of its wielders. If they are sensible, their language is full of sense, and it becomes nonsense when foolish people speak it. There is an English proverb, "A bad carpenter quarrels with his tools." Those who quarrel with a language are often like the bad carpenter. —*Young India* : Oct. 20, 1917.

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A LANGUAGE that borrows unstintingly from the others without harming its special characteristic will be enriched, even as the English language has become enriched by free borrowings. —*Harijan* : Feb. 1, 1942.

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A LANGUAGE becomes what its speakers and writers make it. English had no merit apart from what Englishmen made it. In other words, a language is a human creation and takes the colour of its creators. Every language is capable of infinite expansion. —*Harijan* : Feb. 8, 1942.

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I DO not want my house to be walled in on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the cultures of all the lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any. I refuse to live in other people's houses as an interloper, a beggar or a slave. —*Young India* : June 1, 1921.

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THERE never was a greater superstition than that a particular language can be incapable of expansion or of expressing abstruse or scientific ideas. A language is an exact reflection of the character and growth of its speakers.

—*Young India* : June 5, 1928.

MAN is neither mere intellect, nor the gross animal body, nor the heart or soul alone. A proper and harmonious combination of all the three is required for the making of the whole man and constitutes the true economics and education.

—*Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi* : Page 213.

Law

JUSTICE that love gives is a surrender, Justice that law gives is a punishment. —*Young India* : Jan. 9, 1925.

◈ ◈ ◈

PEOPLE seem to think, that when a law is passed against any evil, it will die without any further effort. There never was a grosser self-deception. Legislation is intended and is effective against an ignorant or a small evil-minded minority ; but no legislation which is opposed by an intelligent and organised public opinion, or under cover of religion by a fanatical minority, can ever succeed.

—*Young India* : July 7, 1927.

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ONCE a law is enacted, many difficulties must be encountered before it can be reversed. It is only when public opinion is highly educated that the laws in force in a country can be repealed. A constitution under which laws are modified or repealed every now and then cannot be said to be stable or well organised.

—*Satyagraha in South Africa* : Page 140.

Lawyers

IN England, in South Africa, almost everywhere I have found that in the practice of their profession, lawyers are consciously or unconsciously led into untruth for the sake of their clients. An eminent English lawyer has gone so far as to say that it may even be the duty of a lawyer

to defend a client whom he knows to be guilty. There I disagree. The duty of a lawyer is always to place before the judges and to help them to arrive at the truth, never to prove the guilty as innocent.

—*Gandhiji in Ceylon* : Page 85.

◈ ◈ ◈

A TRUE lawyer is one who places truth and service in the first place and the emoluments of the profession in the next place only. —*Harijan* : Nov. 26, 1938.

Law Courts

TRULY speaking I am in no love with fighting in law courts. Victory there does not depend on the truth of your case. Any experienced vakil will bear me out that it depends more on the judge, the counsel, and the venue of the court. In English there is a proverb that it is always the man with the longest purse that wins. And there is a good deal of truth in this, as there is exaggeration in it.

—*Young India* : June 17, 1919.

◈ ◈ ◈

I HAVE not a shadow of doubt that society will be much cleaner and healthier if there was less resort to law courts than there is. The rush after the best council is undignified.

If one has committed an offence, he must plead guilty and suffer the penalty. If he has not and is still found guilty, imprisonment for him is no disgrace.

—*Young India* : Dec. 3, 1919.

◈ ◈ ◈

IF we were not under the spell of lawyers and law courts and if there were no touts to tempt us into the quagmire of the courts and to appeal to our basest passions, we would be leading a much happier life than we do today. Let those who frequent the law-courts—the best of them-

bear witness to the fact that the atmosphere about them is foetid. Perjured witnesses are ranged on either side, ready to sell their very souls for money or for friendship's sake. But that is not the worst of these courts. The worst is that they support the authority of a government. They are supposed to dispense justice and are therefore called the palladile of a nation's liberty. But when they support the authority of an unrighteous Government, they are no longer palladile of liberty, they are crushing houses to crush a nation's spirit. Such were the martial law tribunals and the summary courts in the Punjab. We had them in their nakedness. Such they are even in normal time when it is a matter of dispensing justice between a superior race and its helots. This is so all the world over Look at the trial of an English officer and the farcical punishment he received for having deliberately tortured inoffensive negroes at Nairobi. Has a single Englishman suffered the extreme penalty of the law or anything like it for brutal murders in India ? Let no one suppose that these things would be changed when Indian judges and Indian prosecutors take the place of Englishmen. Englishmen are not by nature corrupt. Indians are not necessarily angels. Both succumb to their environment. There were Indian judges and Indian prosecutors during the martial law regime, who were generally guilty or just as bad as the Englishmen. Those, who tortured the innocent women in Amritsar, were Indians, if it was a Bosworth Smith in Manianwala who insulted its women.

—*Young India* : Oct. 6, 1920.

◈ ◈ ◈

If we will cease to be slaves we must cease to rely for protection upon the British bayonet or the slippery justice of law courts. —*Young India* : April 2, 1925.

Leaders

COURAGE, tendurance, fearlessness and above all self-acrifice are the qualities required of our leaders. A

person belonging to the suppressed classes exhibiting these qualities in their fulness would certainly be able to lead the nation; whereas the most finished orator, if he has not these qualities, must fail.

—*Young India* : Sept. 29, 1921.

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ALL cannot become leaders, but all can be bearers.

—*Young India* : Sept. 29, 1921.

◈ ◈ ◈

IN well ordered organisations leaders are elected for convenience of work, not for extra ordinary merit. A leader is only first among equals. Some one may be put first, but he is and should be no stronger than the weakest link in the chain.

—*Young India* : Dec. 8, 1921.

◈ ◈ ◈

A LEADER is useless when he acts against the promptings of his own conseience. *Harijan* : Dec. 12, 1937.

Liberty

WHERE a choice has to be made between liberty and learning, who will not say that the former has to be preferred a thousand times to the latter.

The youths whom I called in 1920 from cidatels of slavery—their schools and colleges—and whom I advised that it was far better to remain unlettered and break stones for the sake of liberty than to go in for a literary education in the chains of slaves will probably be able now to trace my advice to its source

—*My Experiments with Truth* : Page 248.

◈ ◈ ◈

Death in the fight is a deliverence, and prison, a gateway to liberty.

Religious freedom, like liberty, becomes licence when it is indulged in at the expense of the health and safety of others, or in contravention of the principles of decency

or moral ity. If you want to claim unrestricted and absolute liberty for yourselves, you must choose to retire from society and take to solitude.

—*Harijan* : Feb. 18, 1939.

Life

TO enjoy life one should give up the lure of life.

—*Harijan* : March 1, 1942.

◈ ◈ ◈

TO deprive a man of his natural liberty and to deny to him the ordinary amenities of life is worse than starving the body. It is starvation of the soul—the dweller in the body. *Harijans* are a powerful illustration of this process of starvation of the soul.

—*Harijan* : Oct. 26, 1934.

Love

WHERE love is, there God is also.

—*Satyagraha in South Africa* : Page 360.

◈ ◈ ◈

WHAT barrier is there that love cannot break ?

—*My Experiments with Truth* : Page 222.

◈ ◈ ◈

THE only way love punishes is by suffering.

—*Young India* : Feb. 16, 1922.

◈ ◈ ◈

AFFECTION cannot be manufactured or regulated by law. If one has no affection for a person or system one should be free to give the fullest expression to his disaffection, so long as he does not contemplate, promote or incite violence. —*Young India* : Mar. 15, 1922.

◈ ◈ ◈

IT is perfectly true, I must admit it in all humility, that however indifferently it may be, I endeavour to represent love in every fibre of my being. I am impatient

to realise the presence of my Maker, who to me embodies truth, and in the early part of my career I discovered that if I was to realise Truth I must obey, even at the cost of my life, the Law of Love.

—*Young India* : Nov. 16, 1931.

◈ ◈ ◈

HATRED ever kills. Love never dies. Such is the vast diffierence between the two. What is obtained by love is retained for all time. What is obtained by hatred proves a burden in reality, for it increases hatred.

—*Young India* : May 10, 1919.

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IT may be long before the law of love will be recognized in international affairs. The machineries of governments stand between and hide the hearts of one people from those of another.

—*Young India* : June 23, 1919.

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THE test of love is tapasya and tapasya means self-suffering. —*Young India* : June 12, 1922.

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WITHOUT truth there is no love, without truth it may be affection, as for one's country to the injury of others; or infatuation, as of a young man for a girl· or love may be unreasoning and blind, as of ingnorant parents for their children. Love transcends all animality and is never patrial.

True love is boundless like the ocean and rising and swelling within one spreads itself out and crossing all boundaries and frontiers envelops the whole world.

—*Young India* : Sept. 20, 1928.

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LOVE never claims, it ever gives. Love ever suffers, never resents, never revenges itself.

—*Young India*: July 9, 1925.

TO surrender is not to confer favour. Justice that love gives is a surrender, justice that law gives is a punishment. What a lover gives transcends justice. And yet it is always less than he wishes to give because he is anxious to give more and frets that he has nothing left. —*Young India* : July 9, 1925.

◈ ◈ ◈

HAVING flung aside the sword, there is nothing except the cup of love which I can offer to those who oppose me. It is by offering that cup that I accept to draw them close to me. I cannot think of permanent enmity between man and man, and believing as I do in the theory of rebirth, I live in the hope that if not in this birth, in some other birth, I shall be able to hug all humanity in friendly embrace.

—*Young India* : April 2, 1931.

◈ ◈ ◈

I AM quite conscious of the fact that blind surrender to love is often more mischievous than a forced surrender to the lash of the tyrant. There is hope for the slave of the brute, none for that of love. Love is needed to strengthen the weak, love becomes tyrannical when it exacts obediene from an unbeliever.

—*Young India* : Oct. 13, 1921.

◈ ◈ ◈

A LOVE that is based on the goodness of those whom you love is a mercenary affair, whereas, true love is self-suffering and demands no consideration. It is like that a model Hindu wife, Sita for instance, who loved her Rama even whilst he bid her pass through a raging fire. It was well with Sita, for she new what she was doing. She sacrificed herself out of her strength, not out of her weakness. Love is the strongest force the world possesses and yet it is the humblest imaginable. —*Young India* : Aug. 20, 1925.

TRUTH quenches untruth. Love quenches anger, self-suffering quenches violence. This eternal rule is a rule not for saints only but for all.

—*Harijan* : Feb. 1, 1942.

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IT is my firm belief that it is love that sustains the earth. There only is life where there is love. Life without love is death. Love is the reverse of the coin of which the obverse is Truth.

It is my firm faith and it is my experience of forty years that we can conquer the world by truth and love.

The root of Non-co-operation is in *Satyagraha*, which is love. The Law of Love, call it attraction, affinity, cohesion, if you like, governs the world. Life persists in the face of death. The universe continues in spite of destruction incessantly going on. Truth triumphs over untruth. Love conquers hate. God eternally triumphs over Satan. —*Young India* : Oct. 23, 1924.

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THE more efficient a force is, the more silent and the more subtle it is. Love is the subtlest force in the world. —*Young India* : Oct. 4, 1924.

M

Mahatmaship

MY Mahatmaship is worthless. It is due to my outward activities, due to my politics which is the least part of me and is therefore evanescent. What is of abiding worth is my insistence on truth, non-violence and *Brahmacharya* which is the real part of me. That permanent part of me, however, small is not to be despised. It is my all. I prize even the failures and disillusionments which are but steps towards success. —*Young India* : Dec. 2, 1921.

THE Mahatma I must leave to his fate. Though a non-co-operater I shall gladly subscribe to a bill to make it criminal for anybody to call me Mahatma and to touch my feet. Where I can impose the law myself, *i.e.*, at the *Ashram*, the practice is criminal.

—*Young India* : March 17, 1927.

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THANK God my much vaunted Mahatmaship has never fooled me. —*Young India* : Jan. 12, 1930.

◈ ◈ ◈

Q. Are you really a Mahatma ?

A. I do not feel like being one. But I do know that I am among the humblest of God's creatures.

Q. If so, will you define the word Mahatma ?

A. Not being acquainted with one I cannot give any definition.

Q. If not, did you ever tell your followers that you are not one ?

A. The more I repudiate, the more it is used.

—*Young India* : Oct. 27, 1931.

Man

I HAVE found by experience that man makes his plans to be often upset by God, but, at the same time where the ultimate goal is the search of Truth, no matter how a man's plans are frustrated the issue is never injurious and often better than anticipated.

—*My Experiments with Truth* : Page 372.

◈ ◈ ◈

ALL men are imperfect, and when imperfection is observed in some one in a larger measure than in others, people are apt to blame him. But that is not fair. Man can change his temperament, can control it, but cannot eradicate it. God has not given him so much liberty. If the leopard can change his spots then only can man modify the peculiarities of his spiritual constitution.

—*Satyagrah in South Africa* : Page 212.

MAN is a fallible being. He can never be sure of his steps. —*Young India* : Sept. 25, 1924.

◈ ◈ ◈

PROGRESS is man's distinction, man's alone, not beasts. Man has dicrimination and reason. Man does not live by bread alone, as the brute does. He uses his reason to worship God and to know Him, and regards the attainment of that knowledge as the *sumnun bonum* of life. The brute, if he can be said to worship God, does so involuntarily. The desire to worship God is inconceivable in the brute, while man can voluntarily worship even Satan. It must therefore, be and is, man's nature to know and find God. When he worships Satan, he acts contrary to his nature. Of course, I will not carry conviction to one who makes no distinction between man and the brute. To him virtue and vice are convertible terms. While to the man whose end and aim is realisation of God, even the functions of eating and drinking can be natural only within certain limits. For having knowledge of God as his end, he will not eat or drink for the sake of enjoyment, but solely for sustaining the body. Restraint and renunciation will therefore always be his watch-words even in respect of these functions.

And if it is man's nature to know and find God, sexual indulgence should be contrary to his nature, and complete renunciation of it will accord best with his mission. For realisation of God is impossible without complete renunciation of the sexual desire. It is not man's duty to develop *all* his faculties to perfection ; his duty is to develop all his God-ward faculties to perfection and to suppress completely those of contrary tendencies.

—*Young India* : June 26, 1926.

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MAN has reason, discrimination, and free-will such as it is. The brute has no such thing. It is not a free agent,

and knows no distinction between virtue and vice, good and evil. Man, being a free agent, knows these distinctions, and when he follows his higher nature shows himself far superior to the brute, but when he follows his baser nature can show himself lower than the brute.

—*Young India* : June 3, 1926.

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MAN is not all body but he is something infinitely higher. —*Young India* : April 14, 1927.

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OF all the animal creation of God, man is the only animal who has been created in order that he may know his maker. Man's aim in life is not therefore to add from day to to day his material prospects and to his material possessions but his predominant calling is from day to day to come nearer his own Maker. —*Young India* : Oct. 20, 1927.

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Q. IS man a special creation of God ?

A. Man is a special creation of God precisely to the extent that he is distinct from the rest of His creation.

—*Young India* : Feb. 13, 1930.

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MAN is, undoubtedly, an artist and creater. Undoubtedly he must have beauty and, therefore, colour. His artistic and creative nature at its best taught him to discriminate, and to know that any conglomeration of colours was no mark of beauty, nor every sense of enjoyment good in itself. His eye for art taught man to seek enjoyment in usefulness. Thus, he learnt at an early stage of his evolution that he was to eat not for its own sake, as some of us still do, but he should eat to enable him to live. At a later stage, he learnt further that there was neither beauty nor joy in living for its own sake, but that he must live to serve his fellow creatures and through them his Maker.

—*Harijan* : April 4, 1936.

MAN'S estate is one of probation. During that period he is played upon by evil forces, as well as good. He is ever prey to temptations. He has to prove his manliness by resisting and fighting temptations. He is no warrior who fights outside foes of his imagination, and is powerless to lift his little finger against the innumerable foes within, or what is worse, mistakes them for friends.

—*Harijan* : April 4, 1936.

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TH E main purpose of life is to live rightly, think rightly tact rightly : the soul must languish when we give all our, hought to the body. —*Harijan* : Feb. 27, 1936.

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IT is man's special privilege and pride to be gifted with the faculties of head and heart both, that he is a thinking no less than a feeling animal as the very derivation of the word shows ; and to renounce the sovereignty of reason over the blind instincts is, therefore, to renounce a man's estate. In man reason quickens and guides the feeling, in brute the soul lies ever dormant. To awaken the heart is to awaken the dormant soul, to awaken reason, and to inculcate discrimination between good and evil.

—*Harijan* : Nov. 21, 1936.

◈ ◈ ◈

MAN'S destined purpose is to conquer old habits, to over-come the evil in him and to restore good to its rightful place. If religion does not teach us how to achieve this conquest, it teaches us nothing. But there is no royal road to success in this, the truest enterprise in life. Cowardice is perhaps the greatest vice from which we suffer and is also possibly the greatest violence, certainly far greater than bloodshed and the like that generally go under the name of violence. For it comes from want of faith in God and ignorance of His attribute. —*Harijan* : Dec. 12, 1937.

Manliness

MANLINESS consists not in bluff, bravado or lordiness. It consists in daring to do the right and facing

consequences, whether it is in matters social, political or other. It consists in deeds, not in words.

—*Young India* : Jan. 24, 1929.

◈ ◈ ◈

MANLINESS consists in making circumstances subserve to ourselves. These who will not heed themselves perish. To understand this principle is not to be impatient, not to reproach fate, not to blame others. He who understands the doctrine of self-help blames himself for failure. —*Harijan* : June 25, 1936.

Manners

AFTER all, manners and methods change with the times. We must grow with our years. What was good enough for our babyhood cannot be good enough for manhood. —*Young India* : July 14, 1920.

Marriage

IN India, it must be held to be a crime to spend money on dinner and marriage parties, *tamashas* and other luxuries as long as millions of people are starving. We would not have a feast in a family if a member was about to die of starvation. If India is one family, we should have the same feeling as we would have in a private family.

—*Young India* : Dec. 22, 1920.

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THOSE who want to perform national service, or those who want to have a glimpse of the real religious life, must lead a celibate life, no matter if married or unmarried. Marriage but, brings a woman closer together with the man, and they become friends in a special sense, never to be parted either in this life or in the lives that are to come. But I do not think that, in our conception of marriage, our lusts should necessarily enter.

—*Young India* : Dec. 2, 1921.

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Every girl, every Indian girl, is not born to marry. I can show many girls who are to-day dedicating themselves

to service instead of serving one man. It is high time that Hindu girls produce or reproduce an edition and, if possible, a glorified edition of Parvati and Sita.

—*Gandhiji in Ceylon* : *Page 146.*

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Q. ARE you against the institution of marriage ?

'I shall have to answer this question at some length, said Bapu, 'The aim of human life is Moksha. As a Hindu, I believe that Moksha is freedem from birth, by breaking the bonds of the flesh, by becoming one with God. Now marriage is a hindrance in the attainment of this supreme object, in as much as it only tightens the bonds of flesh. Celibacy is a great help, inasmuch as it enables one to lead a life of full surrender to God. What is the object generally understood of marriage, except a repetition of one's own kind ? And why need you advocate marriage ? It propagates itself. It requires no agency to promote its growth.'

'But must you advocate celibacy and preach it to one and all ?'

'Yes,' said Gandhiji.—Ramachandran looked preplexed.—'Then you fear there will be an end of creation ?' 'No. The extreme logical result would be not extinction of the human species, but the transference of it to a higher plane.'

'But may not an artist or a great genius leave a legacy of his genius to posterity through his own children ?'

'Certainly not,' said Bapu, with emphasis, 'He will have more disciples than he can ever have children ; and through those disciples all his gifts to the world will be handed down in a way that nothing else can do it. It will be the soul's marriage with the sipirit : the progeny being the disciple,—a sort of divine procreation. No. ! You must leave marriage to take care of itself. Repetition and not

growth would be the result ; for lust has come to play the most important part in marriage.'

'Mr. Andrews' said Ramachandran, 'does not like your emphasis on celibacy.'

'Yes, I know,' said Gandhiji, 'that is the legacy of Protestantism. Protestantism did many good things, but one of its few evils was that it ridiculed celibacy.'

'That' rejoined Ramachandran, 'was becasue it had to fight the deep abuses in which the clergy of the age had sunk.'

'But all that was not due to any inherent evil of celibacy,' said Bapu, 'It is celibacy that has kept Catholicism green up to the present day.' (M. D.)

—*Young India* : Nov. 13, 1924.

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Married life would be intolerable, as it does become, when one partner breaks through all bonds of restraint. Marriage confirms the right of union between two partners to the exclusion of all the others when in their joint opinion they consider such union to be desirable but it confers no right upon one partner to demand obedience of the other to one's wish for union. What should be done when one partner on moral or other grounds cannot conform to the wishes of the other is a separate question. Personally, if divorce was the only alternative I should not hesitate to accept it, rather than interrupt my moral progress,—assuming that I want to restrain myself on purely moral grounds.

—*Young India* : Oct. 8, 1925.

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A correspondent, whom I know well, raises an issue, I take it, for purely academic interest because I know the views he has set out are not his. 'Is not our present day morality unnatural ?' he asks. If it was natural it should have been the same everywhere in all ages, but every race and community seems to have its own peculiar marriage

laws and in enforcing them men have made themselves worse than beasts. For diseases which are unknown amongst animals are quite common amongst men; infanticide, abortions, child-marriages, which are impossible in the brute creation, are the curse of the society that holds up marriage as a sacrament, and no end of evil results have sprung from what we uphold as laws of morality. And the miserable condition of Hindu widows—what is it due to, but to the existing marriage laws? Why not go back to nature, and take a leaf out of the book of the brute creation?

I do not know whether the advocates of free love in the West resort to the argument summarised above or have any stronger reasons to put forth, but I am sure that the tendency to regard the marriage-bond as barbarous is distinctly Western. If the argument is also borrowed from the West, there is no diffiulty about meeting it.

It is a mistake to institute a comparison between man and the brute and it is this comparison that vititates the whole argument. For man is higher than the brute in his moral instincts and moral institutions. The law of nature as applied to the one is different from the law of nature as applied to the other. Man has reason, discrimination, and free will such as it is. The brute has no such thing. It is not a free agent, and knows no distinction between virtue and vice, good and evil. Man, being a free agent, knows these distinctions, and when he follows his higher nature shows himself far superior to the brute, but when he follows his baser nature can show himself lower than the brute. Even the races regarded as the most uncivilised on earth accept some restriction on sexual relations. If it be said that the restriction is itself barbarous, then freedom from all restraints should be the law of man. If all men were to act according to this lawless law, there would be perfect chaos within twenty four hours. Man being by nature more passionate than the brute, the moment all restraint is withdrawn, the lava of unbridled passion would over-

spread the whole earth and destroy mankind. Man is superior to the brute inasmuch as he is capable of self-restraint and sacrifice of which the brute is incapable.

Some of the diseases that are so common at the present day are the result of infringement of marriage laws. I should like to know a single instance of a man strictly observing the restraint of the marriage bond having suffered from the diseases the correspondent has in mind. Infanticide, child-marriages and the like, are also the result of the breach of marriage laws. For the law lays down that a man or woman shall choose a mate only when he or she has come of age, is healthy, and capable of restraint, and desires to have progeny. Those who strictly obey this law, and regard the marriage bond as a sacrament, have never an occasion to be unhappy or miserable. Where marriage is a sacrament, the union is not the union of bodies but the union of souls indissoluble even by the death of either party. Where there is a true union of souls, the re-marriage of a widow or widower is unthinkable, improper and wrong. Marriages, where the true law of marriage is ignored, do not deserve the name. If we have very few true marriages now-a-days it is not the institution of marriage that is to blame, but the prevailing form of it, which should be reformed.

The correspondent contends that marriage is no moral or religious bond but a custom, and a custom which is opposed to religion and morality and hence deserves to be abolished. I submit that marriage is a fence that protects religion. If the fence were to be destroyed religion would go to pieces. The foundation of religion is restraint and marriage is nothing but restraint. The man who knows no restraint has no hope of self-realisation. I confess it may be difficult to prove the necessity of restraint to an atheist or a materialist. But he who knows the perishable nature of flesh from the imperishable nature of the spirit, instinctively knows that self-realisation is impossible without self-

discipline and self-restraint. The body may either be a play-ground of passion, or temple of self-realisation. If it is the latter, there is no room there for libertinism. The spirit needs must curb the flesh every moment.

Woman will be the apple of discord where the marriage bond is loose, where there is no observance of the law of restraint. If men were as unrestrained as the brutes they would straightway take the road to destruction. I am firmly of opinion that all the evils that the correspondent complains of can be eradicated not by abolishing marriage but by a systematic understanding and observance of the law of marriage.

I agree that whereas amongst some communities marriage is permitted amongst very near relations, it is prohibited among other communities, that whereas some communities forbid polygamy some permit it. Whilst one would wish that there was a uniform moral law accepted by all communities, the diversity does not point to the necessity of abolishing all restraint. As we grow wise in experience our morality will gain in uniformity. Even today the moral sense of the world holds up monogamy as the highest ideal and no religion makes polygamy obligatory. The ideal remains unaffected by the relaxation of practice according to time and place.

I need not reiterate my views regarding re-marriage of widows, as I consider re-marriage of virgin widows not only desirable but the bounden duty of all parents who happen to have such widowed daughters.

—*Young India* : June 3, 1926.

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MY ideal of a wife is Sita, and of a husband Rama. But Sita was no slave of Rama. Or, each was slave of the other.....The wife has a perfect right to take her own course, and meekly brave the consequences when she knows herself to be in the right, and when

her resistance is for a nobler purpose.

—*Young India*: Oct. 21, 1926.

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FOR me, the married state is as much a state of discipline as any other. Life is duty, a probation. Married life is intended to promote mutual good, both here and hereafter. It is meant also to serve humanity. When one partner breaks the law of discipline, the right accrues to the other of breaking the bond. The breach here is moral and not physical. It precludes divorce. The wife or the husband separates but to serve the end for which they had united. Hinduism regards each as absolute equal of the other. No doubt a different practice has grown up, no one knows since when. But so have many other evils crept into it. This, however, I do not know that Hinduism leaves the individual absolutely free to do what he or she likes for the sake of self-realisation, for which and which alone he or she is born. —*Young India*: Oct. 21, 1926.

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MARRIAGE, for the satisfaction of sexual appetite is no marriage. It is *vyabhichara*—concupisence. To-day's ceremony, therefore, means that the sexual act is permitted only when there is a clear desire by both for a child. The whole conception is sacred. The act has, therefore, to be performed prayerfully. It is not preceded by the usual courtship, designed to provide sexual excitement and pleasure. Such union may only be once in a life-time, if no other child is desired. Those who are not morally and physically healthy have no business to unite, and if they do, it is *vyabhichara*—concupisence. You must unlearn the lesson, if you have learnt it before, that marriage is for the satisfaction of animal appetite. It is a superstition.

—*Young India*: April 24, 1927.

THE very purpose of marriage is restraint and sublimation of the sexual passion. If there is any other purpose: marriage is no consecration, but marriage for other purposes besides having progeny.

—*Young India* : April 24, 1927.



MARRIAGE outside one's religion stands on a different footing. Even here, so long each is free to observe his or her religion, I can see no moral objection to such unions. But, I do not believe that these unions can bring peace. They may follow peace. I can see nothing but disaster following any attempt to advocate Hindu-Muslim unions, so long as the relations between the two remain strained. That such union may be happy in exceptional circumstances can be no reason for their general advocacy. Inter-dining between Hindus and Mussalmans does take place even now on a large scale. But that again has not resulted in promoting peace. It is my settled conviction that intermarriage and inter-dining have no bearing on communal unity. The causes of discord are economic and political—and it is these that have to be removed. There is inter-marriage and inter-dining in Europe, but the Europeans have fought amongst themselves as we Hindus and Mussalmans have never fought in all history. Our masses have stood aside.

—*Young India* : June 4, 1931.



I DO not envisage the wife, as a rule, following an avocation independently of her husband. The care of the children and the upkeep of the household are quite enough to fully engage all her energy. In a well-ordered society, the additional burden of maintining the family ought not to fall on her. The man should look

to the maintenance of the family, the woman to household management; the two thus supplementing and coplimenting each other's labours. —*Harijan* : Oct. 12, 1934.

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BETWEEN husband and wife there should be no secrets from one another. I have a very high opinion of the marriage tie. I hold that husband and wife merge in each other. They are one in two or two in one. —*Harijan* : March 9, 1940.

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MARRIAGE is a natural thing in life, and to consider it derogatory in any sense is wholly wrong. The ideal is to look upon marriage as a sacrament and therefore to lead a life of self-restraint in the married state. Marriage in Hinduism is one of the four *Ashramas*. In fact the other three are based on it. But in modern times marriage has unfortunately come to be regarded purely as a physical union. The other three *Ashramas* are all but non-existent. —*Harijan* : March 22, 1942

Masses

THE educated class, lovers of *Swaraj*, must freely mix with the masses. We dare not reject a single member of the community. We shall make progress only if we carry all with us.

—*Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi* : Page 212.

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WE regard them (masses) as our main-stay, for it is they who have to attain *Swaraj*. It is neither the sole concern of the monied men or that of the educated class. Both must subserve their interest in any scheme of *Swaraj*. —*Young India* : April 20, 1920.

MY faith in the people is boundless. Theirs is an amazingly responsive nature. Let not the leaders distrust them. —*Young India* : Sept. 8, 1920.

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THE masses are by no means so foolish, or unitelligent as we sometimes imagine. They often perceive things with their intution, which we ourselves fail to see with our intellect. But whilst the masses know what tney want, they often do not know how to exppress their wants and, less often, how to get what they want. Herein comes the use of leadership, and disastorous results can easily follow a bad, hasty, or what is worse, selfish lead. —*Young India* : Nov. 3, 1920.

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THE Congress must progressively represent the masses. They are as yet untouched by politics. They have no political consciousness of the type our politicians desire. Their politics are confined to bread and salt I dare not say butter, for millions do not know the taste of *ghee* or even oil. Their politics are confined to communal adjustments. It is right however to say that we the politicians do represent the masses in opposition to Government. But if we begin to use them before they are ready we shall cease to represent them. We must first come in living touch with them by working for them and in their midst. We must share their sorrows, understand their difficulties and anticipate their wants. With the pariahas must be pariaha and see how we feel to clean the closets of the upper classes and have the remains of their table thrown at us. We must see how we like being in the boxes, miscalled houses, of the labourers of Bombay. We must indentify ourselves with the villagers who toil under the hot sun beating on their bent backs and see how we would like to drink water from the pool in which the villagers bathe, wash their clothes and pots and in which their cattle drink

and roll. Then and not till then shall we truly represent the masses and they will, as surely as I am writing this, respond to every call.

We cannot all do this, and if we are to do this, good-bye to *Swaraj* for a thousand years and more," some will say. I shall sympathise with the objection. But I do claim that some of us at least will have to go through the agony and out of it only will a nation full, vigorous and free be born. I suggest to all that they should give their mental co-operation and that they should mentally indentify themselves with the masses, and as a visible and tangible token thereof, they should earnestly spin for at least thirty minutes per day in their name and for their sake. It will be a mighty prayer from the intelligentia among the Hindus, Mussalmans, Parsis, Christians and others of India, rising up to Heaven for their, that is, India's deliverance.

—*Young India* : Sept. 11, 1924.

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I CLAIM to know my millions. All the 24 hours of the day I am with them. They are my first care and last, because I recognise no God except the God that is to be found in the hearts of the dumb millions. They do not recognise His presence; I do. And I worship the God that is Truth or Truth which is God through the service of these millions.

—*Harijan* : March 11, 1939.

Means And End

WE are merely the instruments of the Almighty's will and are therefore ignorant of what helps us forward and what acts as an impediment. We must thus rest satisfied with a knowledge only of the means and if these are pure, we can fearlessly leave the end to take care of itself. —*Satyagraha in South Africa* : Page 480.

FOR me it is enough to know the means. Means and end are convertible terms in my philosophy of life.

—*Young India* : Dec. 26, 1924.

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THEY say 'means are after all means'. I would say 'means are after all everything'. As the means so the end. Violent means will give violent *Swaraj*. That would be a menace to the world and to India herself. There is no wall of separation between means and end. Indeed the Creator has given us control (and that too very limited) over means none over the end. Realisation of the goal is in exact proportion to that of the means. This is a proposition that admits of no exception.

—*Harijan* : Feb. 28, 1937.

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FOR over 50 years I have trained myself never to be concerned about the result. What I should be concerned about is the means, and when I am sure of the purity of the means, faith is enough to lead me on. All fear and trembling melt away before that faith.

—*Harijan* : Sept. 22, 1940

Measures Before Men

MEASURES must always in a progressive society be held superior to men, who are after all imperfect instruments, working for their fulfilment.

—*Young India* : July 18, 1921.

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If we want to serve India we must put measures before men. The latter come and go, but causes must survive even the greatest of them.

—*Young India* : June 5, 1924.

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THE cause is everything. Those even who are

dearest to us must be shunted for the sake of the cause. —*Young India*: June 12, 1924.

Meetings

IF we confine our activities for advancing *Swaraj* only to holding meetings, the nation is likely to suffer harm. Meetings and speeches have their own place and time. But they cannot make a nation.

—*Young India* : Nov. 3, 1921.

Minority and Majority

IT will be the duty of the majority to see to it that minorities receive proper hearing and are not otherwise exposed to insults. *Swaraj* will be an absurdity if individuals have to surrender their judgment to majority. —*Young India* : Dec. 8, 1921.

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THE reader does not know that in South Africa I started with practical unanimity, reached a minority of sixty-four and even sixteen, and went up again to a huge majority. The best and the most solid work was done in the wilderness of the minority.

—*Young India* : March 2, 1922.

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A LIVING faith cannot be manufactured by majority.

—*Young India* : March 16, 1922.

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CORRUPTION is the bane of governments by majority. —*Young India* : Sept. 4, 1924.

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POWER that is sought in the name of service and can only be obtained by a majority of votes is a delusion and snare to be avoided, especially at the present moment. —*Young India*: Sept. 11, 1924.

THERE is at the present moment a note of despondency in the air over the number of Congress members. The complaint is that the members have been never so few as today. The complaint would be reasonable if the franchise being the same the response was less than before. It would also be reasonable, if the influence of the Congress was to be measured by the number of members. Opinions would undoubtedly differ as to the measure to be applied for gauging the Congress influence. For me there is one measure. I attach the highest importance to quality irrespective almost of quantity, the more so for Indian conditions. In the midst of suspicion, discord, antagonistic interests superstition, fear, distrust and the like there is not only no safety in numbers but there may be even danger in them. Who does not know how often numbers have embarrassed us during the past four years? Numbers become irresistible when they act as one man under exact discipline. They are a self-destroying force when each pulls his own way or when no one knows which way to pull.

I am convinced that there is safety in fewness so long as we have not evolved cohesion, exactness and intelligent co-operation and responsiveness. One virtuous son is better than one hundred loafers. Five Pandavas were more than a match for one hundred Kauravas. A disciplined army of a few hundred picked men has time without number routed countless undisciplined hordes. A few members fully satisfying the Congress test can give a good account of themselves, whereas one million members nominally on the Congress register may not be worth the register itself. —*Young India* : April 30, 1925.

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IN a popular institution, it must be opinion of the majority that must count. But I have always held that when a respectable minority objects to any rule of

conduct, it would be dignified for the majority, and would conduce to the good of the Congress, for the majority to yield to the minority. Numerical strength savours of violence when it acts in total disregard of any strongly felt opinion or a minority. The rule of majority is perfectly sound, only where there is no rigid insistence on the part of the dissenters upon their dissent and where there is on their behalf a sportsmanlike obedience to the opinion of the majority. No organisation can run smoothly when it is divided into camps, each growling at the other and each determined to have its own way by hook or by crook.

—*Young India* : Nov. 9, 1929.

Mobs

PERSONALLY I do not mind Governmental fury as I mind mob fury. The latter is a sign of national distemper and therefore more difficult to deal with than the former which is confined to a small corporation. It is easier to oust a Government that has rendered itself unfit to govern than it is to cure unknown people in a mob of their madness. But great movements cannot be stopped altogether because a Government or a people or both go wrong. We learn and profit through our mistakes and failures. No general worth the name gives up a battle because he has suffered reverses, or which is the same thing, made mistakes. —*Young India* : July 28, 1920.

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THE greatest obstacle is that we have not yet emerged from the mobocratic stage. But my consolation lies in the fact that nothing is so easy as to train mobs, for the simple reason that they have no mind, no premeditation. They act in a frenzy.

They repent quickly. Our organised Government does not repent of its fiendish crimes at Jallianwala, Lahore,

Kasur, Akalgarh, Ramnagar, etc. But I have drawn tears from repentant mobs at Gujranwala and everywhere a frank acknowledgment of repentance from those who formed the mob during that eventful month of April. Non-co-operation I am therefore now using in order to evolve democracy. —*Young India* : Sept. 8, 1920.

Modern Civilization

I AM no indiscriminate superstitious worshipper of all that goes under the name of ancient ! I never hesitated to endeavour to demolish all that is evil or immoral, no matter how ancient it may be, but with that reservation I must confess to you that I am an adorer of ancient institutions, and it hurts me to think that a people in their rush for everything mordern despise all their ancient traditions and ignore them in their lives.

We of the East, very often, hastily consider that all that our ancestors laid down for us was nothing but a bundle of superstitions, but my own experience, extending now over a fairly long period, of the inestimable treasures of the East has led me to the conclusion that, whilst there may be much that was superstitious, there is infinitely more which is not only not supersititious, but if we understand it correctly and reduce it to practice, gives life and enobles one. Let us not, therefore, be blinded by the hypnotic dazzle of the West.

Again, I wish to utter a word of caution against your believing that I am an indiscriminate despiser of everything that comes from the West. There are many things which I have myself assimilated from the West. There is a very great and effective Sanskrit word for that particular faculty which enables a man always to distinguish between what is desirable, and what is undesirable, what is right and what is wrong, that word is known as *viveka.*

—*Gandhiji in Ceylon* : Page 105.

Moksha

WHAT I want to achieve,—what I have been striving and pining to achieve these thirty years,—is self-realisation, to see God face to face, to attain *Moksha.* I live and move and have my being in pursuit of this goal. All that I do by way of speaking and writing, and all my ventures in the political field, are directed to this same end.

From the introduction to *The Story of My Experiments with Truth.*

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A friend inquired if Gandhiji's aim was just humanitarian in sitting down in the village, just serving the villagers as best as he could.

"I am here to serve no one else but myself," said Gandiji, "to find my own self-realisation through the service of these village-folk. Man's ultimate aim is the realisation of God, and all his activities,—social, political, religious,—have to be guided by the ultimate aim of the vision of God. The immediate service of all human beings becomes a necessary part of the endeavour simply because the only way to find God is to see Him in His creation and be one with it. This cannot be done except through one's country. I am a part and parcel of the whole, and I cannot find Him apart from the rest of humanity. My countrymen are my nearest neighbours. They have become so helpless, so resourceless, so inert that I must concentrate on serving them. If I could persuade myself that I should find Him in a Himalayan cave, I would proceed there immediately. But I know that I cannot find Him apart from humanity."

Q. **But some comforts may be necessary even for man's spiritual advancement. One could not advance himself by identifying himself with the discomfort and squalor of the villager.**

A. A certain degree of physical harmony and comfort is necessary, but above a certain level it becomes a hindrance instead of help. Therefore the ideal of creating an unlimited number of wants and satisfying them seems to be a delusion and a snare. The satisfaction of one's physical needs, even the intellectual needs of one's narrow self, must meet at a certain point a dead stop before it degenerates into physical and intellectual voluptuousness. A man must arrange his physical and cultural circumstances so that they do not hinder him in his service of humanity, on which all his energies should be concentrated.

—*Harijan* : Aug. 29, 1936.

I WANT to see God face to face. God I *know* is Truth. For me the only certain means of knowing God is non-violence—*ahimsa*—love. I live for India's freedom and would die for it, because it is part of Truth. Only a free India can worship the true God. I work for India's freedom because my *Swadeshi* teaches me that being born in it and having inherited her culture, I am fittest to serve *her* and *she* has a prior claim to my service. But my patriotism is not exclusive ; it is calculated not only not to hurt any other nation but to benefit all in the true sense of the word. India's freedom as conceived by me can never be a menace to the world. —*Young India* : April 3, 1924.

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I do not consider myself worthy to be mentioned in the same breath with the race of prophets. I am a humble seeker after Truth. I am impatient to realise myself, to attain *Moksha* in this very existence. My national service is part of my training for freeing my soul from the bondage of flesh. Thus considered, my service may be regarded as purely selfish. I have no desire for the perishable kingdom of earth. I am striving for the Kingdom of Heaven which is *Moksha.* To attain my end it is not necessary for me to

seek the shelter of a cave. I carry one about me, if I would but know it. A cave-dweller can build castles in the air whereas a dweller in a palace like Janak has no castles to build. The cave-dweller who hovers round the world on the wings of thought has no peace. A Janak though living in the midst of 'pomp and circumstance' may have peace that passeth understanding. For me the road to salvation lies through an incessant toil in the service of my country and there through of humanity. I want to identify myself with everything that lives. In the language of the *Gita* I want to live at peace with both friend and foe. Though therefore a Musalman or a Christian or a Hindu may despise me and hate me, I want to love him and serve him even as I would love my wife or son though they hate me. So my patriotism is for me a stage in my journey to the land of eternal freedom and peace. Thus it will be seen that for me there are no politics devoid of religion. They subserve religion. Politics bereft of religion are a death-trap because they kill the soul.

—*Young India* : April 3, 1924.

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The aim of human life is *Moksha.* As a Hindu I believe that *Moksha* is freedom from birth by breaking the bonds of the flesh, by becoming one with God. Now marriage is a hindrance in the attainment of this supreme object, inasmuch as it only tightens the bonds of flesh. Celibacy is a great help inasmuch as it enables one to lead a life full of surrender to God.

—*Young India* : Nov. 20, 1924.

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Moksha is liberation from impure thought. Complete extinction of impure thought is impossible without ceaseless penance. There is only one way to achieve this. The moment an impure thought arises, confront it with a pure one. This is possible only with God's grace, and God's

grace comes through ceaseless communion with Him and complete self-surrender. This communion with Him in the beginning be just a lip repetition of His name even disturbed by impure thoughts. But ultimately what is on the lips will possess the heart. And there is another thing to bear in mind. The mind may wander, but let not the senses wander with it. If the senses wander where the mind takes them, one is done for. But he who keeps control of the physical senses will some day be able to bring impure thoughts under control..... Impure thoughts need not dismay you. We are monarchs of the domain of effort. God is the sole Monarch of the domain of Result.....You know what to do to create a pure atmosphere about you. Spare diet, sight fixed on the earth below, and impatience with oneself to the extent of plucking the eye out if 'it offends thee.'

(From a letter written to Jamanalal Bajaj by Gandhiji)
—*Harijan* : Feb. 22, 1942.

Money

I HAVE seen from experience that money cannot go as far as fellow-feeling, kind words and kind looks can. If a man, who is eager to get riches gets the riches from another but without sympathy, he will give him up in the long run. On the other hand, one who has been conquerred by love is ready to encounter no end of difficulties with him who has given him his love.

—*Satyagraha in South Africa* : Page 340.

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I HAVE never known a good cause backed by good men ever to have died for want of funds, only we often mistake a bad cause for good and bad men for good and then complain that the cause fails for want of funds.

—*Young India* : Feb. 21, 1929.

Money-Gifts

MONEY-GIFTS are hardly ever a sure indication of love. In fact in our epics we have the story often told of God refusing the richest presents from those having great possessions, and preferring to eat the coarse morsel lovingly given by a devotee.

—*Young India* : April 18, 1929.

Monotony

MONOTONY is the law of nature. Look at the monotonous manner in which the sun rises. And imagine the catastrophe that would befall the universe, if the sun became capricious and went in for a variety of pastime. But there is a monotony that sustains and a monotony that kills. The monotony of necessary occupation is exhilarating and life-giving. An artist never tires of his art. A spinner who has mastered his art will certainly be able to do sustained work without fatigue. There is a music about the spindle which the practised spinner catches without fail.

—*Young India* : Jan. 17, 1921.

Morality

AS soon as we lose the moral basis, we cease to be religious. There is no such thing as religion overriding morality. Man, for instance, cannot be untruthful, cruel or incontinent and claim to have God on his side.

—*Young India* : Nov. 24, 1921.

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THE morals, ethics and religion are convertible terms. A moral life, without reference to religion, is like a house built upon sand. And religion, divorced from morality, is like ' sounding brass, good only for making a noise and breaking heads.' Morality includes truth, *ahimsa* and continence. Every virtue that mankind has ever practised is referable to, and derived from, these three

fundamental virtues. Non-violence and continence are again derivable from Truth, which for me is God.

—*Harijan*: Oct. 3, 1936.

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THAT which is opposed to the fundamental maxims of morality, that which is opposed to trained reason cannot be claimed as *Shastra* no matter how ancient it may be.

—*Harijan*: Dec. 16, 1937.

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MORALITY which depends upon the helplessness of a man or woman has not much to recommend it. Morality is rooted in the purity of our hearts.

—*Harijan*: June 8, 1940.

Moral Authority

MORAL authority is never retained by any attempt to hold on to it. It comes without seeking and is retained without effort. —*Young India*: Jan. 29, 1925.

Motive

PURE motives can never justify impure or violent action. —*Young India*: Dec. 18, 1924.

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TO come now to the question of motive, whilst it is true that mental attitude is the crucial test of *Ahimsa*, it is not the sole test. To kill any living being or thing save for his or its own interest is *himsa*, however noble the motive may otherwise be. And a man who harbours ill-will towards another is no less guilty of *himsa* because for fear of society or want of opportunity, he is unable to translate his ill-will into action. A reference to both intent and deed is thus necessary in order finally to decide whether a particular act or abstention can be classed as *ahimsa*. After all intent has to be inferred from a bunch of correlated acts.

—*Young India*: Oct. 18, 1928.

THE moment there is suspicion about a person's motives, everything he does becomes tainted.

—*Young India* : Mar. 12, 1920.

Municipalities

NATIONAL Government is dependent upon purity of the Government of our cities.

—*Young India* : Nov. 3, 1921.

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Municipalities are perhaps the greatest fraud palmed off upon India. The Government has hitherto used them for consolidating its power. But where the citizens are united, they can attain the muncipal home-rule in a moment. —*Young India* ; Jan. 26, 1922.

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I consider myself a lover of Municipal life. I think that it is a rare privilege for a person to find himself in the position of Municipal Councillor, but let me note down for you as a man of some experience in public life that one indispensable condition of that privilege is that Municipal Councillors dare not approach their office from interested or selfish motives. They must approach their sacred task in a spirit of service.

—*Young India* : March 28, 1929.

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THE one thing which we can and must learn from the West is the science of Municipal sanitation. By instinct and habit we are used to village life, where the need for corporate sanitation is not much felt. But as the Western civilisation is materialistic and therefore tends towards the development of the cities to the neglect of villages the people of the West have evolved a science of corporate sanitation and hygiene from which we have much to learn. Our narrow and tortuous lanes, our congested ill-ventilated houses, our criminal neglect of sources of drinking water

require remedying. Every Municipality can render the greatest service by insisting on people observing the law of sanitation. It is a superstition to consider that vast sums of money are required for effecting sanitary reform. We must modify western methods of sanitation to suit our requirements. And as my patriotism is inclusive and admits of no enmity or ill-will, I do not hesitate, in spite of my horror of Western materialism to take from the West what is beneficial for me. And as I know Englishmen to be resourceful, I gratefully seek their assistance in such matters. For instance, I owe to Poore my knowledge of the cheapest and the most effective method of disposal of human excreta. He has shown how by our ignorance or prejudice we waste this precious manure. Excreta are not dirt in their proper place and when they are properly handled. Dirt, as the English say, is ' matter misplaced. '

—*Young India* : Dec. 26, 1924.

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Nation

BEFORE we become a nation possessing an effective voice in the councils of nations, we must be prepared to contemplate with equanimity, not a thousand murders of innocent men and women but many thousands before we attain a status in the world that shall not be surpassed by any nation. —*Young India* : April 7, 1920.

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NATIONS are born out of travail and suffering.

—*Young India* : Nov. 19, 1920.

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WHAT is true of the individual will be tomorrow true of the whole nation if individuals will but refuse to lose heart and hope. —*Young India* : April 7, 1927.

Nationalism vs. Internationalism

IN my opinion, it is impossible for one to be internationalist without being a nationalist. Internationalism

is possible only when nationalism becomes a fact, *i.e.*, when people belonging to different countries have organised themselves and are able to act as one man. It is not nationalism that is evil, it is the narrowness, selfishness, exclusiveness which is the bane of modern nations, which is evil. Each wants to profit at the expense of, and rise on, the ruin of the other. Indian nationalism has, I hope, struck a different path. It wants to organise itself or to find full self-expression for the benefit and service of humanity at large. Any way, there is no uncertainty about my patriotism or nationalism. God having cast my lot in the midst of the people of India, I should be untrue to my Maker if I failed to serve them. If I do not know how to serve them I shall never know how to serve humanity. And I cannot possibly go wrong so long as I do not harm other nations in the act of serving my country.

—*Young India* : June 18, 1925.

National Dress

I WEAR the national dress because it is the most natural and the most becoming for an Indian. I believe that our copying of the European dress is a sign of our degradation, humiliation and our weakness, and that we are committing a national sin in discarding a dress which is best suited to the Indian climate and which, for its simplicity, art and cheapness, is not to be beaten on the face of the earth and which answers hygienic requirements. Had it not been for a false pride and equally false notions of prestige, Englishmen here would long ago have adopted the Indian costume.

—*Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi* : Page 117.

National Flag

A FLAG is a necessity for all nations. Millions have died for it. It is no doubt a kind of idolatry which it would be a sin to destroy. For a flag represents an ideal

The unfurling of the Union Jack evokes in the English breast sentiments whose strength it is difficult to measure. The Stars and Stripes mean a world to the Americans. The Star and the Crescent will call forth the best bravery in Islam. —*Young India* : April 13, 1921.

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IT was reserved for a Punjabee to make a suggestion that at once arrested attention. It was Lala Hansraj of Jullunder who, in discussing the possibilities of the spinning wheel, suggested that it should find a place on our *Swaraj* Flag. —*Young India* : April 13, 1921.

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I AM the author of the flag. It is dear to me as life. But I do not believe in flag waving. This flag represents unity, non-violence, and identification through the *charkha* of the highest with the lowliest in the land. Any insult to the flag must leave a deep scar on an Indian breast.

—*Harijan* : April 17, 1938.

National Service.

WE want an army of whole-time workers. In a poor country like India, it is not possible to get such workers without pay. I see not only no shame, but I see credit in accepting pay for national work honestly and well done. We shall have to engage many paid whole-time worker when *Swaraj* is established. Shall we then feel less pride in belonging to the *Swaraj* service than Englishmen do in belonging to the India Civil Service?

—*Young India* : July 10, 1924.

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LET there be no shame about accepting remuneration. A labourer is worthy of his hire. And he is no less selfless because he accepts remuneration. As a matter of fact, a most selfless man has to give his all to the nation body, mind and soul. And he has still to feed himself. The nation gladly feeds such men and women and yet regards

them as selfless. The difference between a voluntary worker and a hireling lies in the fact that whereas a hireling gives his service to whosoever pays his price, a national voluntary worker gives his service only to the nation for the cause he believes in and he serves it even though he might have to starve. —*Young India* : May 19, 1929.

Nature

NATURE abhors a vacuum. Therefore, construction must keep pace with destruction.

—*Young India* : May 8, 1924.

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NATURE abhors weakness

—*Young India* : Jan. 13, 1927.

Nobility

LIGHT brings light, not darkness, and nobility done with a noble purpose will be twice rewarded.

—*Young India* : Oct. 13, 1920.

Non-co-operation

THE primary object of Non-co-operation is nowhere stated to be paralysis of the Government. The primary object is self-purification. Its direct result must be paralysis of a Government which lives on our vices and weaknesses.

—*Young India* : April 20, 1920.

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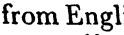
'THE movement,' says Sir William, 'is purely destructive, and, so far as I have been able to ascertain, contains no element of constructive ability.' It is undoubtedly destructive in the sense that a surgeon who applies the knife to a diseased part may be said to make a destructive movement. This destructive movement bears in it the surest seed of construction as the surgeon's knife contains the seed of health. Is temperance destructive? Are national schools springing up everywhere destructive? Are the thousands of spinning wheels destructive of a nation's

prosperity ? They will destroy foreign domination whether it hails from Lancashire or is threatened from Japan.

—*Young India* : April 20, 1920.



NON-CO-OPERATORS are to be blessed for turning the fury of an outraged people from Englishmen to the system they are called upon to administer.—*Young India* : April 20, 1920.



MY friend objects to my statement that Non-co-operation is not anti-Government, because he considers that refusal to serve it and pay its taxes is actually anti-Government. I respectfully dissent from the view. If a brother has fundamental differences with his brother, and association with the latter involves his partaking of what in his opinion is an injustice, I hold that it is his brotherly duty to refrain from serving his brother and sharing his earnings with him. This happens in everyday life. Prahlad did not act against his father when he declined to associate himself with the latter's blasphemies. Nor was Jesus anti-Jewish when he declaimed against the Pharisees and the hypocrites, and would have none of them. In such matters, is it not the intention that determines the character of a particular act ? It is hardly correct as the friend suggests that withdrawal of association under general circumstances would make all government impossible. But it is true that such withdrawal would make all injustice impossible.

—*Young India* : May 19, 1920.



I CONSIDER Non-co-operation to be such a powerful and pure instrument that, if it is enforced in an earnest spirit, it will be like seeking first the Kingdom of God and everything else following as a matter of course. People will then have realized their true power. They would have learnt the value of discipline, self-control, joint action, non-violence, organisation and everything else that goes to make a nation great and good, and not merely great.

—*Young India* : June 2, 1920.

NON-CO-OPERATION in itself is more harmless than Civil Disobedience, but in its effect it is far more dangerous for the Government than Civil Disobedience.

—*Young India* : July 28, 1920.

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THERE is no instrument so clean, so harmless and yet so effective as Non-co-operation. Judiciously hauled it need not produce any evil consequences. And its intensity will depend on the capacity of the people for sacrifice.

—*Young India* : June 30, 1920.

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I HAVE most carefully read the manifesto addressed by Sir Narayan Chandavarkar and others dissuading the people from joining the Non-co-operation movement. I had expected to find some solid argument against Non-co-operation, but to my great regret I have found in it nothing but distortion (no doubt unconscious) of the great religions and history. The manifesto says that 'Non-co-operation is deprecated by the religious tenets and traditions of our motherland, nay, of all the religions that have saved and elevated, the human race. I venture to submit that the *Bhagwad Gita* is a gospel of Non-co-operation between the forces of darkness and those of light. If it is to be literally interpreted, Arjun representing a just cause was enjoined to engage in bloody warfare with the unjust Kauravas. Tulsidas advises the *Sant* (the good) to shun the *Asant* (the evil-doer). The Zendavesta represents a perpetual duel between Ormuzd and Ahriman, between whom there is no compromise. To say of the *Bible* that it taboos Non-co-operation is not to know Jesus, a Prince among passive resisters, who uncompromisingly challenged the might of the Sadducees and the Pharisees and for the sake of truth did not hesitate to divide sons from their parents. And what did the Prophet of Islam do? He non-co-operated in Mecca in a most active manner so long as his life was not in danger and wiped the dust of Mecca off his feet when he found that he and his followers might have

uselessly to perish, and fled to Medina and returned when he was strong enough to give battle to his opponents. The duty of Non-co-operation with unjust men and kings is as strickly enjoined by all the religions as is the duty of co-operation with just men and Kings. Indeed most of the scriptures of the world seem even to go beyond Non-co-operation and prefer violence to effeminate submission to a wrong. The Hindu religious tradition of which the manifesto speaks clearly proves the duty of Non-co-operation. Prahalad dissociated himself from his father. Meerabai from her husband. Bibi Shahan from her brutal brother.

—*Young India* : Aug. 4, 1920.

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THE movement of Non-co-operation is neither anti-Christian nor anti-English nor anti-European. It is a struggle between religion and irreligion, powers of light and powers of darkness. —*Young India* : Sept. 8, 1920.

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ENLIGHTENED Non-co-operation is the expression of anguished love. —*Young India* : Nov. 20, 1920.

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NON-VIOLENT Non-co-operation will and must remain the creed of the nation that has grown weary of camouflage, humbug, and honeyed words.

—*Young India* : Nov. 17, 1920.

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YOU cannot raise this great nation to its full height by the unclean methods of secrecy. We must, by boldly carrying on our campaign in the light of the blazing sun of openness, disarm the secret and demoralising police department. Non-co-operation is nothing if it des not strike at the root. And you strike at the root when you cease to water this deadly tree of the British Government by means of open and honourable Non-co-operation.

—*Young India* : Dec. 1, 1920.

NON-CO-OPERATION is an attempt to awaken the masses to a sense of their dignity and power. This can only be by enabling them to realize that they need not fear brute force, if they would but know the soul within.

—*Young India* : Dec. 1, 1920.

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HITHERTO we have looked up to the Government to do everything for us, and we have found it almost wholly irresponsive in everything that matters. We have therefore been filled with blank despair. We have ceased to believe in ourselves or the Government. The present movement is an attempt to change this winter of our despair into the summer of hope and confidence. When we begin to believe in ourselves, Englishmen will, I promise, begin to believe in us. Then, and not till then, is there any hope of co-operation between the Government and us. The existing system of government, it will be found upon analysis, is based upon a scientific study of our weaknesses, which have rather been promoted by it than reduced. Non-co-operation is, therefore, as much a protest against our own weakness, as against the inherent corruption of the existing system. British and Indian, we become impure by belonging to it. The withdrawal from it of one party purifies both. I invite even the sceptics to follow the programme of Non-co-operation as a trial, and I promise that there will be *Swaraj* in India during the year, if the programme is carried out in its fulness. —*Young India* : Dec. 15, 1920.

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NON-CO-OPERATION is not a movement of brag, bluster, or bluff. It is a test of our sincerity. It requires solid and silent self-sacrifice. It challenges our honesty and our capacity for national work. It is a movement that aims at translating ideas into action. And the more we do, the more we find that much more must be *done* than we had expected. And this thought of our imperfection must make us humble. —*Young India* : Jan. 12, 1921.

THE movement of self-government cannot—must not—be made to depend upon one man. I have but presented India with a new and matchless weapon, or rather an extended application of an ancient and tried weapon. She must reject or accept it for her own use. I cannot use it for her. I can use, have used it, for myself and feel free. Others have done, and feel likewise. If the nation uses the weapon, she becomes free.—*Young India* : April 6, 1921.

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I HAVE said repeatedly that I am acting towards the Government as I have acted towards my own dearest relatives. Non-co-operation on the political field is an extension of the doctrine as it is practised on the domestic field.

—*Young India* : April 20, 1921.

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IT is directed not against men but against measures. It is not directed against the Governors, but against the system they administer. The roofs of Non-co-operation lie not in hatred but in justice, if not in love.

—*Young India* : May 25, 1921.

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WE had lost the power of saying 'no'. It had become disloyal, almost sacrilegious to say 'no' to the Government. This deliberate refusal to co-operate is like the necessary weeding process that a cultivater has to resort before he sows. Weeding is as necessary to agriculture as sowing. Indeed, even whilst the crops are growing, the weeding fork, as every husbandman knows, is an instrument almost of daily use. The nation's Non-co-operation is an invitation to the Government to co-operate with it on its own terms as is every nation's right and every good government's duty. Non-co-operation is the nation's notice that it is no longer satisfied to be in tutelage. —*Young India* : June 1, 1921.

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IN my humble opinion, rejection is as much an ideal as the acceptance of a thing. It is as necessary to reject untruth as it is to accept truth. All religions teach that two

opposite forces act upon us and that the human endeavour consists in a series of eternal rejections and acceptances. Non-co-operation with evil is as much a duty as co-operation with good. —*Young India* : June 1, 1921.

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THIS campaign of Non-co-operation has no reference to diplomacy, secret or open. The only diplomacy it admits of is the statement and pursuance of truth at any cost.

—*Young India* : June 8, 1921.

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NON-CO-OPERATION is beyond the reach of the bayonet. It has found an abiding place in the Indian heart. Workers like me will go when the hour has struck, but Non-co-operation will remain.

—*Young India* : June 8, 1921.

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THE movement of Non-co-operation, is nothing, if it does not purify us and restrain our evil passions.

—*Young India* : Sept. 15, 1921.

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THE secret of Non-violence and Non-co-operation lies in our realizing that it is through suffering that we are to attain our goal. What is the renunciation of titles, councils, law courts, schools but a measure (very slight indeed) of suffering ? The preliminary renunciation is a prelude to the larger suffering—the hardships of a goal life, and even the final consummation on the gallows, if need be. The more we suffer and the more of us suffer, the nearer we are to our cherished goal.

The earlier and the more clearly we recognise that it is not big meetings and demonstrations that would give us victory, but quiet suffering, the earlier and more certain will our victory be. —*Young India* : Sept. 29, 1921.

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INTOLERANCE is itself a form of violence and an obstacle to the growth of a true democratic spirit. Arro-

gant assumption of superiority on the part of a Non-co-operator who has undergone a little bit of sacrifice or put on *Khadi* is the greatest danger to the movement. A Non-co-operator is nothing if he is not humble. When self-satisfaction creeps over a man, he has ceased to grow and therefore has become unfit for freedom. He who offers a little sacrifice from a lowly and religious spirit quickly realises the miserable littleness of it. Once on the path of sacrifice, we find out the measure of our selfishness, and must continually wish to give more and not be satisfied till there is a complete self-surrender.

And this knowledge of so little attempted and still less done must keep us humble and tolerant. It is our exclusiveness and the easy self-satisfaction that have certainly kept many a waverer away from us. Our motto must ever be conversion by gentle persuasion and a constant appeal to the head and the heart. We must therefore be ever courteous and patient with those who do not see eye to eye with us. We must resolutely refuse to consider our opponents as enemies of the country. —*Young India* : Sept. 29, 1921.

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THE scheme of Non-co-oparation or *Swedeshi* is not an exclusive doctrine. My modesty has prevented me from declaring from the house top that the message of Non-co-operation, Non-violence and *Swedeshi*, is a message to the world. It must fall flat, if it does not bear fruit in the soil where it has been delivered. At the present moment India has nothing to share with the world save her degradation, pauperism and plagues. Is it her ancient *Shastras* that we should send to the world ? Well they are printed in many editions, and an incredulous and idolatrous world refuses to look at them, because we, the heirs and custodians, do not live them. Before, therefore, I can think of sharing with the world, I must possess. Our Non-co-operation is neither with the English nor with the West. Our Non-co-operation is with the system the English have established, with the

material civilisation and its attendant greed and exploitation of the weak. Our Non-co-operation is a retirement within overselves. Our Non-co-operation is a refusal to co-operate with the English administrators on their own terms. We say to them, 'Come and co-operate with us on our terms, and it will be well for us, for you and the world.' We must refuse to be lifted off our feet. *A drowning man cannot save others. In order to be fit to save others, we must try to save ourselves.* Indian nationalism is not exclusive, nor aggressive, nor destructive. It is health-giving, religious and therefore humanitarian. India must learn to live before she can aspire to die for humanity. The mice which helplessly find themselves between the cat's teeth acquire no merit from their enforced sacrifice. —*Young India* : Oct. 13, 1921.



HITHERTO the people have been the football of officials or so-called representatives. Non-co-operation enables the people to become the players in the game. Representatives *must* represent or they perish.

—*Young India* : Oct. 27, 1921.



I HAVE said repeatedly that this movement is not intended to drive out the English; it is intended to end or mend the system they have forced upon us.

—*Young India* : Nov. 17, 1921.



NON-CO-OPERATION is not a passive state, it is an intensely active state, more active than physical resistance or violence. Passive resistance is a misnomer. Non-co-operation in the sense used by me must be non-violent and therefore neither punitive nor vindictive nor based on malice, ill-will or hatred. It follows therefore that it would be sin for me to serve General Dyer and co-operate with him to shoot innocent men. But it will be an exercise of forgiveness or love for me to nurse him back to life, if he was suffering from physical malady. I would co-operate a thousand times with

this Government to wean it from its career of crime, but I will not for a single moment co-operate with it to continue that career. And I would be guilty of wrong-doing if I retained a title from it or " a service under it or supported its law courts or schools." Better for me a begger's bowl than the richest possession from hands stained with the blood of the innocents of Jallianwala. Better by far a warrant of imprisonment than honeyed words from those who have wantonly wounded the religious sentiment of my seventy million brothers. —*Young India* : July 24, 1924.

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NO big or swift movement can be carried on without bold risks, and life will not be worth living, if it is not attended with large risks. Does not the history of the world show that there would have been no romance in life, if there had been no risks ? It is the clearest proof of a degenerate atmosphere that one finds respectable people, leaders of society, raising their hands in horror and indignation at the slightest approach of danger or upon an outbreak of any violent commotion. We do want to drive out the beast in man, but we do not want on that account to emasculate him. And in the process of finding his own status, the beast in him is bound, now and again, to put up his ugly appearance. As I have often stated in these pages, what strikes me down is not the sight of blood under every conceivable circumstance. It is blood split by the Non-co-operator or his supporters in breach of his declared pledge, which paralyses me as I know it ought to paralyse every honest Non-co-operator. —*Young India* : Dec. 15, 1921.

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OUR present Non-co-operation refers not so much to the paralysis of a wicked government as to our being proof against wickedness. It aims therefore not at destruction but at construction. It deals with causes rather than with symptoms. —*Young India* : Dec. 22, 1921.

IT is unlawful for a Non-co-operator even to wish ill to his enemies. —*Young India* : Dec. 22, 1921.

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NON-CO-OPERATION is a method of cultivating public opinion. —*Young India* : Dec. 29, 1921.

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OURS is a struggle in which we are pledged to make all sacrifice and exact none. We must voluntarily though temporarily, embrace poverty, if we will banish pauperism and pariahdom from the land. The sacrifice of the ease by a few of us is nothing compared to the reward which is in store for us, viz, the restoration of the honour and prosperity of this holy land.

—*Young India* : Jan. 12, 1922.

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ONE true and perfect Non-co-operator is any day better than a million No-co-operator so-called.

—*Young India* : Jan. 19, 1922.

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CO-OPERATORS do not see that the action of the Govt. is like that of a man, who refuses to give food to a hungry man and then threatens to shoot him whilst he is attempting to help himself.

—*Young India* : Jan. 26, 1922.

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NON-CO-OPERATION and Civil Disobedience are but different branches of the same tree called *Satyagraha* It is my *Kalpadara*—my *Jam-i-Jam*—the Universal Provider. *Satyagraha* is search for Truth; and God is Truth. *Ahimsa* or Non-violence is the light that reveals that Truth to me. *Swaraj* for me is part of that Truth.

—*Young India* : Dec. 26, 1924.

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BEHIND my non-co-operation there is always the keenest desire to co-operate on the sightest pretext even with the worst of opponents. To me, a very imperfect

mortal, ever in need of God's grace, no one is beyond redemption. —*Young India* : Jan. 4, 1925.

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I HAVE said that I am a non-co-operator. I call myself a civil-resister and both words have come to posses a bad odour in the English language like so many other English words but I non-co-operate in order that I may be able to co-operate. I cannot satisfy myself with false co-operation, anything inferior to 24 carats gold. My non-co-operation does not prevent me from being friendly even to Sir Michael O' Dwyer and General Dyer. It harms no one, it is non-co-operation with evil, with an evil system and not with the evil doer. My religion teaches me to love even an evil doer, and my non-co-operation is but part of that religion

—*Young India* : Aug. 20, 1925.

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NON-CO-OPERATION is not only my political but it is also my domestic and social religion. Voluntary and health giving co-operation is impossible without the possibility of non-co-operation at a certain stage and under certain conditions. —*Young India* : Oct. 8, 1925.

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REASONED and willing obedience to the laws of the state is the first lesson in Non-co-operation.

The second is that of tolerance. We must tolerate many laws of the State, even when they are inconvenient. A son may not approve of some orders of the father and yet he obeys them. It is only when they are unworthy of tolerance and immoral that he disobeys them. The father will at once understand such respectful disobedience. In the same way it is only when a people have proved their active loyalty by obeying the many laws of the State that they acquire the right of Civil Disobedience.

The third lesson is that of suffering. He who has

not the capacity of suffering cannot non-co-operate. He who has not learnt to sacrifice his property and even his family when necessary can never non-co-operate. It is possible that a prince enraged by non-co-operation will inflict all manner of punishments. There lies the test of love. patience, and strength. He who is not ready to undergo the fiery ordeal cannot non-co-operate.

—*Young India* : Jan. 8, 1925.

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THE movement of Non-violent Non-co-operation has nothing in common with the historical struggles for freedom in the West. It is not based on brute force or hatred. It does not aim at destroying the tyrant. It is a movement of self-purification. It therefore seeks to convert the tyrant. It may fail because India may not be ready for mass non-violence. But it would be wrong to judge the movement by false standards. My own opinion is that the movement has in no wise failed. Non-violence has found an abiding place in India's struggle for freedom. That the programme could not be finished in a year's time merely shows that the people could not cope with a mighty upheaval during such a short time. But it is a leaven which is silently but surely working its way among the masses. —*Young India* : Feb. 11, 1926.

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THERE is no doubt about it that whenever freedom comes, it will come through some application of Non-co-operation including Civil Disobedience.

—*Young India* : March 18, 1926.

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Q. IT has been suggested in Bombay that you went to the Government uninvited, in fact you forced yourself upon his attention. If so, was it not co-operation even without response ? What could you have to do with the Governor, I wonder ?

A. My answer that I am quite capable even of forcing myself upon the attention of my opponent when I

have strength. I did so in South Africa. I sought interviews after interviews with General Smuts when I knew that I was ready for battle. I pleaded with him, to avoid the untold hardships that the Indian settlers must suffer, if the great historic march had to be undertaken. It is true that he in his haughtiness turned a deaf ear, but I lost nothing. I gained added strength by my humility. So would I do in India when we are strong enough to put up a real fight for freedom. Remember that ours is a non-violent struggle. It pre-supposes humility. It is a truthful struggle and consciousness of truth should give us firmness. We are not out to destroy men. We own nc enemy. We have no ill-will against a single soul on earth. We mean to convert by our suffering. I do not despair of converting the hardest-hearted or the most selfish Englishman. Every opportunity of meeting him is therefore welcome to me.

Let me distinguish. Non-violent Non-co-operation means renunciation of the benefits of a system with which we non-co-operate. We therefore renounce the benefits of schools, courts, titles, legislatures and offices set up under the system. The most extensive and permanent part of our Non-co-operation consists in the renunciation of foreign cloth which is the foundation for the vicious system that is crushing us to dust. It is possible to think of other items of Non-co-operation. But owing to our weakness or want of ability we have restricted ourselves to these items only. If then I go to any official for the purpose of seeking the benefits above named I co-operate. Where as if I go to the meanest official for the purpose of converting him, say to *Khaddar*, or weaning him from his service or persuding him to with draw his children from Govt. schools, I fulfill my duty as a non-co-operator. I should fail if I did not go to him with that definite and direct purpose. —*Young India* : May. 27, 1926.

It is my humble opinion that within the last two generations our country has not gained as much as it has gained since the advent of Non-violent Non-co-operation. I entertain no doubt whatever as to the verdict of history upon Non-violent Non-co-operation. It is also my certain belief, that every student who left his school or college or every Government servant who left what passes as public services has gained immeasurably and lost nothing by having done so. That public services in spite of non-co-operation have not been abandoned, that Government schools have not been abandoned by our boys is no demonstration whatsoever of the failure of my doctrine, even as because men and women are not all votaries of truth, truth cannot be challenged as to its efficacy or soundness. —*Young India* Oct. 20 1927.

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IF co-operation is a duty, I hold that non-co-operation also under certain conditions is equally a duty.
—*Young India* : Oct. 27, 1927.

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THE many years that have passed have left me utterly unrepentant for having asked those boys to come out of those institutions, and I am firmly of opinion that those who responded to the call served their land, and I am sure the future historian of India will record their sacrifice with approval. —*Young India* : Nov. 10, 1927.

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THE mass awakening that took place in 1920 all of a sudden was perhaps the greatest demonstration of the efficacy of non-violence. The Government has lost prestige never to be regained. Titles, law-courts, educational institutions no longer inspire the awe they did in 1920.
—*Young India* : Nov. 10, 1927.

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NON-CO-OPERATION is not allopathic treatment, it is homeopathic. The patient does not taste the drops given to him. He is sometimes even incredulous, but if the homeo-

paths are to be trusted, the tasteless drops or the tiny pills of homeopathy are far more potent than ounce dozes or choking pills of allopathy. I assure the reader that the effect of purifying Non-co-operation is more certain than the effect of homeopathic medicine.

—*Young India* : Feb. 9, 1928.

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THE following is from a God-fearing political friend whom everybody knows :

"You must have shouldered the responsibility of making difficult decisions many a time in your life, but the responsibility which the Ramgarh Congress Resolution has entrusted you with is the gravest of all. The future of India, nay of the world, depends upon it.

"You are far above me in wisdom and experience. But I feel you are very hard upon yourself. The experiments that you sometimes carry on in your search of Truth, involving yourself and thousands of others, make me gasp.

"I have been closely following your experiments in *Ahimsa* and *Satyagraha* and read carefully every word that you write. You feel that these weapons are effective for establishing the right and putting down the wrong in the world. But I tell you these weapons of yours have been and are being abused in the world. The reason for it, I think, is this that once the people begin to feel the strength of these weapons the latent hatred in their hearts comes to the surface and, armed with these, becomes ten times, even a hundred times, more potent for mischief. That is bound to do great harm to the country, and it may take ages to undo it. Non-co-operation has become a curse in every-day life. Its ill effects are seen in family circles, in associations, in business, in factories and in Government offices.

"The most unfortunate part is this that those who are in the wrong are using this weapon against those who are in

the right. An unworthy son or an unworthy daughter, a father on the wrong path, a miserly businessman or mill-owner, a dishonest worker, all these resort to non-co-operation to defend their indefensible conduct. My experience is that those who are in the right are perplexed and paralysed by your weapon. Non-co-operation hits one from behind and in a manner more deadly than the deadliest weapon. Twice I have seen it used in connection with political movements in India, and it brings tears to my eyes whenever I see you about to resort to it. Having learnt its use from you, selfish people use it in your name in order to gain their selfish ends, and bring misery upon thousands of people. Therefore I beg of you not to employ this weapon in politics. It may get us some rights, but it spreads hatred among mankind, not love. We are too imperfect. You are a wise man, you are a man of God. Pray God that He may show you another way.

"I request you not to embarrass the British in any way while they are engaged in this life and death struggle. But I know, by itself the Congress will not have the patience to do so, though it may under your advice. The ill-will and the hatred that would be let loose if non-co-operation is started and the communal bitterness to which it may give rise, would have an adverse effect upon the war and expose India to greater danger.

"If Congressmen must embarrass the British, I feel they should go back to offices in the provinces and should face the British Government with a dilemma at every step in the Provincial and the Central Assemblies. This is the only right course and it tells upon the British public.

"Again we have to solve the Hindu-Muslim problem. For that we should call a conference of all the communal leaders and party leaders. If we make an effort beforehand, we might become united by the time the Government is willing to call the Constituent Assembly. No time should be lost. The demands of the Mussalmans will mount up as

time goes on. I am certain God will help us to attain unity if we try for it in right earnest and without delay. God has put the reins of the country in your hands; you alone can make or or mar her fate."

The writer is one of the most earnest among us. He has presented one side of the picture, but like all one-sided picture, this also is misleading.

Every powerful thing is liable to misuse. Opium and arsenic are most potent and useful drugs. And they lend themselves to great abuse. No one has for that reason suggested the stopping of their good use. If Non-co-operation has lent itself to abuse in some cases, in many cases its wise use has proved absolutely efficacious. A thing has to be judged by its net effect. The net effect of Non-violent Non-co-operation has been of the greatest benefit to India. It has brought about an awakening among the masses which would probably have taken generations otherwise. It has prevented bloodshed and anarchy and on the whole improved the relations between the Britishers and ourselves. There is a better mutual understanding because there is better mutual respect than ever before. And yet our Non-co-operation has been indifferently non-violent. I hold that Non-co-operation is of universal use. Well applied, its use in politics can wholly displace the use of barbarous weapons of mutual destruction. The thing to do, therefore, is not to restrict its use but to extend it care being taken that it is used in accordance with the known laws regulating its use. Risk of misuse has undoubtedly to be run. But with the increase in the knowledge of its right use, the risk can be minimised.

One safe thing about non-co-operation is that in the end its abuse recoils more upon the users than upon those against whom it is used. Its abuse is the greatest in domestic relations because those against whom it is used are not strong enough to resist the abuse. It becomes a case of misapplied affection. Doting parents or wives are the greatest victims.

These will learn wisdom when they realise that affection does not demand yielding to extortion in any form. On the contrary true affection will resist it.

The writer suggests the usual parliamentary programme with obstruction. Its futility, when it is not backed by readiness for Non-co-operation and Civil disobedience, has been fully demonstrated.

So far as the British are concerned I have already said that I will do nothing to embarrass them. I am straining every nerve to avoid a conflict. But they may make it inevitable. Even so, I am praying for a mode of application which will be effective and still not embarrassing in the sense of violent outbreaks throughout the country.

Here I must say that, whilst it is true that active co-operation on the part of Congressmen is not yet much in evidence, of passive co-operation on their part there is no lack. Violent, sporadic eruptions on the part of the people would have paralysed my effort to gather together forces of non-violence in an effective manner. As it is, the restraint which they have exercised fills me with hope for the future.

Hindu-Muslim Unity is a morsel by itself. But my friend is on the wrong track when he suggests that unity should be hastened for fear of Muslims raising their demands. Demands against whom? India is as much theirs as anybody else's The way to unity lies through just demands once for all, not through ever-increasing demands whether just or unjust. The demand for partition puts an end to all effort for unity for the time being. I hold that communal understanding is not a pre-requisite to the British doing justice, on their part. When they feel that they want to recognise India's right of self-determination, all the difficulties that they put forth as obstacles in their path will melt away like ice before the sun's rays. The right of self-determination means the right of determination by every

group and ultimately every individual. The demand for a Constituent Assembly presumes that the determinations of the groups and individuals will coincide. Should it happen otherwise and partition become the fashion, either we shall have partition or partitions rather than foreign rule, or we shall continue to wrangle among ourselves and submit to foreign rule, or else have a proper civil war. Anyway the present suspense cannot continue. It has to end one way or the other. I am an optimist. I have every hope that when we come to grips, Hindus, Muslims, and all others will throw in their weight in favour of India which all will claim as their own.

—*Harijan* : Aug. 18. 1940.

Non-violence

AHIMSA is not the crude thing it has been made to appear. Not to hurt any living thing is no doubt a part of *ahimsa*.

But it is its least expression. The principle of *Ahimsa* is hurt by every evil thought, by undue haste, by lying, by hatred, by wishing ill to anybody. It is also violated by one's holding on to what the world needs. But the world needs even what we eat day by day. In the place where we stand there are millions of micro-organisms to whom the place belongs, and who are hurt by our presence there. What should we do then ? Should we commit suicide ? Even that is no solution, if we believe, as we do, that so long as the spirit is attached to the flesh, on every destruction of the body it weaves for itself another. The body will cease to be only when we give up all attachment to it. This freedom from all attachment is the realisation of God as Truth. Such realisation cannot be attained in a hurry. The body does not belong to us. While it lasts, we must use it as a trust handed over our charge. Treating in this way the things of the flesh, we may one day expect to become free from the burden of the body. Realising the limitations

of the flesh, we must day by day strive towards the ideal with what strength we have in us.

It is perhaps clear from the foregoing, that without *Ahimsa* it is not possible to seek and find Truth. *Ahimsa* and Truth are so intertwined that it is practically impossible to disentangle and separate them. They are like the two sides of a coin, or rather of a smooth, unstamped metallic disc. Who can say, which is the obverse and which is the reverse? Nevertheless *Ahimsa* is the means; Truth is the end. Means to be means must always be within our reach, and so *Ahimsa* is our supreme duty. If we take care of the means, we are bound to reach the end sooner or later. When once we have grasped this point, final victory is beyond question. Whatever difficulties we encounter, whatever apparent reverses we sustain, we may not give up the quest for Truth which alone is being God Himself. —From *Yeravda Mandir.*

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LITERALLY speaking, *Ahimsa* means non-killing. But to me it has a world of meaning and takes me into realms much higher, infinitely higher, than the realm to which I would go, if I merely understood by *Ahimsa*, non-killing. *Ahimsa* really means that you may not offend anybody, you may not harbour an uncharitable thought even in connection with one who may consider himself to be your enemy. Pray notice the guarded nature of this thought; I do not say "whom you consider to be your enemy", but "who may consider himself to be your enemy." For one who follows the doctrine of *Ahimsa* there is no room for an enemy; he denies the existence of an enemy. But there are people who consider themselves to be his enemies, and he cannot help that circumstance. So, it is held that we may not harbour an evil thought even in connection with such persons. If we return blow for blow, we depart from the doctrine of *Ahimsa*. But I go further. If we resent a friend's action or the so-called enemy's action, we still fall short of this doctrine. But

when I say, we should not resent, I do not say that we should acquiesce: but by resenting I mean wishing that some harm should be done to the enemy, or that he should be put out of the way, not even by any action of ours, but by the action of somebody else, or, say, by Divine agency. If we harbour even this thought, we depart from this doctrine of *Ahimsa*. Those who join the *Ashram* have to literally accept that meaning. That does not mean that we practise that doctrine in its entirety. Far from it. It is an ideal which we have to reach, and it is an ideal to be reached even at this very moment, if we are capable of doing so. But it is not a proposition in geometry to be learnt by heart; it is not even like solving difficult problems in higher mathematics; it is infinitely more difficult than solving those problems. Many of you have burnt the midnight oil in solving those problems. If you want to follow out this doctrine, you will have to do much more than burn the midnight oil. You will have to pass many a sleepless night, and go through many a mental torture and agony before you can reach, before you can even be within measurable distance of this goal. It is the goal and nothing less than that, you and I have to reach, if we want to understand what a religious life means. I will not say much more on this doctrine than this: that a man who believes in the efficacy of this doctrine finds in the ultimate stage, when he is about to reach the goal, the whole world at his feet,—not that he wants the whole world at his feet, but it must be so. If you express your love—*Ahimsa*—in such a manner that it impresses itself indelibly upon your so-called enemy, he must return that love. Another thought which comes out of this is that, under this rule, there is no room for organised assasinations, and there is no room for murders even openly committed, and there is no room for any violence even for the sake of your country, and even for guarding the honour of precious ones that may be under your charge. After all, that would be a poor defence of the honour.

This doctrine of *Ahimsa* tells us that we may guard the honour of those who are under our charge by delivering *ourselves* into the hands of the man who would commit the sacrilege. And that requires far greater physical and mental courage than the delivering of blows. You may have some degree of physical power,—I do not say courage—and you may use that power. But after that is expended, what happens? The other man is filled with wrath and indignation, and you have made him more angry by matching your violence against his: and when he has done you to death, the rest of his violence is delivered against your charge. But if you do not retaliate, but stand your ground, between your charge and the opponent, simply receiving the blows without retaliating, what happens? I give you my promise that the whole of the violence will be expended on you, and your charge will be left unscathed. Under this plan of life there is no conception of patriotism which justifies such wars as you witness to-day in Europe.

(*From an address to the Y. M. C. A. Madras*) : Feb. 16, 1916

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IN this age of the rule of brute force, it is almost impossible for any one to believe that any one else could possibly reject the law of the final supremacy of brute force. And so I receive anonymous letters advising me that I must not interfere with the progress of Non-co-operation, even though popular violence may break out. Others come to me and, assuming that secretly I must be plotting violence, inquire when the happy moment for declaring open violence is to arrive. They assure me that the English will never yield to anything but violence secret or open. Yet others, I am informed, believe that I am the most rascally person living in India, because I never give out my real intention and that they have not a shadow of a doubt that I believe in violence just as much as most people do.

Such being the hold that the doctrine of the sword has on the majority of mankind, and as success of Non-co-operation depends principally on absence of violence during its pendency and as my views in this matter affect the conduct of a large number of people, I am anxious to state them as clearly as possible.

I do believe that, where there is only a choice between cowardice and violence, I would advise violence. Thus when my eldest son asked me what he should have done, had he been present when I was almost fatally assaulted in 1908, whether he should have run away and seen me killed or whether he should have used his physical force which he could and wanted to use, and defended me, I told him that it was his duty to defend me even by using violence. Hence it was that I took part in the Boer War, the so-called Zulu rebellion and the late War. Hence also do I advocate training in arms for those who believe in the method of violence. I would rather have India resort to arms in order to defend her honour than that she should in a cowardly manner become or remain a helpless witness to her own dishonour.

But I believe that non-violence is infinitely superior to violence, forgiveness is more manly than punishment. Forgiveness adorns a soldier. But abstinence is forgiveness only when there is the power to punish ; it is meaningless when it pretends to proceed from a helpless creature. A mouse hardly forgives a cat when it allows itself to be torn to pieces by her. I therefore appreciate the sentiment of those who cry out for the condign punishment of General Dyer and his ilk. They would tear him to pieces if they could. But I do not believe India to be helpless. I do not believe myself to be a helpless creature. Only I want to use India's and my strength for a better purpose.

Let me not be misunderstood. Strength does not come from physical capacity. It comes from an indomitable will. An average Zulu is any way more than a match

for an average Englishman in bodily capacity. But he flees from an English boy, because he fears the boy's revolver or those who will use it for him. He fears death and is nerveless in spite of his burly figure. We in India may in a moment realise that one hundred thousand Englishmen need not frighten three hundred million human beings. A definite forgiveness would therefore mean a definite recognition of our strength. With enlightened forgiveness must come a mighty wave of strength in us, which would make it impossible for a Dyer and a Frank Johnson to heap affront upon India's devoted head. It matters little to me that for the moment I do not drive my point home. We feel too down-trodden not to be angry and revengeful. But I must not refrain from saying that India can gain more by waiving the right of punishment. We have better work to do, a better mission to deliver to the world.

I am not a visionary. I claim to be a practical idealist. The religion of non-violence is not meant merely for the *Rishis* and saints. It is meant for the common people as well. Non-violence is the law of our species as violence is the law of the brute. The spirit lies dormant in the brute and he knows no law but that of physical might. The dignity of man requires obedience to a higher law—to the strength of the spirit.

I have therefore ventured to place before India the ancient law of self-sacrifice. For *Satyagraha* and its off-shoots, Non-co-operation and Civil Resistance, are nothing but new names for the law of suffering. The *Rishis*, who discovered the law of non-violence in the midst of violence, were greater geniuses than Newton. They were themselves greater warriors than Wellington. Having themselves known the use of arms, they realised their uselessness and taught a weary world that its salvation lay not through violence but through non-violence.

Non-violence in its dynamic condition means conscious

suffering. It does not mean meek submission to the will of the evil-doer, but it means the putting of one's whole soul against the will of the tyrant. Working under this law of our being, it is possible for a single individual to defy the whole might of an unjust empire to save his honour, his religion, his soul and lay the foundation for that empire's fall or its regeneration.

And so I am not pleading for India to practise non-violence, because she is weak. I want her to practise non-violence being conscious of her strength and power. No training in arms is required for realisation of her strength. We seem to need it, because we seem to think that we are but a lump of flesh. I want India to recognise that she has a soul that cannot perish and that can rise triumphant above every physical weakness and defy the physical combination of a whole world. What is the meaning of Rama, a mere human being, with his host of monkeys, pitying himself against the insolent strength of ten-headed Ravan surrounded in supposed safety by the raging waters on all sides of Lanka? Does it not mean the conquest of physical might by spiritual strength? However, being a practical man, I do not wait till India recognises the practicability of the spiritual life in the political world. India considers herself to be powerless and paralysed before the machine-guns, the tanks and the aeroplanes of the English. And she takes up Non-co-operation out of her weakness. It must still serve the same purpose, namely, bring her delivery from the crushing weight of British injustice, if a sufficient number of people practise it.

I isolate this Non-co-operation from Sinn Feinism, for, it is so conceived as to be incapable of being offered side by side with violence. But I invite even the school of violence to give this peaceful Non-co-operation a trial. It will not fail through its inherent weakness. It may fail because of poverty of response. Then will be the

time for real danger. The high-souled men, who are unable to suffer national humiliation any longer, will want to vent their wrath. They will take to violence. So far as I know, they must perish without delivering themselves or their country from the wrong. 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 am wedded to India because I owe my all to her. I believe absolutely that she has a mission for the world. She is not to copy Europe blindly. India's acceptance of the doctrine of the sword will be the hour of my trial. I hope I shall not be found wanting. My religion has no geographical limits. If I have a living faith in it, it will transcend my love for India herself. My life is dedicated to service of India through the religion of non-violence which I believe to be the root of Hinduism.

Meanwhile, I urge those who distrust me, not to disturb the even working of the struggle that has just commenced, by inciting to violence in the belief that I want violence. I detest secrecy as a sin. Let them give Non-violent Non-co-operation a trial and they will find that I had no mental reservation whatsoever.

—*Young India* : Aug. 11, 1920.



I WOULD rather have India resort to arms in order to defend her honour than that she should in a cowardly manner become or remain a helpless witness to her own dishonour. —*Young India* : Aug. 11, 1920.



THE spirit of non-violence necessarily leads to humility. Non-violence means reliance on God, the Rock

of Ages. If we would seek His aid, we must approach Him with a humble and a contrite heart.

—*Young India* : Jan. 12, 1921.

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I STILL believe that man, not having been given the power of creation, does not possess the right of destroying the meanest creature that lives. The prerogative of destruction belongs solely to the creator of all that lives. I accept the interpretation of *Ahimsa* namely that it is not merely a negative state of harmlessness but it is a positive state of love, of doing good even to the evil-doer. But it does not mean helping the evil-doer to continue the wrong or tolerating it by passive acquiescence. On the contrary, love, the active state of *Ahimsa* requires you to resist the wrong-doer by dissociating yourself from him even though it may offened him or injure him physically. Thus if my son lives a life of shame, I may not help him to do so by continuing to support him; on the contrary, my love for him requires me to withdraw all support from him although it may mean even his death. And the same love imposes on me the obligation of welcoming him to my bosom when he repents. But I may not by physical force compel my son to become good. That, in my opinion, is the moral of the story of the Prodigal Son. —*Young India* : Jan. 19, 1921.

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INDIA'S past training for ages I mean the training of the masses, has been against violence. Human nature in India has advanced so far that the doctrine of Non-violence is more natural for the people at large than that of violence.

—*Young India* : Jan. 26, 1922.

IT has been my belief and practice for over forty years deliberately to practise the doctrine of Non-resistance to evil, not to retaliate. There are more instances than one in my public life when, with the ability to retaliate, I have refrained from doing so and advised friends to do like wise. My life is dedicated to the spread of that doctrine. I read it in the teaching of all the greatest teachers of the world, Zoroaster, Mahavir, Daniel, Jesus, Mahomed, Nanak and a host others. Indeed, I am not sure that we do justice to Moses when we impute to him the doctrine of retaliation in the sense that he made it obligatory on his followers to exact an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. It may be my wish that is father to the thought. But I do think that in an age when people were unrestrained in their appetite for the enemy's blood, Moses restricted retaliation to equal measure and no more.

—*Young India* : Feb 9, 1922.

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THE only virtue I want to claim is Truth and Non-violence. I lay no claim to superhuman powers. I want none. I wear the same corruptible flesh that the weakest of my fellow beings wear, and am therefore as liable to err as as any. —*Young India* : Feb. 16, 1922.

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FOR me, I am positive that neither in the *Koran* nor in the *Mahabharata* there is any sanction for and approval of the triumph of violence. Though there is repulsion enough in Nature she *lives* by attraction. Mutul love enables Nature to persist. Man does not live by destruction. Self-love compels regard for others. Nations cohere, because there is mutual regard among

the individuals composing them. Some day we must extend the national law to the universe, even as we have extended the family law to form nations—a larger family. God has ordained that India should be such a nation. For so far as reason can perceive, India cannot become free by armed rebellion for generations. India can become free by refraining from national violence. India has now become tired of rule based upon violence. That to me is the message of the plains. The people of the plains do not know what it is to put up an orgainsed armed fight. And they must become free, for they want freedom. They have realised that power seized by violence will only result in their greater grinding.

—*Young India* : March 2, 1922.

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I AM sorry that I find a nervous fear among some Hindus and Mahomedans that I am undermining their faith and that I am even doing irreparable harm to India by my uncompromising preaching of non-violence. They seem almost to imply that violence is their creed. I touch a tender spot if I talk about extreme non-violence in their presence. They confound me with texts from the *Mahabharata* and the *Koran* eulogising or permitting violence. Of the *Mahabharata* I can write without restraint, but the most devout Mahomedan will not, I hope, deny me the privilege of understanding the message of the Prophet. I make bold to say that violence is the creed of no religion and that, whereas non-violence in most cases is obligatory in all, violence is merely permissible in some cases.

—*Young India* : March 2, 1924.

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MY interest in India's freedom will cease if she adopts violent means, for their fruit will be not freedom but slavery in disguise.

—*Young India* : April 3, 1924.

VIOLENT means will give violent *Swaraj*. That would be a menace to the world and to India herself.

—*Young India* : July 17, 1924

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IT would be a calamity if by my obstinacy I stand in the way of the country's progress by other means, so long as they are not positively mischievous and harmful. I should for instance rise, even if I was alone against methods of actual violence. But I have recognised that the nation has the right, if it so wills, to vidicate her freedom even by actual violence. Only then, India ceases to be the land of my love even though she be the land of my birth, even as I should take no pride in my mother if she went astray.

—*Young India* : Nov. 20, 1924.

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MY religion is based on Truth and Non-violence. Truth is my God. Non-violence is the means of realising Him. —*Young India* : Jan. 8, 1925.

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AHIMSA and Truth are as my two lungs. I cannot live without them. —*Young India* : Oct. 21, 1926.

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ANGER is the enemy of *Ahimsa*; and pride is a monster that swallows it up. —*Young India* : Oct. 21, 1926.

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HE who trifles with truth cuts at the root of *Ahimsa*. He who is angry is guilty of *Ahimsa*.

—*Young India* : Oct. 21. 1926.

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AHIMSA is the religion of a Kshatriya. Mahavir was Kshatriya, Buddha was a Kshatriya, Rama and Krishna were Kshatriyas and all of them were votaries of *Ahimsa*. We want to propagate *Ahimsa* in their name. But to-day *Ahimsa* has become the monopoly of timid Vaishyas and that is why it has been besmirched. *Ahimsa* is the extreme

limit of forgiveness. But forgiveness is the quality of the brave. *Ahimsa* is impossible without fearlessness.

—*Young India* : Oct. 21, 1926.

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AHIMSA is a weapon of matchless potency. It is the summum bonum of life. It is an attribute of the brave, in fact it is their all. It does not come within the reach of the coward. It is no wooden or life-less dogma, but a living and a life-giving force. It is the special attribute of the soul. That is why it has been described as the highest *dharma* (law).

Ill-will cannot stand in its presence. The sun of *Ahimsa* carries all the hosts of darkness such as hatred, anger and malice before himself. —*Young India* : Sept. 6, 1928.

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AHIMSA is not mere non-killing. A person who remains smugly satisfied with the non-killing of noxious life but has no love in his heart for all that lives will be counted as least in the Kingdom of Heaven. True love is boundless like the ocean and rising and swelling within one spreads itself out and crossing all boundries and frontiers envelops the whole world.

—*Young India* : Sept. 20, 1928.

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AHIMSA is not the way of the timid or the cowardly. It is the way of the brave ready to face death. He who perishes sword in hand is no doubt brave, but he who faces death without raising his little finger and without flinching is braver. For fear of being beaten is a coward and no votary of *Ahimsa*. He is innocent of *Ahimsa*. He, who for fear of being beaten, suffers the women of his household to be insulted, is not manly but just the reverse. He is fit neither to be a husband nor a father, nor a brother. Such people have no right to complain.

He, who cannot protect himself or his nearest and dearest or their honour by non-violently facing death, may

and ought to do so by violently facing death, may and ought to do so by violently dealing with the oppressor. He who can do neither of the two is a burden. He has no business to be the head of a family. He must either hide himself, or must rest content to live for ever in helplessness and be prepared to crawl like a worm at the bidding of a bully. —*Young India* : Oct. 11, 1928.

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TO me it is one of the most active forces in the world. It is like the sun that rises upon us unfailingly from day to day. Only if we would but understand it, it is infinitely greater than a million suns put together. It radiates life and light and peace and happiness.

—*Young India* : April 18, 1929.

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IT is infinitely greater than the gems and the diamonds people prize so much. It can become, if you will make wise use of it, your own saving and the saving of mankind.

—*Young India*: April 18, 1929.

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WHERE the Law of *Ahimsa* reigns supreme, there should be no jealousy, no unworthy ambition, no crime.

—*Young India* : April 18, 1929.

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NON-VIOLENCE and cowardice are contradictory terms. Non-violence is the greatest virtue, cowardice the greatest vice. Non-violence springs from love, cowardice from hate. Non-violence always suffers, cowardice would always inflict suffering. Perfect non-violence is the highest bravery. Non-violent conduct is never demoralising, cowardice always is. —*Young India* : Oct. 31, 1929.

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NON-VIOLENCE cannot be taught to a person who fears to die and has no power of resistance. A helpless, mouse is not non-violent because he is always eaten by pussy. He would gladly eat the murderess if he could, but

he ever tries to flee from her. We do not call him a coward, because he is made by nature to behave no better than he does. But a man who, when faced by danger, behaves like a mouse, is rightly called a coward. He harbours violence and hatred in his heart and would kill his enemy if he could without being hurt himself. He is a stranger to non-violence. All sermonizing on it will be lost on him. Bravery is foreign to his nature. Before he can understand non-violence he has to be taught to stand his ground and even suffer death in the attempt to defend himself against the aggressor who bids fair to overwhelm him. To do otherwise would be to confirm his cowardice and take him furthur away from non-violence. Whilst I may not actually help anyone to retaliate, I must not let a coward seek shelter behind non-violence so-called. Not knowing the stuff of which non-violence is made many have honestly believed that running away from danger every time was a virtue compared to offering resistance especially when it is fraught with danger to one's life. As a teacher of non-violence I must so far as it is possible for me, guard against such an unmanly belief.

Non-violence is the greatest force at the disposal of mankind. It is mightier than the mightiest weapon of destruction devised by the ingenuity of man. Destruction is not the law of the humans. Man lives freely only by his readiness to die, if need be, at the hands of his brother, never by killing him. Every murder or other injury, no matter for what cause, committed or inflicted on another is a crime against humanity.

But I see quite clearly that this truth about non-violence cannot be delivered to the helpless They must be taught to defend themselves.

The sceptic then argues: "You cannot teach non-violence to the weak and you dare not take it to the powerful. Why not admit that it is a futile creed?" The answer

is, non-violence can be effectively taught only by living it. When there is an unmistakable demonstration of its power and efficacy the weak will shed their weakness and the mighty will quickly realize the valuelessness of might and becoming meek acknowledge the sovereignty of non-violence. It is my humble effort to show that this is no unattainable goal even in mass action. —*Harijan* : July 20, 1935

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NON-VIOLENCE is not a quality to be evolved or expressed to order. It is an inward growth depending for sustenance upon intense individual effort.

—*Young India* : April 23, 1938.

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SHOULD India take to the sword, she would cease to be the India of my dreams and I should like to betake me to the Himalayas to seek rest for my anguished soul.

—*Harijan* : Oct. 15, 1938.

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NON-VIOLENCE is a quality not of the body but of the soul. Once its central meaning sinks into your being, all the rest by itself follows. — *Harijan* : Nov. 5, 1938.

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THIS non-violence is not a mere passive quality. It is the mightiest force God had endowed man with. Indeed, possession of non-violence distinguishes man from the brute creation. It is inherent in every human being, but in most it lies dormant. Perhaps the word non-violence is an inadequate rendering of *ahimsa* which itself was an incomplete connotation of all lies was used for conveying. A better rendering would be love or goodwill. Violence was to be met by goodwill. And goodwill came into play only when there was ill-will matched against it. To be good to the good is an exchange at par. A rupee against a rupee gives no index to its quality. It does when it is matched

against an anna. Similarly a man of goodwill is known only when he matches himself against one of ill-will.

—*Harijan* : Nov. 19, 1938.

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I AM here to tell you, with fifty years' experience of non-violence at my back, that it is an infinitely superior power as compared to brute force. An armed soldier relies on his weapons for his strength. Take away from him his weapons for his strength—his gun or his sword, and he generally becomes helpless. But a person who has truly realized the principle of non-violence has the God-given strength for his weapon and the world has not known anything that can match it. Man may, in a moment of unawareness forget God, but He keeps watch over him and protects him always. —*Harijan* : Nov. 19, 1938.

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TO consider the opponent, or, for the matter of that, anybody, even in thought, as your enemy would, in the parlance of non-violence or love, be called a sin. Far from seeking revenge, a votary of non-violence would pray to God that He might bring about a change of heart of his opponent and if that does not happen he would be prepared to bear injury that his opponent might inflict upon him, not in a spirit of cowardice or helplessness, but bravely with smile upon his face. I believe in the ancient saying that non-violence real and complete will melt the stoniest hearts. —*Harijan* : Nov. 19, 1938.

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THE hardest metal yields to sufficient heat. Even so must the hardest heart melt before sufficiency of the heat of non-violence. And there is no limit to the capacity of non-violence to generate heat. —*Harijan* : Jan. 7, 1939.

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IT was only when I had learnt to reduce myself to a zero that I was able to evolve the power of *Satayagraha* in South Africa. *Ahimsa* must express itself through acts of

selfless service of the masses. I cannot think of a better symbol of or medium for its expression than the spinning wheel.

Ahimsa is a science. The word 'failure' has no place in the vocabulary of science. Failure to obtain the expected result is often the precursor to further discoveries.

—*Harijan* : May 6, 1939.

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YOUR *ahimsa* to be effective must shine through your speech, your action, your general behaviour. A votary of *ahimsa* must cultivate a habit of unremitting toil, sleepless vigilance, ceaseless self-control. —*Harijan* : May 6, 1939.

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HIMSA did not merely mean indulgence in physical violence ; resort to trickery, falsehood, intrigue, chicanery and deceitfulness—in short, all unfair and foul means-come under the category of *himsa*, and acceptance of *ahimsa* whether as a policy or a creed necessarily implied renunciation of all these things.

A votary of *ahimsa* has therefore to be in-corruptible, fair and square in his dealings, truthful, straightforward and utterly selfless. He must have also true humility.

—*Harijan* : May 20, 1939.

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JUST as one must learn the art of killing in the training for violence, so one must learn the art of dying in the training for non-violence. Violence does not mean emancipation from fear, but discovering the means of combating the cause of fear. Non-violence, on the other hand, has no cause of fear. The votary of non-violence has to cultivate the capacity for sacrifice of the highest type in order to be free from fear. He recks not if he should loose his land, his wealth, his life. He who has not overcome all fear cannot practise *ahimsa* to perfection. The votary of *ahimsa* has only one fear, that is of God. He who seeks refuge in God ought to have a glimpse of

the *Atman* that transcends the body, and the moment one has glimpse of the Imperishable *Atman* one sheds the love of the perishable body. Training in non-violence is thus diametrically opposed to training in violence. Violence is needed for the protection of things external, non-violence is needed for the protection of the *Atman*, for the protection of one's honour.

The badge of the violent is his weapon-spear or sword, or rifle. God is the shield of the non-violent.

—*Harijan* : Sept. 1, 1940.

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AHIMSA in theory no one knows. It is as indefinable as God. But in its working we get glimpses of it as we have glimpses of the Almighty in his working amongst and through us. —*Harijan* : March 2, 1940.

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IT is the law of love that rules mankind. Had violence, *i.e.*, hate, ruled us, we should have become extinct long ago. And yet the tragedy of it is that the so-called civilized men and nations conduct themselves as if the basis of society was violence. —*Harijan* : April 13, 1940.

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I HAVE been practising with scientific precision non-violence and its possibilities for an unbroken period of over fifty years. I have applied it in every walk of life, domestic, institutional, economic and political. I know of no single case in which it has failed. Where it has seemed sometimes to have failed, I have ascribed it to my imperfections. I claim no perfection for myself but I claim to be a passionate seeker after Truth, which is but another name for God. In the course of that search the discovery of non-violence came to me. Its spread is my life mission. I have no interest in living except for the prosecution of that mission. —*Harijan* : July 6, 1940.

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NON-VIOLENT strength comes from construction, not destruction. —*Harijan* : Jan. 25, 1942.

WE dare not exchange non-violence even for *Swaraj*. For *Swaraj* thus got will be no true *Swaraj*.

—*Harijan* : Jan. 25, 1942.

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THIS however I can say from the house top that I am as confirmed a believer in non-violence as I have ever been. The Congress Resolution of the 8th August is definitely against Fascism in every shape or form. It extends co-operation in war efforts under circumstances which alone can make effective and nation wide co-operation possible.

(*From a letter to Lord Linlithgow*) : Jan. 29, 1943.

O

OATH

SHRI SHIVAPRASAD GUPTA, the great philanthropist of Benares, writes :

> "After hearing the *Harijan* of May 1st read to me, I have been pondering over the note 'Gandhi Seva Sangh and Legislatures.' I re-read it today, I also read the Weekly Letter, but I could not give rest to the surging thought rising in my mind.
>
> The last paragraph of the note reads : 'It is not a religious oath and so far as I understand the Constitution, it is wholly consistent with the demand for immediate and concrete independence.' The following are the questions that arise in my mind :
>
> 1. Are oaths of several and different kinds ?
> 2. Can an oath taken in the name of God, or in the alternative form where one has to affirm solemnly, be classed in two categories, 'religious oath and non-religious oath?'
> 3. What is the governing idea behind a non-religious oath ?
> 4. How can an oath of allegiance to the person of a king be consistent with 'the demand for immed-

iate and concrete independence?' This demand, at least to me, means depriving the same sovereign of his sovereignty.

I would very much like your answer to these pertinent questions.''

My answer to the first and the second questions is 'Yes'. The answer to the other two questions may be gathered from what follows.

An oath may be taken in the name of God and yet may not be styled religious. An oath that a witness takes in a court of law is a legal not a religious oath, breach of which would carry legal consequences. An oath taken by members of Parliament may be called a constitutional not a religious oath, breach of which may involve mundane consequences. Breach of a religious oath carries no legal consequences, but in the opinion of the taker does carry divine punishment. This does not mean that any of the three varieties of oaths is less binding than the others on a conscientious man. A conscientious witness will tell the truth, not for fear of the legal consequence, but he will do so in every case. The legislator's oath has an interpretation in terms of the Constitution which prescribes the oath. The interpretation may be given in the Constitution itself or may grow up by usage. So far as I understand the British Constitution, the oath of allegiance simply means that the legislator will in pushing forward his policy or point conform to the Constitution. I hold that it is open to the legislator consistently with his oath under the British Constitution to adopt measures in the legislature for complete independence. That to my mind is the saving grace of the British Constitution. I fancy that the members of the Union Parliament of South Africa take substantially the same oath as the members in India, but it is open to that Parliament today to declare complete independence without any violation of the oath of allegiance. It is because I have a profound conviction that

the British Constitution in theory permits of the fulfilment of the highest ambition of an individual or the nation of which he is a member that I advised the Working Committee to accept my formula for office acceptance. And it is in the same conviction that I am struggling to get the British Government to respond to it. I am painfully conscious that they would prolong the agony to the breaking point. But I know that if we have faith and grit we shall win at every point and reach our goal without shedding a drop of blood. The British people apply the same laws to the game of politics that they apply to the game of football which I believe is their invention. They give no quarter to the opponent and ask for none. The fundamental difference in our case is that we have abjured the use of arms. This has confounded them. They do not believe our prostestations. They do not mind our agitation for complete independence so long as we keep it within the constitutional limit. What else can the legislators do or are they to do inside their assemblies? They may not take their pistols in their pockets. That would be a flagrant breach of the oath and also the law. Shri Shivaprasad Gupta need not worry himself over the propriety of the oath by Congressmen. If the agitation for complete independence was inconsistent with the oath, surely the British Government themselves would have raised that preliminary objection even to the candidature of Congressmen. —*Harijan*: May 22, 1937.

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I SEE the clearest possible distinction between the oath or affirmation that a person takes before a court of law, a legislature, and before his God perhaps daily at the time of rising and retiring. They have different functions, different incidences. —*Harijan*: June 26, 1937.

Opponents

I WANT you to feel like loving your opponents and

the way to do it is to give them the same credit for honesty of purpose which you would claim for yourself.

And immediately we begin to think of things as our opponents think of them we shall be able to do them full justice. I know that this requires a detached state of mind, and it is a state very difficult to reach. Nevertheless for a *Satyagrahi* it is absolutely essential. Three fourths of the miseries and misunderstandings in the world will disappear, if we step into the shoes of our adversaries and understand their standpoint. We will then agree with our adversaries quickly or think of them charitably.

—*Young India* : March 19, 1925.

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AN OPPONENT is entitled to the same regard for his principles as we would expect others to have for ours. Non-violence demands that we should seek every opportunity to win over opponents. —*Harijan* : May 4, 1940.

Obstinacy

I AM not conscious of being obstinate. Those, who know me, have always credited me with an ample faculty for compromise though they have found me unyielding on matters of principle —*Harijan* : May 4, 1935.

Optimism

I am an irrepressible optimist, but I always base my optimism on solid facts. —*Young India* : Oct. 23, 1924.

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I am an irrepressible optimit because I believe in myself. That sounds very arrogant : does it not ? But I say it from the depth of my humility. I believe in the supreme power of God. I believe in Truth and future of humanity. I trust in God who knows how to confound the wisdom of men. He is a consumate *Jadugar* and I have placed myself in His Hands. He is a hard task-master. He would

accept nothing short of the best you are capable of. I am an optimist because I expect many things from myself. I have not got them I know, as I am not yet a perfect being. If I was one, I should not even need to reason with you. When I am a perfect being I have simply to say the word and the nation will listen. I want to attain that perfection by service. —*Young India* : Aug. 13, 1925.

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I am an irrepressible optimist. No scientist starts his experiments with a faint heart. I belong to the tribe of Columbus and Stevenson, who hoped against hope in the face of heaviest odds. The days of miracles are not gone. They will abide so long as God abides.

—*Harijan* : June 15, 1940.

Organisation

MY experience has taught me that no movement ever stops or languishes for want of funds. This does not mean that any temporal movement can go on without money, but it does mean that wherever it has good men and true at its helm, it is bound to attract to itself the requisite funds. On the other hand, I have also observed that a movement takes its downward course from the time that it is afflicted with a plethora of funds. When therefore a public institution is managed from the interest of investments, I dare not call it a sin but I do say that it is a highly improper procedure. The public should be the bank for all public institutions, which should not last a day longer than the public wish. An institution run with the interest of accumulated capital ceases to be amenable to public opinion and becomes autocratic and self-righteous.

—*Sataygraha in South Africa* : Page 252.

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AN organisation has every right to prescribe penalties for a breach by its members of self-imposed conditions.

—*Young India* : July 10, 1924.

I KNOW no organisation that has died for want of funds. Organisations die always for want of men *i.e.* honesty, efficiency and self-sacrifice.

—*Young India* : June 3, 1926.

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NO organisation can be run with success if its members, especially its officers, refuse to carry out its policy and hold on to it in spite of opposition to it. For winning *Swaraj* one requires iron discipline.

—*Young India* : Aug. 28, 1926.

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LET us not forget that organisations are meant for the service of the people, and not the people for the service of the organisations. —*Young India* : Aug. 18, 1927.

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DISTORTED notions of superiority and inferiority have given rise to indiscipline in almost all the national organisations. Many people think that to abolish distinctions of rank means passport to anarchy and licence. Whereas the meaning of abolition of distinctions should be perfect discipline,—perfect because of voluntary obedience to the laws of the organisation to which we may belong, *i.e.* the laws of our being. For man is himself a wonderful organisation and what applies to him applies to the social or political organisations of which he may be a member. And even as, though the different members of the body are not inferior to any, they are voluntarily subject to the control of the mind, whilst the body is in a healthy state, so have the members of an organisation, whilst none is superior or inferior to any other, to be voluntarily subject to the mind of the organisation which is the head. An organisation which has no directing mind and which has no members co-operating with the mind, suffers from paralysis and is in a dying condition. —*Young India* : May 3, 1928.

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AN organisation weakens if its members continuously

seek indulgence. I know that procrastination among members is the bane of most institutions.

—*Young India* : Aug. 8, 1929.

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ORGANISATIONS, like men, if they are to command respect and grow, must have a sense of honour and must fulfil their promise. —*Young India* : Jan 23, 1930.

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NO movement or organization having vitality dies from external attack. It dies of internal decay.

—*Harijan* : April 11, 1936.

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NO movement or activity that has the sure foundation of purity of character of its workers, is ever in danger to come to an end for want of funds. —*Harijan* : Nov. 28, 1936.

P

Pakistan

IN my opinion, India is today one nation, even a Italy or France is ; and this I maintain in spite of a vivid and painful knowledge of the fact, that Hindus and Musalmans are murdering one another, that Brahmins and Non-brahmins are preparing for a similar battle, and that both Brahmins and Non-brahmins exclude from their purview the classes which both have left no stone unturned to suppress. But I have known similar quarrels in families and in other nations. It has often seemed to me, that a family connection is necessary to establish a good ground for a quarrel. —*Young India* : Aug. 11, 1927.

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BUT though we may quarrel and murder one another though we have numerous languages and still more numerous dialects, India is geographically one, and we are and have been only one people. Those speaking the same language have been known before now to belong to different nationalities, and those that have fought among

themselves like dogs have been known to belong to one nation. The fact is that oneness of speech and absence of internal feuds are no indispensable test of nationality.

—*Young India* : July 30, July 1931.

A MUSLIM friend writes a long letter which pruned down reads as follows :

" The chief difficulty that stands in your way of right thinking is that your heart has so hardened by looking at and interpreting things in the light of your self-assumed principles, that you cannot bring to bear an open mind on anything, howsoever valuable it may be.

" If God has not appointed you as His Messenger, what you say or teach cannot be claimed to be a word of God. No one would contest the truthfulness of truth and non-violence as teachings of the prophets and principles of very high spiritual value, but their true understanding and application require a soul that is in direct communion with God. Any person who has only polished his soul by suppressing or acting against the desires and cravings of the flesh and the self is not a prophet.

" The fact that you stand as a teacher of the world and claim to have diagnosed the disease from which the world is suffering, and proclaim that the truth of your choice and practice and the non-violence of your convictions and applications are the only cures for the afflicted world, betrays your utter disregard and misconception of the truth. You admit you make mistakes. Your non-violence is actually a concealed violence as it is not based on actual spiritual life and is not the earnest of true inspiration from God.

" As a true believer, and in pursuance of that teaching of Islam which enjoins on every Muslim to convey the truth to every human being, I would request you to clear your mind of all complexes, to place yourself in the position of an

ordinary human being who wants to learn and not to teach and to become a real seeker after truth.

" If you wish to find out the truth, I would request you to study the *Quran* and the life of the Prophet Mohamed (Peace of God be upon him) written by Shebli Nomani and M. Sulaiman Nadwi with an open mind.

" As for unity among the different communities inhabiting India, it can never come in terms of a single nation. Broad-minded toleration of each other's religion and practises and an agreement based on the recognition of the Muslims as a nation with their own complete code of life and culture to guide them and an equality of status in political life, shall bring harmony and peace to India."

I have omitted no argument used by the writer.

I have not hardened my heart. I have never claimed to be a messenger of God except in the sense in which all human beings are. I am a mortal as liable to err as any other. Nor have I claimed to be a teacher but I cannot prevent admirers from calling me a teacher or a *Mahatma*, as I cannot prevent traducers from calling me all sorts of names and ascribing to me vices to which I am a stranger. I lay both praise and blame at the feet of the Almighty and go my way.

For the information of my correspondent, who is a schoolmaster in a high school, I may say that I have reverently studied the works he mentions and also many other works on Islam. I have more than once read the *Quran*. My religion enables me, obliges me, to imbibe all that is good in all the great religions on the earth. This does not mean that I must accept the interpretation that my correspondent may put upon the message of the Prophet of Islam or any other Prophet. I must use the limited intelligence that God has given me to interpret the teachings bequeathed to mankind by the Prophets of the world. I

am glad to find that my correspondent agrees that truth and non-violence are taught by the holy *Quran*. Surely it is for him, as for every one of us to apply these principles to daily life according to the light given to us by God.

The last paragraph in the letter lays down a dangerous doctrine. Why is India not one nation.? Was it not one during, say, the Moghul period ? Is India composed of two nations ? If it is, why only two ? Are not Christians a third Parsis a fourth, and so on ? Are the Muslims of China a nation separate from the other Chinese ? Are the Muslims of England a different nation from the other English ? How are the Muslims of the Punjab different from the Hindus and the Sikhs ? Are they no tall Punjabis, drinking the same water, breathing the same air and driving sustenance from the same soil ? What is there to prevent from following their respective religious practises ? Are Muslims all the world over a separate nation ? Or are the Muslims of India only to be a separate nation distinct from the others ? Is India to be vivisected into two parts, one Muslim and the other non-Muslims? And what is to happen to the handful of Muslims living in the numerous villages where the population is predominantly Hindu, and conversely to the Hindus where, as in the Frontier Province or Sind, they are a handful ? The way suggested by the correspondent is the way of strife. Live and let live. Mutual forbearance and toleration is the law of life. That is the lesson I have learnt from the *Quran*, the *Bible*, the *Zend Avesta* and the *Gita*.

—*Harijan* : Oct. 28, 1939.



AS a man of non-violence I cannot forcibly resist the proposed partition if the Muslims of India really insist upon it. But I can never be a willing party to the vivisection. I would employ every non-violent means to prevent it. For it means the undoing of centuries of work done by numberless Hindus and Muslims to live together as one nation. Partition means a patent untruth. My whole soul rebels against the idea that Hinduism and Islam represent two antagonistic cultures and doctrines. To assent to such a doctrine is for me denial of God. For I believe with my whole soul that the God of the *Quran* is also the God of the *Gita*, and that we are all, no matter by what name designated, children of the same God. I must rebel against the idea that millions of Indians who were Hindus the other day changed their nationality on adopting Islam as their religion.

But that is my belief. I cannot thrust it down the throats of the Muslims who think that they are a different nation. I refuse, however, to believe that the eight crores of Muslims will say that they have nothing in common with their Hindu and other brethren. Their mind can only be known by a referendum duly made to them on that clear issue. The contemplated Constituent Assembly can easily decide the question. Naturally on an issue such as this there can be no arbitration. It is purely and simply a matter of self-determination. I know of no other conclusive method of ascertaining the mind of the eight crores of Muslims.

—*Harijan* : April 13, 1940.

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THE partition proposal has altered the face of the Hindu-Muslim problem. I have called it an untruth. There can be no compromise with it. At the same time I have said, that, if the eight crores of Muslims desire it, no power on the earth can prevent it, notwithstanding opposition violent or non-violent. It cannot come by honourable agreement.

That is the political aspect of it. But what about the religious and moral which are greater than the political? For at the bottom of the cry for partition is that belief that Islam is an exclusive brotherhood, and anti-Hindu. Whether it is against other religions it is not stated. The newspaper cuttings in which partition is preached describe Hindus as practically untouchables. Nothing good can come out of Hindu or Hinduism. To live under Hindu rule is a sin. Even joint Hindu-Muslim rule is not to be thought of. The cuttings show that Hindus and Muslims are already at war with one another and that they must be prepared for the final struggle.

Time was when Hindus thought that Muslims were the natural enemies of Hindus. But as is the case with Hinduism, ultimately it comes to terms with the enemy and makes friends with it. The process had not been completed. As if nemesis had overtaken Hinduism, the Muslim League started the same game and taught that there could be no blending of the two cultures. In this connection I have just read a booklet by Shri Atulanand Chakrabarti which shows that ever since the contact of Islam with Hinduism there has been an attempt on the part of the best mind of both to see the good points of each other, and to emphasise inherent similarities rather than seeming dissimilarities. The author has shown Islamic history in India in a favourable light. If he has stated the truth and nothing but the truth, it is a revealing booklet which all Hindus and Muslims may read with profit. He has secured a very favourable and reasoned preface from Sir Shaafat Ahmed Khan and several other Muslim testimonials. If the evidence collected there reflects the true evolution of Islam in India, then the partition propaganda is anti-Islamic.

Religion binds man to God and man to man. Does Islam bind only Muslim to Muslim and antagonise the Hindu? Was the message of the Prophet peace only for

and between Muslims and war against non-Muslims and Hindus? Are eight crores of Muslims to be fed with this which I can only describe as poison? Those who are instilling the poison into the Muslim mind are rendering the greatest disservice to Islam. I know that it is no Islam. I have lived among Muslims not for one day but closely and almost uninterruptedly for twenty years. Not one Muslim taught me that Islam was an anti-Hindu religion.

—*Harijan*: May 4, 1940.

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AN English friend writes thus:

"It is still reasonable at present to proceed on the assumption that the Muslims would accept something a good deal less than '*Pakistan*'. But the trouble is that the longer the time that elapses without any compromise being reached, the stronger and more insistent will be the cry for '*Pakistan*', for that in the end civil war or partition will be the only alternatives. I think the view held by some that there is nothing to be done but to wait upon events is fatal. It is up to the British now to use all their powers of persuasion and statesmanship to compel the parties to settle.

"The crux of the matter is who is to control power at the Centre-Hindus or Muslims? Over this the Congress must be prepared to make great concessions. The principles of parliamentary democracy and majority rule must be jettisoned. They are not applicable when two distinct civilisations have got to live down together. Majority rule from the Muslim point of view will mean, or at any rate, contain the menace of the dominance of one civilisation over the other. If the Congress does not recognize this quickly, I am afraid partition will become, if not the only alternative, the best one which will give you an idea of how bad the other alternatives will be!

"If the Congress can be brought to see the need for great concessions on this point, I am sure compromise

solutions can be found. I hold this necessity to be vital."

Of course the British Government can do much. They have done much by force. They can make the parties come to a solution by force. But they need not go so far. What they have done hitherto is to prevent a proper solution. In proof of my statement I commend the esteemed correspondent to the columns of the *Harijan*. The only thing the British Government have to do is to change their attitude. Will they ? They can retain their hold on India only by a policy of divide and rule. A living unity between Muslims and Hindus is fraught with danger to their rule. It would mean an end of it. Therefore it seems to me that a true solution will come with the end of the rule, potentially if not in fact.

What can be done under the threat of *Pakistan* ? If it is not a threat but a desirable goal, why should it be be prevented ? If it is undesirable and the means only for Muslims to get more under its shadow, any solution would an unjust solution. It would be worse than no solution. Therefore I am entirely for waiting till the menace is gone. India's independence is a living thing. No make-believe will suit. The whole world is in the throes of a new birth. Anything done for a temporary gain would be tantamount to an abortion.

I cannot think in terms of narrow Hinduism or narrow Islam. I am wholly uninterested in a patchwork solution. India is a big country, a big nation composed of different cultures, which are tending to blend one another, each complimenting the rest. If I must wait for the completion of the process, I must wait. It may not be completed in my life. I shall love to die in the faith that it must come in the fullness of time. I should be happy to think that I had done nothing to hamper the process. Subject to this condition I would do anything to bring compromise, but

they are compromises that have brought me nearer the goal. *Pakistan* cannot be worse than foreign domination. I have lived under the latter though not willingly. If God so desires it, I may have to become a helpless witness to the undoing of my dream. But I do not believe that the Muslims really want to dismember India.

—*Harijan* : May 4, 1940.

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Q. ARE you right in conceding the right of self-determination to Muslims in a matter so vitally affecting others also, *viz* Hindus, Sikhs, etc. Supposing the majority of the Muslims decide in favour of partition in terms of the Muslim League resolution, what happens to the self-determination of Hindus, Sikhs, etc., who will be minorities in the Muslim States? If you will go on like this, where will be the end of it?

A. Of course Hindus and Sikhs will have the same right. I have simply said that there is no other non-violent method of dealing with the problem. If every component part of the nation claims the right of self-determination for itself, there is no one nation and there is no independence. I have already said that *Pakistan* is such an untruth that it cannot stand. As soon as the authors begin to work out, they will find that it is not practicable. In any case mine is a personal opinion. What the vast Hindu masses and the others will say or do I do not know. My mission is to work for the unity of all, for the sake of the equal good.

—*Harijan* : May 18, 1940.

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Q. YOU have said in *Harijan* that "if the eight crores of Muslims desire partition, no power on earth can prevent it." Does it not strike you that 25 crores of non-Muslims too might have a say in the matter? Does not your statement imply that you put a premium on the opinion of the Muslims while underrating that of the Hindus?

A. I have only given my opinion. If the majority

of Hindus or Christians or Sikhs or even Parsis, small though their number is, stubbornly resist the express wish of the duly elected representatives of eight crores of Muslims, they will do so at the peril of a civil war. This is not a question of majority or minority If we are to solve our problems non-violently, there is no other way. I say this not because the eight crores happen to be Muslims. I would say the same if the eight crores were any other community. —*Harijan* : May 25,1940.

Panic

PANIC is the most demoralising state anyone can be in. There never is any cause for panic. One must keep heart whatever happens. War is an unmitigated evil. But it certainly does one good thing, it drives away fear and brings bravery to the surface. Several million lives must have been already lost between the Allies and the Germans. They have been wasting blood like water. Old men, women both old and young, and children in Britain and France are living in the midst of imminent death. But there is no panic there. If they were seized by panic, that would be an enemy more dreadful than German bullets, bombs and poison gas. Let us learn from these suffering nations of the West and banish panic from our midst. And in India there is no cause whatsoever for panic. Britain will die hard and heroically even if she has to. We may hear of reverses, but we will not hear of demoralisation. Whatever happens will happen in an orderly manner.

—*Harijan* : June 8, 1940.

Passions

HUMAN passions are fleeter even than the wind and to subdue them completely requires no end of patience.

—*Young India* : Oct. 15, 1927.

Parties

YOU suggest the desirability of unity. I think unity of goal we have. But parties we shall have—we may not find a common denominator for improvements. For some will want to go further than others. I see no harm in a wholesome variety. What I would rid ourselves of, is distrust of one another and imputation of motives. Our besetting sin is not our differences, but our littleness. We wrangle over words, we fight often for shadow and lose the substance.....It is not our differences that really matter. It is the meanness behind that is ugly.

—*Young India* : Feb. 1 1928.

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THERE is room enough in our country for as many parties as there are honest men.

—*Young India* : Dec. 8, 1921.

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I HAVE repeatedly observed that no school of thought can claim a monopoly of right judgment. We are all liable to err and are often obliged to revise our judgments. In a vast country like this, there must be room for all schools of honest thought. And the least therefore that we owe to ourselves as to others is to try to understand the opponent's view-point and, if we cannot accept it, respect it as fully as we would expect him to respect ours. It is one of the indispensable tests of a healthy public life and therefore fitness for *Swaraj*. If we have no charity, and no tolerance, we shall never settle our differences amicably and must therefore always submit to the arbitrament of a third party *i.e.*, to foreign domination.

—*Young India* : April 17, 1924.

Patience

TO lose patience is to lose the battle.

—*Young India* : Dec. 12, 1920.

IF patience is worth anything, it must endure to the end of time. And a living faith will last in the midst of the blackest storm. —*Young India*: Jan. 7, 1926.

Patriotism

FOR me patriotism is the same as humanity. I am patriotic because I am human and humane. It is not exclusive. I will not hurt England or Germany to serve India. Imperialism has no place in my scheme of life. The law of a patriot is not different from that of the patriarch. And a patriot is so much the less a patriot if he is a lukewarm humanitarian. There is no conflict between private and political law. My patriotism is not exclusive: it is calculated not only not to hurt any other nation but to benefit all in the true sense of the word. India's freedom as conceived by me can never be a menace to the world. —*Young India* : April 3, 1924.

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THE first thing is that my mission is not merely brotherhood of Indian humanity. My mission is not merely freedom of India, though today, it undoubtedly engrosses practically the whole of my life and the whole of my time. But through realisation of freedom of India I hope to realise and carry on the mission of brother-hood of man. My patriotism is not an exclusive thing. It is all-embracing and I should reject that patriotism which sought to mount upon the distress or the exploitation of other nationalities. The conception of my patriotism is nothing if it is not always in every case without exception consistent with the broadest good of humanity at large. Not only that but my religion and my patriotism derived from my religion embrace all life. I want to realise brother-hood or identity not merely with the beings called human, but I want to realise identity with all life, even with such beings as crawl on earth. I want, if I don't give you a shock, to realise identity with even the crawling things on earth, because we claim

common descent from the same God, and that being so, all life in whatever form it appears must be essentially one.

—*Young India* : April 4, 1929.

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YOU cannot serve both self and country. Service of self is strictly limited by that of the country, and hence excludes a living beyond the means of this absolutely poor country. To serve our villages is to establish *Swaraj*. Everything else is but an idle dream.

—*Young India* : Dec. 26, 1929.

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THERE never can be any conflict between the real interest of one's country and that of one's religion. Where there appears to be any, there is something wrong with one's religion ; *i e.* one's morals. True religion means good thought and good conduct. True patriotism also means good thought and good conduct. To set up a comparison between two synonymous things is wrong.

—*Young India* : Jan 9, 1930.

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I AM a humble servant of India, and in trying to serve India, I serve humanity at large. I discovered, in my early days, that the service of India is not inconsistent with the service of humanity. As I grew older in years, and I hope also in wisdom, I saw that the discovery was well made, and after nearly 50 years of public life, I am able to say today that my faith in the doctrine, that the service of one's nation is not inconsistent with the service of the world, has grown. It is a good doctrine. Its acceptance alone will ease the situation in the world, and stop the mutual jealousies between nations inhabiting this globe of ours.

—*Young India* : Nov. 7, 1933.

Peace

I AM a man of peace. I believe in peace. But I do not want peace at any price. I do not want the peace that you find in the grave : but I do want that peace which you

find embedded in the human breast, which is exposed to the arrows of a whole world, but which is protected from all harm by the Power of the Almighty God.

—*Young India* : Jan. 19, 1922.

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THE way of peace is the way of truth. Truthfulness is even more important than peacefulness.

—*Young India* : May 20, 1925.

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EACH one has to find his peace from within. And peace to be real must be unaffected by outside circumstances.

—*Young India* : Nov. 19, 1929.

Penance

PENANCES with me are no mechanical acts. They are done in obedience to the "inner voice."

—*Young India* : April 2, 1931.

Perfection

NO human being is so bad as to be beyond redemption no human being is so perfect as to warrant his destroying him whom he wrongly considers to be wholly evil.

—*Young India* : March 26, 1931.

Perseverance

PERSEVERANCE opens up treasures which bring perenial joy.

—*Harijan* : April 5, 1942.

Petition Writing

I DO wish as a practised draughtsman to warn writers of petition, whether they be pleaders or otherwise, to think of the cause they may be expousing for the time being. I assure them that a bare statement of facts unembellished with adjectives is far more eloquent and effective than a narrative glowing with exuberent language. Petition writers must understand that they address busy men, not necessarily

sympathetic, sometimes prejudiced, and almost invariably prone to sustain the decisions of their subordinates. Petitions have to be read and analysed by public workers and journalists who have none too much time at their disposal. I make a present of my valuable experience to young patriots whe wish to try the art of advocating public cause by writing petitions or otherwise. I had the privilege of serving under the late Mr. Gokhale and for a time under the G.O.M. of India. Both told me that if I wanted to be heard I must be brief, I must write to the point and adhere to facts, and never travel beyond the cause under notice, and I must be most sparing in my adjectives And if some success has attended my effort it is due to my acceptance of the golden advice given to me by the two illustrious deceased. —*Young India* : Jan. 12, 1920.

Picketing

PICKETING in its nature must be temporary, but it is like what a stimulant is in medicine. Drink is more a disease than a vice. I know scores of men who would gladly leave off drink if they could.

Inspite of the temptation having been put away at their instance, I have known them to steel drink. I do not, therefore, think that it was wrong to have removed the temptation. Diseased persons have got to be helped against themselves. If I have a son who is addicted (say to gambling, and a gambling company imposes itself on me to tempt my boy, I have either violently to knock the company down or to post watches at its offices, in order, if possible, to shame my son into not going there. It is true that there are other gambling companies some distance from my place. Still I take it, I would be held in the right in having posted a watch at the company's door. I must make it difficult for my son to gamble. What, for instance, should the public do, if the state were to build palaces in every street for women of ill-fame, and issue to them licences to ply their

trade? Will it not be its duty, unless it destroys these palaces inhabited by vice, to quarantime them and warn the public of the danger of falling an easy prey to the temptation forced on it? I recognise the necessity of using only men and women of character as pickets and of guarding against violence being offered to those who insist on drinking in the face of public opinion. Picketing is a duty, a citizen must discharge, when he is not helped by the state. What is a police patrol, if it is not picketing against thieves? The police use the gun, when the thief betrays an inclination to break into another's house. A picket uses the pressure of shame, *i.e.*, love, when he warns a weak brother against the dangers of the drink evil. —*Young India* : Jan. 13, 1920.

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PEACEFUL picketing does not mean that so long as no physical violence is used, any kind of pressure could be exercised. The picketers' duty is merely to warn drinkers against the vice of drink, not molest them or otherwise prevent them if they will not listen. If we may force temperance upon the people believing it to be good for them, the English administrators and their Indian supporters are certainly performing an analogous operation. They too force the present system on us well believing that it is good for us. I would rather have India to be free than sober if freedom has to buy sobriety.

—*Young India* : Feb. 23, 1922.

Plains-peaking

IF plain-speaking were rudeness, I am simply saturated with it. —*Harijan* : April 20, 1935.

Policy

LET us understand the distinction between policy and creed. A policy may be changed, a creed cannot. But either is as good as the other whilst it is held.

—*Young India* : July 30, 1931.

Politics

THE politician in me has never dominated a single decision of mine, and if I seem to take part in politics, it is only because politics encircle us to-day like the coil of a snake from which one cannot get out, no matter how much one tries. I wish therefore to wrestle with the snake, as I have been doing with more or less success consciously since 1894, unconsciously as I have now discovered, ever since reaching years of discretion. Quite selfishly, as I wish to live in peace in the midst of a bellowing storm howling round me, I have been experimenting with myself and my friends by introducing religion into politics. Let me explain what I mean by religion. It is not the Hindu religion which I certainly prize above all other religions, but the religion which transcends Hinduism, which changes one's very nature, which binds one indissolubly to the truth within and which ever purifies. It is the permanent quality in human nature which counts no cost too great in order to find full expression and which leaves the soul utterly restless until it has found itself, known its Maker and appreciated the true correspondence between the Maker and itself. —*Young India* : May 8, 1920.

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POURING ridicule on one's opponent is an approved method in " civilized politics!"

—*Young India* : Sept. 1, 1920.

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I HAVE sacrified no principle to gain a political end. —*Young India* : March 12, 1925.

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OURS is a movement of self-purification. There are some who think that morality has nothing to do with politics. We do not concern ourselves with the character

of our leaders. The democracies of Europe and Ameriea steer clear of any notion of morality having anything to do with politics. Bad characters are often great intellects, and they can manage certain affairs well enough by the force of their intellect. The private character of some of the leading men of the House of Commons will not bear examination. We too have often carried on our political movement in the same fashion. We did not concern ourselves with the morals of the Congress delegates or leaders. But in 1920 we struck an entirely new departure and we declared that since truth and non-violence were the sole means to be employed by the Congress to reach its goal, self-purification was necessary even in political life. —*Young India* : Jan. 23, 1930.

Political Power

TO me political power is not an end but one of the means of enabling people to better their condition in every department of life. Political power means capacity to regulate national life through national representatives. If national life becomes so perfect as to become self-regulated, no representation is necessary. There is then a state of enlightened anarchy. In such a state every one is his own ruler. He rules himself in such a manner that he is never a hindrance to his neighbour. In the idle state therefore there is no political power because there is no State. But the ideal is never fully realised in life. Hence the classical statement of Thoreau that that Government is best which governs the least.—*Harijan* : Dec. 2, 1938.

Politics vs, Religion

I THINK the political life must be an echo of private life and that there cannot be any divorce between the two. —*Young India* : July 11, 1925.

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I HAVE always said that my politics are subservient

to my religion. I have found myself in them, as I could not live my religious life (i. e.) a life of service, without being affected by them. I should discard them today if they hindered it. I cannot therefore subscribe to the doctrine that I may not, being a political leader deal with matters religious. —*Young India* : July 19 1924.

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FOR me there is no politics without religion—not the religion of the superstitous and the blind religion that hates and fights, but the Universal Religion of Toleration. Politics without morality is a thing to be avoded. Then says the critic, I must retire from all public activity. Such however is not my experience. I must try to live in society and yet remain untouched by its pitfalls. —*Young India* : Nov. 27, 1924.

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TODAY there is not much open opposition to the idea, though there are many who secretely believe that politics should have nothing to do with morality. That is why our progress is so slow and in some respects even nil. If we had acted up to our creed of 1920, we should not have taken nine years to arrive at the present stage. If *Swaraj* was not meant to civilize us, and to purify and stabilise our civilisation, it would be nothing worth. The very essence of our civilisation is that we give a paramount place to morality in all our affairs, public or private.—*Young India.* Jan. 23, 1930.

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YOU must understand that I cannot isolate politics from the deepest things of my life, for the simple reason that my politics are not corrupt, they are inextricabely bound up with Non-violence and Truth. As I have said often enough I would far rather that India perished than that she won freedom at the sacrifie of truth. —*Young India* : Oct. 1, 1931.

Poverty

THE curse of the poor has destroyed nations, has deprived kings of their crowns and the rich of their riches.

Retributive justice is inexorable. The blessings of the poor have made kingdoms flourish.

Riches are no test of goodness. Ind ed poverty is the only test. A good man voluntarily embraces poverty.

—*Young India* : Nov. 19, 1925.

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EVERY palace that one sees in India is a demonstration not of her riches but of the isolence of power that riches give to the few, who owe them to the miserably requited labours of the millions of the paupers of India.

—*Young India* : July 7, 1927.

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NON-POSSESSION is allied to Non-stealing. A thing not originally stolen must nevertheless be classified as stolen property, if one possesses it without needing it. Possession implies provision for the future. A seaker after Truth, a follower of the Law of Love cannot hold anything against tomorrow. God never stores for the morrow. He never creates more than what is strictly needed for the moment. If therefore we repose faith in His providence, we should rest assurred that He will give us every day our daily bread, meaning everything that we require. Saints and devotees, who have lived in such faith, have always derived a justification for it from their experiencc. Our ignorance or negligence of the Divine Law, which gives to man from day to day his daily bread and no more, has given rise to inequalities with all the miseries attendant upon them. The rich have a superfluous store of things which they do not need, and which are therefore neglected and wasted ; while millions are starved to death for want of sustenance. If each retained possession only of what he needed, no one would be in want, and all would live in contentment. As it is, the rich are discontented no less than the poor. The poor man would fain become a millionaire and the millionaire a multi-millionare. The rich should take the initiative in dispossession with a view to a universal diffusion of the

spirit of contentment. If only they keep their own property within moderate limits, the starving will be easily fed, and will learn the lesson of contentment along with the rich. Perfect fulfilment of the ideal of Non-possession requires that man should, like the birds, have no roof over his head, no clothing and no stock of food for the morrow. He will indeed need his daily bread, but it will be God's business, and not his, to provide it. Only the fewest possible, if any at all, can reach this ideal. We ordinary seekers may not be repelled by the seeming impossibility. We must keep the ideal constantly in view, and in the light thereof, critically examine our possessions, and try to reduce them. Civilisation, in the real sense of the term, consists not in the multiplication, but in the deliberate and voluntary reduction of wants. This alone promotes real happiness and contentment, and increases the capacity for service. Judging by this criterion, we find that in the *Ashram* we possess many things, the necessity for which cannot be proved, and we thus tempt our neighbours to thieve.

From the standpoint of pure Truth, the body too is a possession. It has been truly said that desire for enjoyment creates bodies for the soul. When this desire vanishes there remains no further need for the body, and man is free from the vicious cycle of birth and deaths. The soul is omnipresent ; why should she care to be confined within the cagelike body, or do evil and even kill for the sake of that cage ? We thus arrive at the ideal of total renunciation, and learn to use the body for the purposes of service so long as it exists, so much so that service, and not bread, becomes with us the staff of life. We eat and drink, sleep and wake, for service alone. Such an attitude of mind brings us real happiness, and the beatific vision, in the fulness of time. Let us all examine ourselves from this standpoint.

We should remember that Non-possession is a principle applicable to thoughts, as well as to things. One who fills his brain with useless knowledge violates that inestimable

principle. Thoughts, which turn us away from God, or do not turn us towards Him, constitute impediments in our way. In this connection we may consider the definition of knowledge contained in the 13th chapter of the *Gita*. We are there told that humility (*amanitvam*), etc., constitute knowledge, and all the rest is ignorance. If this is true,—and there is no doubt that it is true,—much that we hug today as knowledge is ignorance pure and simple, and therefore only does us harm, instead of conferring any benefit. It makes the mind wander, and even reduces it to a vacuity, and discontent flourishes in endless ramifications of evil. Needless to say, this is not a plea for inertia. Every moment of our life should be filled with mental or physical activity. But that activity should be *sattvika*, tending to Truth. One who has consecrated his life to service cannot be idle for a single moment. But one has to learn to distinguish between good activity and evil activity. This discernment goes naturally with a single-minded devotion to service.

—*From Yeravda Mandir.*

Power

POWER is of two kinds. One is obtained by the fear of punishment and the other by arts of love. Power based on love is a thousand times more effective and permanent than the one derived from fear of punishment.

—*Young India* : Jan. 8, 1925.

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POWER invariably elects to go into the hands of strong. That strength may be physical or of the heart or, if we do not fight shy of the word, of the spirit. Stength of the heart connotes soul force. Let it be remembered that physical force is transitory even as the body is transitory. But the power of the spirit is permanent, even as the spirit is ever lasting. —*Harijan* : Feb. 1, 1942.

Prayer

HERE is a letter written by a student to the

Principle of a national instution asking to be excused from attending its prayer meetings :

"I beg to state that I have no belief in prayer, as I do not believe in anything known as God to which I should pray. I never feel any necessity of supposing a God for myself. What do I lose if I do not care for Him and calmly and sincerely work my own schemes ?

"So far as congregational prayer is concerned, it is of no use. Can such a huge mass of men enter into any mental concentration upon a thing, however trifling it may be ? Are the little and ignorant children expected to fix their fickle attention on the subtlest ideas of our great scriptures, God and soul and equality of all men and many other high-sounding phrases ? This great performance is required to be done at a particular time at the command of a particular man. Can love for the so-called Lord take its root in the hearts of boys by any such mechanical function ? Nothing can be more repugnant to reason than to expect the same behaviour from men of every temperament. Therefore, prayer should not be a complusion. Let those pray who have a taste for it and those avoid who dislike it Anything done without conviction is an immoral and degrading action."

Let us first examine the worth of the last idea. Is it an immoral and degrading act to submit to discipline before one begins to have conviction about its necessity ? Is it immoral and degrading to study subjects according to the school syllabous if one has no conviction about its utility ? May a boy be excused from studying his vernacular if he has persuaded himself that it is useless ? It is not true to say that a schoolboy has no conviction about the things he has to learn or the discipline he has to go through ? His choice is exhausted if he had it, when he elected to belong to an institution. His joining one means that he willingly submits to its rules and regulations. It is open to him to leave it but he may not choose what or how he will learn.

It is for teachers to make attractive and intelligible what to the pupils may at first appear repulsive or uninteresting.

It is easy enough to say, 'I do not believe in God for God permits all things to be said of Him with impunity. He looks at our acts. And any breach of His Law carries with it, not its vindictive, but its purifying, compelling punishment. God's existence cannot be, does not need be proved. God is. If He is not felt, so much the worse for us. The absence of feeling is a disease which we shall some day throw off *nolens volens.*

But a boy may not argue. He must out of sense of discipline attend prayer meeting if the institution to which he belongs requires such attendance. He may respectfully put his doubts before his teachers. He need not believe what does not appeal to him. But if he has respect for his teachers he will *do* without believing what he is asked to do out of fear, not out of churlishness, but with the knowledge that it is right for him so to do and with the hope that what is dark to him to-day will some day be made clear to him.

Prayer is not an asking. It is a longing of the soul. It is a daily admission of one's weakness. The tallest among us has a perpetual reminder of his nothingness before death, disease, old age, accident, etc. We are living in the midst of death. What is the value of 'working for our own schemes' when they might be reduced to naught in the twinkling of an eye or when we may be equally swiftly and unawares be taken away from them? But we may feel strong as a rock, if we could truthfully say 'we work for God and His scheme.' Then all is as clear as day-light. Then nothing perishes. All perishing is then only what seems. Death and destruction have *then,but only then,* no reality about them. For death or destruction is then but a change. An artist destroys his picture for creating a better one. A watch maker throws away a bad spring to put in new and useful one.

A congregational prayer is a mighty thing. What

we do not often do alone, we do together. Boys do not need conviction. If they merely attend in obedience to the call to prayer without inward resistence, they feel the exaltation, But many do not. They are even mischievous. All the same the unconscious effect cannot be resisted. Are there not boys who at the commencement of their career were scoffers but who subsequently became mighty believers in the efficacy of congregational prayer? It is a common experience for men who have no robust faith to seek the comfort of congregational prayer. All who flock to churches, temples, or mosques are not scoffers or humbugs. They are honest men and women. For them congregational prayer is like a daily bath, a necessity of their existence. These places of worship are not a mere idle superstition to be swept away at the first opportunity. They have survived all attacks up to now and are likely te persist to the end of time.—*Young India* : Sept. 23, 1926.

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NO act of mine is done without prayer. Man is a fallible being. He can never be sure of his steps. What he may regard as an answer to prayer may be an echo of his pride. For infallible guidance man has to have a perfectly innocent heart incapable of evil. I can lay no such claim. Mine is a struggling, striving, erring, imperfect soul. But I can rise only by experimenting upon myself and others. I believe in absolute oneness of God and therefore also of humanity. What though we have many bodies? We have but one Soul. The rays of the sun are many through refraction. But they have the same source. I cannot, therefore, detach myself from the wickedest soul nor may I be denied identity with the most virtuous. Whether, therefore, I will or not, I must involve in my experiment the whole of my kind. Nor can I do without experiment. Life is but an endless series of experiments

—*Young India* ; Sept. 25, 1942.

DRAUPADI, when she found that not even her five husbands could help her, cried out in agony to Krishna, the only help of the helpless, and he heard her prayers. Even so shall I work away to-day and cry in the name of the dumb millions of India, and I am sure, my prayers will be heard one day. —*Young India* : Sept. 6, 1926.

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A MEDICAL graduate asks :

"What is the best form of prayer? How much time should be spent at it? In my opinion to do justice is the best form of prayer and one who is sincere about doing justice to all, does not need to do any more praying. Some people spend a long time over *Sandhya* and 95 per cent of them do not understand the meaning of what they say. In my opinion prayer should be said in one's mother tongue. It alone can affect the soul best. I should say that a sincere prayer for one minute is enough. It should suffice to promise God not to sin."

Prayer means asking God for something in a reverent attitude. But the word is used also to denote any devotional act. Worship is a better term to use for what the correspondent has in mind. But definition apart, what is it that millions of Hindus, Musalmans, Christians and Jews and others do every day during the time set apart for the adoration of the Maker? It seems to me that it is a yearning of the heart to be one with the Maker, an invocation for His blessing. It is the attitude that matters, not words uttered or muttered. And often the association of words that have been handed down from ancient times has an effect which in their rendering into one's mother-tougue they will lose altogether. Thus the *Gayatri* translated and recited in, say, Gujarati, will not have the same effect as the original. The utterance of the word *Rama* will instantaneously affect millions of Hindus, while the word God, although they may understand the meaning will leave them untouched. Words after all acquire power by long

usage and sacredness associated with their use. There is much, therefore, to be said for the retention of the old Sanskrit formulae for the most prevalent *mantras* or verses. That the meaning of them should be properly understood goes without saying.

There can be no fixed rule laid down as to the time these devotional acts should take. It depends upon individual temperament. These are precious moments in one's daily life The exercises are intended to sober and humble us and enable us to realise that nothing happens without His will and that we are but 'clay in the hands of the Potter.' These are moments when one reviews one's immediate past, confesses one's weakness, asks for forgiveness and strength to be and do better. One minute may be enough for some, twenty-four hours may be too little for others. For those who are filled with the presence of God in them, to labour is to pray. The life is one continuous prayer or act of worship. For those others who act only to sin; to indulge themselves, and live for self, no time is too much. If they had patience and faith and the will to be pure, they would pray till they feel the definite purifying presence of God within them. For us ordinary mortals there must be a middle path between these two extremes. We are not so exalted as to be able to say that all our acts are a dedication nor perhaps are we so far gone as to be living purely for self. Hence have all religions set apart times far general devotion. Unfortunately these have nowadays become merely mechanical and formal, where they are not hypocritical. What is necessary, therefore, is the correct attitude to accompany these devotions.

For definite personal prayer in the sense of asking God for something, it should certainly be in one's own tongue. Nothing can be grander than to ask God to make us justly towards everything that lives. —*Young India* : June 10, 1926.

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THERE is an eternal struggle raging in man's breast

between the powers of darkness and of light, and he who has not the sheet-anchor of prayer to rely upon will be a victim to the powers of darkness. The man of prayer will be at peace with himself and with the whole world, the man who goes about the affairs of the world without a prayerful heart will be miserable and will make the world also miserable. Apart therefore from its bearing on man's condition after death prayer has incalculable value for man in this world of the living. Prayer is the only means of bringing about orderliness and peace and repose in our daily acts. We inmates of the *Ashram* who came here in search of Truth and for insistence on truth professed to believe in the efficacy of prayer, but had never up to now made it a matter of vital concern. We did not bestow on it the care that we did on other matters. I awoke from my slumbers one day and realised that I had been woefully negligent of my duty in the matter. I have, therefore, suggested measures of stern discipline and far from being any the worse, I hope we are the better for it is so obvious. Take care of the vital things and other thi gs will take care of themselves. Rectify one angle of a square and other angles will be automatically right.

Begin therefore your day with prayer, and make it so soulful that it may remain with you until the evening. Close the day with prayer so that you may have a peaceful night free from dreams and nightmares. Do not worry about the form of prayer. Let it be any form, it should be such as can put into communion with the divine. Only, whatever be the form, let not the spirit wander while the words of prayer run out of your mouth.

Prayer has been the saving of my life. Without it I should have been a lunatic long ago. My autobiography will tell you that I have had my fair share of the bitterness, public and private experiences. They threw me into temporary despair, but if I was able to get rid of—it was because of prayer. Now I may tell you that prayer has not

been part of my life in the sense that truth has been. It came out of sheer necessity, as I found myself in a plight when I could not possibly be happy without it. And the more my faith in God increased, the more irresistible became yearning for prayer. Life seemed to be dull and vacant without it. I had attended the Christian service in South Africa but it had failed to grip me. I could not join them in prayer. They supplicated God, but I could not do so, I failed egregiously. I started with disbelief in God and prayer and until at a later stage in life I did not feel anything like a void in life. But at that stage I felt that as food was indispensable for the body so was prayer indispensable for the soul. In fact food for the body is not so necessary as prayer for the soul. For starvation is often necessary in order to keep the body in health, but there is no such thing as prayer starvation. You cannot possible have a surfeit of prayer. Three of the greatest teachers of the world—Buddha, Jesus, Muhammad—have left unimpeachable testimony, that they found illumination through prayer and could not possibly live without it. But to come nearer home millions of Hindu and Musalmans and Christians find their only solace in life in prayer. Either you vote them down as liars or self-deluded people. Well, then I will say that this lying has a charm for me, a truth-seeker. It is " lying " that has given me that mainstay or staff of life, without which I could not bear to live for a moment. In spite of despair staring me in the face on the political horizon, I have never lost my peace. In fact I have found people who envy my peace. That peace, I tell you, comes from prayer. I am not a man of learning, but I humbly claim to be a man of prayer. I am indifferent as to the form. Every one is a law unto himself in that respect. But there are some well-marked roads, and it is safe to walk along the beaten tracks, trod by ancient teachers. Well, I have given my personal testimony. Let every one try and find that, as a result of daily prayer, he adds some-

thing new to his life, something which nothing can be compared."

" But," youth asked the question, " Sir whilst you start with belief in God, we start with unbelief. How are we to pray."

" Well, " said Gandhiji, " it is beyond my power to induce in you a belief in God. There are certain things which are self-proved and certain which are not proved at all. The existence of God is like a geometrical axiom. It may be beyond our heart grasp. I shall not talk of an intellectual grasp. Intellectual attempts are more or less failures, as a rational explanation cannot give you the faith in a living God. For it is a thing beyond the grasp of reason. It transcends reason. There are numerous phenomena from which you can reason out the existence of God, but I shall not insult your intelligence by offering you a rational explanation of that type. I would have you brush aside all rational explanations and begin with a simple childlike faith in God. If I exist, God exists. With me it is a necessity of my being as it is with millions. They may not be able to talk about it, but from their life you can see that it is a part of their life. I am only asking you to restore the belief that has been undermined. In order to do so, you have to unlearn a lot of literature that dazzles your intelligence and throws you off your feet. Start with the faith which is also a token of humility and an admission that we know nothing, that we are less than atoms in this universe. We are less than atoms, I say, because the atom obeys the law of its being, whereas we in the insolence of our ignorance deny the law of nature. But I have no argument to address to those who have no faith.

" Once you accept the existence of God, the necessity for prayer is unescapable. Let us not make the astounding claim, that our whole life is a prayer, and therefore we need not sit down at a particular hour to pray. Even men who were all their time in tune with the Infinite did not

make such a claim. Their lives were a continuous prayer, and yet for our sake, let us say, they offered prayer at set hours, and renewed each day the oath of loyalty to God. God of course never insists on the oath, but we must renew our pledge every day, and I assure you we shall then be free from every imaginable misery in life " (M. D.)

—*Young India* : Sep. 24, 1931.

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GANDHIJI had enough time to think and write during his recent visit to Abbottabad, especially as he was kept free of many engagements and interviewers. But even there he had some interviewers—not of the usual type interested in politics or topics of the day, but of the unusual type troubled with ultra mundane problems. History has it that discourses on such problems used to take place in this region hallowed of old by the steps of the followers of Buddha. One of the interviewers of Gandhiji described himself as a follower of Buddha, and discussed a problem arising out of his creed. He is an archæologist and loves to live in and dream of the past. Dr. Fabri—for that is his name—has been in India for many years. He was a pupil of Prof. Sylvan Levy and came out as an assistant to the famous archæologist Sir Aurel Stein. He served in the Archæological Department for many years, helped in reorganizing the Lahore Museum, and has some archæological work to his credit. Delving deep in Buddhistic lore has turned him into a stark rationalist. He is a Hungarian and had in the past corresponded with Gandhiji and even sympathetically fasted with him. He had come to Abbottabad specially to see Gandhiji.

He was particularly exercised about the form and content of prayer and would very much like to know what kind of prayer Gandhiji said. Could the Divine Mind be changed by prayer ? Could one find it out by prayer ?

" It is a difficult thing to explain fully what I do when I pray, " said Gandhiji. " But I must try to answer your

question. The Divine Mind is unchangeable, but that Divinity is in everyone and everything—animate and inanimate. The meaning of prayer is that I want to evoke that Divinity within me. Now I may have that intellectual conviction, but not a living touch. And so when I pray for *Swaraj* or Independence for India I pray or wish for adequate power to gain that *Swaraj* or to make the largest contribution I can towards winning it, and I maintain that I can get that power in answer to prayer."

" Then you are not justified in calling it prayer. To pray means to beg or demand," said Dr. Fabri.

" Yes, indeed. You may say I beg it of myself, of my Higher Self, the Real Self with which I have not yet achieved complete identification. You may, therefore, describe it as a continual longing to lose oneself in the Divinity which comprises all."

" And you use an old form to evoke this ?"

" I do. The habit of a lifetime persists, and I would allow it to be said that I pray to an outside Power. I am part of that Infinite, and yet such an infinitesimal part that I feel outside it. Though I give you the intellectual explaination, I feel, with identification with the Divinity, so small that I am nothing. Immediately I begin to say I do this thing and that thing I begin to feel my unworthiness and nothingness, and feel that someone else, some Higher Power, has to help me."

" Tolstoy says the same thing. Prayer really is complete meditation and melting into the Higher Self, though one occasionally does lapse in imploration like that of a child to his father."

" Pardon me," said Gandhiji, cautioning the Buddhist doctor, " I would not call it a lapse. It is more in the fitness of things to say that I pray to God who exists somewhere up in the clouds, and the more distant He is, the

greater is my longing for Him and find myself in His presence in thought. And thought as you know has a greater velocity than light. Therefore, the distance between me and Him, though so incalculably great, is obliterated. He is far and yet so near."

"It becomes a matter of belief but some people like me are cursed with an acute critical faculty," said Dr. Fabri. "For me there is nothing higher than what Buddha taught, and no greater master. For Buddha alone among the teachers of the world said: 'Don't believe implictly what I say. Don't accept any dogma or any book as infallible. There is for me no infallible book in the world, inasmuch as all were made by men, however inspired they may have been. I cannot hence believe in a personal idea of God a *Maharaja* sitting on the Great White Throne listening to our prayers. I am glad that your prayer is on a different level."

Let it be said in fairness to the savant that he is a devotee of the *Bhagawad Gita* and the *Dhammapada*, and those are the two scriptures he carries with him. But he was arguing an extreme intellectual position. Even here Gandhiji caught him from being swept into the torrent of his logic.

"Let me remind you," said Gandhiji, "that you are again only *partially* true when you say my prayer is on a different level. I told you that the intellectual conviction that I gave you is not eternally present with me. What is present is the intensity of faith whereby I lose myself in an Invisible Power. And so it is far truer to say that God has done a thing for me than that I did it. So many things have happened in my life for which I had intense longing, but which I could never have achieved myself. And I have always said to my co-workers it was in answer to my prayer. I did not say to them it was in answer to my intellectual effort

to lose myself in the Divinity in me ! The easiest and the correct thing for me was to say, 'God has seen me through my difficulty'."

"But that you deserved by your *Karma*. God is Justice and not Mercy. You are a good man and good things happen to you," contended Dr. Fabri.

"No fear. I am not good enough for things to happen like that. If I went about with that philosophical conception of *Karma*, I should often come a cropper. My *Karma* would not come to my help. Although I believe in the inexorable Law of *Karma*, I am striving to do so many things, every moment of my life is strenuous endeavour, which is an attempt to build up more *Karma*, to undo the past and add to the present. It is therefore wrong to say that because my past is good, good is happening at present. The past would be soon exhausted, and I have to build up the furture. I tell you *Karma* alone is powerless. Ignite this match, I say to myself, and yet I cannot if there is no co-operation from without. Before I strike the match my hand is paralysed or I have only one match and the wind blows it off. Is it an accident of God or Higher Power ? Well, I prefer to use the language of my ancestors or of children. I am no better than a child. We may try to talk learnedly and of books, but when it comes to brass tacks—when we are face to face with a calamity—we behave like children and begin to cry and pray and our intellectual belief gives no satisfaction !"

"I know very highly developed men to whom belief in God gives incredible comfort and help in the building of character," said Dr. Fabri. "But there are some great spirits that can do without it. That is what Buddhism has taught me."

"But Buddhism is one long prayer," rejoined Gandhiji.

"Buddha asked everyone to find salvation for himself. He never prayed, he meditated," maintained Dr. Fabri.

"Call it by whatever name you like, it is the same thing. Look at his statues."

"But they are not true to life," said the archaeologist questioning the antiquity of these statues. "They are 400 years later than his death."

"Well," said Gandhiji, refusing to be beaten by a chronological argument. "give me your own history of Buddha as you may have discovered it. I will prove that he was a praying Buddha. The intellectual conception does not satisfy me. I have not given you a perfect and full definition as you cannot describe your own thought. The very effort to describe is a limitation It defies analysis and you have nothing but scepticism as the residue."

Was it of such people that Pope wrote :—

> With too much knowledge for the sceptic side.
> With too much weakness for the stoic's pride.
> He hangs between ; in doubt to act, or rest :
> In doubt to deem himself a god or beast.
> In doubt his mind or body to prefer ;
> Born but to die, and reasoning but to err
> Sole judge of truth, in endless error hurled.
> The glory, jest and riddled of the world.

But to proceed. "What about the people who cannot pray ?" asked Dr. Fabri.

"Be humble ! said Gandhiji, "I would say to them and do not limit even the real Buddha by your own conception of Buddha. He could not have ruled the lives of millions of men that he did and does to-day if he was not humble enough to pray. There is some thing infinitely higher than intellect that rules us and even the

sceptics. Their scepticism and philosophy do not help them in critical periods of their lives. They need something better, something outside them that can sustain them. And so if someone puts a conundrum before me I say to him, 'You are not going to know the meaning of God or prayer unless you reduce yourself to a cipher. You must be humble enough to see that in spite of your greatness and gigantic intellect you are but a speck in the universe. A merely intellectual conception of the things of life is not enough. It is the spiritual conception which eludes the intellect, and which alone can give one satisfaction. Even monied men have critical periods in their lives; though they are surrounded by everything that money can buy and affection can give, they find at certain moments in their lives utterly distracted. It is in these moments that we have a glimpse of God, a Vision of Him who is guiding every one of our steps in life. It is prayer."

"You mean what we might call a true religious experience which is stronger than intellectual conception," said Dr. Fabri, "Twice in life I had that experience, but I have since lost it. But I now find great comfort in one or two sayings of Buddha : 'Selfishness is the cause of sorrow.' 'Re member monks, everything is fleeting.' To think of these takes almost the place of belief."

"That is prayer," repeated Gandhiji with an insistence that could not but have gone home.

—*Harijan* Aug. 19, 1939.

Preaching

AN ounce of practice is more than tons of preaching.

—*Young India* : June 25, 1931.

Principle

THERE is no principle worth the name if it is not wholly good. —*Young India* : May 21, 1925.

Let no one charge me with ever having abused or encouraged weakness or surrunder on matter of principle. But I have said, as I say again, that every trifle must not be dignified into a principle. —*Young India* : Oct. 22, 1925.

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A PRINCIPLE is the expression of perfection, and as imperfect beings like us cannot practise perfection, we devise every moment limits of its compromise in practice.

—*Young India* : Oct. 21, 1926.

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ILL-DIGESTED principles are if anything, worse than ill-digested food, for the latter harms the body and there is cure for it, whereas the former ruin the soul and here is no cure for it. —*Harijan* : May 1, 1937.

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A PRINCIPLE is a principle, and in no case can it be watered down because of our incapacity to live it in practice. We have to strive to achieve it, and the striving should be conscsious, deliberate and hard.

—*Harijan* : Nov. 18, 1939.

Priests

IT is a painful fact, but it is a historical truth, that priests who should have been the real custodians of religion have been instrumental in destroying the religion of which they have been custodians. —*Young India* : Oct. 20, 1927.

Progress

PROGRESS is to be measured by the amount of suffering undergone by the sufferer. The purer the suffering, the greater is the progress.

—*Young India* : June 16, 1920.

◈ ◈ ◈

PROGRESS towards *Swaraj* will be in exact proportion

to increase in the number of workers who will dare to sacrifice their all for the cause of the poor.

—*Young India* : June 20, 1926.



HEALTHY discontent is the prelude to progress.

—*Young India* : Aug. 1, 1929.



THE road to any progress is strewn with such difficulty, and the story of man's accent in the scale of evolution is co-extensive with the history of the successful over-coming of these difficulties. Take the story of the attempts to conquer the Himalayas. The higher you go, the steeper becomes the climb, the more difficult the ascent, so much so that its highest peak still remains unvanquished. The enterprise has already exacted a heavy toll of sacrifice. Yet every year sees fresh attempts made, only to end in failure like their predecessors. All that has, however, failed to damp the spirit of the explorers. If that is the case with the conquest of the Himalayas, what about the conquest of self, which is a harder job by far, even as the reward is richer ? The scaling of the Himalayas can, at best, give a temporary feeling of elation and triumph. But the reward of the conquest of self is a spiritual bliss that knows no waning, and grows ever more and more.

—*Harijan* : March 20, 1937.



IF an individual can observe a certain rule of conduct it follows that a group of individuals can do likewise. It is necessary for me to emphasise the fact that no one need wait for anyone else in order to adopt a right course. Men generally hesitate to make a beginning if they feel that the objective cannot be had in its entirety. Such an attitude of mind is in reality a bar to progress.

—*Harijan* : Aug. 25, 1940.

Promise

I AM fully convinced that no body of men can make themselves into a nation to perform great task unless they become as true as steel and unless their promises come to be regarded by the world like the law of the Medes and Persians inflexible and unbreakable.

—*Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi* : Page 119.

MY own opinion and that of many others is that promises or vows are necessary for the strongest of us. A promise is like a right angle not nearly but exactly 90° The slightest deflection makes it useless for the grand purpose that the right angle serves. A voluntary promise is like a plumb line keeping a man straight and warning him when he is going wrong. Rules of general application do not serve the same purpose as an individual vow. We find therefore the system of declarations followed in all large and well conducted institutions. The Viceroy has to take the oath of office. Members of Legislatures have to do likewise all the world over, and in my opinion rightly so. A soldier joining an army has to do likewise. Moreover a written undertaking reminds one of what one has promised to do. Memory is a very frail thing. The written word stands for ever. —*Young India* : Dec. 12, 1925.

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WE have in this country a habit of making promises in a fit of enthusiasm, keeping them for a time, and then forgetting altogether. —*Young India* : July 7, 1927.

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ABOVE all keep yourselves pure and clean, and learn to keep your promises even at the cost of life.

—*Young India* : Nov. 10, 1927.

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I BELIEVE in the necessity of the performance of one's promises at all costs. —*Young India* : March 27, 1928.

BREACH of promise is a base surrender of truth.

—*Young India* : May 1, 1929.

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BREACH of a promise is no less an act of insolvency than a refusal to pay one's debt.

—*Young India* : Sept. 16, 1930.

◈ ◈ ◈

TO my knowledge, thr ughout my public and private career, I have never broken promise.

—*Harijan* : April 22, 1939.

Propaganda

PRACTICE is the best speech and the best propaganda.

Black flags, noisy slogans, and hurling of stones and shoes have no place in educative and destructive propaganda. —*Harijan* : Sept. 9, 1939.

Prostitution

OF all the evils for which man has made himself responsible, none is so degrading so shocking or so brutal as his abuse of the better half of humanity to me, the female sex, not the weaker sex. It is the nobler of the two, for it is even to-day the embodiment of sacrifice, silent suffering, humility, faith and knowledge. A woman's intution has often proved truer than man's arrogant assumption of superior knowledge. There is method in putting Sita before Rama and Radha before Krishna.

—*Young India* : Nov. 17, 1921.

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THEY are driven to a life of shame. I am satisfied that they do not go to it from choice. And the beast in man has made the detestable crime a lucrative profession.

—*Young India* : Dec. 18, 1921.

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OF all the addresses I received in the South the most touching was one on behalf of the Devadasis—a euphemism

for prostitutes. It was prepared and brought by people who belong to the clan from which these unfortunate sisters are drawn. I understood from the deputation that brought the address that reform from within was going on but that the rate of progress was still slow. The gentleman who led the deputation told me that the public in general was apathetic to the reform. The first shock I received was at Cocanada. And I did not mince matters when I spoke to the men of that place. The second was at Barisal where I met a large number of these unfortunate sisters. Whether they be known as Devadasis or by any other name, the problem is the same. It is the matter of bitter shame and sorrow, of deep humiliation, that a number of women have to sell their chastity for man's lust. Man the law-giver, will have to pay a dreadful penalty for the degradation he has imposed upon the so-called weaker sex. When woman, freed from man's snares, rises to the full height and rebels against man's legislation and institutions designed by him, her rebellion, no doubt non-violent, will be none-the-less effective. Let the Indian man ponder over the fate of the thousands of sisters who are destined to a life of shame for his unlawful and immoral indulgence. The pity of it is that the vast majority of the men who visit these pestilential haunts are married men and therefore commit a double sin. They sin against their wives to whom they have sworn allegiance and they sin against the sisters whose purity they are bound to guard with as much jealousy as that of their own blood sisters. It is an evil which cannot last for a single day, if we men of India realise our own dignity.

If many of the most respectable among us were not steeped in the vice this kind of indulgence would be regarded as a greater crime than the stealing of a banana by a hungry man or the picking of a pocket by a youngster who is in need of money. What is worst and more hurtful to society—to steal property or to steal the honour of a woman? Let me not be told that the public woman is a party

to the sale of her honour, but not the millionaire on the race-course whose pocket is picked by a professional pick-pocket. Who is worse—an urchin who picks a pocket or a scoundrel who drugs his victim and then makes him singn away the whole of his property? Does not man by his subtle and unscrupulous ways first rob woman of her noblest instinct and then make her partner in the crime committed against her? Or are some women, like *Panchamas*, born to a life of degradation? I ask every young man married or unmarried to contemplate the implications of what I have written. I cannot write all I have learnt about this social disease, this moral leprosy. Let his imagination fill in the rest and then let him recoil with horror and shame from the sin if he has himself been guilty of it. And let every pure man, wherever he is, do what he can to purify his neighbourhood. I now that the second part is easier written than practised. It is a delicate matter. But for its very delicacy it demands the attention of all thoughtful men. Work among the unfortunate sisters must be left everywhere to experts. My suggestion has reference to work among the visitors to these houses of ill-fame.

—*Young India*: April 16, 1921.

Provincialism

TO attain *Swaraj* implies the cultivation of a spirit of self-sacrifice, including the sacrifice of provincialism.

Provincialism is a bar not only to the realisation of national *Swaraj*, but also to the achievement of provincial autonomy. Women perhaps are more responsible than men for keeping up this narrow spirit. Variety is worth cherishing up to a certain limit, but if the limit is exceeded, amenities and customs masquerading under the name of variety are subversive of nationalism.

—*Young India*: Feb. 2, 1928.

Public Fund

LET me, however, in conclusion, warn the public that

the safety of the public fund lies more in an intelligent vigilance of the public than in the strict integrity of those who are in charge of fund. Absolute honesty of the trustees is a necessity, but public inertia is a crime. Ignorant criticism must not be mistaken for intelligent vigilance. What I have found that some publicmen, with a knowledge of account-keeping, make it a point, now and again, of overhauling the administration of public funds and bringing the administrators to book.

—*Yourg India*: Aug. 20, 1925.



A PUBLIC fund becomes public property and therefore every member of the public is entitled to know in detail the administration of such funds.

—*Young India*: Feb. 24, 1927.



I DO not think any one can beat me in my passion for guarding and expending public money like a miser. The reason is obvious. Public money belongs to the poor public of India than whom there is none poorer on earth.

—*Young India* : April 16, 1931.

Public Institutions

IT has become my firm conviction that it is not good to run public institutions on permanent funds. A permanent fund carries in itself the seed of the moral fall of the institution. A public institution means an institution conducted with the approval, and from the funds of the public. When such an institution ceases to have public support, it forfeits its right to exist. Institutions maintained on permanent funds are often found to ignore public opinion, and are frequently responsible for acts contrary to it. In our country we experience this at every step. Some of the so-called religious trusts have ceased to render any accounts. The trustees have become the owners and are responsible to none. I have no doubts that the ideal is for public institutions to live,

like nature, from day to day. The institution that fails to win public support has no right to exist as such. The subscriptions that an institution annually receives are a test of its popularity and the honesty of its management, and I am of opinion that every institution should submit to that test. But let no one misunderstand me. My remarks do not apply to the bodies which cannot, by their very nature, be conducted without permanent buildings. What I mean to say is that the current expenditure should be found from subscriptions voluntarily received from year to year.

—*My Experiments with Truth* : Page 243.

Public Opinion

PUBLIC opinion alone can keep a society pure and healthy.

—*Young India* : Dec. 18, 1920.

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LEGISLATION in advance of public opinion is often worse than useless. Non-co-operation is the quickest method of creating public opinion.

—*Young India* : Jan. 29, 1921.

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FOR me every ruler is alien that defies public opinion.

—*Young India* : April 24, 1924.

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PUBLIC opinion cannot be aroused over grievances that cannot be verified and traced to their sources.

—*Young India* : May 5, 1927.

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HEALTHY public opinion has an influence of which we have not realised the full significance. Public opinion becomes intolerable when it becomes violent and aggressive.

—*Young India* : May 7, 1931.

A POPULAR state can never act in advance of public opinion. If it goes against it, it will be destroyed.

—*Young India :* July 30, 1931.

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THE evolution of public opinion is at times a tardy process but it is the only effective one.

—*Young India :* June 9, 1925.

Public Workers

I AM used to misrepresentation all my life. It is the lot of every public worker. He has to have a tough hide. Life would be burdensome if every misrepresentation had to be answered and cleared. It is a rule of life with me never to explain misrepresentation except when the cause requires correction. This rule has saved much time and worry.

—*Young India* : May 27, 1926.

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FINALLY a servant of the people should never fear or give way to bitterness if he finds himself a victim of misunderstanding, whether unintentional or wilful. The acts of men who have come out to serve or lead have always been misunderstood since the beginning of the world and none can help it. To put up with these misrepresentations and to stick to one's guns come what might,—this is the essence of the gift of leadership. Misunderstandings have been my lot ever since I entered public life, and I have got inured to them.

—*Young India* : Aug. 12, 1927.

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THERE is in modern public life a tendency to ignore altogether the character of a public worker so long as he works efficiently as a unit in an administrative machinery. It is said that everybody's character is his own private concern. Though I have known this view to have been often taken I have never been able to appreciate, much less to adopt it. I have known

the serious consequences overtaking organizations that have counted private character as a matter of no consequence.

—*Harijan :* Nov. 7, 1936.

Punctuality

I ATTACH the greatest importance to punctuality in our programme as it is a corrollary of non-violence.

—*Harijan :* Nov. 12, 1938.

Punishment

I KNOW that thrusting my finger into a furnace will surely burn it and still I thrust it; my suffering is no punishment, it is the natural consequence of my action. Punishment depends upon the will of the judge. Natural consequences are independent of any person's will.

—*Harijan :* Sept. 3, 1938.

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PUNISHMENT is God's, who alone is the Infallible Judge. It does not belong to man "with judgement weak."

Harijan : Jan. 12, 1939.

Purity

IT is my faith, based on experience, that if one's heart is pure, calamity brings in its train men and measures to fight it —*My Experiments with Truth* : Page 355.

Q

Quality *Vs.* Quantity

STRENGTH of numbers is the delight of the timid. The valiant of spirit glory in fighting alone. And you are all here to cultivate that valour of the spirit. Be you one or many, this valour is the only true valour, all else is false. And the valour of the spirit cannot be achieved without Sacrifice, Determination, Faith and Humility. —*Young India :* June 17, 1926.

IN every great cause it is not the number of fighters that counts but it is the quality of which they are made that becomes the deciding factor. The greatest men of the world have always stood alone. Take the great prophets, Zoraster, Buddha, Jesus, Mahomed—they all stood alone like many others whom I can name. But they had living faith in themselves and their God, and believing as they did that God was on their side, they never felt lonely. You may recall the occasion when pursued by numerous enemies Abu Bakr, who was accompanying the Prophet in his flight, trembled to think of their fate and said : 'Look at the number of the enemies that is overtaking us. What shall we two do against these heavy odds ?' Without a moment's reflection, the Prophet rebuked his faithful companion by saying : 'No, Abu Bakr, we are three, for God is with us ?' Or, take the invincible faith of Vibhishan and Prahlad. I want you to have that same living faith in yourselves and God.

— *Young India* : Oct. 10, 1929.

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THAT quality is more than quantity is sound theory because it is true in practice. Indeed, I hold that what cannot be proved in practice cannot be sound in theory. —*Young India* : Nov. 14, 1929.

R

Ramaraj

I WARN my Musalman friends against misunderstanding me in my use of the words 'Ramaraj.' By Ramaraj I do not mean Hindu Raj. I mean by Ramaraj Divine Raj, the Kingdom of God. For me Rama and Rahim are one and the same deity. I acknowledge no other God but the one God of truth and rightness. Whether Rama of my imagination ever lived or not on this earth, the ancient ideal of Ramaraj is undoubtedly one of true

democracy in which the meanest citizen could be sure of swift justice without an elaborate and costly procedure. Even the dog is described by the poet to have received justice under Ramaraj. —*Young India* : Sept. 19, 1929.

Reason

Intellect takes us along in the battle of life to a certain limit but at the crucial moment it fails us. Faith transcends reason. It is when the horizon is the darkest and human reason is beaten down to the ground that faith shines brightest and comes to our rescue. It is such faith that our youth requires and this comes when one has shed all pride of intellect and surrendered one self entirely to His will. —*Young India* : March 21, 1929.

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RATIONALISTS are admirable beings, rationalism is a hideous monster when it claims for itself omnipotence. Attribution of omnipotence to reason is as bad a piece of idolatry as is worship of stock and stone believing it to be God. —*Young India* : Dec. 12, 1936.

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TRUTH is superior to everything and I reject what conflicts with it. Similarly that which is in conflict with non-violence should be rejected. And on matters which can be reasoned out, that which conflicts with Reason must also be rejected. There are subjects where Reason cannot take us far and we have to accept things on faith. Faith then does not contradict Reason but transcends it. Faith is a kind of sixth sense which works in cases which are without the purview of reason. —*Young India* : March 6, 1937.

Rebellion

REBELLION in a just cause is a duty, the extent of opposition being determined by the measure of the injustice done and felt. —*Young India* : June 2, 1920.

Reformer

A REFORMER cannot always afford to wait. If he does not put into force his belief he is no reformer. Either he is too hasty or too afraid or too lazy. Who is to advise him or provide him with a barometer? You can only guide yourself with a disciplined conscience, and then run all risks with the protecting armour of truth and non-violence. A reformer could not do otherwise.

—*Young India* : Nov. 12, 1931.

Regularity

IT is universal experience that a boy with regular habits does twice the amount of work than a boy does who works irregularly. —*Young India* : Dec. 3, 1925.

Religion

I DO not like the world tolerance but could not think of a better one. Tolerance may imply gratuitous assumption of the inferiority of other faiths to one's own, whereas *ahimsa* teaches us to entertain the same respect for the religious faiths of others as we accord to our own, thus admitting the imperfection of the latter. This admission will be readily made by a seeker of Truth, who follows the Law of Love. If we had attained the full vision of Truth, we would no longer be mere seekers, but would have become one with God, for Truth is God. But being only seekers, we prosecute our quest, and are conscious of our imperfection. And if we are imperfect ourselves, religion as conceived by us must also be imperfect. We have not realised religion in its perfection, even as we have not realised God. Religion of our conception, being thus imperfect, is always subject to a process of evolution and reinterpretation. Progress towards Truth towards God, is possible only because of such evolu-

tion. And if all faiths outlined by men are imperfect, the question of comparative merit does not arise. All faiths constitute a revelation of Truth, but all are imperfect and liable to error. Reverence for other faiths need not bind us to their faults. We must be keenly alive to the defects of our own faith also, yet not leave it on that account, but try to overcome those defects. Looking at all religions with an equal eye, we would not only not hesitate but would think it our duty to blend into our faith every acceptable feature of other faiths.

The question then arises. Why should there be so many different faiths? The Soul is one, but the bodies which She animates are many. We cannot reduce the number of bodies, yet we recognise the unity of the Soul. Even as a tree has a single trunk, but many branches and leaves, so is there one true and perfect religion, but it becomes many, as it passes through the human medium. The one religion is beyond all speech. Imperfect men put it into such language as they can command, and their words are interpreted by other men equally imperfect. Whose interpretation is to be held to be the right one? Everyboby is right from his own standpoint but it is not impossible that every body is wrong. Hence the necessity for tolerance, which does not mean indifference towards one's own faith, but a more intelligent and purer love for it. Tolerance gives us spiritual insight, which is as far from fanaticism as the north pole from the south. True knowledge of religion breaks down the barriers between faiths and faith. Cultivation of tolerence for other faith will impart to us a truer understanding of our own.

Tolerence obviously does not disturb the distinction between right and wrong, or good and evil. The reference here throughout is naturally to the principle

faiths of the world. They are all based on common fundamentals. They have all produced great saints.

—*Yaravda Mandir* : *Chapter X.*

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THE acceptance of the doctrine of Equality of Religions does not abolish the distinction between religion and irreligion. We do not propose to cultivate toleration for irreligion. That being so some people might object that there would be no room left for equi-mindedness, if everyone took his own decision as to what was religion and what was irreligion. If we follow the Law of Love, we shall not bear any hatred towards the irreligious brother. On the contrary, we shall love him, and therefore either we shall bring him to the error of his ways or he will point out our error, or each will tolerate the others difference of opinion. If the other party does not observe the Law of Love, he may be violent to us. If, however we cherish real love for him, it will overcome his bitterness in the end. All obstacles in our path will vanish, if only we observe the golden rule that we must not be impatient with those whom we may consider to be in error, but must be prepared, if need be to suffer in our own person.

—*Yaravda Mandir* : *Chapter XI.*

LET me explain what I mean by religion. It is not the Hindu religion which I certainly prize above all other religions, but the religion which transcends Hinduism, which changes one's very nature, which binds one indissolubly to the truth within and which ever purifies. It is the permanent element in human nature which counts no cost too great in order to find full expression and which leaves the soul utterly restless until it has found itself, known its maker and appreciated the true correspondence between the Maker and itself —*Young India* : May 12, 1920.

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AS soon as we loose moral basis, we cease to be

religious. There is no such thing as religion overriding morality, man for instance, cannot be untruthful, cruel, or incontinent and claim to have God on his side.

—*Young India* : Nov. 24, 1921.

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RELIGION is a matter of the heart. No physical inconvenience can warrant abandonment of one's own religion. —*Young India* : Oct. 27, 1920.

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RELIGION is more than life. Remember that his own religion is the truest to everyman even if it stands low in the scales of philosophical comparison.

—*Young India* : Aug. 28, 1924.

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MY religion is based on truth and non-violence. Truth is my Cod. Non-violence is the means of realising Him. —*Young India* : Jan. 8, 1928.

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IN nature there is fundamental unity running through all the diversity we see about us. Religions are given to mankind so as to accelerate the process of realisation of fundamental unity. —*Young India* : Aug. 20, 1934.

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ONE'S own religion is after all a matter between oneself and one's Maker and no one else's.

—*Young India* : Aug. 20, 1924.

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RELIGION worth the name can only be saved by purity, humility and fearlessness of the uttermost type among its professors. It is the only *shuddhi* and only propaganda. —*Young India*: June 16, 1927.

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IN matters of religion I am against any state interference. —*Young India* : July 7, 1927.

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ALL the religions of the world, while they may differ

in other respects undoubtedly proclaim that nothing lives in this world but truth. —*Young India* : Oct. 20, 1927.

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IT is a painful fact, but it is a historical truth, that priests who should have been the real custodians of religion have been instrumental in destroying the religion of which they have been coustodians. —*Young India* : Oct. 20, 1927.

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LET no one even for a moment entertain the fear that a reverent study of other religions is likely to weaken or shake on'es faith in one's own. The Hindu system of philosophy regards all religions as containing the elements of truth in them and enjoins an attitude of respect and reverence towards them all. This of course presupposes regard for one's own religion. Study and appreciation of other religions need not cause a weakening of that regard ; it should mean extension of that regard to other religions.

—*Young India* : Dec. 6, 1928.

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TO me religion means truth and *Ahimsa* or rather truth alone, because truth includes *ahimsa*, *ahimsa* being the necessary and indispensable means for its discovery.

—*Young India* : Dec. 6, 1928.

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IN the Congress we must cease to be exclusive Hindus or Musalmans or Sikhs, Parsis, Christians, Jews. While we may staunchly adhere to our respective faiths, we must be in the Congress Indians first and Indians last. A good Hindu or a good Musalman should be a better Hindu or a better Musalman for being a lover of his country. There never ean be any conflict between the real interest of one's country and that of one's religion. Where there appears to be any there is something wrong with one's religion, *i. e.*, one's morals. True religion means good thought and good conduct. True patriotism also means good thought and

good conduct. To set up a comparison between two synonymous things is wrong. —*Young India* : Jan. 9, 1930.

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THE *Allaha* of Islam is the same as the God of Christians and the *Ishwara* of Hindus. Even as there are numerous names of God in Hinduism, there are many names of God in Islam. The name do not indicate individuality but attributes and little man has tried in his humble way to describe mighty God by giving Him attributes, though He is above all attributes, Indescribable, Immeasurable. Living faith in this God means acceptance of the brotherhood of mankind. It also means equal respect for all religions. If Islam is dear to you, Hinduism is dear to me. The closest though very incomplete analogy for religion I can find is marriage. It is or used to be an indissoluble tie. Much more so is the tie of religion. And just as a husband does not remain faithful to his wife, or wife to her husband, because either is conscious of some exclusive superiority of the other over the rest of his or her sex but because of some indifinable but irresistible attraction so does one remain irresistbly faithful to one's own religion and find ful satisfaction in such adhesion. And just as a faithful husband does not need in order to sustain his faithfulness to consider other women as inferior to his wife. so does not a person belonging to one religion need to consider others to be inferior to his own. To pursue the analogy still further, even as faithfulness to one's wife does not presuppose blindness to her shortcomings, so does not faitfulness to one's religion persuppose blindness to the shortcomings of the religion. Indeed faithfulness certainly demands a keener perception of shortcomings and therefore a livelier sense of the proper remedy for their removal. Taking the view I do of religion, it is unnecessary for me to examine the beauties of Hinduism. The reader may rest assured that I am not likely to remain a Hindu if I was not conscious of its many beauties. Only for my purpose they need not be exclusive. My approach

to other religions, therefore, is never as a fault-finding critic but as a devotee hoping to find the like beauties in the other religions and wishing to incorporate in my own the good I may find in them and miss in mine.

—*Harijan* : Aug. 12, 1938.

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I BELIEVE in the fundamental truth of all great religions of the world. I believe that they are all God-given, and I believe that they were necessary for the people to whom these religions were revealed. And I believe that, if only we could all of us read the scriptures of the different faiths from the standpoint of the followers of those faiths, we should find that they were at bottom all one and were all helpful to one another. —*Harijan* : Feb. 10, 1934.

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RELIGION deals with the science of the soul. Great as the other forces of the world are, if there is such a thing as God, soul force is the greatest of all. We know as a matter of fact that the greater the force the finer it is. Hitherto electricity has held the field among the finer physical powers. And yet nobody has seen it except through its wonderful results. Scientific speculation dares to talk of a force finer even than that of electricity. But no instrument devised by man has been able to know anything positive of soul force or spiritual force. It is on that force that the true religious reformer has hitherto relied.

—*Harijan* : Aug. 22, 1936.

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RELIGION is a matter of life and death. A man does not change religion as he changes his garments. He takes it with him beyond the grave. Nor does a man profess his religion to oblige others. He professes a religion because he cannot do otherwise. A faithful husband loves his wife as he would love no other woman. Even her faithlessness would not wean him from his faith. The bond is

more than blood-relationship. So is the religious bond if it is worth anything. It is a matter of the heart.

—*Harijan* : Jan. 17, 1937.

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TRUE religion is not a narrow dogma. It is not external observance. It is faith in God, and living in the presence of God, it means faith in a future life, in truth and *ahimsa*. There prevails to-day a sort of apathy towards these things of the spirit. Our temples appear today to be meant only for the simple and the ignorant. Few visit real temples of God. Let the educated class take up the work of reform in this direction. —*Harijan* : Aug. 30, 1938.

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TO try to root out religion itself from society is a wild goose chase. And were such an attempt to succeed, it would mean the destruction of society. Superstitions, evil customs and other imperfections creep in from age to age and mar religion for the time being. They come and go. But religion itself remains. Because the existence of the world in a broad sense depends on religion. The ultimate difinition of religion may be said to be obedience to the Law of God. God and His law are synonymous terms. Therefore God signifies an unchanging and living law. No one has ever really found Him. But *avators* and prophets have, by means of their '*tapasya*' given to mankind a faint glimpse of the Eternal Law. —*Harijan* : Aug. 25, 1940.

Religion and Reason

I REJECT any religious doctrine that does not appeal to reason and is in conflict with morality.

—*Young India*: : July 21, 1920.

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I HAVE found that mere appeal to reason does not answer where prejudices are age long and based on supposed religious authority. Reason has to be strengthened by suffering and suffering opens the eyes of understanding.

—*Young India* : Dec. 14, 1928.

EVERY formula of every religion has in this age of reason, to submit to the acid test of reason and universal assent. —*Young India* : Feb. 26, 1925.

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BUT religion that takes no count of practical affairs and does not help to solve them, is no religion.

—*Young India* : May 7, 1925.

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RELIGION without the backing of reason and enlightenment is a worthless sentiment which is bound to die of inanition. It is knowledge that ultimately gives salvation. —*Young India* : May 7, 1925.

Religious Neutrality

IN free India every religion should prosper on terms of equality, unlike what is happening today. Christianity being the nominal religion of the rulers, it receives favours which no other religion enjoys. A Government responsible to the people dare not favour one religion over another. —*Harijan* : Dec. 30, 1939.

Repentance

A CLEAN confession, combined with a promise never to commit the sin again, when offered before one who has the right to receive it, is the purest type of repentance.

—*My Experiments with Truth* : Page 412.

Repression

REPRESSION, if it does not cow us down, if it does not deter us from our purpose, can but hasten the advent of *Swaraj*, for it puts us on our mettle and evokes the spirit of self-sacrifice and courage in the face of danger. Repression does for a true man or a nation what fire does for gold. —*Young India* : Dec. 26, 1924.

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ACCORDING to the science of *Satyagraha*, the greater the repression and lawlessness on the part of

authority, the greater should be the suffering courted by the victims. Success is the certain result of suffering of the extremest character, voluntarily undergone.

—*Young India* : May 8, 1930.

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REPRESSION is really an oxygen draught.

—*Young India* : Dec. 17, 1931.

Resolutions

IT would conduce to national progress and save a great deal of time and trouble if we cultivated the habit of never supporting the resolutions either by speaking or voting for them if we had not either the intention or the ability to carry them out. —*Young India* : March 7, 1929.

Retreat

RETREAT itself is often a plan of resistence and may be a precursor of great bravery and sacrifice. Every retreat is not cowardice which implies fear to die. Of course a brave man would more often die in violently or non-violently resisting the aggressor in the latter's attempt to oust him from his property, but he will be no less brave if wisdom dictates present retreat.

—*Harijan* : April 12, 1942.

Revenge

YOU have now perhaps learnt that the best way of resisting injury is never to injure the injurer, but ever to refuse, no matter how much suffering the refusal costs us, to do his will when we know it to be wrong.

—*Young India* : May 28, 1931.

Riches

I KNOW that generally speaking it is the experience of the world that possession of gold is inconsistent with the possession of virtue ; but though such is the unfortunate experience in the world it is by no means an inexorable law. We have the celebrated instance of Janaka, who,

although he was rolling in riches and had a limitless power, being a great prince, was still one of the purest men of his age. And even in our own age I can cite from my own personal experience and tell you that I have the good fortune of knowing several moneyed men who do not find it impossible to lead a straight pure life. What is possible for these few men is surely possible for every one of you. And I wish that my word can find an abiding place in your heart and know how much good it will do you and the society in which you are living. —*Young India* : Oct. 6, 1927.



LET not possession of wealth be synonomous with degradation and profigacy. —*Young India* : Oct. 6, 1927.



THE rich, monied class ought to use their God-given wealth for philanthropic purposes.

—*Young India*: March 1, 1928.

Ridicule

RIDICULE is like repression. Both give place to respect when they fail to produce the intended effect.

—*Young India* : Dec. 2, 1921.

Right

Proved right should be capable of being vindicated by right means as against the rude *i.e.*, sanguinary, means. Man may and should shed his own blood for establishing what he considers to be his right. He may not shed the blood of his opponent who disputes his 'right.'

—*Harijan* : Jan. 2, 1930.



"A MORAL right, if there is any such thing, does not need any asserting and defending."

" And is there anything like a moral right ? Give me an illustration "

"Have I not a moral right to speak ?"

"It is not a moral right but a legal right. There is no right but is legal. Divorced from legality, moral right is a misnomer. And therefore you either enforce a right or fight for it. Whereas nobody asserts one's duty. He humbly performs it. I shall take an illustration. You are here. You feel like preaching to me the Gospel. I deny the right and ask you to go away. If you regard praying for me a duty, you will quietly go away and pray for me. But if you claim the right to preach to me, you will call the police and appeal to them for preventing my obstructing you. That leads to a clash. But your duty no one dare question. You perform it here or elsewhere. and if your prayers to God to change my heart are genuine, God will change my heart. What Christianity, according to my interpretation of it, expects you to do is to pray to God to change my heart. Duty is a debt. Right belongs to a creditor, and it would be a funny thing indeed if a devout Christian claimed to be a creditor!"—*Harijan* : April, 6 1937.

(From a conversation between Gandhi ji and a Christian.)

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Sacrifice

NO cost is too heavy for the preservation of one's honour, especially religious honour. Only they will ssacrifice who cannot abstain. Forced sacrifice is no acrifice. It will not last. A movement lacks sincerity when it is supported by unwilling workers under pressure. The Khilafat Movement will become an irresistible force when every Musalman treats the peace terms as an individual wrong. No man waits for others help or sacrifice in matters of private personal wrong. He seeks help no doubt, but his battle against the wrong goes on whether he gains help or not. If he has justice on his side, the divine law is that he does get help. God is the help of the helpless. When the Pandava brothers were unable to help Draupadi, God came to the rescue and saved her honour. The Prophet was helped by God when he seemed to be forsaken by men.—*Young India* : Aug. 11, 1920.

WHEN self-satisfaction creeps over a man, he has ceased to grow and therefore has become unfit for freedom. He who offers a little sacrifice from a lowly and religious spirit quickly realises the miserable littleness of it. Once on the path of sacrifice, we find out the measure of our selfishness, and must continually wish to give more and not be satisfied till there is a complete self-surrender. —*Young India* : Sept. 29, 1921.

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A LITTLE reflection would however show that self-sacrifice must not be allowed to excuse a crime. Not even self-immolation can be allowed to support a bad or an immoral cause. He would be a weak father who would permit his child to play with fire because the child is hunger-striking for the permission.

—*Young India* : Dec. 18, 1924.

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SELF-SACRIFICE of one innocent man is a million times more potent than the sacrifice of million men who die in the act of killing others. The willing sacrifice of the innocent is the most powerful retort to insolent tyranny that has yet been conceived by God or man. —*Young India* : Feb. 12, 1925.

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THERE is no necessary charm about death on the gallows; often such death is easier than a life of drudgery and toil in malarious tracts.

I suggest to my friend the revolutionary that death on the gallows serves the country only when the victim is a 'spotless lamb.'

—*Young India* : April 9, 1925.

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NO sacrifice is worth the name unless it is a joy. Sacrifice and a long face go ill together. Sacrifice is 'making sacred.' He must be a poor specimen of humanity who is in need of sympathy for his sacrifice. Buddha

renounced everything because he could not help it. To have anything was a torture to him. The Lokamanaya remained poor because it was painful for him to possess riches. Andrews regards the possession of even a few rupees a burden, and continually contrives to lose them if he gets any. I have often told him that he is in need of a caretaker. He listens, he laughs and repeats the same performance without the slightest contrition. *Madar-i-Hind*s is a terrible goddess. She will exact the willing, nye, even the unwilling sacrifice of many a young man and young woman before she deigns to say. 'Well done my childern you are free.' We are as yet playing at sacrifice. The reality has still to come. —*Young India* : June 25, 1925.

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WE are all creatures of circumstances. Brought up only to work as servants under constant constraint and with all initiative killed in us, we cannot respond to the call for self-sacrifice, for love of the country above love of self or family, for service without distinction.

—*Young India* : Dec. 10, 1925.

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THAT sacrifice which causes pain loses its sacred character and will break down under stress. One gives up things that one considers to be injurious and therefore there should be pleasure attendant upon the giving up. Whether the substitute is effective or not is a different question altogether. If the substitute is effective, it is no doubt well, but, it is well also even if the substitute is ineffective. It must lead to an effort to procure a bettter substitute, but surely not to a return to what has been given up after full knowledge and experience of its harmfull character.

—*Young India* : July 15, 1926.

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THE world is touched by sacrifice. It does not then discriminate about the merits of a cause. Not so

God. He is all seeing. He insists on the purity of the cause and on adequate sacrifice therefore.

—*Young India* : April 3, 1930.



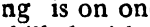
THE law of sacrifice is uniform throughout the world. To be effective it demands the sacrifice of the bravest and the most spotless.

—*Young India* : April 21, 1930.



SWARAJ won without sacrifice cannot last long. I would therefore like our people to get ready to make the highest sacrifice that they are capable of. In true sacrifice all the suffering is on one side-one is required to master the art of getting killed without killing, of gaining life by losing it. May India live up to this *mantra*.

—*Young India* : May 8, 1930.

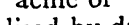


GENTLENESS, self-sacrifice and generosity are the exclusive possession of no one race or religion.

—*Young India* : Aug. 3, 1930.

Satihood

SATIHOOD is the acme of purity. This purity cannot be attained or realised by dying. It can be attained only through constant striving, constant immolation of the spirit from day to day. —*Young India* : May 21, 1931.



A SATI has been described by our ancients, and the description holds good to-day, as one who ever fixed in her love and devotion to her husband, signalises herself by her selfless service during her husband's lifetime as well as after, and remains absolutely chaste in thought, word and deed. Self-immolation at the death of the husband is not a sign of enlightenment, but of gross ignorance as to the nature of the soul. The soul is immortal, unchangeable and immanent.

It does not perish with the physical body but journeys on from one mortal frame to another, till it completely emancipates itself from earthly bondage. The truth of it has been attested to by the experience of countless sages and seers, and can be realised by any one who may wish to even to-day. How can suicide be, then, justified in the light of these facts ?

Again, true marriage means not merely union of bodies. It connotes the union of the souls too. If marriage meant no more than a physical relationship, the bereaved wife should be satisfied with a portrait or a waxen image of her husband. But self-destruction is worse than futile. It cannot help to restore the dead to life, on the contrary it only takes away one more from the world of the living.

—*Young India* : May 12, 1931.

Satyagraha

THE very nature of Satyagraha is such that the fruit of the movement is contained in the movement itself. Satyagraha is based on self help, self-sacrifice and faith in God.

—*Satyagraha in South Africa* : Page 282.

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THE humility of a Satyagrahi knows no bounds. He does not let slip a single opportunity for settlement, and he does not mind if any one therefore looks upon him as timid. The man who has faith in him and the strength which flows from faith, does not care if he is looked down upon by others. He relies solely upon his internal strength. He is therefore courteous to all, and thus cultivates and enlists world opinion in favour of his own cause.

—*Satyagraha in South Africa* : Page 442.

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SATYAGRAHA is a priceless and matchless weapon

and those who wield it are strangers to disappointment or defeat. —*Satyagraha in South Africa* : Page 511.

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THE end of a Satyagraha campaign can be described as worthy, only when it leaves the Satyagrahis stronger and more spirited then they are in the beginning —*My Experiments with Truth* : Page 538.

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THE hope of India lies in Satyagraha. And what is Satyagraha ? It has often been described But just as the sun cannot be *fully* described even by the myriad tongued Sheshnaga, so also the sun of Satyagraha cannot be adequately described. And though we always see the sun but know really very little of it, even so we do ever seem to see the sun of Satyagraha, but we know precious little about it. —*Satyagraha Leaflets.*

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IN the course of the Satyagraha struggle in South Africa several thousand indentured Indians had struck work. This was a Satyagraha strike and therefore, entirely peaceful and voluntry. Whilst the strike was going on, a strike of a European miners, railway employers, etc, was declared. Overtures were made to me to make common cause with the European strikers. As a Satyagrahi, I did not require a moment's consideration to decide not to do so. I went further and for fear of our strike being classed with the strike of Europeans, in which methods of violence and the use of arms found prominent place, ours was suspended and Satyagraha from that moment came to be recognized by the Europeans of South Africa as a humble and honest movement and, in the words of General Smuts, a "constitutional movement." —*Young India* : April 18, 1919.

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SATYAGRAHA is like a banian tree with innumerable branches. Civil disobedience is one such branch.

Satya (truth) and *Ahimsa* (non-violence) together make the parent trunk from which all innumerable branches shoot out. We have found by bitter experience that whilst in an atmosphere of lawlessness civil disobedience found ready acceptance, *Satya* (truth) and *Ahimsa* (non-violence) from which alone civil disobedience can worthily spring have commanded little or no respect. Ours then is a herculian task, but we may not shirk it. We must fearlessly spread the doctrine of *Satya* and *Ahimsa* and then and not till then, shall we be able to undertake mass *Satyagraha*. —*Young India* : May 1, 1919.

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FOR the past thirty years I have been preaching and practising Satyagraha. The principles of Satyagraha, as I know it to-day, constitute a gradual evolution.

The term Satyagraha was coined by me in South Africa to express the force that the Indians there used for full eight years, and it was coined in order to distinguish it from the movement, then going on in the United Kingdom and South Africa under the name of Passive Resistance.

Its root meaning is holding on to truth; hence, Truth-force. I have also called it Love-force or Soul-force. In the application of Satyagraha I discovered in the earliest stages that pursuit of truth did not admit of violence being inflicted on one's opponent but that he must be weaned from error by patience and sympathy. For what appears to be truth to the one may appear to be error to the other. And patience means self-suffering. So the doctrine came to mean vindication of truth not by infliction of suffering on the opponent, but one's own self.

Satyagraha differs from Passive Resistance as the North Pole from the South. The latter has been conceived as a weapon of the weak and does not exclude the use of physical force or violence for the purpose of

gaining one's end; where as the former has been conceived as a weapon of the strongest and excludes the use of violence in any shape or form.

When Daniel disregarded the laws of the Medes and Persians which offended his conscience and meekly suffered the punishment for his disobedience, he offered Satyagraha in its purest form. Socrates would not refrain from preaching what he knew to be the truth to the Athenian youth, and bravely suffered the punishment of death. He was in this case, a Satyagrahi. Prahlad disregarded the orders of his father because he considered them to be repugnant to his conscience. He uncomplainingly and cheerfully bore the tortures to which he was subjected at the instance of his father. Mirabai, who is said to have offended her husband by following her own conscience was content to live in separation from him and bore with quiet dignity and ,resignation all the injuries that are said to have been done to her in order to bend her to her husband's will. Both Prahlad and Mirabai practised Satyagraha. It must be remembered, that neither Daniel nor Socrates, neither Prahlad nor Mirabai had any ill-will towards their prosecutors. Daniel and Socrates are regarded as having been model citizens of the States to which they belonged, Prahlad a model son, Mirabai a model wife.

This doctrine of Satyagraha is not new; it is merely an extension of the rule of domestic life to the political. Family disputes and differences are generally settled according to the law of love. The injured member has so much regard for the others that he suffers injury for the sake of his principles without retaliating and without being angry with those who differ from him. And as repression of anger, self-suffering are difficult processes he does not dignify trifles into principles, but, in all non-essentials, readily agrees with the rest of the family and thus contrives to gain the maximum of peace for

himself without disturbing that of the others. Thus his action, whether he resists or resigns, is always calculated to promote the common welfare of the family. It is this law of love which, silently but surely governs the family for the most part throughout the civilized world.

I feel that nations cannot be one in reality nor can their activities be conducive to the common good of the whole humanity, unless there is this definition and acceptance of the law of the family in national and international affairs, in other words, on the political platform. Nations can be called civilized, only to the extent that they obey this law.

This law of love is nothing but a law of truth. Without truth there is no love; without truth it may be affection, as for one's country to the injury of others; or infatuation, as of a young man for a girl; or love may be unreasoning and blind as of ignorant parents for their children. Love transcends all animality and is never partial. Satyagraha has, therefore, been described as a coin, on whose face you read love and on the reverse you read truth. It is a coin current everywhere and has indefinable value.

Satyagraha is self-dependent, It does not require the assent of the opponent before it can be brought into play. Indeed it shines out most when the opponent resists. It is, therefore, irresistible. A Satyagrahi does not know what defeat is for he fights for truth without being exhausted. Death in the fight is a deliverance, and prison, a gate-way to liberty.

It is called also soul-force, because a definite recognition of the soul within is a necessity, if a Satyagrahi is to believe that death does not mean cessation of struggle, but a culmination. The body is merely a vehicle for self-expression; and he gladly gives up the body, when its existence is an obstruction in the way

of the opponent seeing the truth, for which the Satyagrahi stands. He gives up the body in the certain faith that if anything would change his opponent's view a willing sacrifice of his body must do so. And with the knowledge that the soul survives the body, he is not impatient to see the triumph of truth in the present body. Indeed, victory lies in the ability to die in the attempt to make the opponent see the truth which the Satyagrahi for the time being expresses.

And as a Satyagrahi never injures his opponent and always appeals, either to his reason by gentle argument, or his heart by the sacrifice of self, Satyagraha is twice blessed, it blesses him who practises it, and him against whom it is practised.

It has, however, been objected that Satyagraha, as we conceive it, can he practised only by a select few. My experience proves the contrary. Once its simple principles—adherence to truth and insistence upon it by self-suffering—are understood, anybody can practise it. It is as difficult or as easy to practise as any other virtue. It is as little necessary for its practice that everyone should understand, the whole philosphy of it, as it is for the practice of total abstinence.

After all, no one disputes the necessity of insisting on truth as one sees it. And it is easy enough to understand that it is vulgar to attempt to compel the opponent to its acceptance by using brute force; it is discreditable to submit to error because argument has failed to convince, and that the only true and honourable course is not to submit to it even at the cost of one's life. Then only can the world be purged of error, if it ever can be altogether. There can be no compromise with error where it hurts the vital being.

But, on the political field, the struggle on behalf of the people mostly consists in opposing error in the

shape of unjust laws. When you have failed to bring the error home to the lawgiver by way of petitions and the like, the only remedy open to you, if you do not wish to submit to it, is to compel him to retrace his steps by suffering in your own person, *i.e.*, by inviting the penalty for the breach of the law. Hence, Satyagraha largely appears to the public as civil disobedience or civil resistence. It is civil in the sense that it is not criminal.

The criminal, *i. e.*, the ordinary law-breaker breaks the law surreptitiously and tries to a void the penalty; not so the civil resister. He ever obeys the laws of the State to which he belongs, not out of fear of the sanctions, but because he considers them to be good for the welfare of society. But there come occasions, generally rare when he considers certain laws to be so unjust as to render obedience to them a dishonour, he then openly and civilly breaks them and quietly suffers the penalty for their breach. And in order to register his protest against the action of the law-giver, it is open to him to withdraw his co-operation from the State by disobeying such other laws whose breach does not involve moral turpitude. In my opinion, the beauty and efficacy of Satyagraha are so great and the doctrine so simple that it can be preached even to children.

(From the Report of the Commissioners appointed by the Indian National Congress).

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WITH Satya combined with Ahimsa you can bring the world to your feet. Satyagraha in its essence is nothing but the introduction of truth and gentleness in the political, *i.e.*, national life. —*Young India* : March 10, 1920.

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SATYAGRAHA is not predominantly civil disobedience but a quiet and irresistible pursuit of truth. On the rares

occasions it becomes civil disobedience. But conscious and willing obedience must, in the case of a large body of workers, precede it. —*Young India* : Jan. 12, 1922.

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SATYAGRAHA is never adopted abruptly and never till all other and milder methods have been tried.

—*Young India* : Jan. 11, 1929.

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IT is undertaken not from a belief in human aid but it is based upon an unquenchable faith in God and His justice. And God is both gentle and hard. He tries us through and through to the last suffering point but He is so gentle as never to test us to the breaking point.

—*Young India* : Feb. 18, 1926.

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NO power on earth can make a person do a thing against his will. Satyagraha is a direct result of the recognition of this great Law and is independent of numbers participating in it. —*Young India* : Feb. 18, 1926.

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SATYAGRAHA, cannot be resorted to for personal gain, but only for the good of others. A Satyagrahi should always be ready to undergo suffering and pecuniary loss.

—*Young India* : Sept. 30, 1926.

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SATYAGRAHA struggle requires no prestige save that of truth, and no strength save that of self-suffering which comes only from an immovable faith in one's cause and from a completely non-violent spirit.

Impatience is a phase of violence. A Satyagrahi has nothing to do with victory. He is sure of it, but he has also to know that it comes from God. His is but to suffer.

—*Young India* : Oct. 18, 1927.

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THE fact is that Satyagraha presupposes the living

presence and guidance of God. The leader depends not on his own strength but on that of God. He acts as the Voice within guides him. Very often therefore what are practical politics so-called are unrealities to him, though in the end his prove to be most practical politics.

—*Young India* : Aug. 2, 1928.

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SATYAGRAHA presupposes self-discipline, self-control self-purification, and a recognised social status in the person offering it. A Satyagrahi must never forget the distinction between evil and evil doer. He must not harbour ill-will or bitterness against the latter. He may not even employ needlessly offensive language against the evil person, however unrelieved his evil might be. For it should be an article of faith with every Satyagrahi that there is none so fallen in this world but can be converted by love. A Satyagrahi will always try to overcome evil by good, anger by love, untruth by truth, himsa by ahimsa. There is no other way of purging the world of evil. Therefore a person who claims to be a Satyagrahi always tries by close and prayerful self-introspection and self-analysis to find out whether he is himself completely free from the taint of anger, ill-will and such other human infirmities, whether he is not himself capable of those very evils against which he is out to lead a crusade. In self-purification and penance lies half the victory of a Satyagrahi. A Satyagrahi has faith that the silent and undemonstrative action of truth and love produces far more permanent and abiding results than speeches or such other showy performances.

But although Satyagraha can operate silently, it requires certain amount of action on the part of a Satyagrahi. A Satyagrahi, for instance, must first mobilise public opinion against the evil which he is out to eradicate, by means of wide and intensive agitation. When public opinion is sufficiently roused against a social abuse even the tallest will not dare to practice or openly to lend support to it. An

awakened and intelligent public opinion is the most potent weapon of a Satyagrahi. When a person supports a social evil in total disregard of a unanimous public opinion, it indicates a clear justification for his social ostracism. But the object of social ostracism should never be to do injury to the person against whom it is directed. Social ostracism means complete non-co-operation on the part of society with the offending individual ; nothing more, nothing less, the idea being that a person who deliberately sets himself to flout society has no right to be served by the society. For all practical purpose this should be enough. Of course, special action may be indicated in special cases and the practice may have to be varied to suit the peculiar features of each individual case. —*Young India* : Aug. 28, 1929.

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SATYAGRAHA literally means insistence on truth. This insistence arms the votary with matchless power. This power or force is connoted by the word Satyagraha. Satyagraha, to be genuine, may be offered against one's parents against wife or one's children, against rulers, against fellow citizens even against the whole world.

Such a universal force necessarily makes no distinction between kinsmen and strangers, young and old, man and woman, friend and foe. The force to be so applied can never be physical. There is in it no room for violence. The only force of universal application can, therefore, be that of *ahimsa* or love. In other words it is Soul Force.

Love does not burn others, it burns itself. Therefore, a Satyagrahi *i. e.*, a civil resister will joyfully suffer even unto death.

It follows, therefore, that a civil resister, whilst he will strain every nerve to compass the end of the existing rule, will do no intentional injury in thought, word or deed to the person of a single Englishman.

—*Young India* : Feb. 27, 1930.

THE Satyagrahi whilst he is ever ready for fight must be equally eager for peace. He must welcome any honourable opportunity for peace. The essential condition of a compromise is that there should be nothing humiliating, nothing panicky about it.

Whilst however a Satyagrahi never yields to panic or hesitancy, neither does he think of humiliating the other party of reducing it to an abject surrender. He may not swerve from the path of justice and may not dictate imposible terms. He may not pitch his demands too high, neither may he pitch them too low.

—*Young India* : March 19, 1931.

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I AM myself daily growing in the knowledge of Satyagraha. I have no text book to consult in time of need, not even the *Gita* which I have called my dictionary. Satyagraha as conceived by me is a science in the making. It may be that what I claim to be a science may prove to be no science at all and may well prove to be the musings and doings of a fool, if not a mad man. It may be that what is true in Satyagraha is as ancient as the hills.

—*Harijan* : Sept. 24, 1938.

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Q. IF some of the Socialists and Communists who did not believe in God could be Satyagrahis ?

A. I am afraid not. For a Satyagrahi has no other stay but God, and he who has any other stay or depends on any other help cannot offer Satyagraha. He may be a passive resister, non-co-operator and so on, but not a true Satyagrahi. It is open to you to argue that this excludes brave comrades, whereas it may include men who profess a belief in God but who in the daily lives are untrue to their profession. I am not talking of those who are untrue to their profession, I am talking of those who are prepared in the

name God to stake their all for the sake of their principle. Don't ask me again why I am enunciating this principle today and did not do so 20 years ago. I can only say that I am no prophet but an erring mortal, progressing from blunder towards truth. 'What about the Buddhists and Jains, then?' someone has asked. Well, I will say that if the Buddhists and Jains raise this objection themselves, and say that they would be disqualified if such a strict rule were observed, I should say to them that I agree with them.

But far be it from me to suggest that you should believe in the God that I believe in. May be your definition is different from mine, but your belief in that God must be your ultimate mainstay. It may be some Supreme Power or some Being even indefinable, but belief in it is indispensable. To bear all kinds of tortures without a murmur of resentment is impossible for a human being without the strength that comes from God. Only in His strength we are strong. And only those who can cast their cares and their fears on that Immeasurable Power have faith in God.

—*Harijan* : June 3, 1939.

Schools

THERE is no doubt that the safest and the most honourable course for the student world is to leave Government schools and colleges at any cost. But the next best course for them is to hold themselves in readiness to be thrown out whenever a conflict occurs between the Government and the people. —*Young India* : Feb. 16, 1928.

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IT is my conviction that our schools and colleges, instead of making us manly, make us obsequious, timid indecisive and ballastless. Manliness consists not in bluff, bravado or lordiness. It consists in daring to do the right.

and facing consequences, whether it is in matters social, political or other. It consists in deeds not in words.

—*Young India* : Jan. 31, 1929.

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IT is gross superstition to suppose that knowledge can be obtained only by going to schools and colleges. The world produced brilliant students before schools and colleges came into being. There is nothing so ennobling or lasting as self-study. Schools and colleges make most of us mere receptacles for holding the superfluities of knowledge. Wheat is left out and mere husk is taken in. I do not wish to decry schools and colleges as such. They have their use. But we are making altogether too much of them. They are but one of the many means of gaining knowledge.

—*Young India* : June 25, 1931.

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A SCHOOL or a college is a sanctuary where there should be nothing that is base or unholy. Schools and colleges are factories for the making of character.

—*Young India* : July 30, 1931.

Science

I AM not opposed to the progress of science as such. On the contrary, the scientific spirit of the West commands my admiration, and if that admiration is qualified, it is because the scientist of the West takes no note of God's lower creation. I abhor vivisection with my whole soul. I detest the unpardonable slaughter of innocent life in the name of science and humanity so-called, and all the scientific discoveries stained with innocent blood I count as of no consequence. If the circulation of blood theory could not have been discovered without vivisection, the human kind could well have done without it. And, I see the day clearly dawning when the honest scientist of the West will put limitations upon the present methods of pursuing knowledge. Future measurements will take note not merely of the human

family but of all that lives and even as we are slowly but surely discovering that it is an error to suppose that Hindus can thrive upon the degradation of a fifth of themselves, or that peoples of the West can rise or live upon the exploitation and degradation of the Eastern and African nations, so shall we realise, in the fulness of time, that our dominion over the lower order of creation is not for their slaughter, but for their benefit equally with ours. For, I am as certain that they are endowed with a soul, as that I am.

—*Young India* : Dec. 17, 1925.

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WHO can deny that much that passes for science and art today destroys the soul instead of uplifting it and instead of evoking the best in us panders to our basest passions ?

—*Young India* : Jan. 23, 1922.

Scortched Earth Policy

THERE is no bravery in my poisoning my well or filling it in so that my brother who is at war with me may not use the water. Let us assume that I am fighting him in the orthodox manner. Nor is there sacrifice in it, for it does not purify me, and sacrifice, as its root meaning implies, presupposes purity. Such destruction may be likened to cutting one's nose to spite one's face. Warriors of old had wholesome laws of war. Among the excluded things were poisoning wells and destroying food crops. But I do claim that there are bravery and sacrifice in my leaving my wells, crops and homestead intact, bravery in that I deliberately run the risk of the enemy feeding himself at my expense and pursuing me, and sacrifice in that the sentiment of leaving something for the enemy purifies and ennobles me. —*Harijan* : April 12, 1942.

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SCORTCHED earth policy is a self-defeating measure.

—*Harijan* : April 19, 1942.

Scriptures

I EXERCISE my judgment about every scripture, including the *Gita*. I cannot let a scriptural text supersede my reason. Whilst I believe that the principal books are inspired, they suffer from a process of double distillation. Firstly they come through a human prophet, and then through the commentaries of interpreters. Nothing in them comes from God directly. Matthews may give one version of one text and John may give another. I cannot surrender my reason whilst I subscribe to divine revelation. And above all, *the letter killeth, the spirit giveth life.* But you must not misunderstand my position. I believe in Faith also, in things where reason has no place, *e. g.*, the existense of God. No argument can move me from that faith, and like that little girl who repeated against all reason '*yet we are seven*' I would like to repeat, on being baffled in argument by a very superior intellect, 'Yet there is God.' (M.D.)

—*Harijan* : Dec. 5, 1936.

Section 124-A

SECTION 124-A is hung over our heads like the sword of Damocles whether we are feasting or fasting.

—*Young India* : July 18, 1929.

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DISAFFECTION has been described by a commentator on the section as want of affection. He goes so far as to say that he who has no affection for the Government established by law is guilty of disaffection. I do not know any Indian who has actually affection for the Government as it is today established.

It is a rape of the word 'law' to say that it is a Government established by 'law'. It is established by the naked sword, kept ready to descend upon us at the will of the arbitrary rulers in whose appointment the people have no say.

—*Young India* : July 18, 1929.

Self-confidence

THE history of the world is full of instances of men who rose to leadership, by sheer force of self-confidence, bravery and tenacity. We too, if we sincerely aspire to Swaraj and are impatient to attain it, should have similar self-confidence. —*Young India* : March 20, 1930.

Self-evolution

I DO not realise that I am staking a whole nation for self-evolution. For self-evolution is wholly, consistent with a nation's evolution. A nation cannot advance, without the units of which it is composed advancing and conversely no individual can advance, without the nation of which he is a part also advancing. —*Young India* : March 26, 1931.

Self-help and Mutual help

SELF-HELP is the capacity to stand on one's legs without anybody's help. This does not mean indifference to or rejection of outside help, but it means the capacity to be at peace with oneself, to preserve one's self-respect, whom outside help is not forthcoming or is refused. A farmer who rejecting friends, help, insists on tilling his own soil, making his own implements, gathering his own harvest, spinning and weaving his own cloth and building his own house, all by himself, must be either foolish or self-conceited or barbarous. Self-help includes bread-labour and means that every man shall earn his bread in the sweat of his brow. Hence a man who works in his field for eight hours daily is entitled to help from the weaver, the carpenter, the blacksmith or the mason. It is not only his right, it is his duty to seek the help of these, and they in their turn benefit by the agriculturist's labour in the field. The eye that would dispense with the help of the hands does not practise self-help, but is conceited and self-deceived. And as the different members of the body are self-reliant so far as their own

functions are concerned and yet are mutually helpful and mutually dependent, so are we three hundred million members of the Indian body politic, each following the rule of self-help in performing his own function, and yet co-operating with one another in all matters of common interest. Only then can we be said to be servants of the country and only then do we deserve to be called nationalists. —*Young India* : May 13, 1926.

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NATIONS are born after much travail. Either we must die like flies in an armed rebellion than submit to military autocracy and in the distant and dim future hope to have democratic rule ; or by patient, natural, unperceived suffering evolve as a self-ruling self- respecting nation.

—*Young India* : July 24, 1924.

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Self-Interest

CONSIDERATIONS of self-interest drive shame away and mislead men out of the straight and narrow path.

—*Satayagraha in South Africa* : Page 214.

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WE must evolve the capacity for going on with our programme without the leaders. That means self-government. And no government in the world can possibly put a whole nation in prison, it must yield to its demand or abdicate in favour of a government suited to that nation.

—*Young India* : Oct. 27, 1920.

Self-purification

HAVING travelled in Ceylon and now fairly long enough in Burma I feel that we in India have perhaps more fully, though by no means as fully as possible, interpreted

the message of the Buddha then you have done. We have it in our *Shastras* that whnever things go wrong, good people and sages go in for *tapasya* otherwise known as austeries. Gautama himself, when he saw oppression, injustice and death around him, and when he saw darkness in front of him, at the back of him and each side of him went out in the wilderness and remained there fasting and praying in searcih of light. And if such penance was necessary for him who was infinitely greate than all of us put together, how much more necessary is it for us, no matter whether we are dressed in yellow or not? My friends, if you will become torch bearers lighting the path of a weary world towards the goal of *ahimsa*, there is no other way out of it, save that of self-purification and penance.

—*Young India* : April 18, 1929.

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THIS gospel of self-purification that has been made so familiar to us during the last ten years thanks to the non-co-operation movement was something startingly new to this friend and he seemed to feel as if a new star had 'swum into his ken.' Gandhiji continued. "This spiritual weapon of self-purification intangible as it seems is the most potent means for revolutionising one's environment and for loosening external shackles. It works subtly and invisibly ; it is an intensive process and though it might often seem a weary and long drawn out process, it is the straightest way to liberation, the surest and the quickest, and no effort can be too great for it. What it requires is faith—an unshakable, mountain-like faith that flinches from nothing."

(M.D.)—*Young India* : March 28, 1929.

Self-realization

TO develope the spirit is to build character and to enable one to work towards a knowledge of God and self-realization.

I am familiar with the superstition that self-realisation is possible only in the fourth stage of life, *i.e. sannyasa*

(renunciation). But it is a matter of common knowledge that those who defer preparation for this invaluable experience until the last stage of life attain not self-realization but old age amounting to a second and pitiable childhood, living as a burden on this earth.

—*My Experiments with Truth* : Page 413.

Self-respect

DIGNITY of the soul and self-respect are interpreted differently by different persons. I am aware that self-respect is often misinterpreted. The over-sensitive man may see disrespect or hurt in almost everything. Such a man does not really understand what self-respect is. That has been my experience in many cases. But no harm accrues even if a non-violent man holds mistaken notions of self-respect. He can die cheerfully for the sake of what he believes to be his dignity and self-respect. Only he has no right to injure or kill the supposed wrong-doer. —*Harijan* : Aug. 18, 1940.

Separate Electorates

SEPARATE electorates to the untouchables will assure them bondage in perpetuity. The Musalmans will never cease to be Musalmans by having separate electorates. Do you want the untouchables to remain 'untouchables' for ever? Well, the separate elctorates would perpetuate the stigma. What is needed is destruction of untouchability, and when you have done it, the bar sinister which has been imposed by an insolent 'superior' class upon an 'inferior' class will be destroyed. When you have destroyed the bar sinister, to whom will you give the separate electorates? Look at the history of Europe. Have you got separate electorates for the working classes or women? With adult franchise, you give the untouchables complete security. Even the orthodox Hindus would have to approach them for votes.

—*Young India* : Nov. 12, 1931.

SEPARATE electorates have resulted in the separation of hearts. They presupposed mutual distrust and conflict of interests. They have tended to perpetuate differences and deepen the distrust.—*Harijan* : Jan. 25, 1942.

Service

SERVICE which is rendered without joy helps neither the servant nor the served. But all other pleasures and possessions pale into nothingness before service which is rendered in a spirit of joy.

—*My Experiments with Truth* : Page 215.

Service is no mushroom growth. It presupposes the will first, and then experience.

—*My Experiments with Truth* : Page 274.

THAT service is the noblest which is rendered for its own sake. —*Young India* : Feb. 24, 1925.

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REAL affection is not shown through praise, but through service. Self-purification is a preliminary process, an indispensable condition of real service.

—*Young India* : March 14, 1929.

Shraddha Ceremonies

PERSONALLY I do not believe in the *Shraddha* ceremony as commonly understood among us in India and although I remember having performed *Shraddha* at a time, I have given up the practice long since, for, as I wrote to a correspondent recently in reply to a question of his, I believe that the only true way of celebrating the Sharaddha of one's ancestors is constantly to ponder over and translate into daily life their good qualities. —*Young India* : Sept. 20, 1928.

Silence

I MUST say that, beyond occasionally exposing me to laughter, my constitutional shyness has been no dis-

advantage whatever. In fact I can say that, on the contrary, it has been all to my advantage. My hesitancy in speech, which was once an annoyance, is now a pleasure. Its greatest benefit has been that it has taught me the economy of words. I have naturally formed the habit of restraining my thoughts. And I can now give myself the certificate that a thoughtless word hardly ever escapes my tongue or pen. I do not recollect ever having had to regret anything in my speech or writing. I have thus been spared many a mishap and waste of time. Experience has taught me that silence is part of the spiritual discipline of a votary of truth. Proneness to exaggerate, to suppress or modify the truth wittingly, or unwittingly is a natural weakness of man and silence is necessary in order to surmount it. A man of few words will really be thoughtless in his speech, he will measure every word. We find so many people impatient to talk. There is no chairman of a meeting who is not pestered with notes for permission to speak. And whenever the permission is given the speaker generally exceeds the time-limit, asks for more time, and keeps on talking without permission. All this talking can hardly be said to be of any benefit to the world. It is so much waste of time. My shyness has been in reality my shield and buckler. It has allowed me to grow. It has helped me in my discernment of truth.

— *My Experiments with Truth* : Page 84.

IT has often occurred to me that a seeker after truth has to be silent. I know the wonderful efficacy of silence. I visited a monastery Trappist in South Africa. A beautiful place it was. Most of the inmates of the place were under a vow of silence. I enquired of the father the motive of it and he said that "the motive is apparent. We are frail human beings. We do not know very often what we say. If we want to listen to the still small voice that is always speaking within

us, it will not be heard if we continually speak." I understood that precious lesson. I know the secret of silence. —*Young India* : Aug. 6, 1925.

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THERE are occasions when silence is wisdom.

—*Young India* : Oct. 17, 1929.

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I BELIEVE that it often becomes the duty of every public man to be silent even at the risk of incurring unpopularity and even a much worse penalty as it undoubtedly becomes his duty to speak out his mind when the occasion requires it, though it may be at the cost of his life. —*Young India* : Oct. 17, 1929.

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AS I do nothing except with an ultimate spiritual end in view, this silence obviously carried with it its spiritual advantage. Silence is essential for one whose life is an incessant search for truth But such silence is a much more serious affair than this. Even writing as a means of communication must stop. Truth would speak, if it must, in every act and not through the written word. —*Harijan* : April 27, 1935.

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THERE is another merit in silence which these four weeks demonstrated to me unmistakably. I am prone to anger like anyone else, but I can successfully suppress it. Well I found out that silence helps one to suppress one's anger as perhaps nothing else does. How is one to give vent to one's wrath if one is silent? Not by eyes. Surely not be physical violence, when one is pledged to non-violence. Not by writing, for the wrath would disappear in the very process of writing.

There are number of other uses of silence that I could mention, but these should suffice. Let me tell

you that I was not looking forward to the termination of this silence. I was dreading it, and I should often like to go into silence, if not quite for a month or months, at least for brief periods.

No wonder Carlyle wrote : *Speech is silvery, but silence is golden.* —*Harijan* : April 17, 1935.

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WELL I should like to leave you a message of silence. Speech without the backing of experience based on action will lack chastity and refinement. I would ask you to curb your tongues and make use of your hands and feet for the service of the community. After you have done so for a few years, you will speak the speech that counts and never fails. —*Harijan* : May 4, 1935.

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Q. THE greatest thing you have ever done is the observance of your Monday silence. You illustrate thereby the storing up and releasing of power when needed. What place has it continued to have in the preparation of your spiritual tasks ?

A. It is not the greatest thing I have done, but it certainly means a great thing to me. I am now taking silence almost every day. If I could impose on myself silence for more days in the week than one I should love it. In Yervada Jail I once observed 15 days' silence. I was in the seventh heaven during that period. But this silence is now being utilized to get through arrears of work. It is a superficial advantage after all. The real silence should not be interrupted even by writing notes to others and carrying on conversation through them. The notes interrupt the sacredness of the silence when you should listen to the music of the spheres. That is why I often say that my silence is a fraud. —*Harijan* : Dec. 29, 1936.

IT has now become both a physical and spiritual necessity for me. Originally it was taken to relieve the sense of frustration. Then I wanted time for writing. After, however, I had practised it for some time I saw the spiritual value of it. It suddenly flashed across my mind that that was the time when I could best hold communion with God. And now I feel as though I was naturally built for silence. Of course I may tell you that from my childhood I have been noted for my silence. I was silent at school, and in my London days I was taken for a silent drone by friends.

—*Harijan* : Dec. 10, 1938.

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1. THERE is a perceptible drop in blood pressure when I observe silence. Medical friends have therefore advised me to take as much silence as I can.

2. There is no doubt whatsoever that after every silence I feel recuperated and have greater energy for work. The output of work during silence is much greater than when I am not silent.

3. The mind enjoys a peace during silence which it does not without it. That is to say, the decision to be silent itself produces a soothing effect on me. It lifts a burden off my mind. My experience tells me that silence soothes the nerves in a manner no drugs can. With me it also induces sleep.

Caution : I have noticed in the jails that prisoners go moody when, deprived of company, they have to observe enforced silence. To produce the effect I have said that silence has to be liked. No one, therefore, need be silent out of love of imitation or merely for the knowledge that it produces on me the effect described by me. The best thing would be to take silence on medical advice. Needless to say that here I do not refer to the spiritual need and effects of silence.

—*Harijan* : Oct: 28, 1939.

WHEN Shri Sarat Chandra Bose was here the other day I asked him if he had been to Segaon. He said that he had been and had a long talk with Gandhiji, but all that Gandhiji had said to him was contained on a slip of the newspaper : "Give my love to all the members of the family." Then he proceeded. " I asked Mahatmaji if he was going to continue his silence in Delhi. The reply was a nod of assent. I then asked him if he would continue it in the Frontier Province also. Again he noded assent. Amazing, is it not."

I do not know how all this is going to be, but I am sure his keenest desire is to continue the silence indefinitely. Several times, during this period of silence he has written : "What a mercy I am silent !" There is no doubt it has given him immeasurable joy and freedom from what may have been many an unhappy moment of angry outburst.

When one comes to think of it one cannot help feeling that nearly half of the misery of the world would disappear if we fretting mortals knew the virtue of silence. Befory modern civilisation came upon us, at least six to eight hours of silence out of twenty-four were vouchsafed to us. Modern civilisation has taught us to convert night into day and golden silence into brazen din and noise. What a great thing it would be if we in our busy lives could retire into ourselves each day for at least a couple of hours and prepare our minds to listen into the voice of the Great Silence. The Divine Radio is always singing if we could only make ourselves ready to listen to It, but it is impossible to listen in without silence. St Teresa has used a charming image to sum up the sweet result of silence :

"You will at once feel your senses gather themselves together ; they seem like bees which return to the hive and there shut themselves up to work at the making of honey : and this will take place without effort or care on your part. God thus rewards the violence which your soul has been doing to itself ; and gives to it such a domination over the senses that a sign is enough

when it desires to recollect itself, for them to obey and so gather themselves together. At the first call of the will they come back more and more quickly. At last after many and many exercises of this kind God disposes them to a state of absolute repose and of perfect contemplation."

—*Harijan* : Dec. 12, 1937.

Sin

MAN and his deed are two distinct things. Whereas a good deed should call forth approbation and a wicked deed disapprobation, the doer of the deed, whether good or wicked always deserves respect or pity as the case may be. 'Hate the sin and not the sinner' is a precept which though easy enough to understand is rarely practised, and that is why the poison of hatred spreads in the world.

This *ahimsa* is the basis of the search for truth. I am realizing every day that the search is vain unless it is founded on *ahimsa* as the basis. It is quite proper to resist and attack a system, but to resist and attack its author is tantamount to resisting and attacking oneself. For we are all tarred with the same brush, and are children of one and the same Creator, and as such the divine powers within us are infinite. To slight a human being is to slight those divine powers. —*My Experiments with Truth* : Page 327.

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A HIDDEN sin is like poison corrupting the whole body. The sooner the poison is thrown off, the better it is for society. And just as a bit of arsenic mixed with milk renders it none the-less vitiating for the addition of pure milk, so also do good deeds in a society fail to cover unexpiated sins —*Young India* : Jan. 12, 1927.

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'BE thou certain, none can perrish, trusting Me,' says the Lord, but let it not be understood to mean that our sins will be washed away by merely trusting Him without any

striving. Only he who struggles hard against the allurements of sense objects, and turns in tears and grief to the Lord, will be comforted. —*Young India* : Jan. 12, 1928.

Slavery

I WISH you could realize that the destiny of our beloved land lies not in us, the parents, but in our children. Shall we not free them from the curse of slavery which has made us crawl on our bellies ? Being weak, we may not have the strength or the will even to throw off the yoke. But shall we not have the wisdom not to leave the cursed inheritence to our children ? —*Young India* : Nov. 3, 1920.



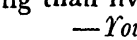
THE slave owner is always more hurt than the slave.
—*Young India* : Nov. 10, 1930.



OUR slavery is complete when we begin to hug it.
—*Young India* : Nov. 24, 1920.



RATHER die begging than live in bondage.
—*Young India* : April 13, 1921.



FROM childhood up a slave-mentality is sedulously cultivated in us. And if we cannot think freely, how can we act freely ? We are alike slaves of the caste, of a foreign education, and of an alien government. Every one of the facilities provided us have become our fetters.
—*Young India* : Feb. 4, 1926.



A SLAVE is a slave because he consents to slavery.
—*Young India* : Feb. 4, 1926.



GOLDEN fetters are no less galling to a self-rerpecting man than iron ones ? The sting lies in the fetters, not in the metal. —*Young India* : June 6, 1929.

IT is only because we have created a vicious atmosphere of impotence round ourselves that we consider ourselves to be helpless even for the simplest possible things.

—*Young India* : June 20, 1929.

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VOTARY as I am of non-violence, if I was given a choice between being a helpless witness to chaos and perpetual slavery, I should unhesitatingly say that I would far rather be witness to chaos in India, I would far rather be witness to Hindus and Musalmans doing one another to death than that I should daily witness our gilded slavery. To my mind golden shackles are far worse than iron ones, for one easily feels the irksome and galling nature of the latter and is prone to forget the former. If therefore India must be in chains, I would they were of iron rather than of gold or other precious metal. —*Young India* : Jan. 16, 1930.

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FOREIGN domination is undoubtedly responsible for many evils, but we need to remember that many pre-existing evils were also a potent cause of that domination. Therefore the mere throwing off of the foreign yoke, whilst it is as essential as life breath, will never be the cure all.

—*Young India* : Feb. 27, 1930.

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JUST as a man would not cherish the thought of living in a body other than his own, so do nations not like to live under other nations however noble and great the latter may be —*Harijan* : March 16, 1942.

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HOW can one be compelled to accept slavery ? I simply refuse to do the master's bidding. He may torture me, break my bones to atoms, and even kill me. He will then have my dead body, not my obedience. Ultimately, therefore, it is I who am the victor and not he, for he has failed in getting me to do what he wanted done.

—*Harijan* : June 7, 1942

Smoking

EVER since I have grown up, I have never desired to smoke and have always regarded the habit of smoking as barbarous, dirty and harmful. I have never understood why there is such a rage for smoking throughout the world. I cannot bear to travel in a compartment full of people smoking. I become choked.

—*My Experiments with Truth* : Page 213

I HAVE a horror of smoking as I have of wines. Smoking I consider to be a vice. It deadens one's conscience and is often worse than drink, in that it acts imperceptibly. It is a habit which is difficult to get rid of when once it seizes hold of a person. It is an expensive vice. It fouls the breath, discolours the teeth and some time even causes cancer. It is an unclean habit. —*Young India* : Jan. 13, 1921.

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SMOKING is in a way a greater curse than drink, inas much as the victim does not realise its evil in time. It is not regarded as a sign of barbarism, it is even acclaimed by civilised people. I can only say, let those who can, give it up and set the example. —*Young India* : Feb. 4, 1926.

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I SHALL now proceed to say something about cigarette smoking and coffee and tea drinking. They are not necessities of life. There are some who manage to take ten cups of coffee a day. Is it necessary for their healthy development and for keeping them awake for the performance of their duties ? If it is necessary to take coffee or tea to keep them awake, let them not drink coffee or tea but go to sleep. We must not become slaves to these things. But the majority of the people who drink coffee or tea are slaves to them. Cigars and cigarettes, whether foreign or indigenous, must be avoided. Cigarette smoking is like an opiate and the cigars that you smoke have a touch of opium about them. They get to your nerves and you cannot leave them afterwards.

How can you foul your mouth by converting it into a chimney ? If you give up these habits of smoking cigars and cigarettes and drinking coffee, and tea you will find out for yourselves how much you are able to save. A drunkard in Tolstoy's story is hesitating to execute his design of murder so long as he has not smoked his cigar. But he puffs it, and then gets up smiling and saying, "What a coward am I," takes the dagger and does the deed. Tolstoy spoke from experience. He has written nothing without having had personal experience of it. And he is much more against cigars and cigarettes than against drink. But do not make the mistake that between drink and tobacco, drink is a lesser evil. No. If cigarettes is Beelzebub, then drink is Satan.

—*Young India* : Sept. 15, 1927.

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IF every smoker stopped the dirty habit, refused to make of his mouth a chimney, to foul his breath, damage his teeth and dull his sense of delicate discrimination and make a present of his savings to some national cause, he would benefit both himself and the nation.

—*Young India* : July 5, 1929.

Social Boycott

SOCIAL Boycott is an age-old institution. It is coeval with caste. It is the one terrible sanction exercised with great effect. It is based upon the notion that a community is not bound to extend its hospitality or service to an excommunicate. It answered when every village was a self-contained unit, and the occasions of recalcitrancy were rare. But when opinion is divided, as it is to-day, on the merits of Non-co-operation, when its new application is having a trial, a summary use of social boycott in order to bend a minority to the will of the majority is a species of unpardonable violence. If persisted in, such boycott is bound to destroy the movement. Social boycott is applicable and effective when it is not felt as a punishment and accepted by the

object of boycott as a measure of discipline. Moreover, social boycott to be admissible in a campaign of Non-violence must never savour of inhumanity. It must be civilised. It must cause pain to the party using it, if it causes inconvenience to its object, Thus, depriving a man of the services of a medical man, as is reported to have been done in Jhansi, is an act of inhumanity tantamount in the moral code to an attempt to murder. I see no difference in murdering a man and withdrawing medical aid from a man who is on the point of dying. Even the laws of war, I apprehend, require the giving of medical relief to the enemy in need of it. —*Young India* : Feb. 16, 1921.

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WE must not resort to social boycott of our opponents. It amounts to coercion. Claiming the right of free opinion and free action as we do, we must extend the same to others. The rule of majority, when it becomes coercive, is as intolerable as that of a bureaucratic minority. We must patiently try to bring round the minority to our view by gentle persuasion and arguments. —*Young India* : Jan. 26, 1922.

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OSTRACISM is violent or peaceful according to the manner in which it is practised. A congregation may well refuse to recite prayers after a priest who prizes his title above his honour. But the ostracism will become violent if the individual life of a person is made unbearable by insults, innuendoes or abuse. The real danger of violence lies in the people resorting to Non-co-operation, becoming impatient and revengeful. —*Young India* : April 28, 1920.

Social Reform

THE sooner it is recognised that many of our social evils impede our march towards *Swaraj*, the greater will be our progress towards our cherished goal. To postpone social reform, till after the attainment of *Swaraj*, is not to know the meaning of *Swaraj*. —*Young India* : June 28, 1929.

THERE is, I know, a section who says that political freedom must be won first and social reform would follow later. It is a wrong idea, and certainly inconsistent with one who would win *Swaraj* by non-violent means

—*Harijan* : Feb. 1, 1942.

Social Work

SOCIAL service to be effective has to be rendered without noise. It is best performed when the left hand knoweth not what the right is doing.

—*Speeches and writings of Mahatma Gandhi* : Pages 397.

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INDIA whose chief disease is her political servitude recognises only those who are fighting publicly to remove it by giving battle to a bureaucracy that has protected itself with a treble line of entrenchment—army and navy, money and diplomacy. She naturally does not know her self-less and self-effacing workers in other walks of life, no less useful than the purely political. —*Young India* : Dec. 12, 1920.

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I MUST say that the service of the so-called "untouchables" does not rank with me as in any way subordinate to any kind of political work. Just a moment ago I met two missionary friends, who drew the same distinction and therefore came in for some gentle rebuke from me. I suggested to them that my work of social reform was in no way less than or subordinate to political work. The fact is, that when I saw that to a certain extent my social work would be impossible without the help of political work, I took to the latter and only to the extent that it helped the former. I must therefore confess that work of social reform or self-purification of this nature is a hundred times dearer to me than what is called purely political work. —*Young India* : Aug. 6, 1931.

Speeches

IT is contended that it is courage, it is undoubtedly wisdom, to restrain the tongue whilst one is unprepared for action. Mere brave speech without action is letting off useless steam. Speech is necessary for those who are dumb-struck. Restraint is necessary for the garrulous.

—*Harijan*: Sep. 30, 1939.

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YOU cannot get Swaraj by mere speeches, shows, processions, etc. What is needed is solid, steady, constructive work, what the youth craves for and is fed on is only the former. —*Harijan*: Jan. 12, 1940.

Speed

SPEED is not the end of life. Man sees more truly and lives more truly by walking to his duty.

—*Harijan*: Sep. 30, 1939.

Spirits

I NEVER receive communications from the spirits of the dead. I have no evidence warranting a disbelief in the possibility of such communications. But I do not strongly disapprove of the practice of holding or attempting to hold such communications. They are often deceptive and are products of imagination. The practice is harmful both to the medium and the spirits, assuming the possibility of such communications. It attracts and ties to the earth the spirit so invoked whereas its effort should be to detach itself from the earth, and rise higher. A spirit is not necessarily purer because it is disembodied. It takes with it most of the frailties to which it was liable when on earth. Information or advice therefore given by it need not be true or sound. That the spirit likes communications with those on earth is no matter for pleasure. On the contrary it should be weaned from such unlawful attachment. So much for the harm done to the spirits.

As for the medium, it is a matter of positive knowledge with me that all those within my experience have been deranged or weak brained and disabled for practical work whilst they were holding or thought they were holding such communications. I can recall no friend of mine who having held such communication had benefited in any way.

—*Young India* : Sept, 12, 1929

Spiritulism

WE often confuse spiritual knowledge with spiritual attainment. Spirituality is not a matter of knowing scriptures and engaging in philosophical discussions. It is a matter of heart culture, of immeasurable strength. Fearlessness is the first requisite of spirituality. Cowards can never be moral.

—*Harijan* : June 22, 1921

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I DO not believe as the friend seems to do that an individual may gain spiritually and those who surround him suffer. I believe in *advaita*, I believe in the essential unity of man and for that matter of all that lives. Therefore I believe that if one man gains spiritually, the whole world gains with him and if one man falls the whole world falls to that extent. I do not help opponents without at the same time helping myself and my co-workers.

—*Young India* : Dec. 4, 1924.

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JUST as this physical purification is necessary for the health of the body, even so spiritual purification is necessary for the health of the soul. In fact the necessity for physical cleanliness is in inverse proportion to the necessity for spiritual cleanliness. That is to say, spiritual cleanliness means automatic physical cleanliness. Have we not heard that a Yogi's body emits a frequent smell ? The 'fragrant' smell means here the absence of bad smell.

—*Young India* : July, 1925.

BUT I am not so stupid as to think that I or any single person can supply the spiritual needs of his neighbour. Spiritual needs cannot be supplied through the intellect or through the stomach even as the needs of the body cannot be supplied through the spirit. One can paraphrase the famous saying of Jesus and say "Render unto the body that which is its, and unto the spirit that which is its." And the only way I can supply my neighbour's spiritual needs is by living the life of the spirit without even exchanging a word with him. The life of the spirit will translate itself, into acts of love for my neighbour. —*Harijan* : June 12, 1937.

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IT is my own firm belief that the strength of the soul grows in proportion as you subdue the flesh,

—*Young India* : Oct. 23, 1924.

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FAR more indispensable than food for the physical body is spiritual nourishment for the soul. One can do without food for a considerable time, but a man of the spirit cannot exist for a single second without spiritual nourishment. —*Harijan* : April 8, 1939.

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I DO believe the most spiritual act is the most practical in the true sense of the term.

—*Harijan* : July 1, 1939.

State

A GOVERNMENT is an instrument of service only in so far as it is based upon the will and consent of the people. It is an instrument of oppression when it enforces submission at the point of the bayonet. Oppression therefore ceases when people cease to fear the bayonet. —*Young India* : Oct. 22, 1919.

A GOVERNMENT that is loyal to the governed commands their loyalty as a matter of course.

—*Young India* : Oct. 27, 1919.

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IN truth a Government that is ideal governs the least. It is no self-government that leaves nothing for the people to do. That is pupilage—our present state. But if we are to attain *Swaraj*, a large number of us must outgrow enforced nonage and feel our adolescence. We must govern ourselves at least where there is no deadly opposition from armed authority. The constructive programme is the test of our capacity for self-government. If we impute all our weaknesses to the present Government, we shall never shed them.

—*Young India* : Aug. 27, 1925

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SUBMISSION to the state law is the price a citizen pays for his personal liberty. Submission therefore, to a state wholly or largely unjust is an immoral barter for liberty. —*Young India* : Jan. 13, 1927.

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PEOPLE are the roots, the state is the fruit. If the roots are sweet, the fruits are bound to be sweet.

—*Young India* ; Feb. 2, 1928.

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WHEN, therefore, there is only a caricature of responsible government, things can be much worse than under a frankly and purely autocratic government. The latter not depending upon the votes of any class can afford to be impartial to all. The former dare not.

—*Young India* : July 8, 1926.

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A MAN is generous when he does something at his own expense. Governments can do nothing at their

own expense. But they always succeed in making people believe that they are generous even when they are barely or less than just. Justice is like a debt which has to be discharged. —*Harijan* : Oct. 12, 1937.

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I AM no believer in the doctrine that the same power can at the same time trust and distrust, grant liberty and repress it. —*Harijan* : Jan. 12, 1939

Strength

STRENGTH does not come from physical capacity. It comes from an indomitable will.

—*Young India* : Aug. 11, 1920.

Strikes

WHILST I have pleaded for the removal of restrictions on the speech and movements of students, I am not able to support political strikes or demonstrations. Students should have the greatest freedom of expression and of opinion. They may openly sympathise with any political party they like. But, in my opinion, they may not have freedom of action whilst they are studying. A student cannot be an active politican and pursue his studies at the same time. It is difficult to draw hard and fast lines at the time of big national upheavals Then, they do not strike or, if the word 'strike' can be used in such circumstances, it is a wholesale strike; it is a suspension of studies. Thus, what may appear to be an exception is not one in reality.

—*Young India* : Oct. 2, 1927.

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I THINK I have written often enough against strikes by students and pupils except on the rarest of occasions. I hold it to be quite wrong on the part of students and pupils to take part in political demonstrations and party politics. Such ferment inter-

feres with serious study and unfits students for solid work as future citizens. —*Harijan* : June 15, 1938.

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IN a country groaning as India is under foreign rule, it is impossible to prevent students from taking part in movements for national freedom. All that can be done is to regulate their enthusiasm, so as not to interfere with their studies. They may not become partisans, taking side with warring parties. But they have a right to be left free to hold, and actively to advocate, what political opinion they choose. The functions of educational institutions is to impart education to the boys and girls who choose to join them, and there through to help to mould their character, never to interfere with their political or other non-moral activities outside the school-room.

—*Young India* : Jan. 24, 1929.

Students

I am an autumnal leaf on the tree that might fall off at any moment; the teachers are the young sprouts that would last longer, but fall off at their proper time; but you, the students, are the branches that would put forth new leaves to replace the old ones. —*Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi* : Page 510.

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HOW can we understand the duty of students today? We have fallen so much from the ideal. The parents take the lead in giving the wrong direction. They feel that their children should be educated only in order that they may earn wealth and position. Education and knowledge are thus being prostituted and we look in vain for the peace, innocence and bliss that the life of student ought to be. Our students are weighed down with cares and worries when they should really be careful for nothing. They have simply to receive and to assimilate. They should know only

to discriminate between what should be received and what rejected. It is the duty of the teacher to teach his pupils discrimination. If we go on taking in indiscriminately, we would be no better than machines. We are thinking, knowing beings and we must in this period distinguish truth from untruth, sweet from bitter language, clean from uuclean things, and so on. But the student's path to-day is strewn with more difficulties than the one of distinguishing good from bad things. He has to fight the hostile atmosphere around him. Instead of the sacred surroundings of a *Rishi Guru's Ashrama* and his paternal care, he has the atmosphere of broken-down home and the artificial surroundings created by the modern systems of education. The *Rishis* taught their pupils without books. They only gave them few *Mantras*, which the pupils treasured in their memories and translated in practical life. The present-day student has to live in the midst of heaps of books, sufficient to choke him.

—*Young India* : Jan. 29, 1925.

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THE base imitation of the West, the ability to speak and write correct and polished English, will not add one brick to the Temple of Freedom. The student world, which is receiving an education far too expensive for starving India, and an education which only a miscroscopic minority can ever hope to receive is expected to qualify itself for it by giving its life-blood to the nation. Students must become pioneers in conservative reform, conserving all that is good in the nation and fearlessly ridding society of the innumerable abuses that have crept into it.

—*Young India* : June 9, 1927.

Students and Politics

ALL the world over students are playing a most

important and effective part in shaping and strengthening national movements. It would be monstrous if the students of India did less. —*Young India* : Feb. 9, 1928.

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THE correspondent has written in the hope of my condemning the participation by the student world in active political work. But I am sorry to have to disappoint him. He should have known that in 1920-21 I had not an inconsiderable share in drawing students out of their schools and colleges and inducing them to undertake political duty carrying with it the risk of imprisonment. I think it is their clear duty to take a leading part in the political movement of their country. They are doing so all the world over. In India where political consciousness has till recently been unfortunately confined in a large measure to the English educated class, their duty is, indeed, greater. In China and Egypt it was the students who have made the national movement possible. They connot do less in India.

—*Young India* : March 29, 1928.

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THE students should know that the cultivation of nationalism is not a crime but a virtue.

—*Harijan* : Sep. 18, 1937.

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STUDENTS cannot afford to have party politics. They may hear all parties, as they read all sorts of books, but their business is to assimilate the truth of all and reject the balance. That is the only worthy attitude that they can take.

Power politics should be unknown to the student world. Immediately they dabble in that class of work, they cease to be students and will, therefore, fail to serve the country in its crisis. —*Harijan* : Jan. 26, 1941.

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OUR real strength must lie in the people doing in

normal times the things they did in abnormal times under the severe pressure of public opinion or worse.

—*Young India* :May 14, 1931.

Submission

SUBMISSION to convention in trivial matters in which there is no danger of deceiving others or oneself is often desirable and even necessary. But submission in matters of religion, especially where there is a positive repugnance from within and a danger of deceiving our neighbours and ourselves, cannot but be debasing,

—*Young India* : Sep. 1, 1927.



WHAT is readily yielded to courtesy is never yielded to force. Submission to a courteous request is religion, submission to force is irreligion. —*Harijan* : March 12, 1936.

Suffering

REAL suffering bravely borne melts even a heart of stone. Such is the potency of suffering, or *tapasa.* And there lies the key to Satyagraha.

—*Satyagrahai n South Africa* : Page 212.



SUFFERING cheerfully endured ceases to be suffering and is transmitted into an ineffable Joy. The man who *flies from suffering is the victim* of endless tribulation before it has come to him, and is half-dead when it does come. But one who is cheerfully ready for anything and everything that comes, escapes all pain ; his cheerfulness acts as an anaesthetic. —*Young India* : Oct. 13, 1931.



THE hardest heart and the grossest ignorance must disappear before the rising sun of suffering, without anger and without malice. —*Young India* : Feb. 19, 1925.

THE conviction has been growing upon me, that things of fundamental importance to the people are not secured by reason alone but have to be purchased with their suffering. Suffering is the law of human beings, war is the law of the jungle. But suffering is infinitely more powerful than the law of the jungle for converting the opponent and opening his ears, which are otherwise shut to the voice of reason. Nobody has probably drawn up more petitions or exposed more forlorn causes than I and I have come to this fundamental conclusion that if you want something really important to be done, you must not merely satisfy the reason, you must move the heart also. The appeal of reason is more to the head but the penetration of the heart comes from suffering. It opens up the inner understanding in man. Suffering is the badge of the human race, not the sword. —*Young India* : Nov. 5, 1931.

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JOY comes not out of infliction of pain on others but out of pain voluntarily borne by ourself.

— *Young India* : Dec. 31. 1931.

Suicide

BUDDHA had excused monks who committed suicide. "What would you say to the right of man to dispose of his life ? Life as life I hold of very little importance," or Fabri asked.

"I think," said Gandhiji, "that man has a perfect right to dispose of his life under certain circumstances. A co-worker, suffering from leprosy, knowing that his disease was incurable and that his life was as much an agony for those who had to serve him as it was for him, recently decided to end his life by abstaining from food and water. I blessed the idea. I said to him : 'If you really think you can stand the trial, you may do so.' I said this to him for I knew how different it is to die by inches from, say, suddenly killing oneself by drowning or poisoning. And my warning was fully justified, for someone tempted him with the hope

that there was one who could cure leprosy, and I now hear that he has resumed eating and put himself under his treatment !"

"The criterion, " said Dr. Fabri, "seems to me to be that if one's mind is completey obscured by pain, the best thing for him would be to seek *nirvana.* A man may not be ill but he may be tired of the struggle."

"No, no," said Gandhiji, correcting him as he was again running away with the thought that his view was identical with Gandhiji's. "My mind rejects this suicide. The criterion is not that one is tired of life, but that one feels that one has become a burden on others and therefore wants to leave the world. One does not want to fly from pain but from having to become an utter burden on others. Otherwise one suffers greater pain in a violent effort to end one's agony. But supposing I have a cancer, and it is only a question of time for me to pass away, I would even ask my doctor to give me a sleeping draught and thereby have the sleep that knows no waking."

Dr. Fabri got up to go with the parting wish that there may be many more years of helpful activity left for Gandhiji.

"No," said Gandhiji, with a hearty laugh, "according to you I should have no business to stay if I feel I have finished my task. And I do think I have finished mine !"

"No, I am convinced that you can serve humanity for many more years. Millions are praying for your life. And though I can neither pray nor desire anything—."

"Yes," said Gandhiji interrupting him, "the English language is so elastic that you can find another word to say the same thing."

"Yes," said Dr. Fabri, "I can unselfishly opine that you have many years before you."

"Well that's it. You have found the word ! Here too let me tell you there is the purely intellectual conception of a man being unable to live. If he has not the desire to live, the body will perish for the mere absence of the desire to live." —*Harijan* : Aug. 19, 1939.

Q. IT has been said that the "will to live" is irrational ; being born of a deluded attachment to life. Why is then suicide a sin ?

A. The will to live is not irrational. It is also natural. Attachment to life is not a delusion. It is very real. Above all, life has a purpose. To seek to defeat that purpose is a sin. Therefore suicide is very rightly held to be a sin. —*Harijan* . June 1, 1940.

Suspicion

I BELIEVE in trusting. Trust begets trust. Suspicion is foiled and only stinks. He who trusts has never yet lost in the world. A suspicious man is lost to himself and the world Let those who have made of non-violence a creed beware of suspecting opponents. Suspicion is the brood of violence. Non-violence cannot but trust. I must at any rate, refuse to believe anything against anybody, much less against my honoured fellow workers, unless I have absolute proof.

—*Young India* : June 4, 1925.

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THE canker of suspicion cannot be cured by arguments or explanations.—*Satyagraha in South Africa* : Page 285.

Swadeshi

WE do not realise that Swaraj is almost wholly obtainable through Swadeshi. If we have no regard for our respective vernaculars, if we dislike our clothes, if our dress repels us, if we are ashamed to wear the sacred *Shikha*, if our

food is distasteful to us, our climate is not good enough, our people uncouth and unfit for our company, our civilization faulty and the foreign attractive, in short, if everything native is bad and everything foreign pleasing to us, I should not know what Swaraj can mean for us. If everything foreign is to be adopted, surely it will be necessary for us to continue long under foreign tutelage, because foreign civilisation has not permeated the masses. It seems to me that, before we can appreciate Swaraj, we should have not only love but passion for Swadeshi. Every one of our acts should bear the Swadeshi stamp. Swaraj can only be built upon the assumption that most of what is national is on the whole sound. If the view here put forth be correct, the Swadeshi movement ought to be carried on vigorously. Every country that has carried on the Swaraj movement has fully appreciated the Swadeshi spirit. The Scotch Highlanders hold on to their kilts even at the risk of their lives. We humourusly call the Highlanders the 'petticoat brigade.' But the whole world testifies to the strength that lies behind that petticoat and the Highlanders of Scotland will not abandon it, even though it is an inconvenient dress, and an easy target for the enemy. The object in developing the foregoing argument is not that we should treasure our faults, but what is national, even though comparatively less agreeable should be adhered to, and that what is foreign should be avoided, though it may be more agreeable than our own. That which is wanting in our civilization can be supplied by proper effort on our part. —*Young India* : Nov. 3, 1917.

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TO use foreign articles rejecting those that are manufactured in India is to be untrue to India. It is an unwarranted indulgence. To use foreign articles because we do not like indigenous ones is to be a foreigner. It is obvious that we cannot reject indigenous articles, even as we cannot reject the native air and the native soil because

they are inferior to foreign air and soil.

—*Young India* : May 13, 1919.

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AFTER much thinking, I have arrived at a definition of *Swadeshi* that perhaps best illustrates my meaning. *Swadeshi* is that spirit in us which restricts us to the use and service of our immediate surroundings to the exclusion of the more remote. Thus, as for religion, in order to satisfy the requirements of the definition, I must restrict myself to my ancestral religion, that is, the use of my immediate religious surroundings. If I find it defective, I should serve it by purging it of its defects. In the domain of politics I should make use of the idigenous institutions and serve them by curing them of their proved defects. In that of economics I should use only things that are produced by my immediate neighbours and serve those industries by making them efficient and complete where they might be found wanting. It is suggested that such *Swadeshi*, if reduced to practice, will lead to the millenium. And as we do not abandon our pursuit after the millenium, because we do not expect quite to reach it within our times, so may we not abandon *Swadeshi*, even though it may not be fully attained for generations to come. —*Young India* : June 21, 1919.

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I WANT to see God face to face. God I *know* is Truth. For me the only certain means of knowing God is non-violence—*ahimsa*—love. I live for India's freedom and would die for it, because it is part of Truth. Only a free India can worship the true God. I work for India's freedom because my Swadeshi teaches me that being born in it and having inherited her culture, I am fittest to serve *her* and *she* has a prior claim to my service. But my patriotism is not exclusive ; it is calculated not only not to hurt any other nation but to benefit all in the true sense of the word. India's freedom as conceived by me can never be a menace to the world. —*Young India* : April 2, 1924.

MY definition of Swadeshi is well known. I must not serve my distant neighbour at the expense of the nearest. It is never vindictive or punitive. It is in no sense narrow, for I buy from every part of the world what is needed for my growth. I refuse to buy from anybody anything however nice or beautiful if it interferes with my growth or injures those whom Nature has made my first care. I buy useful healthy literature from every part of the world. I buy surgical instruments from England, pins and pencils from Austria and watches from Switzerland. But I will not buy an inch of the finest cotton fabric from England or Japan or any other part of the world because it has injured and increasingly injures the millions of the inhabitants of India. I hold it to be sinful for me to continue to buy the cloth spun and woven by the needy millions of India's paupers and to buy foreign cloth, although it may be superior in quality to the Indian hand-spun. My Swadeshi therefore chiefly centres round the hand-spun Khaddar and extends to every thing that can be and is produced in India. My nationalism is as broad as my Swadeshi. I want India to rise so that the whole world may be benefitted. I do not want India to rise on the ruin of other nations. If therefore India was strong and able, India would send out to the world her treasures of art and health-giving spices, but will refuse to send out opium or intoxicating liquors although the traffic may bring much material benefit to India.

—*Young India* : May 12, 1925.

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SWEDESHI does not mean drowning oneself in one's own little puddle, but making it tributary to the ocean, that is, the nation. And, it can claim to contribute to the ocean only if it is and keeps itself pure.

—*Young India* : Feb. 2, 1928.

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RULE of the best and the cheapest is not always true. Just as we do not give up our country for one with a better

climate but endeavour to improve our own, so also may we not discard Swadeshi for better or cheaper foreign things. Even as a husband who being dissatisfied with his simple looking wife goes in search of a better looking woman is disloyal to his partner, so is a man disloyal to his country who prefers foreign made things though better to country made th ngs. The law of each country's progress demands on the part of its inhabitants, preference for their own products and manufactures. —*Young India* : May 30, 1929.

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AS regards the definition of a Swadeshi company, I would say that only those concerns can be regarded as Swadeshi whose control, direction and management either by a Managing Director or by Managing Agents are in Indian hands. I should have no objection to the use of foreign capital, or to the employment of foreign talent, when such are not available in India, or when we need them,—but only on condition that such capital and such talents are exclusively under the control, direction and management of Indians and are used in the interests of India. —*Harijan* : March 26, 1938.

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IF I have to use the adjective 'true' before Swadeshi, a critic may well ask, 'Is there also false Swadeshi?' Unfortunately I have to answer 'yes.' As, since the days of *khadi*, I am supposed to be an authority on Swadeshi, numerous conundrums are presented to me by correspondents. And I have been obliged to distinguish between the two kinds of Swadeshi. If foreign capital is mixed with indigenous, or if foreign talent is mixed with indigenous, is the enterprise Swadeshi? There are other questions too. But I had better reproduce the definition I gave to a Minister the other day. "Any article is Swadeshi if it subserves the interests of the millions, even though the capital and talent are foreign but under effective Indian control." Thus *khadi* of the definition of the A. I. S. A. would be

true Swadeshi even though the capital may be all foreign and there may be Western specialists employed by the Indian Board. Conversely Bata's rubber or other shoes would be foreign though the labour employed may be all Indian and the capital also found by India. The manufactures will be doubly foreign because the control will be in the foreign hands and the article, no matter how cheap it is, will oust the village tanner mostly and the village *mochi* always. Already the *mochis* of Bihar have begun to feel the unhealthy competition. The Bata shoe may be the saving of Europe : it will mean the death of our village shoe-maker and tanner. I have given two telling illustrations, both partly imaginary. For in the A. I. S. A. the capital is all indigenous and the whole of the talent also. But I would love to secure the engineering talent of the west to give me a village wheel which will beat the existing wheels, through deep down in me I have the belief that the improvements that indigenous talent has made are by no means to be despised. But this is a digression. I do hope that those ministers and others who guide or serve the public will cultivate the habit of distinguishing between true and false Swadeshi.

—*Harijan* : Feb. 25, 1939.

Swaraj

WE get what Government we deserve. When we improve, the Government also is bound to improve. Only when we improve can we attain Swaraj.

—*Young India* : Nov. 10, 1920

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THE Swaraj that I dream of will be a possibility only when the nation is free to make its choice both of good and evil and not be good at the dictation of an irresponsible, insolent, and godless bureaucracy.

—*Young India* : Dec. 8, 1920.

IF India could make a successful effort to stop this drain—sixty crores of rupees annually paid by us for piece-goods, she can gain Swaraj by that one act.

—*Young India* : Jan. 19, 1921.

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OUR civilization, our culture, our Swaraj depend not upon multiplying our wants—self-indulgence, but upon restricting our wants—self-denial.

—*Young India* : Feb. 23, 1921.

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I SHOULD be a bad representative of our cause, if I went to any body to ask for Swaraj I have had the hardihood to say that Swaraj could not be granted even by God. We would have to earn it ourselves. Swaraj from its very nature is not in the giving of anybody.

—*Young India* : May 25, 1921.

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SWARAJ means ability to regard every inhabitant of India as our own brother or sister

—*Young India* : Sep. 15, 1921.

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SAWARAJ is the abandonment of the fear of death. A nation which allows itself to be influenced by the fear of death cannot attain Swaraj, and cannot retain it if somehow attained. —*Young India* : Oct. 13, 1921.

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FIGHT for SWARAJ means, not mere political awakening, but an all round awakening—social, educational moral, economic and political. —*Gandhiji in Ceylon* : Page 146.

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EVERY yard of yarn spun or *khaddar* woven is a step towards Swaraj. —*Young India* : April 3, 1924.

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A SWARAJ Government means a Government establish-

ed by the free-joint will of Hindus, Mussalmans and others. Hindus and Mussalmans, if they desire Swaraj, have perforce to settle their differences amicably.

—*Young India* : May 12, 1924.

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SWARAJ for me means freedom for the meanest of our countrymen.

I am not interested in freeing India merely from the English yoke. I am bent upon freeing India from any yoke whatsoever. I have no desire to exchange king 'log for king stork.' Hence for me the movement of Swaraj is a movement of self-purification. —*Young India* : June 12, 1924.

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I SUGGEST, therefore, that there is no substitute for Swaraj, and the only universal definition to give it is, that status of India which her people desire at a given moment. —*Young India* : July 17, 1924.

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REAL Swaraj will come not by the acquisition of authority by a few but by the acquisition of the capacity by all to resist authority when it is abused. In other words, Swaraj is to be attained by educating the masses to a sense of their capacity to regulate and control authority.

—*Young India* : Jan. 29, 1925.

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HINDU-Muslim Unity, *khaddar* and removal of untouchability are to me the foundation for Swaraj. On that firm foundation it is possible to erect a structure nobler than which the world has not seen. Anything without that foundation will be like a building built on sand.

—*Young India* : April 2, 1925.

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HE who has sacrificed his all for Swaraj has certainly attained it for himself —*Young India* : Oct. 22, 1925.

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SWARAJ is not meant for cowards, but for those who

would mount smilingly to the gallows and refuse even to allow their eyes to be bandaged.

—*Young India* : Feb. 14, 1929.

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YOU cannot get Swaraj by mere speeches, shows, processions, etc. What is needed is solid, steady, constructive work; what the youth craves for and is fed on is only the former. —*Young India* : Sep. 5, 1929.

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YOU say that complete independence is an indifferent rendering for Purana Swaraj. What then is the real meaning of Purana Swaraj.

Proper translation I cannot give you. I do not know any word or phrase to answer it in the English language—I can, therefore, only give an explanation. The root meaning of Swaraj is self-rule. "Swaraj" may, therefore, be rendered as disciplined rule from within and purana means "complete". "Independence" has no such limitation. Independence may mean licence to do as you like. Swaraj is positive. Independence is negative. Purana Swaraj does not exclude association with any nation, much less with England. But it can only mean association for mutual benefit and at will. Thus, there are countries which are said to be independent but which have no Purana Swaraj, *e. g.* Nepal. The word Swaraj is a sacred word, a Vedic word, meaning self-rule and self-restraint, and not freedom from all restraint which "independence" often means. —*Young India* : March 19, 1931.

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IT has been said that Indian Swaraj will be the rule of the majority community, *i. e.* the Hindus. There could not be a greater mistake than that. If it were to be true, I for one would refuse to call it Swaraj and would fight it with all the strength at my command, for to me Hind Swaraj is the rule of all the people, is the rule of justice. Whether under that rule the ministers were Hindus or Musalmans or Sikhs, and whether the legislatures were exclusively filled by the

Hindus or Mussalmans or any other community, they would have to do even handed justice. And just as no community in India need have any fear of Swaraj being monopolised by any other, even so the English should have no fear. The question of safe-guards should not arise at all. Swaraj would be real Swaraj only when there would be no occasion for safe-guarding any such rights.

—*Young India* : April 16, 1931.

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I CLAIM to live for the semi-starved paupers of India and Swaraj means the emancipation of these millions of skeletons. Purana Swaraj denotes a condition of things when the dumb and the lame millions will speak and walk. That Swaraj cannot be achieved by force, but by organisation and unity. —*Young India* : April 28, 1931.

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ONCE I said in spinning wheel lies Swaraj, next I said in prohibition lies Swaraj. In the same way I would say in cent per rant. Swadeshi lies Swaraj. Of course, it is like the blind man describing the elephant. All of them are right and yet not wholly right. —*Harijan* : Dec. 12, 1935.

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WITHOUT overcoming lust, man cannot hope to rule over self. And without rule over self, there can be no *Swaraj* or *Rama Raj*. Rule of all without rule of oneself, would prove to be as deceptive and disappointing as a painted toy mango, charming to look at outwardly but hollow and empty from within. —*Harijan* : April 25, 1936.

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IT is therefore clear to me as daylight that real *Swaraj*, whenever it comes to us, will have to be not a donation rained on us from London, but a prize earned by hard and health-giving non-co-operation with organized forces of evil. —*Harijan* : Nov. 10, 1940.

T

Takli

IT is the solace of the perturbed heart and a mute companion. The wheel sings to you and may therefore distract your attention. The takli is eloquent in its very muteness, and in that way is perhaps a fitter representative of the dumb millions. Try it and you will experience the same joy that many of us do. —*Young India* : April 24, 1930.

Temples

IF anyone doubts the infinite mercy of God, let him have a look at these sacred places. How much hypocricy and irreligion does the Prince of Yogis suffer to be perpetrated in His holy name ? He proclaimed long ago.

'Whatever a man sows that shall he reap.' The Law of Karma is inexorable and impossible of evasion. There is thus hardly any need for God to interfere. He laid down the law and, as it were retired.

—*My Experiments with Truth* : Page 298.

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CHURCHES, mosques and temples, which cover so much hypocricy and humbug and shut the poorest out of them, seem but a mockery of God and His worship when one sees the eternally renewed temple of worship under the vast blue canopy inviting every one of us to real worship, instead of abusing His name by quarrelling in the name of religion. —*Young India* : March 5, 1942.

OUR temples are not meant for show but for

expression of humility and simplicity which are typical of a devotional mood. —*Young India* : Dec. 12, 1927.

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I DO not regard the existence of temples as a sin or superstition. Some form of common worship, and a common place of worship appear to be a human necessity. Whether the temples should contain images or not is a matter of temperement and taste. I do not regard a Hindu or Roman Catholic place of worship containing images as necessarily bad or superstitious and a mosque or a Protestant place of worship being good or free from superstition merely because of their exclusion of images. A symbol such as a Cross or a book may easily become idolatrous and therefore superstitous. And the worship of the image of Child Krishna or Virgin Mary may become ennobling and free of all superstitions. It depends upon the attitude of the heart of the worshiper. —*Young India* : Nov. 5, 1925.

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BITTER experience has taught me that all temples are not houses of God. They can be habitations of the devil. These places of worship have no value unless the keeper is a good man of God. Temples, mosques, churches are what man makes them to be.

—*Young India* : May 19, 1927.

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I HAVE a letter from a Jaffna Hindu telling me that there are some temples in this place where you have dances by women of ill-fame on certain occassions. If that information is correct, then let me tell you that you are converting temples of God into dens of prostitution.

A temple to be a house of worship, to be a temple of God has got to conform to certain well-defined limitations. A prostitute has as much right to go to a house of worship as a saint. But she exercises that right when she enters the temple to purify herself.

But when the trustees of a temple admit a prostitute under cover of religion or under cover embellishing the worship of God then they convert a house of God into one of prostitution. And if any body no matter how high he may be comes to you and seeks to justify the admission of women of ill-fame into your temples for dancing or any such purpose, reject him and agree to the proposal that I have made to you. If you want to be good Hindus, if you want to worship God, and if you are wise, you will fling the doors of all your temples open to the so-called untouchables, God makes no distinction between His worshippers. He accepts the worship of these untouchables just as well and as much as that of the so-called touchables provided it comes from the bottom of the heart.

—*Young India* : Dec. 25, 1927.

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IN imagination my mind travelled back to the pre-historic centuries when they began to convey the message of God in stone and metal. I saw quite clearly that the priest, who was interpreting each figure in his own choice Hindi, did not want to tell me that each of those figures was God. But without giving me that particular interpretation he made me realize that these temples were so many bridges between the Unseen, Invisible and Indefinable God and ourselves who are infinitesimal drops in the Infinite Ocean. We, the human family, are not all philosophers. We are of the earth very earthy, and we are not satisfied with contemplating the Invisible God. Somehow or other we want something which we can touch, something which we can see, something before which we can kneel down. It does not matter whether it is a book, or an empty stone building, or a stone building inhabited by numerous figures. A book will satisfy some, an empty building will satisfy some others, and many others will not be satisfied unless they see something

inhabiting these empty buildings. Then I ask you to approach these temples not as if they represented a body of superstitions. If you will approach these temples with faith in them you will know each time you visit them you will come away from them purified, and with your faith more and more in the living God.

It depends upon our mental condition whether we gain something or do not gain anything by going to the temples. We have to approach these temples in a humble and penitent mood. They are so many houses of God. Of course God resides in every human form, indeed in every particle of His creation, everything that is on this earth. But since we very fallible mortals do not appreciate the fact that God is everywhere, we impute special sanctity to temples and think that God resides there. And so when we approach these temples we must cleanse our bodies, our minds and our hearts and we should enter them in a prayerful mood and ask God to make us purer men and purer women for having entered their portals. And if you will take this advice of an old man, this physical deliverance that you have secured will be a deliverance of the soul. —*Harijan*: Jan. 13, 1937.

Temptation

THERE are some actions from which an escape is a god-send both for the man who escapes and for those about him Man, as soon as he gets back his consciousness of right, is thankful to the Divine mercy for the escape. As we know that a man often succumbs to temptation, however much he may resist it, we also know that Providence often intercedes and saves him in spite of himself. How all this happens how far a man is free and how far a creature of circumstances—how far freewill comes into play and where fate

enters on the scene,—all this is a mystery and will remain a mystery —*My Experiments with Truth* : Page 37.

Thought

SO long as thought is not under complete control of the will, *Brahmacharya* in its fullness is absent. Involuntary thought is an affectation of the mind, and curbing of thought, therefore means curbing of the mind which is even more difficult to curb than the wind. Nevertheless the existence of God within makes even control of the mind possible. Let no one think that it is impossible because it is difficult. It is the highest goal and it is no wonder that the highest effort should be necessary to attain it.

—*My Experiments with Truth* : Page 259.

I FEEL thankful to God that for years past I have come to regard secrecy as a sin, more especially in politics. If we realised the presence of God as a witness to all we say and do, we would not have anything to conceal from anybody on earth. For we would not think unclean thoughts before our Maker, much less speak them. It is uncleanliness that seeks secrecy and darkness. The tendency of human nature is to hide dirt, we do not want to see or touch dirty things : we want to put them out of sight. And so must it be with our speech. I would suggest that we should avoid even thinking thoughts we would hide from the world. —*Young India* : Dec. 12, 1922.

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THE potency of thought unsuppressed but unembodied is far greater than that of thought embodied that is translated into action. And, when the action is brought under due control, it reacts upon, and regulates the thought itself. Thought thus translated into action becomes a prisoner and is brought under subjection.

—*Young India* : Jan. 12, 1927.

ALWAYS aim at complete harmony of thought and word and deed. Always aim at purifying your thoughts and everything will be well. There is nothing more potent than thought. Deed follows word and word follows thought. The word is the result of a mighty thought, and where the thought is mighty and pure the result is always mighty and pure. —*Harijan* : April, 24, 1937.

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MODERN scientists recognize the potency of thought and that is why it is said that as a man thinks so does he become. One who always thinks of murder will turn a murderer, and one who thinks of incest will be incestuous. On the contrary he who always thinks of truth and non-violence will be truthful and non-violent, and he whose thoughts are fixed on God will be godly.

—*Harijan* : Jan. 11, 1936.

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TRUTH has been the very foundation of my life. *Brahmacharya* and *Ahimsa* were born later out of truth. Whatever, therefore, you do, be true to yourselves and to the world. Hide not your thoughts. If it is shameful to reveal them, it is more shameful to think them.

—*Harijan* : April 24, 1937.

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A DISSOLUTE character is more dissolute in thought than in deed. And the same is true of violence. Our violence in word and deed is but a feeble echo of the surging violence of thought in us. —*Harijan* : June 17, 1939.

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MAN often becomes what he believes himself to be. If I keep on saying to myself that I cannot do a certain thing, it is possible that I may end by really becoming incapable of doing it. On the contrary, if I have the belief that I can do it, I shall surely acquire the capacity to do it even if I may not have it at the beginning.

—*Harijan* : Sep. 1, 1940.

Trusteeship

THE trusteeship theory is not unilateral, and does not in the least imply superiority of the trustee. It is, as I have shown, a perfectly mutual affair, and each believes that his own interest is best safeguarded by safeguarding the interest of the other. 'May you propitiate the gods and may the gods propitiate you, and may you reach the highest good by this mutual propitiation,' says the *Bhagawad Gita*. There is no separate species called gods in the universe, but all who have the power of production and will work for the community using that power are gods—labourers no less than the capitalists. —*Harijan* : June 25, 1938.

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IF the trusteeship idea catches, philantrophy, as we know it, will disappear. A trustee has no heir but the public. In a state built on the basis of non-violence, the commission of trustees will be regulated. Princes and Zamindars will be on a par with the other men of wealth.

—*Harijan* ; April 13, 1948.

Truth

THE word *Satya* (truth) is derived from *Sat* which means being. And nothing is or exists in reality except truth. That is why *Sat* or Truth is perhaps the most important name of God. In fact it is more correct to say that Truth is God, than to say that God is Truth. But as we cannot do without a ruler or a general, names of God such as King of kings or the Almighty are and will remain more usually current. On deeper thinking, however, it will be realised that *Sat* or *Satya* is the only correct and fully significant name for God.

And where there is Truth, there also is knowledge, pure knowledge, Where there is no Truth, there can be no true knowledge. That is why the word *Chit* or knowledge is associated with the name af God. And where there is true knowledge, there is always bliss (*Ananda*). Sorrow has no place

there. And even as Truth is eternal, so is the bliss derived from it. Hence we know God as *Sat-chit-ananda*, one who combines in Himself Truth, Knowledge and Bliss.

Devotion to this Truth is the sole reason for our existence. All our activities should be centered in Truth. Truth should be the very breath of our life. When once this stage in the pilgrim's progress is reached, all other rules of correct living will come without effort, and obedience to them will be instinctive. But without Truth it would be impossible to observe any principles or rules in life.

Generally speaking, observing the law of Truth is merely understood to mean that we must speak the truth. But we in the *Ashram* understand the word *Satya* or Truth in a much wider sense. There should be Truth in thought, Truth is speech, and Truth in action. To the man who has realised this Truth in perfection, nothing else remains to be known, because all knowledge is necessarily included in it. What is not included in it is not Truth, and so not true knowledge; and there can be no inward peace without true knowledge. If we once learn how to apply this never-failing test of truth, we will at once be able to find out what is worth being, what is worth seeing and what is worth reading.

But how is one to realise this Truth, which may be likened to the philosopher's stone or the cow of plenty? By single-minded devotion (*Abhyas*) and indifference to every other interest in life *Vairagya*—replies the *Bhaghwadgita*. In spite, however, of such devotion, what may appear as truth to one person will often appear as untruth to another person. But that need not worry the seeker. When there is honest effort, it will be realised that what appears to be different truths are like apparently different countless leaves of the same tree. Does not God Himself appear to different individuals in different aspects? Still we know that He is One. But Truth is the right designation of God. Hence there is nothing wrong in every one following Truth

according to one's lights. Indeed it is one's duty to do so. Then if there is a mistake on the part of any one so following Truth, it will be automatically set right. For the quest of Truth involves *tapas*—self-suffering, sometimes even unto death. There can be no place in it for even a trace of self-interest. In such selfless search for Truth no body can lose his bearings for long. Directly one takes to the wrong path one stumbles, and is thus redirected to the right path. Therefore the pursuit of Truth is True *Bhaghti* (devotion). It is the path that leads to God, and therefore there is no place in it for cowardice, no place for defeat. It is the *talisman* by which death itself becomes the portal to life eternal.

In this connection we should ponder over the lives and examples of Harishchandra, Prahlad, Ramchandra, Imams Hassan and Hussian, the Christian Saints, etc. How beautiful it would be, if all of us, young and old, men and women, devoted ourselves wholly to Truth in all that we might do in our waking hours, whether working, eating, drinking or playing till pure dreamless sleep claimed us for her own ? God as Truth has been for me a treasure beyond price, may He be so to every one of us.

—*Young India* : July 30, 1931.

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MORALITY is the basis of things and truth is the substance of all morality.

—*My Experiments with Truth* : Page 37.

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TRUTH is like a vast tree which yields more and more fruit, the more you nurture it. The deeper the search in the mine of truth, the richer the discovery of the gems buried there, in the shape of openings for an ever greater variety of service. —*My Experiments with Truth* : Page 268.

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IN the march towards Truth, anger, selfishness, hatred, etc., naturally gives way, for otherwise Truth would be

impossible to attain. A man who is swayed by passions may have good enough intentions, may be truthful in word, but he will never find the Truth. A successful search for Truth means complete deliverance from the dual throng such as of love and hate happiness and misery.

—*My Experiments with Truth* : Page 428.

A DEVOTEE of Truth may not do anything in deference to convention. He must always hold himself to correction, and whenever he discovers himself to be wrong he must confess it at all costs and atone for it.

—*My Experiments with Truth*: Page 429.

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NOT truth simply as we ordinarily understand it, that as far as possible, we ought not to resort to a lie, that is to say, not truth which merely answers the saying, "Honesty is the best policy"—implying that if it is not the best policy, we may depart from it. But here truth as it is conceived, means that we have to rule our life by this law of Truth at any cost. And in order to satisfy the definition I have drawn upon the celebrated illustration of the life of *Prahlad*. For the sake of truth, he dared to oppose his own father, and he defended himself, not by retaliation, by paying his father back in his own coin, but in defence of Truth, as he knew it : he was prepared to die without caring to return the blows that he had received from his father or from those who were charged with his father's instructions. Not only that : he would not in any way even parry the blows : on the contrary, with a smile on his lips, he underwent the innumerable tortures to which he was subjected, with the result that, at last, Truth rose triumphant, not that Prahlad suffered the tortures because he knew that some day or other in his very life-time he would be able to demonstrate the infallibility of the Law of Truth. The fact was there ; but if he had died in the midst of tortures, he would still have

adhered to Truth. That is the Truth which I would like to follow.—*Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi,* : Page 2 13.

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MY desire is to close this life searching for truth, acting truth and thinking truth and that alone and I request the blessings of the nation that that desire of mine may be fulfilled.—*Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi* : Page 223.

EVERYTHING appears to me to be lifeless without truth. I am convinced that untruth will never benefit the country, and even if untruth seems to bring immediate benefit, I firmly believe that truth ought never to be abondoned. I have grasped this truth ever since I learnt to think for myself, and I have been trying to put into practice for the last 40 years. And still I feel that I have not been uniformly successful in preserving unity in thought, word and deed. But what matters it ? Ideals seem to recede from us as we approach them. Manliness lies in accelerating our motion towards them all the more. 'We fall to rise, are baffled to fight better?' It will suffice simply if we never turn our backs. —*Young India* : Sept. 13, 1919.

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MOREOVER there are not many fundamental truths, but there is only one fundamental truth which is Truth itself, otherwise known as Non-violence. Finite human beings shall never know in its fulness Truth and Love which is in itself infinite. —*Young India* : May 5, 1920.

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I AM a humble but very earnest-seeker after Truth. And in my search, I take all fellow-seekers in uttermost confidence so that I may know my mistakes and correct them. I confess that I have often erred in my estimates and judgments. —*Young India* : May 5, 1920.

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I CLAIM to be a humble servant of India and humanity, and would like to die in the discharge of such

service. I have no desire to found a sect. I am really too ambitious to be satisfied with a sect for a following. For I represent no new truths. I endeavour to follow and represent Truth as I know it. I do claim to throw a new light on many an old Truth.—*Young India* : May, 12, 1920.

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IF truth is violent, I plead guilty to the charge of violence of language. But I could not, without doing violence to truth, refrain from using the language I have regarding General Dyer's action.

—*Young India* : Sept. 29, 1920.

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IF it was a good thing to scale the heights of Mt. Everest, sacrificing precious lives in order to be able to go there and make some slight observations, if it was a glorious thing to give up life after life in planting a flag in the uttermost extremities of the earth, how much more glorious would it be to give not one life, surrender not a million lives, but a billion lives in search of the potent and imperishable truth ? —*Young India* : Oct. 6, 1920.

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HE who does not know what it is to speak the truth is like a false coin valueless. —*Young India* : Oct. 6, 1920.

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I AM but a seeker after Truth. I claim to have found the way to it. I claim to be making a ceaseless effort to find it. But I admit that I have not yet found it. To find Truth completely is to realise oneself and one's destiny to become perfect. I am painfully conscious of my imperfections, and therein lies all the strength I possess, because it is a rare thing for a man to know his own limitations.

—*Young India* : Nov. 17, 1921.

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ABSTRACT truth has no value, unless it incarnates in human beings who represented it by proving their readiness to die for it. Our wrongs live because we only pretend

to be their living representatives. The only way we can prove our claim is by readiness to suffer in the discharge of our trust. —*Young India* : Dec. 22, 1921.

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We must speak the Truth under a shower of bullets. —*Young India* : Jan. 5, 1922.

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NO veil of darkness can ever cover up truth from view for all time. —*Young India* : Jan. 12, 1922.

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LET the opponent glory in our humiliation or so called defeat. It is better to be charged with cowardice and weakness than to be guilty of denial of our oath and sin against God. It is million times better to *appear* untrue before the world than to *be* untrue to ourselves.

—*Young India* : Feb. 16, 1922.

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TRUTH is superior to man's wisdom.

—*Young India* : July 3, 1924.

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MY religion is based on truth and non-violence. Truth is my God. Non-violence is the means of realising Him.

—*Young India* : Jan. 8, 1924.

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THE way of peace is the way of truth. Truthfulness is even more important than peacefulness. Indeed, lying is the mother of violence. A truthful man cannot long remain violent. He will perceive in the course of his search that he has no need to be violent and will further discover that so long as there is the slightest trace of violence in him, he will fail to find the truth he is searching.

There is no half way between truth and non-violence on the one hand and untruth and violence on the other. We may never be strong enough to be entirely non-violent in thought, word and deed. But we must keep non-violence

as our goal and make steady progress towards it. The attainment of freedom whether for a man, a nation or the world, must be in exact proportion to the attainment of non-violence by each. Let those, therefore, who believe in non-violence as the only method of achieving real freedom, keep the lamp of non-violence burning bright in the midst of the present impenetrable gloom. The truth of a few will count, the untruth of millions will vanish even like chaff before a whiff of wind. —*Young India* : May 20, 1925.

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WITH reference to my removal of certain passages from a correspondent's letter recently published, he thus complains :

"In spite of the expurgation you have thought fit to effect in my letter I may claim that in all my letters to you, especially where communal questions are involved, I have tried to observe not the 'prudent' maxim, (which means in brief 'speak not the unpleasant truth') although it be found in most of our received texts of Manu, but the saying of William Lloyd Garrison, the American slave-liberator, which has stood for many years at the head of the *Indian Social Reformer* of Bomby as its motto : I *will be* as harsh as truth, and as uncompromising as justice," etc.

I do not mind harsh truth but I do object to spiced truth

Spicy language is as foreign to truth as hot chillies to a healthy stomach. The passages removed by me were not necessary to elucidate the meaning of the correspondent or give point to it. They were offensive without being useful or necessary. There seems to be in fashion to think that in order to be truthful one must use harsh language; whereas truth suffers when it is harshly put. It is like wanting to support strength : Truth being itself fully strong is insulted when an attempt is made to support its harshness. I

see no conflict between the Sanskrit text and Garrison's motto quoted by the correspondent. In my opinion the Sanskrit text means that one should speak the truth in gentle language. One had better not speak it, if one cannot do so in a gentle way; meaning thereby that there is not truth in a man who cannot control his tongue. In other words, truth without non-violence is not truth, but untruth. Garrison's motto requires to be interpreted in terms of his own life. He was one of the gentlest of men of his time. Mark his language. He will be as harsh as truth, but since truth is never harsh but always gentle and beneficial, the motto can only mean that Garrison would be as gentle as truth but no more. Both the texts have ralation to the inner state of the speaker or writer, not to the effect that will be produced upon those to whom the speech or the writing is addressed. The *Indian Social Reformer* is rarely, if ever, harsh. It tries to be fair though often jumps to conclusions in a hurry and is obliged later to revise its estimate of men and things. In these days of surrounding bitterness one cannot be too cautious. After all who knows the absolute truth ? It is in ordinary affairs of life, only a relative term. What is truth to me is not necessarily truth to the rest of my companions. We are all like the blind men who on examining an elephant gave different descriptions of the same animal according to the touch they were able to have of him. And they were all, according to their own lights in the right. But we know also that they were all in the wrong. Everyone of them fell far short of the truth. One cannot be too insistent therefore upon the necessity of guarding oneself against bitterness. Bitterness blurs the vision and to that extent disables one from seeing even the limited truth that the physically blind men in the fable were able to do.

—*Young India* : Sept. 17, 1925.

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TRUTHFULNESS is the master-key. Do not lie under

any circumstances whatsoever. Keep nothing secret, take your teachers and your elders into your confidence and make a clean breast of everything to them. Bear ill-will to none, do not say an evil thing of anyone behind his back, above all 'to thine own-self be true', so that you are false to no one else. Truthful dealings even in the least, little things of life is the only secret of a pure life. —*Young India*: Dec. 25, 1925.

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EVERY truth is self-acting and possesses inherent strength. I therefore remain unperturbed even when I find myself grossly misrepresented. —*Young India* : Dec. 11, 1924.

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I AM nothing but a mere lump of earth in the hands of the Potter. Truth and Love—*Ahmisa*—is the only thing that counts. Where this is present, everything right is in the end. This is a law to which there is no exception. It would be very bad indeed that Gujrat or India should look up to me and sit with folded hands. Let her worship Truth and Love, look up to that divine couple, employ servants like myself so long as they, tread the strait and narrow path and check them when they swerve from it.

—*Young India* : Aug. 18, 1927.

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I WILL not sacrifice truth and *ahimsa* even for the deliverance of my country or religion. This is as much as to say that neither can be so delivered.

—*Young India* . Oct. 13, 1927.

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ALL the religions of the world, while they may differ in other respects unitedly proclaim that nothing lives in this world but truth. —*Young India* : Oct. 20, 1927.

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FIRHAD in his quest of Shirin wore away his life in breaking rocks, shall we do less for our Shirin of Truth, without which service is not ? —*Young India* : Sep. 20, 1928.

THOSE who join me in my experiments in Truth seeking are not my "test-tubes," they are my valued fellow-workers, sharing with me the joy that the search for Truth brings as no other search does.

—*Young India* : March 25. 1931.

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IF observance of truth was a bed of roses, if truth cost one nothing and was all happiness and ease, there would be no beauty about it. We must adhere to truth even if the heavens should fall. —*Young India* : Sept. 27, 1928.

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I HAVE no hesitation in saying that I should, if there could be such a choice, most decidedly sacrifice the country for Truth which to me is God. I further hold that no individual or nation has ever gained by the sacrifice of Truth—there is, therefore, no such thing as sacrifice of country for Truth. —*Young India* : March 26, 1931.

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TRUTH is not truth merely because it is ancient. Nor it is necessarily to be regarded with suspicion because it is ancient. There are some fundamentals of life, which may not be lightly given up because they are difficult of enforcement in one's life. —*Harijan* : March 14, 1936.

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TRUTH and non-violence are not for the dense. Pursuit of them is bound to result in an all round growth of the body, mind and heart. If this does not follow, either truth and non-violence are untrue, or we are untrue and since the former is impossible the latter will be the only conclusion. The whole of the constructive programme—including handspinning and handweaving, Hindu Muslim Unity, removal of untouchability, prohibition—is in pursuit of truth and non-violence. —*Harijan* : May 8, 1937.

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IS it not a fact that untruth and dishonesty often win in life ?

A. That certainly is not my experience. They often seem to win, but if you dive a little deeper you will find that in reality truth wins. But if the victory of truth was always easy and self-evident truth would not have the value it has, and the observance of truth would be no merit.

—*Harijan* : May 28, 1938.

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THE way of truth is straight and narrow, and it is our duty to point it out whenever there is an opportunity.

—*Harijan* : May 28, 1938.

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WE do not always know wherein lies our good. That is why it is best to assume that good always comes from following the path of truth. —*Harijan* : May 28, 1938.

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I HAVE often said that I would not sell truth for the sake of India's deliverence much less would I do so for wining Muslim friendship. —*Harijan* : May 27, 1939.

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ONLY truth quenches untruth, Love quenches anger, self-suffering quenches violence. This enternal rule is a rule not for saints only but for all. Those who observe it may be few but they are the salt of the earth, it is they who keep the society live together not those who sin against light and truth. —*Harijan* : Feb. 1 1942.

Tulsidas Ramayana

SEVERAL friends on various occasions have addressed to me criticims regarding my attitude towards *Tulsi Ramayana*. The substance of their criticisms is as follows :—

"You have described the *Ramayana* as the best of books, but we have never been able to reconcile ourselves with your view. Do not you see how *Tulsidas* has disparaged womankind, defended Rama's unchivalarous ambuscade on Vali, praised Vibhishan for betrayal of his country, and

described Rama as an *avatar* in spite of his gross injustice to Sita? What beauty do you find in a book like this? Or do you think that the poetic beauty of the book compensates for everything else? If it is so then we venture to suggest that you have no qualification for the task."

I admit that if we take the ciriticisms of every point individually they will be found difficult to refute and the whole of the *Ramayana* can in this manner, be easily condemned. But that can be said of almost everything and everybody. There is a story related about a celebrated artist that in order to answer his critics he put his picture in a show window and invited visitors to indicate their opinion by marking the spot they did not like. The result was that there was hardly any portion that was not covered by the critics' marks. As a matter of fact, however, the picture was a masterpiece of art. Indeed even the *Vedas*, the *Bible* and the *Koran* have not been exempt from condemnation. But their lovers fail to discover those faults in them. In order to arrive at a proper estimate of a book it must be judged as a whole. So much for external criticism. The internal test of a book consists in finding out what effect it has produced on the majority of its readers. Judged by either method the position of the *Ramayana* as a book *par excellence* remains unassailable. This, however, does not mean that it is absolutely faultless. But it is claimed on behalf of the *Ramayana* that it has given peace to millions, has given faith to those who had it not, and is even today serving as a healing balm to thousands who are burnt by the fire of unbelief. Every page of it is flowing with devotion. It is a veritable mine of spiritual experience.

It is true that the *Ramayana* is sometimes used by evil-minded persons to support their evil practices. But that is no proof of evil in the *Ramayana*. I admit that Tulsidas has, unintentionally as I think, done injustice to womankind. In this, as in serveral other respects also, he has

failed to rise above the prevailing notions of his age. In other words, Tulsidas was not a reformer; he was only a prince among devotees. The faults of the *Ramayana* are less a reflection on Tulsidas than a reflection on the age in which he lived.

What should be the attitude of the reformer regarding the position of women or towards Tulsidas under such circumstances? Can he derive no help whatever from Tulsidas? The reply is emphatically 'he can.' In spite of disparaging remarks about women in the *Ramayana* it should not be forgotten that in it Tulsidas has presented to the world his matchless picture of Sita. Where would be Rama without Sita? We find a host of other ennobling figures like Kaushalya, Sumitra etc., in the Ramayana. We bow our head in reverence before the faith and devotion of Shabari and Ahalaya. Ravana was a monster but Manododari was a *sati*. In my opinion these instances go to prove that Tulsidas was no reviler of women by conviction. On the contrary, so far his convictions went, he had only reverence for them. So much for Tulsidasji's attitude towards women.

In the matter of the killing of Vali, however, there is room for two opinions. In Vibhishan I can find no fault. Vibhishan offered *Satyagraha* against his brother. His example teaches us that it is a travesty of patriotism to sympathise with or try to conceal the faults of one's rulers or country and to oppose them is the trust patriotism. By helping Rama, Vibhishan rendered the truest service to his country. The treatment of Sita by Rama does not devote heartlessness. It is a proof of a duel between kingly duty and a husband's love for his wife.

To the sceptics who feel honest doubts in connection with the *Ramayana*, I would suggest that they should not accept, anybody's interpretations mechanically. They should leave out such portions about which they feel doubtful.

Nothing contrary to truth and *ahimsa* need be condoned. It would be sheer perversity to argue that because in our opinion Rama practised deception, we too may do likewise. The proper thing to do would be to believe that Rama was incapable of practising deception. As the *Gita* says. *There is nothing in the world that is entirely free from fault.* Let us therefore like the fabled swan, who rejects the water and takes only the cream, learn to treasure only the good and reject the evil in everything. Nothing and no one is perfect but God. —*Young India* : Oct. 31, 1929.

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Unemployment

IN one of his talks to the students of the Village Workers' Training School, Gandhiji pointed out the difference between the problem of unemployment in this country and that in Western countries. " In one sense," he said, " the problem of unemployment in our country is not so difficult as in other countries. The mode of life is a great factor. The western employed worker must have warm clothing, boots or shoes and socks like the rest of the people, he must have a warm house and many other things incidental to the cold climate. We do not want all these things. I have indeed wept to see the stark poverty and unemployment in our country, but I must confess our own negligence and ignorance are largely responsible for it. We do not know the dignity of labour as such. Thus a shoemaker will not do anything beyond making his shoes, he will think that all other labour is below his dignity. That wrong notion must go. There is enough employment in India for all who will work with their hands and feet honestly. God has given everyone the capacity to work and earn more than his daily bread, and whoever is ready to use that capacity is sure to find work. No labour is too mean for one who wants to earn an honest penny. The only thing is the readiness to use the hands and feet that God has given us. (M. D.) —*Harijan* : Dec. 19, 1936.

Unitary Method

IN a well-regulated family the relations are governed by the unitary method. Thus a father gives to his children not as a result of a pact. He gives out of love, a sense of justice without expecting any return therefor. Not that there is none. But everything is natural, nothing is forced. Nothing is done out of fear or distrust. What is true of a well regulated family is equally true of a well-regulated society which is but an extended family. —*Harijan* : Feb. 1, 1942.

Untouchability

IT is, to my mind, a curse that has come to us, and as long as that curse remains with us, so long I think we are bound to consider that every affliction that we labour under in this sacred land is a fit and proper punishment for this great and indelible crime that we are committing. That any person should be considered untouchable because of his calling passes one's comprehension.

—*Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi* : Page 217.

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A RELIGION that establishes the worship of the cow cannot possibly countenance or warrant a cruel and inhuman boycott of human beings. And I should be content to be torn to pieces rather than disown the suppressed classes. Hindus will certainly never deserve freedom, nor get it if they allow their noble religion to be disgraced by the retention of the taint of untouchability. And as I love Hinduism dearer than life itself, the taint has become for me an intolerable burden. Let us not deny God by denying to a fifth of our race the right of association on an equal footing. —*Young India* : Sep. 29, 1920.

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IF it was proved to me that this is an essential part of Hinduism, I for one would declare myself an open rebel against Hinduism itself. —*Young India* : Nov. 2, 1920.

Thus, whilst I am prepared to defend, as I have always done, the division of Hindus into four castes, as I have so often said in these columns, I consider untouchability to be a heinous crime against humanity. It is not a sign of self-restraint but an arrogant assumption of superiority. It has served no useful purpose and it has suppressed as nothing else in Hindiusm has, vast numbers of the human race who are not only every bit as good as ourselves, but are rendering in many walks of life an essential service to the country. It is a sin of which the sooner Hinduism purges itself the better it is for itself, if it is to be recognised as an honourable and elevating religion. I know no argument in favour of its retention and I have no hesitation in rejecting scriptural authority of a doubtful character in order to support a sinful institution. Indeed I would reject all authority if it is in conflict with sober reason or the dictates of the heart. Authority sustains and ennobles the weak when it is the hand-work of reason, but it degrades them when it supplants reason, sanctified by the still small voice within.

—*Young India* : Dec. 8, 1920.

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WE can do nothing without Hindu-Muslim Unity and without killing the snake of untouchability. Untouchability is a corroding poison that is eating into the vitals of Hindu society. *Varanashram* is not a religion of superiority and inferiority. No man can consider another man as inferior to himself. He must consider every man as his blood-brother. It is the cardinal principle of every religion.

—*Young India* : Feb. 23, 1921.

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UNTOUCHABILITY is the sin of the Hindus. They must suffer for it, they must purify themselves, they must pay the debt that they owe their suppressed brothers and sisters. Theirs is the shame and theirs must be the glory when they have purged themselves of the black sin. The silent loving suffering of one single pure Hindu as such will be enough to

melt the heart of millions of Hindus : but the sufferings of thousands of non-Hindus on behalf of the untouchables will leave the Hindus unmoved. Their blind eyes will be opened by outside interference, however, well-intentioned and generous it may be ; for it will not bring home to them the sense of guilt. On the contrary, they would probably hug the sin all the more for such interference. All reform to be sincere and lasting must come from within.

—*Young India* : May 1, 1924.

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MANY sincere and otherwise noble-minded Hindus consider untouchability as a part of the Hindu creed and would therefore regard the reformers as outcastes. If untouchability was a part of the Hindu creed, I should decline to call myself a Hindu and most decidely embrace some other faith if it satisfied my highest aspirations. Fortunately for me, I hold that untouchability is no part of Hinduism. On the contrary it is a serious blot upon it, which every lover of it must sacrifice himself to remove. Suppose, however, I discovered that untouchability was really an integral part of of Hinduism, I should have to wander in the wilderness because the other creeds as I know them through their accepted interpreters would not satisfy my highest aspirations.

—*Young India* : April 24, 1924.

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HINDUS living as they do in glass houses have no right to throw stones at their Mussalman neighbours. See what we have done, are still doing, to the suppressed classes ! If ' Khaffir ' is a term of opprobrium, how much more so is ' Chandal ' ? In the history of the world religions, there is perhaps nothing like our treatment of the suppressed classes. The pity of it is that the treatment still continues. God does not punish directly. His ways are inscrutable. Who knows that all our woes are not due to that one black sin ?

—*Young India* : May 29, 1924.

THE scriptures proclaimed that there is no distinction between a Brahmin and a Scavenger. Both have souls; both have five organs of sense. —*Young India* : Jan. 8, 1925.

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THE fight against untouchability is a religious fight. It is a fight for the recognition of human dignity. It is a fight for a mighty reform in Hinduism. It is a fight against the entrenched citdatels of orthodoxy.

—*Young India* : Feb. 5, 1925.

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IN the eyes of God there are no touchables and untouchables. Brahmans are called Brahmans not for their superiority, not for their ability to lord it over, but because of their ability to serve mankind by their knowledge and by their ability to efface themselves in the act of serving. Theirs is the privilege and theirs the duty, of serving their fellow men and they cannot do so to the full, unless they renounce every earthly reward. —*Young India* : Sept. 22, 1927.

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UNTOUCHABILITY poisons Hinduism as a drop of arsenic poisons milk. —*Young India* : Oct. 20, 1927.

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YOU must remember that all the great religions of the world are at the present time in the melting pot. Let us not ostrich-like hide our faces and ignore the danger that lies at the back of us. I have not a shadow of doubt that in the great turmoil now taking place either untouchability has to die or Hinduism has to disappear. But I do know that Hinduism is not dying, is not going to die, because I see untouchability is a corpse struggling with its last breath to hold on for a little while. —*Young India* : Oct. 20, 1927.

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THAT is the lesson that comes down to us from South Africa too. A just nemesis has descended upon us there. Just as we are treating our brothers here, our kith and kin

are being treated as Pariahas and Bhangis in South Africa. The moment we purge ourselves of the sin, the moment we are free from the curse of untouchability, you will find the shackles dropping off our countrymen in South Africa.

—*Young India* : Jan. 13, 1927.

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UNTOUCHABILITY is undoubtedly, a difficult point among the masses. It does however appeal to them, only it appeals in a way we do not like. They hug the exclusiveness which they have inherited for ages. But if we cannot, by our purity, unselfishness and patience, cure them of the disease, we must perish as a nation. The sooner every political reformer realises the fact, the better it is for him and the country. We must refuse to give up the struggle or postpone it till after Swaraj. Postponement of it means postponement of Swaraj. It is like wanting to live without lungs. Those who believe that Hindu-Muslim tension and untouchability can be removed after Swaraj are living in the dream land. They are too fatigued to grasp the significance of their proposition.

—*Young India* : Aug. 14, 1924.

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THE Hindu reformers have undertaken the work not as patrons, not to do the favour to the untouchables, certainly not to exploit them politically. They have undertaken the task, because their conception of Hinduism premptorily demands it. They have either to leave Hinduism or to make good the claim that untouchability is no part of it but that it is an excrescence to be rooted out.

—*Young India* : April 17, 1930.

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AN untouchable who lives his Hindusim in the face of persecution at the hand of those Hindus who arrogate to themselves a superior status is a better Hindu than the self-styled superior Hindu, who by the very act of claiming superiority denies his Hinduism.—*Young India* : June 4, 1925.

WHO can deny that the custom of untouchability is immoral, barbarous and cruel.—*Young India* : Dec. 24, 1925.

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ITS removal is calculated to purge Hinduism of the greatest evil that has crept into it, without touching the great system of division of work.—*Young India* : Feb. 11, 1925.

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THIS removal of untouchability is not to be brought about by any legal enactment. It will only be brought about when the Hindu conscience is roused to action, and of its own accord removes the shame. It is a duty the touchables owe to the untouchables.

—*Young India* : June 30, 1927.

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IT is a weedy growth fit only to be weeded out, as we weed out the weedes that we see growing in wheat fields or rice fields. —*Young India* : Oct. 20, 1927.

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I SPEAK with a due sense of my resposibility that this untouchability is a curse that is eating into the vitals of Hinduism, and I often feel that unless we take due precautions and remove this curse from our midst, Hinduism itself is in danger of destruction. That in this age of reason, in this age of wide travel, in this age of a comparative study of religions, there should be found people, some of whom are educated, to uphold the hideous doctrine of treating a single human being as an untouchable, unapproachabe, or unseeable because of his birth, passes my comprehension. As a lay humble student of Hinduism and claiming to be one desirous of practising Hinduism in the spirit and to the letter let me tell you that I have found no warrant or support for this terrible doctrine. Let us not deceive ourselves into the belief that everything that is written in Sanskrit and printed in *Shastra* and has any binding effect upon us. That which is opposed to the fundamental maxims of morality, that which is opposed to trained reason,

cannot be claimed as no matter how ancient it may be. There is enough warrant for the proposition that I have just stated in the *Vedas*, in the *Mahabharata* and in the *Bhagad Gita*. —*Young India* : Oct. 20, 1927.

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LET me not forget the so-called untouchables, the classes that we, Hindus, have been guilty of suppressing. Shall we not have the vision to see that in suppressing a sixth (or whatever the number) of ourselves, we have depressed ourselves? No man takes another down a pit without descending into it himself and sinning in the bargain. It is not the suppressed that sin. It is the suppressor who has to answer for his crime against those whom he suppresses. —*Young India* : March 29, 1928.

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PATIENCE with evil is really trifling with evil and with ourselves. —*Young India* : Oct. 10, 1927.

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UNTOUCHABILITY attaching to birth or calling is an atrocious doctrine repugnant to the religious sense of man. —*Young India* : Oct 3, 1929.

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LET those who are present here today understand that we have not been able yet to win Swaraj because of the load of sin that we are still carrying on our backs. If all the so called "touchable" Hindus did real penance for having wronged their "untouchable" brethren, Swaraj would be automatically in our hands. And pray understand mere removal of physical untouchability does not mean expiation. The removal of untouchability means the removel of all distinctions of superiority and inferiority attaching to birth. Varnashramadharma is a beautiful institution, but if it is used to buttress up social superiority of one section over another, it will be a monstrosity. Let removal of untouchability result from a living conviction that all are one in the eyes of God, that the Father in Heaven will deal with us all with even-handed justice. —*Young India* : Aug. 6, 1931.

SEPARATE electorates to the untouchables will ensure them bondage in perpetuity. The Musalmans will never cease to be Musalmans by having separate electorates. Do you want the untouchables to remain "untouchables" for ever? Well the separate electorates would perpetuate the stigma. What is needed is destruction of untouchability and when you have done it; the bar sinister which has been imposed by an insolent "superior" class upon an "inferior" class will be destroyed. When you have destroyed the bar sinister, to whom will you give the separate electorates? Look at the history of Europe. Have you got separate electorates for the working classes or women? With adult franchise, you give the untouchables complete security. Even the orthodox Hindus would have to approach them for votes. —*Young India* : Nov. 12, 1931.

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Q. DON'T you think that the whole Harijan problem is in the last anaylises an economic problem, and that the moment you improve the Harijans' economic status you solve the problem?

A. No. You may solve the economic problem, but unhappily the Harijan problem, which is essentially that of the eradication of a disease in Hinduism, will not be solved thereby. Dr. Ambedkar who is economically much better off than most of us is still regarded as an untouchable.

—*Harijan* : July 4, 1934.

V

Vaccination

I AM and have been for years a confirmed anti-vaccinationist but I recongnise that I must not expect public support for my views. Anti-vaccinaiton has no backing from the orthodox medical opinion. A medical man who expresses himself against vaccination loses caste. Tremendous pecuniary interests too have grown round vaccination. A sort of temporary immunity from small pox is

gained by vaccination though at much cost otherwise to the body and certainly to moral fibre. But all this argument often based on solid experience counts for nothing against the tangible though temporary immunity from small pox, which the person who has the filthy vaccine injected into his body gets. It will be thus to the end of the world.

—*Young India* : July 18, 1928.

Varnashrama Dharma

A FAIR friend writes :

"A fellow traveller drew my attention to the message of yours to the Rajput Parishad of Vartej. By reading it, a protest which was lying suppressed in the subconscious level of the mind made its way to the surface and claimed a hearing. Man is one who does *manan* or thinking. So I hope you will be tolerant to a fellow-thinker and give an attentive hearing to thoughts that may run counter to your habitual ones. These thoughts had occurred at the first sight of the Sabarmati Ashram with its weaving shed in 1920 had disappeared and reappeared off and one, till of late they have been busy building a permanent abode in my mind for which your message to the Rajputs has supplied the straw for the last brick.

"In a place where the whole station was lined from one end to the other with volunteers dressed in military style with swords hanging at their sides, where the whole air was redolent with reminiscenees of bravery and chivalry of men of the military caste of India, was not your message urging them in a way to substitute the music of your wheel for the music of their sword, a preaching of the *dharma* of of your cast to all cast *ad absurdum* like the Christian missionary ? Should you not rather like the sages of ancient India exhort a Brahman to be a true Brahman, a Kshatriya to be an ideal Kahatriya and a Vaisha to be a model Vaisha ? The insignia of the Brahman is the book or pen,

of the Kshatriyha the sword, and of the Vaishya the wheel or plough. You may well pride yourself in being called a weaver or an agriculturist as thereby you are true to the natural tendencies of your *jati* or to *Vaishya dharma*. But why would you a Hindu a believer in Varnashrama principles help in the degradation of a Brahman or a Kshatriya by instisting on their accepting *Vashya dharma* and rejecting or neglecting their respective *jati dharmas* ? Can a Kshatriya not serve and protect the poor even in these days but in the Vaishya way ?

The great men of India have always upheld *swadharma* for each individual temperament. You are the first of them to preach the throwing in of the *dharmas* of all people into the same melting pot and thereby Vaishyaising the whole nation. Uplift the Vaishyas by all means but pray do not pull the Brahmans and the Kshatriyas by their legs. Spiritualise your caste people but do not materialise the men of other casts by turning them into spinners and weavers with the spell of your personality. To my thinking a Vinoba and a Balkoba would have rendered more potent service to the nation as pure Brahmans with their intellects fully developed rather than as spiritual weavers which you have turned them into."

I have not reproduced the whole of the letter but I have given the cream of it. The rest is a commentary on the extract quoted by me. The friend is born and claims to be a Hindu even as I claim to be one. As I have regarded spinning to be superior to sectional religions, I had hoped that I would not be misunderstood by cultured friends. But it was not to be. The friend tells me she is not the only one to oppose the *charkha*. I must therefore endeavour patiently to examine the argument. I have noted in the course of my journalistic experience dating from 1904 that most of the criticism received by editors is based upon an imperfect understanding of an opponent's statement. In the case in point if only the friend had

borne in mind that I had presented that message of the wheel not to be Hindus alone but to all Indians without exception, to men and women, to Mussalmans, Parsis, Chiristians, Jews, Sikhs and all others who claimed to be Indians, she would have written differently. She would then have inferred that I had placed before the people of India something which not only did not come in conflict with the several religions but which in so far as it was taken up, added lusture to one's own religion and in Hinduism to one's own varna or caste. Mine therefore I claim to be a method not of confusion but cleansing. I ask no one to forsake his own hereditary dharma or occupation but I ask every one to add spinning to his natura-occupation. The Rajputs of Kathiawad knew this. They asked me whether I wanted them to give up their swords. I told them I wanted them to do no such thing. On the contrary, I added, I wanted each one of them to possess a trusty sword so long as long as they believed in it. But I certainly told them that my ideal Rajput was he who defended without the sword and who died at his post without killing. A sword may be snatched from one, not so the bravery to die without striking. But this is by the way. For my purpose, it is enough to show that the Rajputs were not to give up their calling of protecting the weak. Nor do I want the Brahmans to give up their vocation as teachers. I have suggested to them that they become better teachers for sacrificial spinning. Vinoba and Balkoba are better Brahmans for having become spinners and weavers and scavengers. Their knowledge is more digested. A Brahman is one who knows God. Both these fellow-workers are nearer to God today by reason of their having felt for and identified themselves through spinning with the starving millions of India. Divine knowledge is not borrowed from books. It has to be realised in oneself. Books are at best an aid, often even a hindrance. A learned Brahman had to learn divine wisdom from a God-fearing butcher.

What is this Varnashrama? It is not a system of watertight compartments. It is a recognition to me of a scientific fact whether we know it or not. A Brahman is not only a teacher. He is only predominantly that. But a Brahman who refuses to labour will be voted down as an idiot. The *Rishis* of old who lived in the forests cut and fetched wood, tended cattle and even fought. But their pursuit in life was pre-eminently search after Truth. Similarly a Rajput without learning was good for nothing no matter how well he wielded the sword. And a Vaishya without divine knowledge sufficient for his own growth will be a veritable monster eating into the vitals of society as many modern Vaishyas whether of the East or the West have become. They are, according to the *Gita* 'incarnations of sin who live only for themselves.' The spinning wheel is designed to wake up every one to a sense of his duty. It enables everyone better to fulfil his *dharma* or duty. When a vessel is running on smooth waters, work on board is exquisitly divided. But when it is caught in the grip of a violent storm and is about to sink, every one has to give a helping hand to the necessary work of life-saving.

Let us also bear in mind that with the rest of the world India finds herself in the deadly coil of the mercantile cobra. It is a nation of shop-keeping soldiers that claims to rule her. It will tax all the resources of all her best Brahmans to unwind India from that coil. Her learned men and her soldiers will therefore have to bring their learning and their prowess to bear upon the mercantile requirements of India. They must therefore, in order to be able faithfully to carry out their *dharma*, learn and practise spinning.

Nor have I the least hesitation in recommending hand-weaving as a bread winning occupation to all who are in need of an honest occupation. To the Brahmans, the *Kshatriyas* and others, who are at the present moment not following their hereditary occupation but are engaged

in the mad rush for riches, I present the honest and (for them) selfless toil of the weaver and invite them with a view to returning to their respective *dharmas* to be satisfied with what little the handloom yields to them. Just as eating, drinking, sleeping etc. are common to all castes and all religions, so must spinning be common to all without exception whilst the confusion, selfish greed and resulting pauperism persist. Mine therefore, is a method not of making Varnasankara—confusion worse confounded—but it is one of making Varnashram-cleansing more secure.

—*Young India* : Sep. 22, 1927.

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IN his speech at Cuddalore, Gandhiji spoke at length on the Brahman Non-Brahman problem :

You have drawn my attention to the existence of the dissensions between the Brahmans and the Non-Brahmans, and asked me to find out a solution. As a Non-Brahman myself, if I could remove the dissensions by forfeiting my life, I should do so this very moment. But God is a very hard taskmaster. He is never satisfied with fire-works display. His mills, although they grind surely and incessantly, grind excruciatingly slow, and He is never satisfied with hasty forfeitures of life. It is a sacrifice of the purest that He demands, and so you and I have prayerfully to plod on, live out the life so long as it is vouchsafed to us to live it. I have said, only very recently in Madras, that whenever you want me to take part in your deliberations, or want me to advise you, you will find me at your disposal. I have no clear-cut solution for this difficult question. I confess to you, that I do not even now know the points of differences between the two. I tried to draw out some Non-Brahmans, who came to me on Nandi Hill, and they promised to see me in my tour and place all the points of difference before me. I must confess to you that I am no wiser about the Brahman side of the question. And will as the Brahmans

are, I admit they have not told me what the differences are, fully well knowing what my opinion would be about all these questions. As you are aware, though a Non-Brahman myself, I have lived more with them and amongst them than amongst Non-Brahmans, and on that account some of my Non-Brahman friends suspect me of having taken all my colouring from Brahman friends. I have a shrewd suspicion, that the Non-Brahman friends consider that I am not to be accepted as a hope for a proper solution and so I find myself in the happy position of being isolated by both the parties, a position which in the present state of my health suits me admirably. But all the same I give you my assurance that I for my part hold myself in readiness to be wooed by either party. And I assure you too, that I shall not plead physical unfitness.

But I have for both the parties two counsels of perfection which I can lay before you. To the Brahman I will say : "Seeing that you are repositories of all knowledge and embodiments of sacrifice and that you have chosen the life of mendicancy, give up all that the Non-Brahman wants and be satisfied with that they may leave for you." But the modern Brahman would, I know, summarily reject my Non-Brahman interpretation of his *dharma*. To the Non-Brahman I say : "Seeing that you have got numbers on your side, seeing that you have got wealth on your side, what is it that you are worrying about ? Resisting as you are, and as you must, untouchability, do not be guilty of creating a new untouchability in your midst. In your haste, in your blindness, in your anger against the Brahmans, you are trying to trample under foot the whole of the culture which you have inherited from ages past. With a stroke of the pen, may be at the point of the sword, you are impatient to rid Hinduism of its bed-rock. Being dissatisfied and properly dissatisfied with the husk of Hinduism, you are in danger of losing even the kernel, life itself. You in your impatience seem to think that there is absolutely nothing to

be said about *Varnashrama*. Some of you are ready even to think that in defending *Varnashrama* I am also labouring under a delusion. Make no mistake about it. They who say this have not even taken the trouble of understanding what I mean by *Varnashrama*."

It is universal law, stated in so many words by Hinduism. It is a law of spiritual economics. Nations of the West and Islam itself unwittingly are obliged to follow that law. It has nothing to do with superiority or inferiority. The customs about eating, drinking and marriage are no integral part of *Varnashrama Dharma*. It was a law discovered by your ancestors and my ancestors, the *rishis* who saw that if they were to give the best part of their lives to God and to the world, and not to themselves, they must recognise that it is the law of heredity. It is a law designed to set free man's energy for higher pursuits in life. What true Non-Brahmans should therefore set about doing is not to undermine the very foundations on which they are sitting, but to clean all the sweepings they have gathered on the foundation and make it perfectly clean. Fight by all means the monster that passes for *Varnashrama* to-day, and you will find me working side by side with you. My *Varnashrama* enables me to dine with anybody who will give me clean food, be he Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Parsi, whatever he is. My *Varnashrama* accommodates a pariah girl under my own roof as my own daughter. My *Varnashrama* accommodates many Panchama families with whom I dine with the greatest pleasure,—to dine with whom is a privilege. My *Varnashrama* refuses to bow the head before the greatest potentate on earth, but my *Varnashrama* compels me to bow down my head in all humility before knowledge, before purity, before every person, where I see God face to face. Do not therefore swear by words that have, at the present moment become absolutely meaningless and obsolete. Swear all you are worth, if you like, against Brahmans but never against Brahmanism, and even at the risk of being under-

stood or being mistaken by you to be a pro-Brahman, I make bold to declare to you that whilst Brahmans have many sins to atone for, and many for which they will receive exemplary punishments, there are to-day Brahmans living in India who are watching the progress of Hinduism and who are trying to protect it with all the piety and all the austerity of which they are capable. Them you perhaps do not even know. They do not care to be known. They expect no reward, they ask for none. Their work is its own reward. They work in this fashion because they must. It is their nature. You and I may swear against them for all we are worth, but they are untouched. Do not run away with the beleif that I am putting in a plea for Brahmans, Vakils and Ministers and even Justices of the High Courts in India. I have not thought of them in my mind at all. What, therefore, both Brahmans and Non-Brahmans and for that matter everybody who wants India to progress has to do, is to sweep his own house clean. I therefore suggest to Non-Brahmans, who have not yet lost their heads, to think out clearly what it is that they are grieved over, and make up your minds and fight for all they are worth to remove those grievances. I recognise however that I have this evening entered upon an academic discussion. Not knowing the merits of their quarrels, I do nothing else. But in my own humble opinion, I have indicated the lines of action for both and within the limits of your capacity, it is open to you to make use of it in any manner you like.

Vegetarianism

THE real seat of taste is not the tongue but the mind.

—*My Experiments with Truth* : Page 77.

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ABSTEMIOUSNESS from intoxicating drinks and drugs, and from all kinds of foods, especially meat, is undoubtedly a great aid to the evolution of the spirit, but it is by no means an end in itself. Many a man eating meat

and with everybody, but living in the fear of God is nearer his freedom than a man religiously abstaining from meat and many other things, but blaspheming God in every one of his acts. —*Young India* : Sept. 29, 1920.

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IT is generally known that I am a taunch vegetarian and food reformer. But it is not equally generally known that *Ahmisa* extends as much to human beings as to lower animals and that I freely associate with meat-eaters.

I would not kill a human being for protecting a cow, as I will not kill a cow for saving a human life, be it ever so precious. Needless to say I have authorised no one to preach vegetarianism as a part of Non-Co-operation.

—*Young India* : May 18, 1921.

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I DO not regard flesh-food as necessary for us at any stage and under any clime in which it is possible for human beings ordinarily to live. I hold flesh-food to be unsuited to our species. We err in copying the lower animal world if we are superior to it. Experience teaches that animal food is unsuited to those who would curb their passions.

But it is wrong to over estimate the importance of food in the formation of character or in subjugating the flesh. Diet is a powerful factor not to be neglected. But to sum up all religion in terms of diet, as is often done in India, is as wrong as it is to disregard all restraint in regard to diet and to give full reins to one's appetite. Vegetarianism is one of the priceless gifts of Hinduism. It may not be lightly given up. It is necessary therefore to correct the error that vegetarianism has made us weak in mind or body or passive or inert in action. The greatest Hindu reformers have been the activest in their generation and they have invariably been vegetarians. Who could show greater activity than say Shankara or Dayanand in their times ?

—*Young India* : Oct. 7, 1926.

THE golden rule to be observed always in this connection is that you can never be too severe in dealing with yourself but you must be deliberately liberal in judging others. For, experience has shown that no matter how severe we may try to be with regard to ourselves, we shall, in the result, still be found to have acted partially towards ourselves, for the simple reason that our unconscious bias always prepossesses us in our favour and seldom allows the test to be carried beyond our capacity for endurance. But in the case of others we do not know their weaknesses and limitations, which are known only to God who alone can read our hearts. There is therefore always a danger, with all our desire to be liberal, of our being betrayed into a hollow harshness and intolerance when we proceed to apply our personal standards to others ; and paradoxical though it may sound, the more liberal, the more patient, the more considerate we are in such cases, the quicker the results are likely to be ; they will certainly be more permanent and lasting. — *Harijan* : March 1, 1937.

Vested Interest

EVERYONE who knows anything of public finance knows how extravagant this Government is and how heavy is the load of debts that is crushing the nation. Everyone knows also what concessions have been given to foreigners in utter disregard of the national interest. These cannot demand, dare not expect recognition from Independent India under the much abused name of vested interests. All vested interests are not entitled to protection. The keeper of a gambling den or of a brothel has no vested interest. Nor has a Corporation that gambles away the fortunes of a nation and reduces it to impotence.

—*Young India* : Jan. 9, 1930.

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IF we contemplate examining so-called vested rights in the light of India's interests, it is not because of racial

prejudice but because of vital necessity. Their vested rights may not smother nascent indigenous enterprise.

—*Young India* : April 16, 1931.

Vice

WRONG like vice flourishes in secrecy. It dies of sun light. —*Young India* : Feb. 2, 1922.

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IT is easier for the average man to run away from evil than remain in it and still remain unaffected by it. Many men can shung gog-shops and remain tea-totallers, but not many can remain in these pestilential places and avoid the contagion. —*Young India* : Aug. 6, 1925.

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VICE pays a homage to virtue, and sometimes the way it chooses is to expect virtue, not to fall from its pedestal even whilst vice is rampant round about.

—*Young India* : Jan. 16, 1930.

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CRIME and vice generally require darkness for prowling. They disappear when light plays upon them.

—*Harijan* : Dec. 31, 1933.

Villages

WE have until a little ago concentrated on work in cities and we have arranged our plans according to the needs of cities. We have to reverse the process now. The cities are capable of taking care of themselves. It is the villages we have to turn to. We have to disburse them of their prejudices, their superstitions, their narrow outlook and we can do so in no other manner than that of staying amongst them and sharing their joys and sorrows and spreading education and intelligent information amongst them. —*Young India* : April 30, 1931.

I HAVE been saying that if untouchability stays, Hinduism goes ; even so I would say that if the village perishes India will perish too. It will be no more India. Her own mission in the world will get lost. The revival of the village is possible only when it is no more exploited. Industrialization on a mass scale will necessarily lead to passive or active exploitation of the villagers as the problems of competition and marketing come in. Therefore we have to concentrate on the village being self-contained, manufacturing mainly for us. Provided this character of the village industry is maintained, there would be no objection to villagers using even the modern machines and tools that they can make and can afford to use. Only they should not be used as a means of exploitation of others.

—*Harijan* : Aug. 29, 1936.

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INDIA lives in her villages, not in her cities.

—*Harijan* : Sept. 19, 1936.

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THE key to *Swaraj* is not with the cities but with the villages. When I succeed in ridding the villages of their poverty, I have won *Swaraj* for you and for the whole of India. —*Harijan* : Nov. 11, 1936.

Violence

BRUTE force has been the ruling factor in the world for thousands of years, and mankind has been reaping its bitter harvest all along. He who runs may read. There is little hope of anything good coming out of it in the future. If light can come out of darkness, then alone can love emerge from hatred.

—*Satyagraha in South Africa* : *Page* 289.

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IF India makes violence her creed and I have survived, I would not care to live in India. She will cease to evoke any pride in me. My patriotism is subservient to my reli-

gion. I cling to India like a child to its mother's breast, because I feel that she gives me the spiritual nourishment I need. She has the environment that responds to my highest aspiration. When that faith is gone, I shall feel like an orphan without hope of ever finding a guardian. Then the snowy solitude of the Himalaya must give what rest it can to my bleeding soul. —*Young India* : April 6, 1922.

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TO use violence for securing rights may seem an easy path, but it proves to be thorny in the long run. Those who live by the sword die also by the sword. The swimmer often dies by drowning. —*Young India* : June 8, 1921.

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EXPERIENCE convinces me that permanent good can never be the outcome of untruth and violence. Even if my belief is a fond delusion, it will be admitted that it is a fascinating delusion. —*Young India* : Dec. 11, 1924.

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HOWEVER much I may sympathise with and admire worthy motives, I am an uncompromising opponent of violent methods even to serve the noblest of causes.

—*Young India* : Dec. 11, 1924.

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JUST as certain as personal abuse, irritating conduct, lying, causing hurt and murder are symbols of violence, similarly courtesy, inoffensive conduct, truthfulness etc., are symbols of non-violence. —*Young India* : Dec. 26, 1924.

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EVEN if I was assured that we could have independence by means of violence, I should refuse to have it. It wont be real independence. —*Harijan* : Feb. 13, 1937.

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I DO not believe in eradicating evil from the human breast at point of bayonet. The human breast does not lend itself to that means. —*Harijan* : March 13, 1937.

Virtue

THE world, though not itself virtuous pays an unconscious homage to virtue. —*Young India* : Feb. 2, 1928.

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LET us not seek to prop virtue by imagining hellish torture after death for vice and *houris* hereafter as a reward for virtue in this life. If virtue has no attraction in itself it must be a poor thing to be thrown away on the dung heap. Nature, I am convinced is not so cruel as she seems to us, who are so often filled with cruelty ourselves. Both heaven and hell are within us. Life after Death there is, but it is not so unlike our present experiences as either to terrify us or make us delirious with joy. 'He is steadfast who rises above joy and sorrow.' says the *Gita*. 'The wise are unaffected either by death or life. These are but faces of the same coin.' —*Young India* : Oct. 25, 1928.

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THERE comes a time in man's life when virtue itself becomes vice. Virtue which was virtue in its time, when torn from the purpose to which it was dedicated, becomes vice.

If our liberty of speech is chocked, the movement for the freedom of our country from bondage is choked. Then the virtue of self-restraint is going to become vice.

—*Harijan* : Sept. 22, 1940.

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TO trust is a virtue. It is weakness that begets distrust.

—*Young India* : Dec. 31, 1919.

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We should cease to grow the moment we cease to discriminate between virtue and vice.

—*Young India* : Sept. 15, 1921.

Voters

MY attempt is to point out that we need an electorate, which is impartial, independent and intelligent. If the

electors do not interest themselves in national affairs and remain unconcerned with what goes on in their midst, and if they elect men with whom they have private relations or whose aid they need for themselves, this state of things can do no good to the country ; on the contrary, it will be harmful. —*Young India* : June 9, 1920.

Vows

INTERPRETATION of pledges has been a fruitful source of strife all the world over no matter how explicit the pledge, people will turn and twist the test to suit their own purposes. They are to be met with among all classes of society, from which the rich down to poor, from the prince down to the peasant. Selfishness turns them blind, and by the use of the ambiguous middle they deceive themselves and seek to deceive the world and God. One golden rule is to accept the interpretation honestly put on the pledge by the party administering it. Another is to accept the interpretation of the weaker party, where there are two interpretations possible. Rejection of these two rules gives rise to strife and inequity which are rooted in untruthfulness. He who seeks truth alone easily follows the golden rule. He need not seek learned advice for interpretation.

—*My Experiments with Truth* : Page 79.

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THE importance of vows grew upon me more clearly than ever before. I realized that a vow, far from closing the door to real freedom, opened it. Upto this time I had not met with success because the will had been lacking, because I had no faith in myself, no faith in the grace of God, and therefore my mind had been tossing on the bosterous sea of doubt. I realized that in refusing to take a vow, man was drawn into temptations, and that to be bound by a vow was like a passage from liberatism to a real monogamous marriage. I believe in effort, I do not want to bind myself with the vows, is the mentality of weakness and betrays a

subtle desire for the thing to be avoided or where can be the difficulty in making a final decision. I vow to flee from the serpent which I know will bite me, I do not simply make an effort to flee from him. I know that mere effort may mean certain death, mere effort means ignorance of the certain fact that the serpent is bound to kill me. The fact, therefore, that I could rest content with an effort only, means that I have not yet clearly realized the necessity of definite action. 'But supposing my views are changed in the future, how can I bind myself by a vow?' such a doubt often deters us. But that doubt also betrays a lack of clear perception that a particular thing must be renounced. That is why Nishkulanand has sung.

'Renunciation without aversion is not lasting.'

Where therefore the desire is gone, a vow of renunciation is the natural and inevitable fruit.

—*My Experiments with Truth* : *Page 255.*

PERSONALLY I hold that a man, who deliberately and intelligently takes a pledge and then breaks it, forfeits his manhood. And just as a copper coin treated with mercury not only becomes valueless when found out but also makes its owner liable to punishment, in the same way a man who lightly pledges his word and then breaks it becomes a man of straw and fits himself for punishment here as well as hereafter. —*Satayagraha in South Africa* : Page 165.

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I KNOW that pledges and vows are, and should be, taken on rare occasions. A man who takes a vow every now and then is sure to stumble.

—*Satayagraha in South Africa* : Page 116.

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WHEN once a man has pledged himself he need not hesitate to pledge himself a hundred times. But yet it is no

uncommon experience to find men weakening in regard to pledges deliberately taken and getting perplexed when asked to put down a verbal pledge in black and white.

—*Satyagraha in South Africa* : Page 186.

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A VOW is a purely religious act which cannot be taken in a fit of passion. It can be taken only with a mind purified and composed and with God as witness. —*Young India* : Jan. 21, 1919.

ACTS which are not possible by ordinary self-denial, become possible with the aid of vows which require extraordinary self-denial. It is hence believed that vows can only uplift us. —*Young India* : Jan. 28, 1919.

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IT is certainly better not to take a vow than having taken it to break it ; one cannot be too cautious about taking vows. But we hold that the vast mass of mankind need the binding force of pledges. They build up a man's character. They are, on the one hand, a recognition of the fickleness of the human nature and, on the other, an additional help to strong minds. Every one recognises the excellent effect produced by temperance pledges. With the support derived from such pledges many have succumbed to the temptation to drink. A vow is fixed and unalterable determination to do a thing, when such a determination is related to something noble which can only uplift the man who makes the resolve. A vow is to all other indifferent resolves what a right angle is to all other angles. And just as a right angle gives an invisible and correct measure, so does a man of vows, rightly followed, gives of himself an unvariable and correct measure. —*Young India* : June 28, 1919.

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ONLY he can take great resolves who has indomitable faith in God and has fear of God.

—*Harijan* : July 17, 1938.

MY religion teaches me that a promise once made or a vow once taken for a worthy object may not be broken.

—*Young India*: Sept. 9, 1924.

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IT is easy enough to take a vow under a stimulating influence. But it is difficult to keep to it especially in the midst of temptation. —*Young India*: Jan. 22, 1925.

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MY own opinion and that of many others is that promises or vows are necessary for the strongest of us. A promise is like a right angle not nearly but exactly 90 degrees. The slightest deflection makes it useless for the grand purpose that the right angle serves. A voluntary promise is like a plumb line keeping a man straight and warning him when he is going wrong. Rules of general application do not serve the same purpose as an individual vow. We find therefore the system of declaration followed in all large and well conducted institutions. The Viceroy has to take the oath of office. Members of legislatures have to do likewise all the world over, and in my opinion rightly so. A soldier joining an army has to do likewise. Moreover, a written undertaking reminds one of what one has promised to do. Memory is a very frail thing. The written word stands for ever.

—*Young India*: Oct. 1, 1925.

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A CORRESPONDENT who seems to be a regular and careful reader of *Navajiwan* writes:

> "I spin regularly, but the question is whether or not I should bind myself to it by a vow. If I take a vow to spin regularly for hour every day, I suppose I must do an hour's honest spinning unfailingly, come what may. Suppose now having taken the vow, I am required to go out on a long journey, how can I fulfil my vow about spinning or again, suppose I fall seriously ill even then I must do my spinning, or else be guilty of breaking my vow before man and God. On the other hand if I do

not take a vow what guarantee is there that my resolution would not give way and betray me at a critical moment ?

"You will perhaps say that one's resolution ought to be made of sterner stuff. But when even the acknowledged leaders of the country are seen hourly breaking their resolutions, what can one expect from the rank and life ? What are lesser mortals like myself to do ? Would you kindly resolve my dilemma ?"

Being accustomed from very childhood to taking vows I confess I have a strong bias in favour of the practice. It has come to my rescue in many a crisis. I have seen it save others from many a pitfall. A life without vows is like a ship without anchor or like an edifice that is built on slip-sand instead of a solid rock. A vow imparts stability, ballast and firmness to one's character. What reliance can be placed on a person who lacks these essential qualities ? An agreement is nothing but a mutual interchange of vows ; simultaneously one enters into a pledge when one gives one's word to another.

In old days, the word of most of illustrious persons was regarded as good as a bond. They concluded transactions involving millions by oral agreements. In fact our entire social fabric rests on the sanctity of the pledged word. The world would go to pieces if there was not this element of stability, or finality in agreements arrived at. The Himalayas are immovably fixed for ever in their place. India would perish if the firmness of the Himalayas gave way. The sun, the moon and other heavenly bodies move with unerring regularity. Were it not so human affairs would come to a standstill. But we know that the sun has been rising regularly at its fixed time for countless ages in the past and will continue to do so in future. The cooling orb of the moon will continue always to wax and wane and it has done for ages past with a clock-work regularity. That is why we call the sun and the moon to be witness to our affairs. We base

our calender on their movements, we regulate our time by their rising and setting.

The same law, which regulates these heavenly bodies, applies equally to men. A person unbound by vows can never be absolutely relied upon. It is overweaning pride to say, "This thing comes natural to me. Why should I bind myself permanently by vows? I can well take care of myself at the critical moment. Why should I take an absolute vow against wine? I never get drunk. Why should I forgoe the pleasure of an occasional cup for nothing?" A person who argues like this will never be weaned from his addiction.

To shirk taking of vows betrays indecision and want of resolution. One never can achieve anything lasting in this world by being irresolute. For instance, what faith can you place in a general or a soldier who lacks resolution and determination, who says, 'I shall keep guard as long as I can?' A householder, whose watchman says that he would keep watch as long as he can, can never sleep in security. No general ever won victory by following the principle of being vigilant so long as he could.

I have before me innumerable examples of spinners at will. Every one of them has come to grief sooner or later. On the other hand, sacramental spinning has transformed the entire life of those who have taken to it; mountains of yarn stored up by them tell the tale. A vow is like a right angle. An insignificant right angle will make all the difference between ugliness and elegance, solidity and shakiness of a gigantic structure. Even so stability or unstability, purity or otherwise of an entire career may depend upon the taking of a vow.

It goes without saying that moderation and sobriety are of the very essence of vow-taking. The taking of vows that are not feasible or that are beyond one's capacity would betray thoughtlessness and want of balance. Similarly a

vow can be made conditional without losing any of its efficacy or virtue. For instance there would be nothing wrong about taking a vow to spin for at least one hour every day and to turn out not less than 200 yards daily except when one is travelling or is sick. Such a vow would not only be quite in form but also easy of observance. The essence of a vow does not consist in the difficulty of its performance but in the determination behind it unflinchingly to stick to it in the teeth of difficulties.

Self-restraint is the very key-stone of the ethics of vow taking. For instance, one cannot take a vow of self-indulgence, to eat, drink and be merry, in short to do as one pleases. This warning is necessary because I know of instances when an attempt was made to cover things of questionable import by means of vows. In the heyday of Non-co-operation one even heard of the objection raised: "How can I resign from Government service when I have made a covenant with it to serve it ?" Or again, "How can I close my liquor shop since I have bound myself by contract to run it for five years ?" Such questions might appear puzzling sometimes. But on closer thinking it will be seen that a vow can never be used to support or justify an immoral action. A vow must lead one upwards, never downwards towards perdition.

The correspondent has concluded by having a fling at the 'acknowledged leaders' of the country and cited their so-called fickleness to justify his position. This sort of reasoning only betrays weakness. Once should try to emulate and imitate only the virtues of one's leaders, never their faults. Our national leaders do not claim to be paragons of prefection. They occupy the position of eminence that they do in public life by virtue of certain qualities which they exhibit in their character. Let us ponder over those qualities and try to assimilate them, let us not even hink of their shortcomings. No son can be called a worthy son of his father who only imbibes the shortcomings of his

parents or pleads inability to keep clear of them. It is the virtues, not the faults, of one's parents that constitute one's true legacy. A son who only adds to the debts of his parents would be written down as unworthy. A worthy son is he who would liquidate their debts and increase the legacy left by them. —*Young India* : Aug. 22, 1929.

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Q. ALL agree that mechanical repetition of prayers is worse than useless. It acts as an opiate on the soul. I often wonder why you encourage repetition morning and evening of the eleven great vows as a matter of routine. May not this have a dulling effect on the moral consciousness of our boys ? Is there no better way of inculcating these vows ?

A. Repetitions when they are not mechanical produce marvellous results. Thus I do not regard the rosary as a superstition. It is an aid to the pacification of a wandering brain. Daily repetition of the vow falls under a different category. It is a daily reminder to the earnest seeker as he rises and retires that he is under the eleven vows which are to regulate his conduct. No doubt it will lose its effect if a person repeats the vows mechanically under the delusion that the mere repetition will bring him merit. You mae ask, "Why repeat the vows at all ? You know that you havy taken them and are expected to observe them." There is force in the argument. But experience has shown that a deliberate repetition gives stimulus to the resolution. Vows are to the weak mind and soul what tonics are to a weak body. Just as a healthy body needs no tonics, a strong mind may retain its healh without the need of vows and the daily reminder thereof. An examination of the vows will, however, show that most of us are weak enough to need their assistance. —*Harijan* : May 27, 1936.

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Q. I AM a genuine seeker after *brahamacharya*. But in spite of all my prayerful effort I am sinking deeper and

deeper into self-indulgence. I cannot blame my partner for it. My circumstances do not permit me to enforce the rule about segregation.

You advocate and believe in the efficacy of vows. You have said in *Harijan* that "for the weak in mind and soul vows are like tonics." But how will you administer this tonic to a case like mine who has not the strength of will to carry out the vow he has taken? Had I such a strong will, the necessity for taking vows would not have arisen.

A. Let me bluntly tell you that I do not believe in your genuineness, not that you are wilfully lying. You are unconsciously ungenuine. If you are genuine, you will at least observe the rules of the game. You give up your case when you say you cannot segregate yourself from your wife for want of room. I have never heard such an excuse. If you take the vow, you must at least produce the necessary atmosphere around you for its observance. Everyone who has successfully carried out the vow has invariably observed this first condition. If you are living in only one room, you should go elsewhere or send away your wife or have a relative to sleep in the same room. The question is how far you are determined. It may be that you want to observe *brahamacharya* because you have read much about it and would like to be classed among *brahamacharis*. I know many such young men. If that is your case, you should not make the attempt. One must have a burning desire to live that life. If you have it, you will adopt the measures that all aspirants have invariably adopted. You are then bound to succeed. —*Harijan* : June 29, 1940.

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YOUR capacity to keep your vow will depend on the purity of your life. A gambler or a drunkard, or a dissolute character can never keep a vow.

—*Harijan* : Nov. 11, 1936.

W

Western Civilization

I DO not think that everything Western is to be rejected. I have condemned the Western civilisation in no measured terms. I still do so, but it does not mean that everything Western should be rejected. I have learnt a great deal from the West and I am grateful to it. I should think myself unfortunate if contact with and the literature of the West had no influence on me. —*Young India* : Oct. 21, 1926.

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IF any one thinks that the people in the West are innocent of humanity he is sadly mistaken. The ideal of humanity in the West is perhaps lower, but their practice of it is very much more thorough than ours. We rest content with lofty ideal and are slow or lazy in its practice. We are wrapped in deep darkness, as is evident from our impoverished cattle and other animals. They are eloquent of our irreligion rather than of religion. —*Young India* : Oct. 21, 1926.

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THE distinguishing characteristic of modern civilisation is an indefinite multiplicity of human wants. The characteristic of ancient civilisation is an imperative restriction upon and a strict regulating of these wants The modern or Western insatiableness arises really from want of a living faith in a future state and therefore also in Divinity. The restraint of ancient or Eastern civilisation arises from a belief, often in spite of ourselves, in a future state and the existence of a Divine Power. The record condensed above is a warning, if we will take it, against a blind imitation of the West, which one sees so often in the city life of India and especially among the educated classes. Some of the immediate and brilliant results of modern inventions are too maddening to resist. But I have no manner of doubt that the victory of man lies in that resistance. We are in danger of

bartering away the permanent good for a momentary pleasure. —*Young India* : June 2, 1927.

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WISDOM is no monopoly of one continent or one race. My resistance to Western civilisation is really a resistance to its indiscriminate and thoughtless imitation based on the assumption that Asiatics are fit only to copy everything that comes from the West. I do believe, that if India has patience enough to go through the fire of suffering and to resist any unlawful encroachment upon its own civilisation which, imperfect though it undoubtedly is, has hitherto stood the ravages of time, she can make a lasting contribution to the peace and solid progress of the world.

—*Young India* : Jan. 12, 1928.

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THE whole of the Europen system is based on mutual distrust and fear. Well did Wallace the contemporary of Darwin say that the amazing material progress of the West made little or no difference in the moral condition of the peoples of the West. Even liberty in many cases is a misnomer. —*Young India* : Feb. I4, 1929t.

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I WOULD heartily welcome the union of East and West provided it is not based on brute force.

—*Young India* : Oct. 1, I931.

Wickedness

ONE may detest the wickedness of a brother withou hating him. Jesus denounced the wickedness of the Scribes, and the Pharisees, but he did not hate them. He did not enunciate this law of love for the man and hate for the evil in him for himself only, but he taught the doctrine for universal practice. Indeed, I find it in all the scriptures of the world. —*Young India* : July 14, 1921.

'JUDGE not lest ye be judged is a golden rule.' Those whom we regard as wicked as a rule return the compliment and in their turn accuse us of what we charge them with. But here again I quite grant the proposition that if one regards another as irrevocably wicked, one is bound ordinarily to non-co-operate with him, for unfortunately many things are regulated purely by one's mental condition. If I mistake a rope for a snake, I am likely to turn pale with fright much to the amusement of the bystander who knows that it is but a rope. —*Young India* : Dec. 26, 1924.

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AFTER all no one is wicked by nature. And if others are wicked, are we the less so ? —*Harijan* : March 30, 1940

Widowhood

IF a young man of 18 being widowed could re-marry why should not a widow of that age, have the same right ? Voluntary enlightened widowhood is a great asset for any nation, as enforced ignorant widowhood is a disgrace.
—*Young India* : May 2, 1929.

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THE curse of every widow, who is burning within to re-marry but dare not for fear of a cruel custom, descends upon Hindu society so long as it keeps the widow under an unforgivable bondage. —*Young India* : May 2, 1929.

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I HAVE repeatedly said that every widow has as much right to re-marry as every widower. Voluntary widowhood is a priceless boon in Hinduism; enforced widowhood is a curse. And I very much feel that many young widows,

if they were absolutely free, not so much from the fear of physical restraint as from the opprobrium of Hindu public opinion, would re-marry without the slightest hesitation.

—*Harijan* : June 22, 1935.

Will Power

STRENGTH does not come from physical capacity. It comes from an indomitable will.

—*Young India* : Aug. 11, 1920.

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STREAM becomes a mighty power only when it allows itself to be imprisoned in a strong little reservoir and produces tremendous motion and carries huge weights by permitting itself a tiny and measured outlet. Even so have the youth of the country of their own free will to allow their inexhaustible energy to be imprisoned, controlled and set free in strictly meaured and required quantities.

—*Young India* : Oct. 3, 1929.

Wisdom

EVEN as wisdom often comes from the mouths of babes so does it often come from the mouths of old people. The golden rule is to test everything in the light of reason and experience, no matter from whom it comes.

—*Harijan* : March 28, 1936.

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NOT mad rush, but unperturbed calmness brings wisdom. This maxim holds as true today as when it was first propounded ages ago. —*Harijan* : Oct. 12, 1934.

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WISDOM, it is said, often comes from the mouths of babes and sucklings. It may be a poetic exaggeration, but

there is no doubt that sometimes it does come through babes. Experts polish it and give it a scientific shape.

—*Harijan* : Dec. 2, 1937.

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IT is unwise to be too sure of one's own wisdom. It is healthy to be reminded that the strongest might weaken and the wisest might err. —*Harijan* : Feb. 17, 1940.

Woman

WOMAN, I hold, is the personification of self-sacrifice, but, unfortunately, to-day, she does not realise what a tremendous advantage she has over man. As Tolstoy used to say, they are labouring under the hypnotic influence of man. If they would realise the strength of non-violence, they would not consent to be called the weaker sex.

—*India's Case For Swaraj* : Page 401.

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IT is no exaggeration to say that a human being without education is not far removed from an animal. Education, therefore, is necessary for women as it is for men. Not that the methods of education should be identical in both cases. In the first place, our State system of education is full of error, and productive of harm in many respects. It should be eschewed by men and women alike. Even if it were free from its present blemishes, I would not regard it as proper for women from all points of view. Man and woman are of equal rank, but they are not indentical. They are a peerless pair, being supplementary to one another; each helps the other, so that without the one the existence of the other cannot be conceived, and, therefore, it follows as a necessary corrollary from these facts, that anything that will impair the status of either of them will involve the equal ruin of them both. In framing any scheme

of women's education, this cardinal truth must be constantly kept in mind. Man is supreme in the outward activites of a married pair, and, therefore, in is the fitness of things he should have greater knowledge thereof. On the other hand, home life is entirely the sphere of woman, and, therefore, in domestic affairs, in the upbringing aud education of children, women ought to have more knowledge. Not that knowledge should be divided into watertight compartments, or that some branches of knowledge should be closed to anyone; but unless courses of instrucation are based on a discriminating appreciation of these basic principles, the fullest life of man and woman cannot be developed.

—*Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi* : Page 423.

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WOMAN is the companion of man, gifted with equal mental capacities. She has the right to participate in very minutest detail in the activities of man, and she has an equal right of freedom and liberty with him.

—*Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi* : Page 423.

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I WILL far rather see the race of man extinct than that we should become less than beasts by making the noblest of God's creation the object of our lust.

—*Young India* : July 21, 1921.

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WOMAN must cease to consider herself the object of man's lust. The remedy is more in her hands than man's. She must refuse to adorn herself for men, including her husband, if she will be an equal partner with man. I cannot imagine Sita ever wasting a single moment on pleasing

Rama by physical charms. —*Young India* : July 21, 1921.

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OUR one limb is paralysed. Women have got to come up to the level of man. As I said to the ladies at a meeting to-day, they may not copy man in all the wildness of his nature, but they must come to the level of man in all that is best in him. —*Young India* : Dec. 1, 1927.

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IF you want to play yourt part in the world's affairs you must refuse to deck yourselves for pleasing man. If I was born a woman, I would rise in rebellion against any pretention on the part of man that woman is born to be his plaything. I have mentally become a woman in order to steal into her heart. I could not steal into my wife's heart until I decided to treat her differently than I used to do, and so I restored to her all her rights by dispossessing myself of all my so-called rights as her husband. And you see her to-day as simple as myself. You find no necklaces, no fineries on her. I want you to be like that. Refuse to be the slaves of your own whims and fancies, and the slaves of men. Refuse to decorate yourselves, don't go in for scents and lavender waters ; if you want to give out the proper scent, it must come out of your heart, and then you will captivate not man, but humanity. It is your birthright. Man is born of woman , he is flesh of her flesh and bone of her bone. Come to your own and deliver your message again. —*Young India* : Feb. 20, 1920.

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THE economic and the moral salvation of India rests mainly with you. The future of India lies on your knees, for you will nurture the future generation. You can bring up the children of India to become simple, God-fearing and brave men and women, or you can coddle them to be weaklings, unfit to brave the storms of life and used to foreign fineries which they would find it difficult in afterlife to discard. —*Young India* : Aug. I, 1921.

EQUALITY of the sexes does not mean equality of occupations. There may be no legal bar against a woman hunting or wielding a lance. But she instinctively recoils from a function that belongs to man. Nature has created sexes as compliments to each other. Their functions are defined as are their forms. —*Harijan* : Dec. 2, 1939.



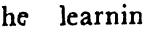
WOMAN is nothing if she is not self-sacrifice and purity personified. —*Young India* : Nov. 19, 1925.



WOMAN is the incarnation of *ahimsa*. *Ahimsa* means infinite love, which again means infinite capacity for suffering. Who but woman, the mother of man, shows this capacity in the largest measure? She shows it as she carries the infant and feeds it during nine months and drives joy in the suffering involved. What can beat the suffering caused by the pangs of labour ? But she forgets them in the joy of creation. Who, again suffers daily so that her babe may wax from day to day ? Let her transfer that love to the whole of humanity, let her forget that she ever was or can be the object of man's lust. And she will occupy her proud position by the side of man as his mother, maker and silent leader. It is given to her to teach the art of peace to the warring world thirsting for that nectar. She can become the leader in *Satyagraha* which does not require the learning that books give but does require the stout heart that comes from suffering and faith.

I am uncompromising in the matter of woman's rights. In my opinion she should labour under no legal disability not suffered by man, I should treat the daughters and sons on a footing of perfect equality.

—*Young India* : Oct. 17, 1929.



WOMAN has circumvented man in a variety of ways in her unconsciously subtle ways, as man has vainly and

equally unconsciously struggled to thwart woman in gaining ascendancy over him. The result is a stalemate. Thus viewed, it is a serious problem the enlightened daughters of *Bharat Mata* are called upon to solve. They may not ape the manner of the West, which may be uited to its environment. They must apply methods suited to the Indian genius and Indian environment. Theirs must be the strong, controlling, purifying, steadying hand, conserving what is best in our culture, and unhesitatingly rejecting what is base and degrading. This is the work of Sitas, Draupadis Savitris and Damayantis, not of amazons and prudes.

—*Young India* : Oct. 17, 1928.

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HINDU culture had erred on the side of excessive subordination of the wife to the husband, and has insisted on the complete merging of the wife in the husband. This has resulted in the husband somtimes usurping and exercising authority that reduces him to the level of the brute.

—*Young India* : Oct. 23, 1929.

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MAN has regarded woman as his tool. She has learned to be his tool, and in the end found this easy and pleasurable to be such, because when one drags another in his fall the descent is easy. —*Harijan* : Jan. 25, 1936.

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TO call a woman a member of the weaker sex is a libel. In what way is woman the weaker sex, I do not know. If the implication is that she lacks the brute instinct of man, or does not possess it in the same measure as man, the charge may be admitted. But then, woman becomes, as she is, the nobler sex. If she is weak in striking, she is strong in suffering. I have described woman as the embodiment of sacrifice and *ahimsa*. She has to learn not to rely on man to protect her virtue or her honour. I do not know a single instance of a man having ever protected the virtue of a woman He cannot, even if he would. Rama certainly did not protect the virtue of Sita, not the five

Pandawas of Draupadi. Both these noble women protected their own virtue by the sheer force of their purity. No person loses honour or self-respect but by his consent. A woman no more loses her honour or virtue, because a brute renders her senseless and ravishes her, than a man loses his because a wicked woman administers to him a stupefying drug and makes him do what she likes.

—*Harijan* : Nov. 14, 1936.

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I SUGGEST that before you put your pens to paper, think of woman as your own mother, and I assure you the chasest literature will flow from your pens, even like the beautiful rain from heaven which waters the thirsty earth below. Remember that a woman was your mother, before a woman became your wife. Far from quenching their spiritual thirst, some writers stimulate their passions, so much so that poor ignorant women waste their time wondering how they might answer to the description our fiction gives of them. Are detailed description of their physical form an essential part of literature. I wonder ? Do you find anything of the kind in the *Upanishads*, the *Quran* or the *Bible* ? And yet, do you know that the English language would be empty without the *Bible* ? Three parts *Bible*, and one part Shakespeare is the description of it. Arabic would be forgotten without the Quran. And, think of Hindi without Tulsidas. Do you find in it anything like what you find in the present-day literature about women.

—*Harijan* : Nov. 21, 1936.

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I BELIEVE, in the proper education of women. But I do not believe that woman will not make her contribution to the world by mimicing or running a race with man. She can run the race but she will not rise to the great heights she is capable of by mimicing man. She has to be the complement of man. —*Harijan* : Feb. 27, 1937.

MAN has converted her into a domestic drudge and an instrument of his pleasure, instead of regarding her as his helpmate and better half! The result is a semi-paralysis of our society. Woman has rightly been called the mother of the race. We owe it to her and to ourselves to undo the great wrong that we have done her.—*Harijan* : Feb. 12, 1939.

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ONLY the toad under the harrow knows where it pinches him. Therefore, ultimately, woman will have to determine with authority what she needs. My own opinion is, that just as fundamentally man and woman are one, their problem must be one in essence. The soul in both is the same. The two live the same life, have the same feelings. Each is a complement of the other. The one cannot live without the other's active help.

But, somehow or other, man has dominated woman from ages past, and so woman has developed an inferiority complex. She has believed in the truth of man's interested teaching that she is inferior to him. But the seers among men have recognised her equal status.

—*Harijan* : Feb. 24, 1940.

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IN my opinion, it is degrading both for man and woman, that woman should be called upon or induced to forsake the hearth, and shoulder the rifle for the protection of that hearth. It is a reversion to barbarity and the beginning of the end. In trying to ride the horse that man rides, she brings herself and him down. The sin will be on man's head for tempting or compelling his companion to desert her special calling. There is as much bravery in keeping one's home in good order and condition, as there is in defending it against attack from without.

—*Harijan* : Feb. 24, 1940.

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THERE is as much reason for man to wish that he was born a woman, as for woman to do otherwise. But the

wish is fruitless. Let us be happy in the state to which we are born, and do the duty for which nature has destined us.

—*Harijan* : Feb. 24, 1940.

WHERE there is a non-violent atmosphere, where there is the constant teaching of *ahimsa*, woman will not regard herself as dependent, weak or helpless. She is not really helpless when she is really pure. Her purity makes her conscious of her strength. I have always held that it is physically impossible to violate a woman against her will. The outrage takes place only when she gives way to fear, or does not realise her moral strength. If she cannot meet the assailiant's physical might, her purity will give her the strength to die before he succeeds in violating her. Take the case of Sita. Physically she was a weakling before Rayana, but her purity was more than a match even for his giant might. He tried to win her with all kinds of allurements but could not carnally touch her without her consent. On the other had, if a woman, depends on her own physical strength, or upon a weapon she possesses, she is sure to be discomfited whenever her strength is exhausted.

—*Harijan* : Sept. 1, 1940.



WOMAN is described as man's better half. As long as she has not the same rights in law as man, as long as the birth of a girl does not receive the same welcome as that of a boy, so long we should know that India is suffering from partial paralysis. Suppression of woman is a denial of *Ahimsa*.

—*Harijan* : Aug. 18, 1940.



IT is my firm conviction that a fearless woman who knows that her purity is her best shield can never be dishonoured. However beastly the man, he will bow in shame before the flame of her dazzling purity.

—*Harijan* : March 1, 1942.

WOMAN is the companion of man, gifted with equal mental capacities. She has the right to participate in every minutest detail in the activities of man and she has an equal right of freedom and liberty with him.

—*Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi* : Page 213.

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WOULD that woman realize the power she has latent in her for good, if she has also for mischief. It is in her power to make the world more livable both for her and her partner whether as father, son or husband, if she would cease to think of herself as weak and fit only to serve as a doll for man to play with. If society is not to be destroyed by insane wars of nation against nations and still more insane wars on its moral foundations, the woman will have to play her part not manfully, as some are trying to do, but womanfully. She won't better humanity by vying with man in his ability to destroy life mostly without purpose.

—*Harijan* : Nov. 16, 1936.

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I AM firmly of opinion that India's salvation depends on the sacrifice and enlightment of her women. In many of the women's meetings I used to address, I emphasised the facts that when we wanted to speak of our ancient heroes and heroines or gods and godesses we would name the latter first, e.g., Sita Ram, Radha Krishna and not Ram Sita or Krishna Radha. This practice is not without its significance. Women used to be honoured and their work and worth were regarded as of special value. Let us continue the tradition in letter and spirit. —*Harijan* : Dec. 27, 1936.

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MORE often than not a woman's time is taken up, not by the performance of essential domestic duties, but in catering for the egoistic pleasure of her lord and master and

for her own vanities. To me, this domestic slavery of woman is a symbol of our barbarism. In my opinion, the slavery of the kitchen is a remanant of barbarism mainly. It is high time that our womankind was freed from this incubus. Domestic work ought not to take the whole of a woman's time. —*Harijan* : June 8, 1940.

Work

WE shall be judged not by our words, but solely by our deeds. —*Young India* : March 18, 1919.



INDEED a sincere worker prefers work to responsibility of office and by not being on the executive escapes the terrible wranglings that take place therein.

—*Young India* : July 3, 1924.



TIME must work in their favour, for it always does in favour of honest and industrious workers.

—*Young India* : May 21, 1925.



PRAYERFUL well-meaning effort never goes in vain, and man's success lies only in such an effort. The result is in His hands. —*Young India* : June 17, 1926.

Working Committee

THE Congress is a paramount authority. The Working Committee is its creature. —*Harijan* : April 9, 1931.



I ATTEND the Working Committee meetings not to identify myself with its resolutions or even its general policy. I attend in the pursuit of my mission of non-violence. So long as they want my attendance. I go there to emphasize non-violence in their acts and through them in those of Congressmen. We pursue the same goal. They all of them would go the whole length with me if they could, but they

want to be true to themselves and to the country which they represent for the time being, even as I want to be true to myself. I know that the progress of non-violence is seemingly a terribly slow progress. But experience has taught me that it is the surest way to the common goal. There is deliverance neither for India nor for the world through clash of arms. Violence, even for vindication of justice, is almost played out. With that belief I am content to plough a lonely furrow, if it is to be my lot that I have no co-sharer in the out and out belief in non-violence. —*Harijan* : Aug. 26, 1939.

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SO far as the Working Committee is concerned, I do attend its meetings whenever I am required to do so. I do influence its decision in the matters that may be referred to me and never in any others. Many sittings of the committee I do not attend at all. Of many of its resolutions, I have no knowledge except after they are passed and that through the press. This was the arrangement when I first severed my legal connection with the Congress. What hold I have on the committee is purely moral. My opinion pevails only to the extent that I carry conviction. Let me give out the secret that often my advice makes no appeal to the members. For instance, if I had my way, the Congress would be reduced to the smallest compass possible. It would consist of a few chosen servants removable at the will of the nation but getting the willing co-operation of the millions in the programme, they may put before the nation. But this is too drastic and too undemocratic for Congressmen.

—*Harijan* : Aug. 12, 1939.

Worry

THERE is nothing that wastes the body like worry, and one who has any faith in God should be ashamed to worry about anything whatsoever. It is a difficult rule no doubt for the simple reason, that faith in God with the majority of mankind is either an intellectual belief or a blind belief, a

kind of superstitious fear of something indefinable. But to ensure absolute freedom from worry requires a living utter faith which is a plant of slow, almost unperceived, growth and requires to be constantly watered by tears that accompany genuine prayer. They are the tears of a lover who cannot brook a moment's separation from the loved one, or of the penitent who knows that it is some trace of impurity in him that keeps him away from the loved one.

—*Young India* : Sept. 1, 1927.

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WHY worry one's head over a thing that is inevitable? Why die before one's death? —*Young India* : Nov. 27, 1936

Wrong

MY soul refuses to be satisfied so long as it is a helpless witness of a single wrong or a single misery. But it is not possible for me a weak, frail, miserable being, to mend every wrong or to hold myself free of blame for all the wrong I see. The spirit in me pulls one way, the flesh in me pulls in the opposite direction. There is freedom from the action of these two forces, but that freedom is attainable only by slow and painful stages. I cannot attain freedom by a mechanical refusal to act, but only by intelligent action in a detached manner. This struggle resolves itself into an incessant crucification of the flesh so that the spirit may become entirely free. —*Young India* : Nov. 17, 1921.

Y

Yajna or Sacrifice

WE make frequent use of the word *yajna*. We have raised spinning to the rank of a daily *mahayajna* (primary sacrifice). It is therefore necessary to think out the various implications of the term *yajna* .

Yajna means an act directed to the welfare of others, done without desiring any return for it, whether of a temporal or spiritual nature. 'Act' here must be taken in its

widest sense, and includes thought and word, as well as deed. 'Others' embraces not only humanity but all life.

Therefore, and also from the standpoint of *ahimsa*, it will not be a *yajna* to sacrifice lower animals even with a view to the service of humanity. It does not matter that animal sacrifice is alleged to find a place in the *Vedas*. It is enough for us that such sacrifice cannot stand the fundamental tests of Truth and Non-violence. I readily admit my incompetence in *Vedic* scholarship. But the incompetence, so far as this subject is concerned, does not worry me, because even if the practice of animal sacrifice be proved to have been a feature of *Vedic* society, it can form no precedent for a votary of *ahimsa*.

Again, a primary sacrifice must be an act which conduces the most to the welfare of the greatest number in the widest area, and which can be performed by the largest number of men and women with the least trouble. It will not therefore be *yajna*, much less a *mahayajna*, to wish or to do ill to anyone else, even in order to serve a so-called higher interest. And the *Gita* teaches, and experience testifies, that all action that cannot come under the category of *yajna* promotes bondage.

The world cannot subsist for a single moment without *yajna* in this sense, and therefore the *Gita*, after having dealt with true wisdom in the second chapter, takes up in the third the means of attaining it, and declares in so many words that *yajna* came with the Creation itself. This body therefore has been given us only in order that we may serve all Creation with it. And, therefore, says the *Gita*, he who eats without offering *yajna* eats stolen food. Every single act of one who would lead a life of purity should be in the nature of *yajna*. *Yajna* having come to us with our birth, we are debtors all our lives, and thus for ever bound to serve the universe. And even as a bondslave receives food, clothing and so on from the master whom he serves, so should

we gratefully accept such gifts as may be assigned to us by the Lord of the Universe. What we receive must be called a gift; for as debtors we are entitled to no consideration for the discharge of four obligations. Therefore we may not blame the Master if we fail to get it. Our body is His to be cherished or cast away according to His will. This is not a matter for complaint; on the contrary, it is a natural and even a pleasant and desirable state, if only we realise our proper place in God's scheme. One does indeed need strong faith, if one would experience this supreme bliss. *Do not worry in the least about yourself, leave all worry to God,*—this appears to be the commandment in all religions.

This need not frighten anyone. He who devotes himself to service with a clear conscience will day-by-day grasp the necessity for it in greater measure, and will continually grow richer in faith. The path of service can hardly be trodden by one, who is not prepared to renounce self-interest and to recognise the conditions of his birth. Consciously or unconsciously everyone of us does render some service or other. If we cultivate the habit of doing this service deliberately, our desire for service will steadily grow stronger, and will make not only for our own happiness, but that of the world at large. —From *Yeravda Mandir.*

I WROTE about *yajna* last week, but feel like writing more about it. It will perhaps be worthwhile further to consider a principle which has been created along with mankind. *Yajna* is a duty to be performed, or service to be rendered, all the twenty four hours of the day, and hence a maxim like परोपकाराय सतां विभूतय: । is inappropriate, if उपकार has any taste of favour about it. To serve without desire is to favour not others, but ourselves, even as in discharging a debt we serve only ourselves, lighten our burden and fulfil, our duty. Again, not only the good, but all of us are bound to place our resources at the disposal of humanity. And if such is the law,

gives way to renunciation. The duty of renunciation differentiates mankind from the beast.

Some object, that life thus understood becomes dull and devoid of art, and leaves no room for the householder. But renunciation here does not mean abandoning the world and retiring into the forest. The spirit of renunciation should rule all the activities of life. A house-holder does not cease to be one, if he regards life as a duty rather than as an indulgence. A merchant, who operates in the sacrificial spirit, will have crores passing through his hands, but he will, if he follows the law, use his abilities for service. He will therefore not cheat or speculate, will lead a simple life, will not injure a living soul and will lose millions rather than harm anybody. Let no one run away with the idea, that this type of merchant exists only in my imagination. Fortunately for the world, it does exist in the West as well as in the East. It is true, such merchants may be counted on one's fingers' ends, but the type ceases to be imaginary, as soon as even one living specimen can be found to answer to it. All of us know of a philanthropic tailor in Wadhwan. I know of one such barber. Every one of us knows such a weaver. And if we go deeply into the matter, we shall come across men in every walk of life, who lead dedicated lives. No doubt these sacrificers obtain their livelihood by their work. But livelihood is not their objective, but only a by-product of their vocation. Motilal was a tailor at first and continued as tailor afterwards. But his spirit was changed, and his work was transmuted into worship. He began to think about the welfare of others, and his life became artistic in the real sense of the term. A life of sacrifice is the pinnacle of art, and is full of true joy. *Yajna* is no *yajna* if one feels it to be burdensome or annoying. Self indulgence leads to destruction, and renunciation to immorality. Joy has no independent existence. It depends upon our attitude to life. One man will enjoy theatrical scenery, another the ever new scenes which unfold themselves in the

tsky. Joy, therefore, is a matter of individual and national education. We shall relish things which we have been aught to relish as children. And illustrations can be easily cited of different national tastes.

Again, many sacrificers imagine that they are free to receive from the people every thing they need, and many things they do not need, because they are rendering disinterested service. Directly this idea sways a man, he ceases to be a servant, and becomes a tyrant over the people.

One who would serve will not waste a thought upon his own comforts, which he leaves to be attended to or neglected by his Master. He will not therefore encumber himself with everything that comes his way, he will take only what he strictly needs and leave the rest. He will be calm, free from anger and unruffled in mind even if he finds himself inconvenienced. His service, like virtue, is its own reward, and he will rest content with it.

Again, one dare not be negligent in service, or be behind hand with it. He, who thinks, that one must be diligent only in one's personal business, and unpaid public business may be done in any way and at any time one chooses, has still to learn the very rudiments of the science of sacrfice. Voluntary service of others demands the best of which one is capable, and must take precedenee over service of self. In fact, the pure devotee consecrates himself to the service of humanity without any reservation whatever.

—*From Yerwada Mandir.*

YAINA is a word full of beauty and power. Hence with the growth of knowledge and experience and with the change of time its meaning is likely to grow and change. *Yajna* literally mean worship; hence sacrifice; hence any sacrifical act or any act of service. And in this sense every age may and should have its own particular *Yajna.*

For mankind lives by *Yajna,* sacrifice. But all the *Yajnas* described in the *Shastras* cannot and should not be revived.

Some of the rites that go under that name cannot be defended. I even doubt whether the meaning that is put upon some of those rites to-day was ever put upon them in Vedic times and even if there be no room for doubt, some of them cannot stand the test of reason or morality. Those versed in the scriptures say that in ancient times our ancestors performed human scrifices. Are they possible today ? And a horse sacrifice would be ridiculous. Again it is needless to canvass whether *yajnas* purify the air or not; for the value of a religious rite cannot be measured by considering whether it produces a result like purifying the air. Modern science is likely to be more helpful in devising means for purifying the air. The principles are absolute and irrespective of space and time. Practices change with place and time.

—*Young India* : May 13, 1926.

Z

To The Zamindars

THE Congress will stand by you certainly. But you will have to make your life correspond to your surroundings. In Bengal some years ago I was the guest of a Zamindar who served me my milk and fruit in gold bowls and plates. The good host naturally thought, that he was doing me the greatest honour by placing before me his costliest plates. He could not know what was passing through my mind. "Where did he get these golden plates from ? I was asking myself, and the answer I got was: "From the substance of the ryots." How then could I reconcile myself to those costly luxuries ? I would not mind your using gold plates provided your tenants were comfortable enough to afford silver plates, but where their life is one long drawn out agony, how dare you have those luxuries ? You will remember, how, fifteen years ago, on the occasion of the opening of the Hindu University, I shocked the Rajas and Maharajas by a reference to their glittering pomp and glory, and raised quite an uproar. My views are the same today; only experience and life

among the humble folk have confirmed them all the more.

—*Young India* : May 28, 1931.

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THE Zamindars would do well to take the time by the forelock. Let them cease to be mere rent collectors. They should become trustees and trusted friends of their tenants. They should limit their privy purse. Let them forego the questionable requisites they take from the tenants in shape of forced gifts on marriage and other occasions or *nazrana* on transfer of holdings from one kisan to another or on restoration to the same kisan after eviction for non-payment of rent. They should give them fixity of tenure, take a lively interest in their wellfare, provide well managed schools for their childern, night school for adults, hospitals and dispensaries for the sick, look after the sanitation of villages and in a variety of ways make them feel that they the Zamindars are their true friends taking only a fixed commission for their manifold services. In short they must justify their position. They should trust Congressmen. They may themselves become Congressmen and know that the Congress is a bridge between the people and the Government. All who have the true welfare of the people at heart can harness the services of the Congress. Congressmen will on their part see to it that kisans scrupulously fulfil their obligations to the Zamindars. I mean not necessarily,the statuary but the obligations which they have themselves admitted to be just. They must reject the doctrine that their holdings are absolutely theirs to the exclusion of the Zamindars. They are or should be members of a joint family in which the Zamindar is the head guarding their rights against encroachment. Whatever the law may be, the Zamindar to be defensible must approach the conditions of a joint family.

—*Young India* : May 28, 1931.

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"THE difference between your view and mine is based on the question whether the Zamindari System is to be

mended or ended. I say it should be mended, and if it cannot be mended, it would end itself. You say that it is incapable of being mended." In these words Gandhiji summed up the difference between the Socialist school, and what may be called the Satyagrahi school, before an informal meeting of Calcutta Congressmen. At the root of the various questions that arise on the subject lies this fundamental difference, and the answers to those questions naturally reflect the philosophy which the replier holds. Thus one of the questions that puzzles many is :

"The Zamindars and *mahajans* are the instruments of the bureaucracy. They have always sided with it and are an obstacle to our progress and freedom. Why should not the obstacle be removed ?"

To this Gandhiji's reply reflecting his philosophy was this; "They are indeed part and parcel of the bureaucracy. But they are its helpless tools. Must they for ever remain so ? We may do nothing to put them away from us. If they change their mentality, their services can be utilized for the nation. If they will not change, they will die a natural death. If we have non-violence in us, we will not frighten them. We have to be doubly careful when the Congress has power."

Q.—But cannot we say the system of zamindari is an anachronism and should go, by non-violent means of course ?

A.—Of course we can. The question is 'must we ?' Why can we not say to the Zamindars, "These are the evils which we ask you to remove yourselves ?" I admit that this presumes trust in human nature.

Q.—Would you say that the permanent settlement should remain ?

A.—No, it has to go. The way to make the kisans happy and prosperous is to educate them to know the reason

of their present condition and how to mend it. We may show them the non-violenet way or the violent. The later may look tempting, but it is the way to perdition in the long run.

Q.—But don't you agree that the land belongs to him who tills it?

A.—I do. But that need not mean that the zamindar should be wiped out. The man who supplies brains and metal is as much a tiller as the one who labours with his hands. What we aim at, or should, is to remove the present terrible inequality between them.

Q.—But the mending process may be very long.

A—Seemingly the longest process is often the shortest.

Q.—But why not parcel out the land among the tillers?

A.—That is a hasty thought. The land is today in their hands. But they know neither their rights nor how to exercise these. Supposing they told neither to move out of the land nor to pay the dues to the zamindar, do you think their misery would be over? Surely much will still remain to be done. I suggest that that should be undertaken now and the rest will follow as day follows night.

—*Harijan* : April 23, 1938.

END

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