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A Searchlight on Gandhi

CALCUTTA CORPORATION AND DINESH GUPTA.

Dinesh Gupta was executed for the murder, on December 3rd 1930, of Lt.-Col. Simpson, Inspector-General of Prisons for Bengal.

The Calcutta Municipal Gazette for July 11th 1931, contained, on its front page, a portrait of Dinesh Gupta and the following report of a meeting of the Calcutta Corporation:—

"Execution of Dinesh Gupta.

" Corporation's Tribute.

" Meeting Adjourns.

" The Corporation of Calcutta expressed its sorrow at the execution of Dinesh Chandra Gupta and adjourned its meeting on Wednesday, the 8th July.

" When the Corporation assembled, Councillor Bhupendra Nath Banerjee moved:—

' This Corporation records its sense of grief at the execution of Dinesh Chandra Gupta who sacrificed his life in the pursuit of his ideal.'

" The House adopted the resolution standing.

" On the motion of Councillor Madan Mohan Burman the meeting was adjourned till Friday, the 10th July.

" The Mayor, in associating himself with the resolution, paid a tribute to the courage and devotion of the deceased."

A Searchlight on Gandhi

**By
the Author of
India on the Brink"**

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LEST WE FORGET.¹

"The key of India is London: the majesty of sovereignty the spirit and vigour of your Parliament, the inexhaustible resources, the ingenuity and determination of your people, these are the keys of India."

LORD BEACONFIELD, 1881.

"India is the pivot of our Empire: if this Empire loses any other part of its Dominions we can survive—but if we lose India the sun of our Empire will have set."

LORD CURZON, 1898.

"There is I know a school of thought who say that we might wisely walk out of India and that the Indians could manage their own affairs better than we can. Anybody who pictures to himself the anarchy, the bloody chaos that would follow from any such deplorable step, might shrink from that decision."

LORD MORLEY, 1908.

PREFACE

A year ago, when I returned from India, it was evident that the majority of the British people failed utterly to realise that in India a situation of incalculable gravity was developing with alarming rapidity—a situation which unless controlled and directed with supreme statesmanship, inevitably must lead to the separation of India from Great Britain, thrusting back that vast sub-continent into the state of anarchy and chaos from which it was redeemed by the British.

Should this great calamity come to pass, it will herald the beginning of the end of the British Empire as surely as night follows day.

With this firm conviction, I compiled and had published in the Spring of this year a small book entitled *India on the Brink* in which I endeavoured to compress the essence of the Simon Report — a compendium of the main factors responsible for the present critical situation and a brief survey of the British connection with India from the year 1600 A.D. when Queen Elizabeth granted to the East India Company its first Charter up to January 19th 1931, when the first Round Table Conference dispersed and the Indian Delegates returned to India.

I ventured to hope that a compilation of this nature might in some small measure assist in arousing the British public to realise, before it

is too late, that decisions on which the very maintenance of the British Empire will depend, must shortly be taken. It is imperative that the electors of Great Britain should be made to realise that each of them is vitally concerned that these decisions shall not be of a nature that will imperil the Empire. If their responsibility can be brought home to them, they can yet prevent this risk by calling upon their representatives in Parliament to vote against any bill conferring a new Constitution on India that provides the least opening for severing the British-India connection, or that does not furnish adequate and permanent safeguards for British as well as *all* Indian interests. To arouse the electors there is no time to be lost. This can only be accomplished if those who grasp the trend of events, especially those who have lived in India, will seize every opportunity to broadcast the import of these events. The greatest difficulty to be overcome is the sheer indifference of the majority of the British public to the subject of India. Their interest in Indian questions is as remote as India itself.

Recently I was told that a Conservative candidate for Parliament, addressing a meeting in the Constituency he contested at the General Election, replied as follows to a request that he should state his views on the Indian question (subsequently he admitted in private that he knew nothing about India): "I think it advisable to express no view

on this complicated question pending the outcome of the Round Table Conference." I can well believe this to be true, and if so, it indicates the reality of the danger that decisions fatal to the Empire may be sanctioned through sheer lack of knowledge.

I fear that with a few notable exceptions the British Press has failed to give to current developments in India the constant prominence which their vital importance to the Empire demands, and has failed especially to emphasize the significance of these developments. A newspaper paragraph on India giving details of an assassination or a communal riot may temporarily stir the readers' interest, but in too many cases it soon passes from their memory. They are too pre-occupied with matters which presumably they think more directly concern them. Yet how important it is that they should be constantly reminded that each one of them is vitally interested in the issues at stake! for should India be lost through their apathy, the death-knell of the British Empire would have sounded. The prevalence of this dangerous indifference even in India, was instanced in a letter I received recently from a resident of Cawnpore acknowledging the receipt of a copy of *India on the Brink*. He wrote:—

" Your book gathers out of the obscuring fog of time the various constituents which go to form the present situation. The average European even in

India hardly remembers the facts and events which he has read about with greater or lesser attention in the political columns of the daily papers during the last decade: of that I am quite sure. If he picks up your book, with a few hours attentive reading, he can make himself master of the facts, with moreover a real understanding of their inner meaning, and it is extremely important that people should do so. How far they will trouble to do so, is unfortunately another question. You know how apathetic folk are in India. Our lives are too full; too full of work and too full of play: after a hard day's work, how hard it is—you know from experience—a man looks for relaxation in some kind of sport, and if he is not looking for it, his wife is. The last thing he or his wife want to do is to sit in a hot stuffy room and listen to or participate in a political debate."

This book I have divided into two parts. *In Part I. I endeavour to marshal—as far as possible chronologically—data on the Indian situation as it has developed since the close of the Round Table Conference in January last.* This summary of recent events discloses a situation of increasing menace. To visualise correctly the trend of these events, knowledge of their origin is essential. Therefore, for the enlightenment of those who know nothing of, or who have forgotten the hideous crimes perpetrated in March 1919 when Mr. Gandhi launched his first campaign of Civil Disobedience, I quote at some length from the Government of India Committee's Report thereon. I detail also, some of the tragic consequences of his second campaign commenced in March 1930.

Part II. I devote to a dissection of Mr. Gandhi's Satyagraha gospel.

As Mr. Gandhi originated the Civil Disobedience Movement and has attracted to it many millions of adherents, it is supremely important to appraise the true value of his apparently hypnotic influence. This—is claimed both by him and his admirers to be founded on his love of Truth—a dictionary definition of Truth is—"conformity of words to thoughts." I quote somewhat extensively, both from his writings and utterances. These are so replete with inconsistencies and fallacies that one can only conclude that Mr. Gandhi, in an exceptional degree, is the victim of "chaos of thought." The "Truth" he preaches is the antithesis of "Reality." On it he founded his policy of Civil Disobedience, inciting the ignorant masses to break the law of the land at the same time exhorting them to be "non-violent." Twice has he embarked on this perilous course. On the first occasion, presumably appalled at its fearful consequences, he admitted that in launching the movement before the people were educated to "non-violence" he had committed a "Himalayan miscalculation," yet ten years later he committed a "Himalayan crime," deliberately incurring the terrible responsibility of launching a second campaign of like character, despite the fact that only a few months previously he had declared in public that he saw no sign that the country was educated up to the

point of understanding his doctrine of "non-violent Civil Disobedience." The second campaign like its predecessor, entailed untold misery—rapine and murder being again its inseparable companion.

Mr. Gandhi is representing the Indian National Congress at the resumed Round Table Conference. On the eve of his departure for England he said: "I see nothing on the horizon to warrant hope."

If by that he meant that he did not anticipate the Conference would uphold the Congress demands that India should have the right "to sever at will" its connection with the British Empire, and repudiate at will "the whole field of British claims including the public debt of India," then, we must trust that his vision of the horizon was correct, and must hope that his renewed and constant contact in this country with men whose goodwill towards their Indian fellow subjects is beyond doubt, will bring him to realise:—

- (1) that he has been and is being used as the tool of extremists:
- (2) that he has had ample proof that a lawless movement designed to bring authority into contempt is bound to get beyond control and end in tragedy:
- (3) that the British people are genuine in their wish to see India become an equal partner in the Empire, and that with loyal co-operation this goal can and will be attained:

- (4) that as the welfare of both countries is so inter-dependent, and in India there exist so many conflicting interests, the grant of self-government must be subject to safeguards for all concerned:
- (5) that in these unique circumstances the provision of essential safeguards implies not the slightest inferiority on the part of India to the sister Dominions where such totally different conditions prevail that similar provision is unnecessary.

Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford recognised this fact and dealt with it as follows:—

" It seems to us axiomatic that there cannot be a completely representative and responsible Government of India on an equal footing with the other self-governing units of the British Commonwealth until the component States whose people it represents and to whom it is responsible, or at least the great majority of them, have themselves reached the stage of full responsible Government. Not even then can we say that the form or the degree of responsibility which will be reached in India will exactly correspond to that attained by the Dominions. The final form of India's constitution must be evolved out of the conditions of India and must be materially affected by the need for securing Imperial responsibilities. The dominating factor in the intermediate process must be the date at which the Provinces can move towards responsible government." (*M.C. Report. Para 850.*)

In 1916, Lord Hardinge, in a farewell speech at Delhi when relinquishing his Viceroyalty, emphasised that progress towards responsible Government could only be achieved by successive stages, and referring to the conditions prevailing

in Dominions, such as Canada and Australia, which render self-government possible, said:—

"A study of the history of these Dominions would show that the development of their present self-governing institutions had been achieved, not by any sudden stroke of statesmanship, but by a process of steady patient evolution which has gradually united and raised all classes of the community to the level of their enhanced responsibilities."

The impracticability of at present granting to India complete Dominion Status was explained with unanswerable logic by Mr. Lloyd George in an article that appeared in the *Daily Mail* on the 13th January 1930. In this article he emphasised how widely the conditions governing our other Dominions differ from those which obtain in India. I quote the following extract.

"What does Dominion Status mean? As far as the territories included in the Dominions are concerned it implies as complete administrative and legislative independence as is enjoyed by Britain herself. Even the Irish reservations would have made no practical difference in India.

"The Indian Government could have raised and maintained a powerful army. Could have independent representation with every foreign country: it might enter into separate commercial treaties with any other nation however hostile the arrangement might be to the rest of the Empire. Ambassadors speaking in the name of the King as King, could pursue a certain policy in foreign capitals; others speaking in his name as Emperor might pursue a totally different policy.

⁴⁴ If British opinion is prepared to accept that grotesque eventuality, surely it is better to grant

India full independence at once, rather than submit the Crown to the possible humiliation of having to wage diplomatic war against itself in every chancellery in the world.

" It might be said that these considerations apply equally to existing Dominions. That is perfectly true, but they have accepted the principle of a whole-hearted partnership inside the Empire and have demonstrated their loyalty to that partnership even to the death. The Lahore Congress makes it clear that those who would have the control of Government in India if a Dominion was set up in the immediate future, have no intention of entering into any partnership with Britain or with the other Dominions.

" Those who quote what has happened in Canada and Australia and South Africa, and even Ireland as a proof of the wisdom of immediately extending Dominion Status to India, ignore the elementary facts of the case. When Canada became a Dominion it had two races, two languages and two religions. South Africa had two races and two languages. South Ireland had one race and one religion (the number of Protestants in the South being negligible). Australia and New Zealand are practically British, but when you come to India there are scores of different races and at least 179 different languages. The religious differences are extremely formidable and add enormously to the complications of Government."

At the present moment, as I write, the prospect of the resumed Round Table Conference succeeding in formulating recommendations that meet with general acceptance by its Delegates, appears remote, and should it fail to do so, it will disperse without having achieved anything. This will not mean that the danger is past, as it almost

certainly will lead to a renewed campaign of Civil Disobedience and violence on the part of Extremists. Should this unhappily prove to be the case, it is to be hoped that the Government of India will profit by past experiences and make it absolutely clear that in the interests of all communities they intend to preserve law and order at any cost.

Should such a situation arise it will afford a supreme test of our capacity to govern, and on the manner in which it is dealt with will depend, whether in the eyes of the world the prestige of the British Nation, which in recent years has been on the decline, is fully restored or irretrievably destroyed.

LONDON, NOVEMBER 1931.

[*Note.*—Quotations in this book from the following sources are marked for identification as shown:—Simon Report (S.R.); Montagu-Chelmsford Report (M.C.); Government of India's Committee's Report on the disturbances in the Punjab etc. 1919 (Hunter Report). In Chapters III and VI certain quotations are condensed from passages quoted in "The Surrender of an Empire" by Nesta H. Webster (Boswell, London).]

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A SEARCHLIGHT ON GANDHI

CHAPTER I.

THE MARCH OF EVENTS.

- 1930.**
26th Jan. The Indian National Congress proclaimed its goal as "Complete Independence." In February the Congress Working Committee authorised Mr. Gandhi to launch his second Civil Disobedience Campaign, and on the
- 2nd Mar.** Mr. Gandhi advised the Viceroy of his intentions.
- 12th Mar,** Mr. Gandhi commenced his march through the country preaching sedition, urging his listeners to break the law by making salt, and to resist police attempts to take salt from their hands "until blood is spilt." For several weeks he conducted his campaign unchecked by Government. Meanwhile the movement spread with the rapidity of a rank jungle growth.
- 5th May** Government suddenly awoke to its responsibilities. Mr. Gandhi was arrested and imprisoned in Yerravda

Gaol, Poona. By this time the spirit of lawlessness had become deep-rooted throughout the country. Each day brought Congress thousands of new adherents who flocked to its standard believing that it was about to triumph over the Government. In many places there occurred acts of violent terrorism, Congress leaders openly incited the military and the police to mutiny, and it became necessary to arrest them and thousands of their misguided and youthful followers—paid to act as "volunteers."

As Mr. Gandhi now must realise that his second "non-violent" movement has resulted in the loss of hundreds of lives and the infliction of untold misery and incalculable loss, he must be left to his conscience, inasmuch as shortly before he launched his second campaign he

"publicly declared that he saw no signa that the country was educated up to the point of understanding his doctrine of civil disobedience; nevertheless he launched his campaign knowing on his own confession that it would lead to the same abominable deeds as marked its trail ten years ago."—*The Statesman*.

July

Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. Jayakar permitted to negotiate with Mr. Gandhi and Pandits Motilal and Jawaharlal Nehru in Poona Gaol. They reject with contumely Lord Irwin's offer to them to attend the Round Table Conference, unless India was to be permitted to "sever at will" its connection with the Empire and investigate "the whole field of British claims including "the so-called National Debt."

1931.

26th Jan.

The anniversary of the Congress declaration for "Independence." Mr. **Gandhi** and his fellow protagonists of sedition and revolution are released unconditionally in the hope that it will create a better atmosphere for obtaining Congress participation in a resumed Round Table Conference.

Feb.

The Viceroy, Lord Irwin, and Mr. Gandhi meet at Delhi as "two rival potentates" (Lord Peel) to discuss "peace" terms. As a preliminary to calling off civil disobedience Mr. Gandhi demands:—

- (1) Withdrawal of the Salt Tax.
- (2) Release of all prisoners not convicted for crimes of violence.
- (3) The right to picket.
- (4) The right to boycott.
- (5) Restoration of property confiscated for breaches of the law.
- (6) An enquiry into the conduct of the police.

4th Mar.

The Viceroy and Mr. Gandhi sign their "peace" pact, under which Mr. Gandhi obtained the following concessions:—

- (1) The right for dwellers by the sea to make salt. The salt law has been in existence from time immemorial. To the Indians it is symbolical of authority and for this reason Mr. Gandhi selected it for his first line of attack in his Civil Disobedience Campaign as the most spectacular method of defying the Government. Mr. Gandhi insisted on this concession, obviously not **for** its actual value but because it

would enable him to proclaim that the law which he had specially selected for defiance and for the breaking of which he and thousands of others were imprisoned had been partially abrogated under his pressure.

" Such salt making is not of actual value—this permission will not be used after the first few celebration! which Congress is sure to organise in order to impress the masses."—
Daily Herald Correspondent in India.

- (2) The release of all Congress prisoners convicted for breaches of law other than crimes of violence.
- (3) The right to continue peaceful (?) picketting.
- (4) The right to boycott British commodities provided the boycott is not used as a political weapon.
- (5) Restoration of confiscated property wherever practicable.

Mr. Gandhi agreed to forego his demand for an enquiry into the conduct of the police as the Viceroy considered it to be " undesirable to hold an enquiry at present."

It is difficult to understand the qualification " undesirable at present" as on the—

28th Mar. Lord Irwin when addressing a Police Parade at New Delhi on the eve of his departure, thanking them for the conspicuously good work they had done during his five years of office, added:

" They have not been easy years for me, or for you, or for anyone else concerned in the administration of this country.

"There have been times, especially in the last twelve months, when things have been done which have been a severe test of good temper and restraint, when the hours of duty have been long and more than usually arduous, and danger to life and limb has had to be constantly faced. It is greatly to the credit of the Police that they have taken these exceptional difficulties as all in the day's work.

" Officers and men have shown a fine example of loyalty, courage and discipline and have raised the high traditions of their service to a level of which they may be rightly proud.

"You may rest assured that the Government, on their part, are very conscious of the debt they owe your service on this account. The discipline and efficiency of a country's police force is to a high degree the criterion of a good Government and the measure of the extent to which the administration retains the confidence of the population at large.

" I think that the Government of India may well congratulate themselves on having, as protectors of the King's peace, a force so efficiently organised, so well disciplined and possessed of so fine a spirit as the Indian Police.*

Extract from the Government of Bengal's **resolution** reviewing the Annual Report on Police Administration in the Presidency for the year 1930.

"The civil disobedience movement imposed a very heavy strain on the Bengal Police. Not only were the polioe

charged with the extremely arduous **and** often dangerous task of maintaining order in the face of heavy odds but on them, as the prime guardians of peace and order, was focussed a constant stream of malicious and unscrupulous propaganda from the side of those whose object was the destruction of the administration.

" No praise therefore is too great for their cheerful endurance of hardship and discomfort, their fortitude in the face of personal danger, their restraint in the face of gross provocation and vile abuse, their steadfast resistance of all attempts to tamper with their loyalty, and His Excellency-in-Council welcomes this opportunity of putting on record his deep appreciation of their loyalty and devotion to duty during the critical days of the past year.

"His Excellency-in-Council is grieved to have to record that ten police officers, including the late Mr. F. J. Lowman, lost their lives in the course of the year, two of them being brutally beaten to death in Midnapore district by villagers led by civil disobedience "volunteers," and that no less than 400 were injured. . . .

"* *Crime Statistics.* . . . the number of cases of serious crime showed an alarming increase. Cases of rioting increased during the year from 755 to 1,608, of murder from 500 to 601, of dacoity from 693 to 1,103, and of robbery from 386 to 523.

" These figures were to an overwhelming degree the result of **the** doctrines of civil disobedience so **assidu-**

ously preached throughout the year. Experience in Bengal has shown that disturbed political conditions are **invariably** reflected in an increase in crimes of violence and particularly of dacoity.

"The history of 1030 has repeated that of 1922, when, following on the non-co-operation movement, the number of dacoity, robbery and rioting cases showed an increase of 55 per cent., 34 per cent., and 36 per cent, respectively, over the quinquennial average for the years 1916 to 1920.

" During the year the Congress did their utmost to wreck the Chaukidari system and succeeded to this extent that they hampered—very seriously in some districts—the prevention and detection of crime. At the same time, the resources of the regular police were strained to the utmost in dealing with the activities of "volunteers" and others whose object was avowedly to bring the administration to a standstill."

1031.
April

Speaking in the Bengal Council the Hon. W. D. R. Prentice said :—

" Since August there had been 53 terrorist outrages in Bengal. There was no indication that the people who were responsible for the terrorist movement had dropped their policy and adopted the policy of non-violence. On the contrary all the evidence so far went the other way, because within seven days after the agreement, bombs were thrown at Krishnagar. That certainly did not indicate that the atmosphere brought about by the Irwin-Gandhi agreement had produced a change in the terrorists,"

a A SEABCHLIGHT ON GANDHI CHAP.

27th June Lord Willingdon speaking at Simla on the services of the Army and the Police said :—

"I am glad to be able to express to the officers and men of both these services my keen appreciation of the loyalty, steadiness and self restraint with which they have carried out duties in times of extreme anxiety and on occasions often of great provocation and to assure them that they have earned and are still earning the gratitude and admiration for their fine service, of all peace loving citizens."

23rd Mar. Bhagat Singh and his two accomplices executed for the brutal murder of a British police officer and an Indian constable.

24th Mar. Mr. Gandhi wrote:—
" Whilst associating myself with the tributes paid to the young patriots I warn the youth of India against copying their example. Let us by all means copy their capacity for sacrifice and reckless courage. By their action the Government put a severe strain upon the settlement and have once more proved their capacity for flouting public opinion and for the exhibition of the immense brute power they possess. This persistence in the exercise of brute power is perhaps a portent showing that notwithstanding their pious and pompous declarations, they do not mean to part with their power, but Congress must not swerve from the path chalked out for it."

25th Mar. Communal rioting breaks out In Oawn-pore. Hindus attacking Moslems, because the latter refused to close their

shops to honour the memory of **the** assassin Bhagat Singh. Men, women, **and** children are massacred. The official record admits 290 deaths and many hundreds injured. Eye-witnesses declare the actual casualties to be vastly in excess of these figures and describe the happenings in Cawnpore as the most horrible holocaust since the mutiny.

26th Mar

Speaking at Delhi, Lord Irwin said:—

"I have been told that the Government of India and I myself have made Mr. Gandhi's task far harder by failure to commute the sentences recently passed on Bhagat Singh and his companions. (I can well believe that our action has at this time been a real difficulty for Mr. Gandhi and those associated with him, and I owe it to Indian opinion that I should take this opportunity of placing them in clear possession of my own thought.) It is significant that none of the petitions (for reprieve) in any form directly or indirectly suggested that the prisoners were other than guilty of the crimes alleged against them. I could imagine no case in which under the law the penalty had been more directly deserved."

Mr. Gandhi, speaking in Bombay, said:—

"We lost nothing by the Delhi truce (N.B.—It is now a 'truce' not a 'peace' pact) because when the representatives of Congress go to the next Round Table Conference they will demand the substance of complete independence, and if they do not get it they

will wash their hands of the Conference. The Karachi Conference is going to reiterate the Lahore demands for complete independence."

At the Annual Meeting of the Indian National Congress held at Karachi, Mr. Gandhi was **the dominant figure and** sponsored the following resolution:—

- (1) " The Congress—places on record its admiration of the bravery and sacrifice of Bhagat Singh, Sukh Dev and Raj Guru, and mourns with the bereaved families the loss of their lives—the Congress is of opinion that the triple execution is an act of wanton vengeance."
- (2) " The Congress having considered the provisional settlement between the Working Committee and the Government of India endorses it, and desires to make clear that the Congress goal of Purna Swaraj (complete independence) remains intact. In the event of—Congress being represented at any Conference with representatives of the British Government the delegation will work for this goal and in particular to give the nation control over the Army, external affairs, finances, fiscal policy and economic policy, a scrutiny by an impartial tribunal of the financial transactions of the British Government of India, to examine and assess the obligations undertaken by India in England, and the right of either party to end the partnership at will.

The Congress appoints and authorises Mahatma Gandhi to represent it at the Conference."

In a speech shortly after his release from gaol, Mr. Gandhi's principal lieutenant, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, said:—

" We are opposed to any safeguards and upon those we are not prepared to negotiate. The Delhi agreement was a truce and not a peace. Until India had achieved Home Rule peace was impossible. If Congress later found no hope of getting the substance of independence the struggle would begin afresh; personally he had not the least hope of a successful settlement. The period of the truce must be utilised in gathering strength."

16th April Lord Irwin, addressing the Bombay Millowners Association, said:—

" I particularly regret the tendency manifested in some quarters to regard the immediate future as a period of truce of which advantage should be taken to organise their forces for a further struggle. The state of mind this represents contains within it dangerous germs of trouble. It is a continuous menace to peace which it was our intention and which it remains my dearest wish to see established. On the one hand it arouses forces which those who call them into being may find difficult to control. On the other hand it necessarily imposes on the Government **the duty of** preparedness for

counter action and I fully recognise that the discharge of this duty must inevitably In its turn breed distrust."

The late Viceroy, in his efforts to secure a peaceful settlement during his conversations with Mr. Gandhi, stretched concession almost to the length of surrender, yet shortly after the Mahatma addressing his supporters contemptuously referred to the assurances he had received as "pious and pompous declarations."

In an interview on 14th September 1931 Mr. Gandhi was asked whether he would admit that English troops are necessary in communal disturbances. He replied:—

"I do not: if our own troops are found wanting the most that can happen is that we might have to put up with Civil War for a time, but it is better that we should have communal strife and fight our own battles against it than that we should have to appeal to another country to set our house in order . . . very possibly there will be some serious communal strife when we have got Swaraj . . . it may perhaps end itself in the exhaustion or destruction of the one community or the other. There may be jealousies and disputes between factions . . . even whole provinces."

According to the recent census there are in India 238 million Hindus and 77 million Moslems. Apparently Mr. Gandhi, rather than fail in his life's ambition to rid India of the "Satanic" British, contemplates with equanimity the possibility of these colossal communities being involved in a conflict of obliteration and the repetition of the horrors of Cawnpore throughout the length and breadth of India. Yet this political chameleon in a message he broadcast to

the United States on the 14th September, recognising that such strong beer would be unpalatable to his audience, said—

" I personally would wait, if need be, for ages, rather than seek to attain the freedom of my country through bloody means."

The conflicting character of these two statements would almost suggest that the Mahatma has the dual personality of a Dr. Jekyll and a Mr. Hyde.

CHAPTER II.

OFFICIAL LIST OF CRIMES ISSUED IN PARLIAMENT ON 81st JULY 1931.

The following record of the names of the British Civil, Military, and Police officials who have been the victims of assassination or attempted assassination in India since December 17th 1928, was circulated by the Secretary for India, Mr. Wedgwood Benn, in reply to questions in the House of Commons.

1928 17th Dec.	At Lahore.—Murder of Mr. J. P. Saunders, Indian Police Service.
1929 8th April	Delhi.—Bombs thrown in Legislative Assembly.
22nd April	North-West Frontier Province.—Captain W. C. S. Haycraft shot dead by sepoy.
14th June	Waziristan.—Captain M. Stephen shot dead when on route to Eazmak.
23rd Dec.	Delhi.—Attempt to blow up Viceroy's train.
1930. 1st Feb.	Lahore.—Attempt to shoot Mr. Lewis, Additional District Magistrate. A friend to whom Mr. Lewis had lent his car was shot at when returning it.

- 2nd Feb. Loralai,—Sergeant Ives **killed while** shooting.
- 24-25th Feb. Landi Kotal.—Lieutenant G. E. H. Hawkes, Assistant Garrison **Engineer**, Khyber, murdered by **burglars**.
- 18-19th April Chittagong.—Two Europeans murdered in raid by Bengal **terrorist** party on the railway **and police** armouries.
- 20th May Multan.—Superintendent of **Police** slightly injured by bomb.
- 6th June Lyallpur.—Bomb thrown into Compound of Chenab Club.
- August Jhansi.—Attempted attack on Commissioner. A man with a **bomb and** pistol in his possession was arrested in the Commissioner's bungalow.
- 25th Aug. Calcutta.—Bombs thrown at Sir C. Tegart, Commissioner of Police.
- 28th Aug. Dacca.—Murder of Mr. F. I. Lowman, Inspector-General of Police, Bengal, and serious wounding of Mr. E. Hodson, Superintendent of Police.
- 15th Oct. Lahore.—Attempt on life of Mr. Smyth, Inspector of Police.
- 16th Oct. Bombay.—Shots fired at Sergeant Taylor and his wife when about to enter Lamington Road Police Station about midnight. Both slightly wounded.
- 28th Oct. Burma.—Attempt to wreck mail **train** carrying important members of Burma Government.
- 29th Oct. Calcutta.—Bomb exploded in **house** of European Assistant Commissioner of Police in South **Calcutta**.

- 4th Dec. Hyderabad.—Bomb thrown into compound of Superintendent of Police.
- 8th Dec. Calcutta. — Murder of Lieutenant-Colonel N. S. Simpson, I.M.S., **and** wounding of Mr. J. W. Nelson, I.C.S., in Writers' Buildings.
- 9th Dec. Lahore.—Captain P. W. J. McClenaghan shot dead on parade.
- 28rd Dec. Lahore.—Sir G. de Montmorency, Governor of the Punjab, shot at **and** wounded when leaving Convocation of Lahore University.
- 24th Dec. Weywa, Burma.—Murder of Mr. H. V. W. Fields-Clarke, Forest Engineer.
- 1931
- 18th Feb. Charsadda.—Attempted assassination of Captain H. A. Barnes, Assistant Commissioner.
- 17th Mar. Krishnagar.—Bomb thrown into residence of Superintendent of Police.
- 5-6th April Charsadda.—Further attempt on **life** of Captain H. A. Barnes.
- 7th April Midnapore. — Shooting of Mr. J. Peddle, District Magistrate. He died next day.
- 22nd May Cawnpore.—Crude letter bomb made of inflammable powder and crushed glass sent to Superintendent of Police.
- 22nd July Poona.—Attempted shooting of Sir E. Hotson, Acting Governor of Bombay, while visiting Fergusson College,
- 23rd July Central Provinces. — Wounding of Lieutenant Hext and Lieutenant Sheehan in Punjab up-Mail. **Lieutenant Hext died subsequently.**

27th July Alipur.—Murder of Mr. R. R. Garlick, I.C.S., District and Sessions Judge.

Since the above official list of crimes was issued, on the

21st Aug. Mr. Alexander Cassels, Commissioner for the Dacca Division, was shot at and wounded at Mymensingh while touring the locality inspecting flood conditions to arrange loans for distressed peasants.

28th Oct. Mr. L. G. Durno, District Magistrate and Collector at Dacca, was shot at and seriously wounded.

20th Oct. Mr. Villiers, the Chairman of the European Association, was shot at and wounded in Calcutta.

CHAPTER III.

A DANGEROUS DOCTRINE.

A singularly dangerous doctrine, which the Great War should have demolished finally, viz., that experience is a disqualification, appears within the last year or two to have revived in certain high quarters and in a certain section of the Press. Surely it is grotesque to brand wholesale as "die-hards" and "reactionaries," those who have lived the best part of their lives in India and who thus must have acquired an infinitely greater knowledge of Indian psychology than can be possessed by those who either never have visited the country, or who have paid it only fleeting visits. Presumably these men with their long experience of India are stigmatised as reactionaries because although they adhere to the pledges given in the Government of India Act 1919, providing for the "progressive realisation of responsible Government in British India" as "an integral part of the British Empire" such progress to "be achieved by successive stages"—they deem it their duty to warn their countrymen that the policy recently pursued of concession to lawlessness and negotiating as equals with the law-breakers whose avowed aim has been to wreck the Constitution instituted under the Government of India Act, and to sever the British connection with India, can only bring chaos to that country and disrupt the Empire. I venture

to assert that these so-called "reactionaries" comprise 99 per cent, of those who have now retired, whether from the Indian Army, the Civil Service, Commerce or the Professions and who* therefore, in warning their countrymen of the danger ahead, clearly can have no object to serve other than the Empire's welfare. Further, I am convinced it would be found that their views are shared by an overwhelming majority of those still serving, were these at liberty to speak.

In comparatively recent times the British nation has suffered heavily for its folly in ignoring experience.

Had the prophetic warnings of that great soldier, Lord Roberts, not fallen on deaf ears, the history of the Great War would have been very different, as it certainly never would have lasted 4½ years, and hundreds of thousands of splendid lives would have been saved. It is even possible that, with Britain prepared, Germany would have hesitated to undertake the risk of war. Lord Roberts devoted the evening of his life to conducting throughout the country his campaign for national service. Speaking at Manchester on October 22nd 1912, he referred to German's Army as—

" the mightiest and most disciplined force that this earth has ever contained . . . Amid those auspicious dreams of peace for what was that Army being trained? Koniggratz, Metz, St. Privat and Sedan are the answer. . . . Now, in the year 1912 just as in 1866 and just as in 1870, war will take place the Instant the German forces by land and sea, are, by their superiority at every point, as certain of victory as anything in human calculation can be made certain. Germany strikes when Germany's hour has struck."

For this and similar solemn warnings this great patriot was ridiculed and reviled by 'Little Englanders' on the platform, in Parliament, and the Press—one of whom asked in the House of Commons whether Lord Roberts could be deprived of his pension, and a certain newspaper in an article headed "A diabolical speech" claimed that—

"there ought to be some means of bringing to book a soldier in receipt of money from the State who speaks of a friendly Power as Lord Roberts spoke of Germany . . . he is a mere jingo in opinion and character, and he interprets the life and interests of this Nation and this Empire by the crude lusts and fears which haunt the unimaginative soldier's brain."

Why soldiers in particular should be branded as unimaginative I fail to perceive. In the year 1882, thirty years before Lord Roberts uttered the solemn warning above quoted, General Gordon (shortly before his valuable life was sacrificed at Khartoum solely through the "too late" policy of the British Government then in power) wrote:—

"Every Briton should think of the future of his country and cause each one to insist on the Government passing a measure for compulsory universal military training. . . . In 1910 or thereabouts there will have arisen a naval power which may prove mightier than she, and should she (Germany) gain supremacy, England will become extinct both as a land and sea power and all her dependencies, including India, will fall into Germany's clutches. . . . When that time comes remember my words."

How near to fulfilment came this remarkable prophecy of another "unimaginative soldier" as to what might happen in about forty years time, even to-day few people realize. Had Germany

not been dazzled by the glamour of Paris and nad she concentrated her main effort on the capture of the Channel Ports in the first weeks of the War—its issue might well have been reversed.

Despite the bitter lessons of the past, we are repeating to-day the folly of ignoring experience. The history of the handling of the Indian problem during the last two years would vie, for sheer eccentricity, with *Alice in Wonderland*. Can anything more amazing be conceived than the manner in which (to borrow Mr. Lloyd George's expression) the Simon Commission has been short-circuited?

The Indian Statutory Commission was appointed by Royal Warrant on the 27th February 1927 with the unanimous approval of all three political parties, both in the House of Commons and the House of Lords. Under the leadership of Sir John Simon the Commission twice visited India—to investigate and report to Parliament

"whether and to what extent it is desirable to establish the principle of responsible Government or to extend the method or restrict the degree of the responsible Government then existing therein."

Yet without awaiting the Commission's Report, Lord Irwin presumably guided by the Home Government, made what Mr. Lloyd George described as

"that ill-judged declaration on Dominion Status in order to propitiate the Lahore Assembly"—"a Congress of leading Indians"—which had "resolved by an overwhelming majority first of all to demand independence of the British Empire and in the next place to organise rebellion against authority until that demand has been conceded."

The late Lord Birkenhead, formerly Secretary of State for India, wrote in the *Daily Telegraph* on the 17th January 1930:—

" From the moment the Simon Commission was constituted by the majestic authority of the State to report to Parliament what ought to be done, it was madness to interfere with it or to attempt to anticipate its decisions. It was indeed a misfortune of almost inconceivable dimensions that the Viceroy Bould had persuaded the Government, or that the Government should have persuaded the Viceroy, to acquiesce in this most unconvincing and dangerous statement. No one ought to have been allowed to say a word until the Simon Commission had reported. Its members had the authority to decide whether or no events in India in the last few years have moved for or against an advance. England and Parliament were awaiting to hear their recommendations and to treat them as of the highest authority. Until they had reported—not the Government itself was entitled to say a word. The result could have easily been foreseen by anyone who had studied the mentality of the Kast. The moment Dominion Status was used by the Viceroy, his Indian negotiators put the matter a step higher. They asked at once whether he would assign a date to the establishment of Dominion Status. He naturally replied that he could not. They thereupon abandoned Dominion Status altogether and concentrated upon independence."

Although the Report of the Commission was published in May 1930, to this day what Sir Harcourt Butler recently described as that " magnificent treasure-house of fact and comment" has never been presented for consideration to the Houses of Parliament. Never before in its history has Parliament so stultified itself as by jettisoning in this manner its own Commission's Report. One at least would have expected repeated and vehement protests from the leader

of the great Conservative party, but apparently even he was persuaded that the "cart before the horse" plan for a Round Table Conference had rendered superfluous the presentation to and consideration by Parliament of its own Commission's Report.

Even more incomprehensible than the slight put upon the Commission, is the fact that its distinguished leader, Sir John Simon, from the day the Report was issued, was never consulted by word or letter by the late Secretary of State for India.

Addressing the Bristol Chamber of Commerce in March last, he said:—

"After two and a half years of work and two long visits to every quarter of India, the Statutory Committee presented its unanimous report last May (1930). Since then he had been a spectator of events, for neither Mr. Benn nor Mr. MacDonald, nor any other member of the Government had held any communication with him publicly or privately on any Indian question from the day that the Report was signed."

Thus we have this amazing situation. Sir John Simon and his colleagues had laboured for, many months sifting evidence from every available source and had embodied their conclusions and recommendations in a Report of over 700 pages only to find this *magnum opus* was to be ignored officially.

Recently I was informed by a distinguished official that on his return from India he had been told by "the powers that be," that his advice was not wanted and he added: "the fact is, the politician does not want near him those who know and can tell him the truth."

Who should be so well qualified to advise on the questions at issue as those members of the Indian Civil Service who, as Commissioners, Deputy Commissioners, Collectors, etc., have spent years of their lives, not in the cities, or in Government Hill Stations where contact is mainly with Indian politicians "educated in the school of that Western learning which they pretend so much to despise," but in close and constant contact with the real India—its rural life, its 500,000 villages and their inhabitants who constitute over 90 per cent, of the entire Indian population. These I.C.S. Officials to whom, through long years, those under their jurisdiction, regardless of race creed or caste, have brought for settlement their difficulties and differences, assured of receiving impartial justice; these men, with British Officers of the Indian Army, who also have exceptional opportunities for gaining knowledge of the real India—these are "the wise men of the East" whose unrivalled experience for some incomprehensible reason has been deliberately ignored, and to whom, presumably because they have completed their service, Lord Irwin in a recent speech referred as "arm-chair critics."

It is an astounding fact that on the Round Table Conference, the retired ranks of the Indian Army, Civil Service and Police are unrepresented.

In attempting to frame a new Constitution for India one would have thought that the late Government would have welcomed advice and assistance from those who from **many** years of service in India and continuous personal touch with its various communities **must possess experience of Indian problems that can be gained in no other manner.** This advice could have been

obtained by issuing to all retired members of the ECS. and Indian Army a questionnaire based on the specific recommendations of the Simon Report, to ascertain their views on these recommendations. A similar questionnaire could have been issued to those still serving, but in their case some method for securing that their replies should be treated as privileged and confidential would be essential. I venture to predict that had this been done the replies would almost unanimously have favoured giving to the Simon Report recommendations a fair trial, with the exception that many would have submitted that the time was not yet ripe for handing over "law and order."

"If a passionate belief and pride in our high calling in the East, in our duty to safeguard the under dog from tyranny and oppression by his old masters, and a reverence for the great achievements of our race . . . if that is to be reactionary, I pray to God that the spirit of reaction may descend upon us all, and give us the infection of a good courage to overcome our difficulties in this our day of destiny."

Lord Lloyd.

CHAPTER IV.

LORD IRWIN.

There is a limit at which forbearance ceases to be a virtue.—*Edmund Burkt.*

On the eve of Lord Irwin's departure from India *The Statesman*, in an article of tribute, wrote:—

"The outcome of the work he has attempted is still on the knees of the Gods, but his personal qualities do not abide question . . . even those who differ most directly with his policy, recognise in both Lord and Lady Irwin servants of India who have apent themselves unflinchingly in the endeavour to help, and the bitterest of opponents will acknowledge the noble purpose that has held them to difficult and thankless tasks."

There can be none who have come in contact with Lord Irwin, who would not subscribe to this eulogy of his personal qualities; on the other hand I believe that an overwhelming majority of those possessing experience of India, gained through long years of residence in the country in constant touch with its myriad problems, hold that in his anxiety to secure peace at almost any price, Lord Irwin's supreme altruism has led him grievously astray. By negotiating with law-breakers and seditionists, and meeting them as equals, he has in effect put a premium on sedition and law-breaking.

On March 5th, 1931, the *Daily Telegraph*, commenting on the Irwin-Gandhi agreement, wrote:—

"The value of the weapon of organised sedition **has** been established in the sight of all India. It has been effective for the imposing of terms. Is it to be supposed that it now will be laid aside to **rust** in permanence?"

The *suaviter in modo* policy responsible **for** these lamentable results was not embarked **upon** **without** ample warning from many quarters.

On January 13th 1930, Mr. Lloyd **George** wrote:—

"India confronts us with the most tremendous internal problem with which the British Empire has been faced since the days of the Mutiny. Shall we abandon our Empire in the East or do we intend to stand by our undoubted responsibilities whatever the hazard or cost. . . . All those who know India best look anxiously at the situation. A Congress of leading Indians have resolved by an overwhelming majority first of all to demand independence of the British Empire and in the next place to organise rebellion against authority until that demand has been conceded. It is no use arguing that the Lahore secessionists represent only a small fraction of the people of India and that the vast majority have no sympathy with this repudiation of the Empire. The Viceroy and the British Government attached such importance to the decisions of this Congress that they issued that ill-judged declaration on Dominion Status in order to propitiate the Lahore Assembly. It was their sole excuse for short-circuiting the Simon Commission. What a lamentable, what a disastrous miscalculation. . . . If Lahore is not to become serious it must be taken seriously. The Government must make it clear ⁴beyond possibility of doubt that they will not tolerate 'Civil Disobedience.'

It must be known before any active steps are taken by Lahorists that every effort to organise sedition will be firmly dealt with, but we must not be rushed either into making rash experiments or into the denial of wise reforms."

On the 1st November 1929, on his return to India from a brief visit to England, Lord Irwin made a public declaration of policy in which he said:—

" In view of the doubts which have been expressed both in Great Britain and India regarding the interpretation to be placed on the intentions of the British Government in enacting the Statute 1919 (I.e., Mr. Montagu's Reform scheme, known as The Government of India Act) I am authorised on behalf of H.M. Government to state clearly that in their judgment it is implicit in the Declaration of 1917 (Mr. Montagu's speech in the House, 1917) that the natural issue of India's Constitutional progress as there contemplated is the attainment of Dominion Status."

On the 7th November 1929, Lord Irwin's declaration in which he introduced the words " Dominion Status " was the subject of a Debate in the House of Commons. Mr. Baldwin asked the Secretary of State for India whether the Viceroy's statement implied " any change in the policy hitherto declared or in the time when this status may be attained," and receiving no answer from Mr. Wedgwood Benn, Mr. Baldwin repeated his question on the 11th November 1929, in a letter he addressed to the Prime Minister, to which Mr. MacDonald replied:—

"The answer to both parts of the question is 'No.' The policy set out in the preamble of the Government of India Act 1919, stands unchanged unless and until Parliament decides to amend it."

On the 24th May 1931 Mr. Baldwin wrote to the Prime Minister for certain assurances as to what would be the constitution and scope of the Round Table Conference, if the Conference was to be resumed. He said:—

" I assume from the declarations of the Government that the Federal Relations Committee is to resume where the work was left on: in January. Questions are not to be reopened that were then settled. Particularly must the safeguards upon which the British declaration insisted be accepted as a basis of the future discussions. . . Finally I understand that it is still agreed that neither the Federal Relations Committee nor the Round Table Conference are to do the work of a Constituent Assembly; that their purpose is to ascertain whether agreement can be reached on the broad lines of the settlement and that when they have finished their work it will be for His Majesty's Ministers to frame and present to Parliament the proposals of the Government for the future Constitution of India in the form of a Bill which will then follow the procedure laid down by Statute."

To this enquiry Mr. MacDonald replied:—

" The scope of the discussion at the resumed meeting will be as declared at the termination of the Conference on the 19th January and announced by the Viceroy on the 5th March—Federation, Indian responsibility and reservations or safeguards in the interests of India, such matters as defence, external affairs, the position of minorities, financial credit of India and the discharge of obligations. . . . I agree with your view that His Majesty's Ministers when the time comes will be responsible for the Bill which will embody the new Constitution of India and the Conference will not therefore be of the nature of a Constituent Assembly."

It will be observed that Mr. MacDonald did not give the specific undertaking for which Mr. Baldwin asked and on the vital question of safeguards he refers only to the interests of India. Surely British interests are entitled to equal consideration.

On the 22nd June 1931 Lord Irwin, addressing a private meeting of the India Committee of the Conservative Party at the House of Commons, is reported to have said that

" the prestige of the white men in India had gone for ever."

and to have attributed this to—

- (1) The defeat of the Russians by the Japanese.
- (2) The use of Indian troops in the Great War against White men, and
- (3) The influence of the Cinema on Indian people.

It is undeniable that the prestige of the white man in India has been diminishing. The causes named by Lord Irwin doubtless have been contributory to this deplorable development, but its root is in Whitehall, where during the last few years our administrators have developed an inferiority complex on matters touching the prestige and welfare of the Empire. No longer are they imbued with that spirit of resolve and indomitable purpose that animated their predecessors. No longer do they appear to regard themselves as the trustees of a glorious heritage. No longer are " British interests " to be safeguarded. Apparently, in response to the clamour of a seditious minority, they contemplate calmly surrendering the fruits of the patient labour and splendid achievement of two centuries; ignoring not only British interests but their supreme moral

obligation to protect and advance the interests of every section of the Indian people who, without British authority to maintain peace amongst them, would collapse into bloody chaos.

Speaking at Harrogate on July 20th 1981, Lord Irwin said:—

" Great Britain should realise that the India with which she dealt to-day was not the India of yesterday any more than it would be the India of to-morrow."

In this sentence we have the key to the defeatist attitude which our political leaders, in dealing with Indian questions, have displayed in recent years. Those who know India best will support my contention that for centuries India fundamentally has not changed: its creeds, caste* and customs are too deep-rooted.

On the surface—Yes. A movement led by a handful of demagogues with a few thousand Western educated and semi-educated supporters, backed by an unbridled and venomously anti-British Press, and confronted only by a weak and vacillating Government, will soon attract some millions of supporters. Not that they understand what they are supporting, but because, to use Mr. Gandhi's own phrase, they have a "partiality for exciting work." They are abnormally vocal and make a misleadingly imposing display.

Beneath the surface—No. The vast majority of the 300,000,000 Indian cultivators know nothing of politics, nor will they want to, so long as they are permitted to live in peace protected from invasion and oppression by a just and stable Government.

I give below an extract from a letter I received from a friend, holding an office of great responsibility in India, which I believe expresses the views of the majority of British-Indian officials on Lord Irwin and his policy.

" I have nothing **but** the highest admiration **for Lord Irwin**. He is a man of the noblest character **and** of the highest principles and the greatest courage of any I have ever met . . . but I share the **opinion that** nearly every one of us who has spent his **life in India** holds that India is a very long way from being fit for anything in the nature of Dominion Status and that the reforms already granted **have been greater than** Indians can digest. The result of the agitation during the past year has been **to create a** doubt in the mind of the man in the street, **whether** Congress or Government is the stronger force, and in the city of Bombay the public seem to have put their money on the Congress. Sedition and disorder have been given such free rein and open **defiance** to Government has had such **startling success that it** is difficult to imagine the prestige of **the** Government ever being restored except by force **and** repression a hundred times more severe **than would** have been necessary twelve months **ago**."

I agree with every word of the above quotation, save those in the last sentence, as I believe—if the situation be dealt with promptly, with firmness and strict justice—the prestige of Government can still be restored without recourse to exceptional employment of force. Tens of millions of Indians would welcome the news that Government intended to resume its functions, and ensure that they could pursue their peaceful avocations unmolested. On this point no one is better qualified to express an opinion than that distinguished Indian administrator, Sir Harcourt

Butler, with his thirty-eight years' experience of the country. In his book *India Insistent* published recently, he writes:—

"There should be no real difficulty in strengthening the administration. The Government is immeasurably strong, if only it will show its strength. The bulk of the people are law-abiding and expect Government to maintain order. It is of course undesirable in ordinary times to rely too much on the military for the prevention of civil disturbance, but these are not ordinary times, and the police force recruited in sufficient numbers for ordinary times may well require assistance in times of extraordinary stress. There is assuredly no reason for a feeling of defeatism. Our prestige in some localities is no doubt at present rather worn and threadbare, but it will revive as on many previous occasions, when recent spasms of depression have passed away. Already thoughtful Indians are criticising Government for its want of firmness and demanding stronger action to prevent and suppress disorder."

It was a great misfortune, both for Lord Irwin and the Empire, that without any previous experience of India, he was plunged into the vortex of political agitation before he had time to make even a superficial study of the causes of unrest. Being a man of exceptionally high ideals, but devoid of the least knowledge of Indian psychology, he treated the Congress representatives with whom he had to negotiate—who were mostly Brahmins—as men of his own moral standard, never realising that he was dealing with past masters in sophistry.

An eminent cleric, who for some years officiated in India and whose views I am sure Lord Irwin would respect, wrote to me recently:—

"The revolutionaries in India and Gandhi among them desire to get rid of the British Raj altogether.

Gandhi has I think been playing a double part for a long time past. But of course the playing of a double part does not involve such a conflict with an Indian's as with an Englishman's honour."

Abbe Dubois, the renowned French Missionary, after thirty years' residence in India wrote of the Brahmins:—

" At disguising the truth the Brahmin far excels every other Caste. It is quite impossible to fathom their minds and discover what they really mean. He would indeed be a fool who relied on their promises, protestations or oaths, if it were in their interest to break them."

Those who know India would I believe unanimously affirm that the Abbe's words are as true to-day as when they were penned 120 years ago.

During the last two years of his Viceroyalty, Lord Irwin doubtless was handicapped by having to mould his policy in conformity with the vagaries of the least experienced and most unsuitable Secretary of State who has ever presided over the India Office.

CHAPTER V.

FOREIGNERS IN INDIA.

The Indian National Congress was founded in 1885 as a body of moderate opinion but has gradually developed into an anti-British organisation. It is predominantly Hindu in composition. The majority of its leaders are Brahmins. It professes to regard the British as "foreigners" in India and its main objective is to oust them from the country.

For some inconceivable reason the contention that the British are foreigners in India appears, to have obtained acceptance by a not inconsiderable number of people in this country. If it were so, then we are equally foreigners in Australia and New Zealand and to take only a few other instances, the British and Boers are foreigners in South Africa, the British and French are foreigners in Canada, the great majority of the population of the U.S. are foreigners in America, the Dutch in the Dutch East Indies, the Russians in Siberia, and in India itself Gurkhas and Pathans are foreigners, not to mention Moham-medans and the majority of Hindus, all of whom at some period have come into India as invaders.

As I stated in *India on the Brink*, the depressed classes in India numbering 60 millions are the true representatives of the indigenious.

population of the country. The following quotation from an article in the May 1931 number of *India* is pertinent to this issue:—

"The British are not foreigners in India. Americans and Japanese are, and so are Afghans and Gurkhas. Congress persistently speaks as if the British were foreigners, and to some extent our own press has followed suit. It seems perhaps a little extraordinary that it should be necessary to remind ourselves that we are just as much citizens of the Indian Empire as are Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Patel. Nor are we prepared to agree to any constitution for India which will alter our status there in this respect. It has been obvious for some time that there are Indians who contemplate not only treating the British in India as foreigners, but as foreigners to whom the most-favoured-nation clause does not apply. They would, in fact, place the British under disabilities which would not apply to Americans, Germans, Afghans and so on. It seems hardly necessary to state that we could not agree to this, but there are people even in England among whom members of the I.L.P. must, it is to be feared, be numbered, who would think it is quite natural that British merchants should be penalised in India. It cannot be too clearly understood that when the European community in India favour self-government for India, they include themselves among those citizens of India who will govern themselves. Indians in Great Britain have the full rights of citizens. They can vote for and can be elected to Parliament. There is no restriction of any kind on their right to trade or enter the professions or to practise. It is clear that British residents in India are entitled to no less. Nor will they be content with less."

At the meeting of the Bound Table Conference on the 19th January 1931, the Committee of the whole Conference passed the following Minute:—

"At the Instance of the British commercial

community the principle was generally agreed that there should be no discrimination between the rights of the British mercantile community, firms and companies, trading in India and the rights of Indian-born subjects, and that an appropriate convention based on reciprocity should be entered into for the purpose of regulating these rights."

This Minute embodied the recommendation* of the Minorities Committee as set forth in paragraph 14 of the Official Report.

On the 28th March 1931 the Karachi Correspondent of *The Times* reported as follows:—

"The Mahatma himself made some dangerous remarks this morning in replying to a deputation of Indian Merchants of Karachi. The Deputation had asked for an assurance that the demand for equality of British trading rights at the outset of para. 14 of the Minorities Report of the Round Table Conference would not be conceded. Mr. Gandhi's answer was 'that Congress felt even more strongly than the merchants themselves did and would take all possible steps to get para. 14 rescinded. . . .' He added 'that any Constitution which impaired the right of an Indian Parliament of the future to discriminate against non-Nationals would be unacceptable to Congress.'"

Dr. Kitchlew, one of the extremist members of the Congress—who was responsible for the Punjab disturbances in 1919—made himself conspicuous as the advocate of a policy which would ensure that, to use his own words,

"even the English would not be allowed to land in India without the order of Indians."—(Punjab Government's Report on the Disturbances, April 1919. Page 1.)

CHAPTER VI.

THE ROWLATT ACT.

It was in opposition to the Rowlatt Act that Mr. Gandhi launched his First Civil Disobedience Campaign. In Chapter XXII. I give his own version of this. In this Chapter I give briefly the reasons for the passing of the Act.

In December 1917 sedition was rife in India and the Government appointed a Committee

" to investigate and report on the nature and extent of the criminal conspiracies connected with the revolutionary movement in India."

The Chairman of this Committee was Mr. Justice Rowlatt. The findings of the Committee were published in India on the 19th July 1918 in what became known as the *Rowlatt Report*. For some reason officially attributed to an oversight, the Report was not published in England until October. But for this delay it is probable that the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms Scheme would not have met with acceptance without substantial modification. The scheme was translated into law before public opinion could be aroused to the alarming extent to which revolutionary activities in India had developed.

" During the War it had been found necessary to arm the administration against revolutionary crime,

by powers given to it under The Defence of India Act, which corresponded to the Defence of the Realm Act in Great Britain. The Government of India introduced two Bills into the Legislature to secure special powers for itself in relation to such crime on the expiry of the war legislation. These * Rowlatt Bills' aroused an opposition as vehement as it was unexpected. Mr. Gandhi placed himself at the head of it and began the first of his Indian 'passive resistance' campaigns. In the organised agitation that followed the masses already discontented and unstable were inflamed by gross misrepresentation."

8.R., Para. 270, Vol I.

" Many false rumours as to the object and purpose of the Rowlatt Act were extensively circulated in the Punjab. The uneducated people were in ignorance of these matters. They were not aware that the Act would only be put in operation in Districts where anarchical and revolutionary crimes were being perpetrated and would only come into operation on the Government of India giving its sanction, when application for powers under the Act was made by the local government. The people believed the rumours and their indignation against Government increased."

Hunter Report, Page 59.

" As examples of these rumours we were told that it was said that, under the Act, the Police would have power to arrest any three or four men conversing together, that nobody would be allowed to own more than a certain amount of land, and that nobody would be allowed to marry without leave from Government. These and similar rumours were widely circulated and were believed by the illiterate population who were not familiar with the provisions Of the Act."

Hunter Report, Page 6.

Mr. Gandhi's main objection to the Rowlatt Act was that it gave power to Government in

certain cases to imprison without open trial. At the time this was essential as witnesses were so intimidated by the terrorists that they dare not come forward to give evidence.

In 1916 Chattopadhyaya, a brother of Mr. Gandhi's disciple, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, was in Germany directing an organisation to bring about a revolution in India and disseminating seditious literature among India's prisoners of war in Germany. Later, when Russia succumbed to Bolshevism, Moscow became the centre of these revolutionary activities.

In January 1919, the Government of India ascertained that considerable sums of money had been remitted by the Soviet to their agents in India. In February 1919, coincident with Mr. Gandhi's plans for his First Civil Disobedience Campaign, Habibullah, the Ameer of Afghanistan, who was loyal to Great Britain, was murdered. Amanullah, who succeeded him, at once proclaimed the independence of Afghanistan and then proceeded to invade India in April, the very month Mr. Gandhi fixed for his general Hartal throughout India. In taking this risk there can be no doubt that Amanullah was banking on the unrest in India spreading.

"The Punjab Government were in possession of information which seemed to point to a connection between the outbreak of hostilities in Afghanistan and the risings in the Punjab."

Hunter Report, Page 15.

Further, Amanullah was relying on the support of the Soviet Government with whom

he was in communication. Lenin wrote to him as follows:—

" Having received the first missive in the name of the free independent Afghan nation with greetings to the Russian people, let us hasten in the name of the Workers and Peasants Government and of **all** the Russian people, to convey an answering greeting to the independent Afghan people—heroically defending their liberty against foreign slave drivers."

On the 27th November 1919 Lenin wrote:—

" The establishment of permanent diplomatic relations between two great peoples opens out wide possibilities for mutual help against every attempt on the part of foreign beasts of prey against **the** liberty of others."

CHAPTER VII.

HUNTER REPORT ON THE 1919 DISTURBANCES.

In Part II I give extracts from Mr. Gandhi's own version of the disturbances that ensued on his First Civil Disobedience Campaign.

In this Chapter I give extracts from the "Report * of the Committee appointed by the Government of India to investigate the disturbances that occurred in the Punjab, etc." These extracts afford a striking illustration of how speedily a so-called "non-violent" movement can get out of control and lead to appalling tragedies:—

•' The general teaching of the doctrine of Civil Disobedience to laws, to masses of uneducated men must inevitably lead to breach of the peace and disorder. Apart from the use of force, Civil Disobedience, if extensively practised, would mean the paralysis of Government. . . . In the situation as it presented itself day by day to the Punjab Government, there were grounds for the gravest anxiety. Within recent years there had been two revolutionary movements. It was difficult, probably unsafe for the Authorities not to assume that the outbreak was the result of a definite organisation. . . . A movement which had started in rioting and become a rebellion might have rapidly developed into a revolution.

Hunter Report, Page 63.

*Known as the Hunter Report.

"The first outbreak occurred in Delhi on the 30th March, 1919. On that date a hartal (i.e., a shutting of shops) was held in the City as part of Mr. Gandhi's passive resistance movement against what is known as the Rowlatt Legislation. Mr. Gandhi's original intention, at least as understood in Delhi, was that the 30th March should be observed throughout India as a day of abstinence from work and general mourning in protest against the Government's action in passing Rowlatt Bill No. 2."

Hunter Report, Page J.

Throughout the day crowds collected **and** enforced Hartal compelling "people to alight from vehicles which they were driving." They went to the railway station and endeavoured to get the vendors of refreshments to abstain from work.

"The contractor, an old deaf man, explained that he was under contract with the Railway Authorities, to keep his stalls open for the sale of goods to passengers. . . . This explanation did not satisfy the crowd. They proceeded to seize and drag the contractor to the entrance and in the scuffle he was hurt.. Mr. Matthews, Deputy Station Superintendent, had the coat torn off his back. . . . The Railway Police arrested two men, but these men do not appear to have been detained for any considerable time. . . . The temporary arrest of the men appears to have evoked great excitement and caused numbers of people to invade the main station building . . . stopping all work and using threats of violence . . . **and** finally Stopping traffic." *Hunter Report, Page 1.*

Rioting in Delhi continued until the 17th of April. On this the Report comments as follows:

"The spread of passive resistance on a wide scale throughout India will inevitably lead to outbreaks of rioting and violence. This latter fact was recognised by Mr. Gandhi after the serious outbreaks **in the Punjab occurred.**" *Hunter Report, Page 6.*

The movement became widespread and in its course several Europeans were atrociously murdered. "The interruptions of telegraphic and railway systems were persistent and widespread." Derailment of trains was resorted to by the rioters in several cases. Fifty-four separate outrages were committed on the telegraph lines. Railway stations, post and telegraph offices and other Government buildings, private houses, etc. with their contents were fired and gutted.

AHMEDABAD.

"Two European employees of a mill who were driving through the town were compelled to alight, being then stoned by the crowd they took refuge in a police chowky. On attempting to proceed thence on foot they were attacked by the mob and driven into a mill where they were joined by a small party of armed police.

"The mob attacked the mill, wrecked a portion of it and demanded the surrender of the Europeans. . . . The people of the mill, fearing the complete destruction of their premises would not allow the Europeans and police to remain. . . . The two Europeans therefore came out accompanied by four policemen. . . . One of the Europeans escaped to a private bungalow, the other with the four policemen ran, pursued by the crowd, up on to the balcony of a house overlooking the street. There they were stoned by the mob, some of whom proceeded to rush the house while others lighted fires below with the object of burning out the fugitives. The latter broke through a back wall, and all but one escaped just as the rioters were forcing their way up the staircase. One policeman was captured and thrown from the balcony into the road where he was assaulted by the mob and received injuries from which he died later In the day. . . .

Hunter Report, Page 10.

" The mobs in the city had broken out into acts of incendiarism and violence. They proceeded to burn all Government buildings in the locality, including the collector's office, the record rooms, the sub-registrar's office, the City Magistrate's office, and the City Survey Office, the Court House, Telegraph Office, the Post Office . . . and two police chowkies. A house occupied by Mrs. Tuke, wife of the Civil Surgeon, was surrounded by the mob who first hesitated on finding that Mrs. Tuke was armed with a revolver, and ultimately withdrew. Certain Indian gentlemen, including medical students, helped to save Mrs. Tuke. Another mob went to the Electric Power Station, half a mile away, stopped its working, attacked Mr. Brown who was in charge. Mr. Brown received severe injuries but . . . escaped with his life.

" The same mob attempted to kill Lieutenant Macdonald of the Army Clothing Department. . . . Lieut. Macdonald held the narrow stair with a cudgel for more than an hour. . . . He was in great danger, for the mob were preparing to set fire to the building . . . his life was saved by the arrival of the troops.

"11th April.—Defiant mobs still faced the military in the city, and others committed outrages where the troops could not prevent them. They found a European police officer, Sergeant Eraser, who was hiding in a shop in the Itichy Road, the main street in the City, dragged him out and murdered him. His body was left lying on the road. Near to the scene of this murder the walls of a police chowky were defaced by inscriptions of an inciting nature such as, 'The British Raj is gone, the King of England is defeated and Swaraj is established,' or 'Kill all Europeans,' 'Murder them wherever they be found.'

" The mob's efforts were directed against Europeans and the property of Government. Public buildings were burned . . . elsewhere buildings **were**

wrecked and their contents thrown out and burned in the Streets. . . . *Hunter Report, Pages 15 and U.*

" Major Kirkwood explains that he received orders . . . that if rioters approached in a threatening manner to within 25 yards of the troops after warning the crowd to keep back, controlled fire must be opened. If people were actually engaged in incendiarism they were to be fired on at once. . . . After passing the place where Lieutenant Larkin had been wounded . . . he found a large crowd and got his Subedar-Major Kanhaiya to warn them. . . ' They threw stones and I was hit on the head. I saw the situation was becoming more involved. . . I ordered three men to fire. . . . I think two men were hit.'

" Before he fired Major Kirkwood had heard a Sadhu (religious mendicant) among the crowd asking for white men's blood. . . .

" When night fell the city and suburbs, except in the North-West, was still in the hands of rioters who during the night burnt some minor Government and Municipal buildings; meanwhile Europeans . . . had taken refuge in the Shahibagh, or at the Railway Station under military protection. The troops in the streets had to remain there during the night. The Electric Power Station being closed the City and Railway Stations were without light. The drainage pumping engine had ceased to work; and the municipal conservancy staff had disappeared. Serious results were likely to follow from . . . the choking of the sewers.

" From the military point of view the situation was disturbing and all available troops at Ahmedabad were engaged in and near the city. They had been continuously on duty and there were no means of relieving them. A train bringing British troops from Bombay was derailed during the night and the telegraph wires connecting Ahmedabad and Bombay were cut. The need of effective action speedily to restore order was imperative.

"Telegraph wires were cut in eight places in Ahmedabad and at fourteen places outside. The value of the property destroyed by the rioters was approximately 9½ lakhs of Rupees.

VIRAMGAM, AHMEDABAD DISTRICT.

" People of Viramgam took their cue from Ahmedabad. A riotous crowd went to the Railway Station. . . . Mr. McIlbride, Traffic Inspector . . . was attacked by a crowd which assaulted him severely with sticks rendering him unconscious. . . . The station was completely gutted and the telegraph wires were cut. Having done this the crowd started for the town. . . .

" Arriving at the Bharwadi Gate they set it and the police chowky on fire. . . . The Post Office . . . they plundered and burned. They then advanced on the Mamlatdar's kacheri (Court House) including the Treasury . . . opened the attack by throwing stones at the building and the police guard. . . . Set fire to the sub-inspector's office. . . . Went to his (Mr. Madhavlal, Police Magistrate) house, looted the premises, smashed the furniture, removed some of his valuables, burned all that remained. His wife concealed herself in a friend's house. The mob discovered Mr. Madhavlal's hiding place . . . taking him to the public road they drenched his clothing with kerosene oil and set fire to him while he was still alive. On his burning body they heaped the records of an adjoining Talukdari (Government record office) which they broke into and plundered. Using these records as fuel they burned Mr. Madhavlal to death so that his body was completely consumed." *Hunter Report, Pages 14, 15 and 16.*

AMRITSAR.

Sir Michael O'Dwyer in a recent article wrote that his

"most serious anxiety when Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab during the Gandhi-inspired rebellion in

1919 was the protection of several hundred British women and children. These were hurriedly **gathered into** places of comparative safety under the protection of such few troops or volunteers as were available. But the adjoining walls were placarded with notices inciting the lawless elements to seize 'white women.' In India, as a rule, molestation of women is rare, but the Moplah rebellion of 1921 and the Cawnpore massacres of March last amply prove that when racial and religious hatreds are aroused, neither age nor sex is safe from outrage, murder and violence. We can no longer shut our eyes to facts."

Evening Neivs, 4th August, 1931.

" **In** Amritsar itself, violence, murder and arson of the most savage description had occurred three days previously, and the city was in the hands of the mob."

The Rt. Hon. Edwin Montagu.

" On the 10th April at Amritsar the mobs **had burned** Government Buildings because they were Government Buildings. After the first few minutes they had murdered all Europeans on whom they **could lay their** hands, except Miss Sherwood (a lady doctor **who had** for many years been working in the City and was greatly respected) whom they left **for dead upon the** street. They had hunted for Mrs. Easdon and the officers of the Chartered **Bank; the other Bank** Managers were sought out in their offices and killed with every circumstance of brutal rage."

Hunter Report, Page 66.

" **A mob attacked the National Bank, murdered Mr. Stewart, Manager, and Mr. Scott, Assistant Manager—looted goods to the value of several lakhs of rupees—oil was poured on the furniture which, with the bodies, was then set alight. An attack was made on the Alliance Bank and the Manager, Mr. Thompson, was cruelly murdered, his assailants even going back a second time, on a rumour that he was**

still breathing, and brutally assaulting him again with clubs, and was flung from an upper balcony into the street where the body was burnt under a pile of Bank furniture drenched in kerosene oil."

Punjab Government Report, 1919, Pages 3 and 4.

"They were not even Government officials—but the Raj is a British Raj; they were in some sense its representatives or symbols, and for this they were murdered. The railway and the telegraphs were attacked partly as Government institutions and partly to paralyse Government by preventing news, by derailing troops and otherwise immobilising the forces."

Hunter Report, Page 67.

Ugly incidents occurred in other parts of India especially in the North and West, and there was grave danger that the revolutionary movement would become widespread. Obviously the situation demanded immediate and drastic action. In Amritsar a proclamation was issued on the evening of April 12th prohibiting unlawful assemblies. On the 13th April the officer commanding, marched troops through the main streets of the city announcing by beat of drum that assemblies defying this proclamation would be dispersed by the use of force. Yet in open defiance of this order, Dr. Muhammad Bashir, a notorious extremist, organised a great gathering of some 15,000 people armed with lathis at Jallianwallahbagh, a favourite place for meetings. The speakers were well-known apostles of violence, and a member of the mob responsible for the atrocities committed on the 10th April, was haranguing the meeting and eulogising murder, when General Dyer arrived with a force of 50 Sepoys and 40 Gurkhas. Fire was opened on the

crowd which began to disperse. **Two groups** seemed to be collecting as if to rush the troops who then directed the fire on these groups. Later a commission was appointed to investigate General Dyer's action and as a result he was censured, deprived of his command and ordered to retire, but it is interesting to note that when Sir Michael O'Dwyer brought his libel suit against Sir Sankaran Nair for alleging that Sir Michael had approved an "atrocities" the presiding Judge, Sir A. McCardie, in his summing up stated that he considered "General Dyer had in the exceptional circumstances acted rightly and had been wrongly condemned by the Secretary of State." The jury by a majority of 11 to 1 after a five weeks' trial in which over 100 witnesses, British and Indian, gave evidence on oath, accepted Sir A. McCardie's pronouncement.

On the 18th April 1919 Mrs. Besant in a letter to *The Times of India* criticising Mr. Gandhi's revolutionary activities, and referring to the rioting at Delhi and Amritsar, wrote:—

"The cutting of telegraph wires, the derailment of troop trains, the burning of railway stations, the attacks on banks, the setting free of jail birds, are not the actions of Satyagrahis, nor even of casual rioters, but of revolutionaries. . . . I say that when a small handful of soldiers and police is face to face with a mob of many thousands and the mob begins to pelt them with brickbats, it is more merciful to order soldiers to fire a few volleys of buckshot, than to allow the violence to gather strength until either the town must be given up to mob rule, or machine guns and bombs be brought into play. It is a terrible alternative, but any Government worthy of the name has to face it."

On the same day Mr. Gandhi advised his followers:—

"To give Government effective co-operation in restoring order," and in a letter to *The Times of India* expressed regret for having embarked on the mass movement of civil disobedience and said he had "under-rated the forces of evil."

I have given above a few instances of the hideous excesses that were committed by frenzied mobs of ignorant people—the direct outcome of Mr. Gandhi's first campaign of Civil Disobedience. It is true that he subsequently confessed he had committed a "Himalayan Miscalculation" in launching this campaign and that he actually "declared a penitential fast of three days for himself." This action is cited by his worshippers as one of his steps toward the perfect state to* which they claim he has now attained. Those who paid the price of his "Miscalculation" must have regarded his act of penance as a preposterous anti-climax to a great tragedy—it certainly could not bring back the dead to life, or comfort the bereaved.

CHAPTER VIII.

CAWNPORE 1931.

The appalling horrors of the Cawnpore massacres in March last, have never, I fear, been realized by the British public, and the majority of those who troubled to read the Press reports that appeared at the time, probably failed to appreciate their significance. A friend of mine residing in Cawnpore, wrote to me:—

" Only in times of excitement is it possible to raise any real interest and not always even then. Look at Cawnpore. For a short time all the world was interested in Cawnpore. People who had no recollection of ever having heard of the place suddenly started talking about Cawnpore. Now there was an opportunity for the European Association to speak up and voice the European opinion in front of the biggest audience they are ever likely to get, not only the Europeans of Cawnpore, but the Europeans of India. Europeans of Cawnpore pass unanimous resolutions condemning the weakness of the Central Administration during the past year, in allowing to proceed unchecked Congress Propaganda against law and order, permitting coercion by intimidation and blackmail of traders and merchants of the country, and through a campaign of lies creating restlessness in the mind of the rural population, resulting in a state of chaotic uncertainty such as has not existed in India since the darkest days of the Mutiny. Had we Europeans not turned out armed and organised

as soon as ever there were indications of the seriousness of the trouble, history might well have repeated itself in another massacre of the Europeans in Cawnpore."

The Statesman in its issue of April 16th 1931, writes:—

"... Evidence accumulates of the serious and horrible nature of the rioting at Cawnpore. We publish to-day a delayed letter written by a European citizen which gives some of the facts. The writer . . . is a man in whose word readers can have every faith."

The following are extracts from the letter:—

"The trouble began at noon on Tuesday with the demand of the Congress to close all shops on account of the execution of Baghat Singh. This was most effectively accomplished in the Mall Road by an attack with brickbats by the 'Venar Sena' (the Monkey Army)—a Congress organisation. Nearly all the shop windows were smashed of both Indian and European shops and some Europeans were attacked in their cars. This is an example of Mr. Gandhi's 'peaceful persuasion' in practice. Shortly after when the Congress followers forcibly insisted on closing the Moslem shops in the City the communal trouble broke out. . . . On Wednesday morning I saw several large gangs of 50 to 100 Hindus, each gang armed with spears, lathis and axes, marching down the Grand Trunk Road into the City to join in the fray, without check or hindrance, shouting their war-cry 'Inqulab Zindabad' ('long live revolution'). . . . The different Mohallas in and around the City were a law unto themselves, a graphic example of self-determination. Mohallas with a Hindu majority, slaughtered Moslems—men, women and children, indiscriminately. Moslem Mohallas did the same to Hindus. . . . The greater part of Cawnpore City is

a shambles, hundreds of houses have been burnt down, several Mohallas practically destroyed, hundreds of people have been slaughtered; it has been a massacre. The casualties will never be known, bodies are still lying about and the stench in parts of the city is unbearable. . . . All this ghastly tragedy had its origin in the practice of 'peaceful persuasion' and 'non-violence.'"

"Another European resident in Cawnpore for many years past, estimates the number of persons killed as 600. He adds that the murders were done with savage ferocity. The victims were hacked to pieces and the corpses of women were ripped up. These are the accounts of reliable eye-witnesses."

In the report of the Commission set up by the "Government of the United Provinces to enquire into the causes of the riots, it is stated—

"The holding of political conferences, the organisation of meetings with a stream of inflammatory speeches, the distribution of leaflets denouncing the Government, the celebration of 'Independence Day,' and the 'National Week'—the enlistment of Congress Volunteers, demonstrations during the march of Mr. Gandhi and on the arrest of Mr. Vallabhai Patel, propaganda amongst students—all these were part of a Congress policy to arouse the feeling of hostility against the Government."

The following admission is made:—

"The Governor in Council must now admit he might with advantage have directed a firmer and more constant recourse to the penal and preventive sections of the ordinary law during the earlier days of the agitation."

Mr. T. Gavin Jones, one of the European delegates to the Round Table Conference giving evidence at the enquiry stated:—

"I trace the root cause of the outbreak at Cawnpore to the Central Government and their weak and

conciliatory attitude towards the provocative Congress activities which are demoralising the Administration. In the terms of the Irwin-Gandhi settlement, peaceful picketting is still permitted. The phrase is a contradiction in terms. . . . The difficulty which the police had to contend with in combating the civil disobedience movement, and also being obliged by strict orders to deal leniently with the activities of Congress, has undermined their authority and (in Cawnpore) demoralized the force."

The Statesman commented on the Report as follows:—

" It is a frank and convincing document. There has been no hushing up of the policy pursued. . . . The local Government even saddles itself with the serious responsibility of not having dealt more sternly with the Civil Disobedience Movement in its early days. That is a responsibility which it shares with the Government of India itself. . . .

" The damage done to the cause of law and order by the disappearing tricks which policemen were taught to demonstrate when prominent Congress men gave public exhibition of how to violate the Salt Laws, can never be accurately assessed, but that it was real and widespread cannot be questioned.

" These, however, are sins of omission, for the sins of commission, murder, massacre and appalling savagery others are to blame. The reason Cawnpore streets ran with blood was the intolerable tyranny of Congress. Because young men who took part in the murder of both an English police officer and a very gallant Indian head constable, paid the penalty of the law, and Mohammedan shopkeepers refused to express their sympathy . . . murderous passion flamed out and they were butchered by self-styled patriots.

" When the shambles was over Congress had the unparalleled effrontery to continue the role of parallel government and set up its own enquiry,

refusing to give evidence at the official **enquiry**. All last winter the country rang with denunciations of **the** unfortunate police. Murder clubs could stone **them in** the streets, and prevent their (lend being **buried or burnt, and** their families buying food, but let the unfortunate police attempt to defend themselves from Congress crowds and the Press shrieked columns about lathi charges, repression, **and brutality**.

" Then came Cawnpore, and some members of **this** disheartened force finding themselves for once not the immediate object of the hooligans' fury, decided not to ask for trouble, but to look the other way. Instantly a new and louder howl went up to heaven, ' Why did not the police fire? ' Well do we all know, as the unhappy police know, that had they fired **they** would have been denounced as murderers, **reeking with** the blood of innocent people."

CHAPTER IX.

INSTIGATORS OF ASSASSINATION.

The newspaper press is a great power, but as unchained torrents of water submerge whole country-sides and devastate crops, even so an uncontrolled pen serves but to destroy.—"Mahatma Gandhi—His Own Story," Page 154.

Recently owing to the Extremist Organs of the Press persistently publishing inflammatory articles in praise of assassination, the Government of India has at last been compelled to introduce a Press Control Bill. The passing of this Bill was obstructed in the Legislative Assembly by the Nationalist Opposition. Mr. Sarma, Editor of *The Bengalee*, a non-official member of the House, accused the Opposition of following Mr. Gandhi with their lips but betraying their professions by their actions. A three days' debate on whether or not to approve the principle of a Bill to prohibit the instigation of assassination was, he said, no credit to the Assembly and no testimony of fitness for self-government.

Mr. Emerson, Secretary, Home Department, Government of India, speaking in the Legislative Assembly on October 6th 1931, said:—

"There was incontrovertible evidence that Press incitements to murder had a widespread effect on the mind of youth."

Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose, the late Mayor of Calcutta, is reported in his own organ *Liberty* as

having used these words in addressing Sikhs at Amritsar: "India was required to produce thousands of Bhagat Singhs before she could attain Puma Swaraj."

"We assume the correctness of the report and **ask how** long the Government of India is to tolerate **these** verbal incitements to cold and callous murder. Thousands of Bhagat Singhs can mean no more and no less than thousands of men who will shoot down officials in circumstances in which they have not a chance of defending themselves. At the doors of would-be Bhagat Singhs lie the cowardly murder of Mr. Peddie, of the shooting of Colonel Simpson, Mr. Lowman and half a score of other men whose one crime was that they were doing their duty.

"Mr. Bose's speech only differs by a shade more outspokenness from a score of speeches that were delivered in Congress. At this very meeting at Amritsar, Pandit Malaviya said:—'He expected every Sikh to come in the firing line.' That was metaphor, we shall be told. It is curious metaphor when addressed to men excited by repeated glorifications of Bhagat Singh. To them the 'firing line' can have only one meaning and the speaker who used the words knew what meaning would be attached to them. It is sheer hypocrisy to talk of 'non-violence' while calling for thousands of Bhagat Singhs and speaking of the 'firing line' on the very day that a murdered official, shot down from behind while endeavouring to further education, is being carried to his grave.

"Nor is that all. This very conference at Amritsar, blessed by Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose and Pandit Malaviya, insists on including in a resolution appreciating the sacrifices of Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and Rajguru, the name of Sajjan Singh, the murderer of Mrs. Curtis. It should not be necessary, but apparently it is desirable to recall the exploit of this

national hero. He attacked with a sword a defenceless woman resting in her garden, nearly severed her arms and finally struck her on the head. Not satisfied with this he attacked two little girls who were playing in the garden and wounded them both. The whole business was a piece of cold-blooded savagery with no purpose whatever, and it is that act which the Sikh League insists on celebrating by an enormous majority.

"The story would be unbelievable were it not actually true. . . . If speeches of this kind are to be tolerated, if resolutions exalting the murder of women and children are to be publicly passed with acclamation and nothing is to be done, there is an end of Government, and we had better admit the fact.

" Officers of Government going quietly and earnestly about the most peaceful and helpful of duties as was Mr. Peddie can be murdered one by one. . . . Here was a man shot down in the midst of a crowd when there were many people who must have recognised the murderer or murderers and yet no one will give the necessary evidence of their identity. Law can only function when the people are behind it, and when prominent men preach from the platform the beauty and holiness of murder, public opinion becomes wholly perverted and no man's life is safe."

The Statesman, 11th April, 1931

On July 8th 1931, the Calcutta Corporation adjourned after recording " its sense of grief at the execution of Dinesh Chandra Gupta who sacrificed his life in the pursuit of his ideals." *

On the 16th September, speaking at the reception given to him at the Friends Meeting House on his arrival in London, Mr. Gandhi, after enlarging on the non-violent aims of the Congress admitted that there was a violent section which

* This Resolution was a tribute to the murderer of Colonel N. S. Simpson.

embarrassed the aims of the Congress, but agreed that "there is a common cause between them and ourselves. They are burning for the freedom to which India is entitled."

It is ludicrous to refer to these youthful assassins as "burning for the freedom of India." If they burn for anything it is notoriety. Hindus will risk much for that. In practically every instance they are youths devoid of mental balance, merely the instruments of the instigators, the real assassins, who prefer not to risk their own skins in executing their vile work.

The truth of the matter is that the Irwin-Gandhi so-called "Peace Pact" has been regarded by Congress merely as a truce. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Mr. Gandhi's principal lieutenant, in fact many regard him as Mr. Gandhi's master, speaking in Madras in June, said:—

"We are on the eve of a big thing and must see it through. It will be dangerous work and have risks, but we have qualities of grit and endurance, comparable to those of the bull-dog—we feel that we have something in us which will knock down the mighty British Empire. We don't care what happens in Conferences, the fundamental question is always one of strength and the power behind you."

And, speaking in Bombay on the 7th June, 1931, he said:—

"If ever we have to fight the Government again the fight will be more grim than the previous one. From the trend of present day events I am not sure when the 'truce' will be broken off, but if that happens we must be prepared for emergencies."

The leaders of the European group in the Bengal Legislative Assembly in a cable to the leaders of the three English political parties

stated "the declared policy of certain Congress leaders is to force the Round Table Conference to agree to secession from the Empire under threat of terrorism."

On the 7th August 1931 *The Statesman* commenting on the resolution deploring violence passed by the Congress Committee in Bombay writes—

"It is an insult to the country's intelligence for Congress, which since the Cawnpore massacre has been dripping with blood, to come forward with an equivocal and insincere 'breach of etiquette' resolution which talks of 'provocation' being given * for such deeds.' Congress hopes the storm will blow over and then the game can begin again. For six months Congress has shown every day and in every way that it interprets the friendly advances which resulted from the Round Table Conference as due to fear of itself."

This is the Congress response to Lord Irwin's conciliatory gestures which Congress supporters now openly attribute to fear, and proclaim that they have only to pursue with redoubled vigour the campaign of Civil Disobedience, which invariably leads to violence, to obtain their goal of independence. Had an invertebrate Government paid heed to the following prophetic warning written by Sir Bampfylde Fuller in 1910—the present dangerous situation could never have developed:—

"A policy of concession, of compromise is exceedingly dangerous. We must do justice, but because it is justice and not because we are afraid of the consequences. The idea of give and take ... is foreign to Indian notions of government. It does not conciliate our opponents, it merely strengthens their hold on the imagination of the people."

CHAPTER X.

CONGRESS CLAIMS REPARATIONS FROM BRITAIN AND THE RIGHT TO FORFEIT VESTED INTERESTS.

The Indian National Congress appointed what they describe as the Financial Obligations Committee to examine India's finances since the middle of the last Century and determine the obligations of the two countries to each other. This Committee recently submitted its Report to the working committee of the Congress and the net result is that Mr. Gandhi is instructed to submit to the Round Table Conference a bill exceeding one thousand millions sterling, based on the most fantastic claims for restitution by Britain to India, inter alia including the cost of the Mutiny.

In his Journal *Young India*, Mr. Gandhi referring to this subject wrote:—

" Congress will seriously follow the matter to the end. If any holders of bonds or securities lose, It will not be because of repudiation of India but by Britain."

That this ridiculous bill of claims is regarded as supplying a weapon for bargaining is evidenced by the reply of Sir Phiroze Sethna (one of the Indian Liberal leaders and a Parsee delegate to

the Hound Table Conference) who, **when asked** his opinion on the bill of claims, said:—

" Financial obligations between Great Britain **in i** India could not be treated lightly—but would **have to** be given the most careful consideration."

A fitting reply to these absurd claims **was** made by Lord Irwin who, when speaking at Harrogate on the 20th July 1981, said:—

" No one who reads history fairly would deny that the British have been the means of bringing immense benefits to the people of what, when we went there, was an oppressed and distracted continent. We have established order where chaos ruled; we have brought justice within the reach of the humblest of India's citizens, and we have given to India a new conception of political unity. No praise, therefore, is too high for some of the best men of our race who have given their lives to this service and created the India that we now know; and I think that if it was ever seriously suggested to strike an historical cash balance between the two countries, Great Britain's account would on such heads as these be found to stand in overwhelming credit."

On January 25th 1929, Mr. Gandhi in reply to a specific enquiry as to whether in any Constitution he could endorse he would guarantee an equality of status in commerce between British and Indians wrote:—

¹⁴ There are many privileges enjoyed by those who belong to the ruling race which have not been legitimately earned. If, therefore, I had my way I should most decidedly examine every such privilege and those which are discovered not to have been legitimately obtained should be taken away."

As recently as November 19th 1931, Mr. Gandhi, addressing the Federal Structure Committee of the Round Table Conference, declared

that under a National Government in India, Capitalists both British and Indian "no matter what interests are concerned . . . will be dispossessed I may tell you without any compensation"; so that free grants may be made to the downtrodden.

No sane person can doubt that should the British Government surrender its Imperial control in India, British rights and concessions acquired at a cost of hundreds of millions of pounds would be obliterated as completely as similar rights have been obliterated in Soviet Russia.

It goes without saying that one of the first acts of an India independent of Imperial control, would be to repudiate in toto, all liability for the pensions of the retired British Members of the I.C.S. and Indian Army and their dependants.

On the 30th March 1930, the number of retired members of the Indian Civil Services drawing pensions was 3,253, and of the Indian Army—Officers, 2,614; Warrant Officers, 985; Medical Officers, 558; Royal Indian Marines, 148; Widows and Orphans, 6,181. Total, 13,639.

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PART II

CHAPTER XI.

MAHATMA GANDHI'S EARLY LIFE.

In this and the succeeding chapters I analyse certain of Mr. Gandhi's own writings and utterances with the object of enabling my readers to judge for themselves how flimsy were his pretexts for inaugurating his policy of Satyagraha (passive resistance) and his campaigns of Civil Disobedience.

I have studied carefully Mr. Gandhi's recent autobiography entitled *Mahatma Gandhi—His Own Story* (George Allen & Unwin, Ltd.). This volume is an abbreviated version of Mr. Gandhi's own writings edited by his missionary friend, the Rev. C. F. Andrews, who appears literally to ooze affection for any traducer of his own country and who in his preface says:—

" In the American edition of this book I have had the great privilege of an introduction to the American public by Dr. John Haynes Holmes, of the Community Church, New York, who had already published the Autobiography serially in " Unity." It was decided between us, with Mahatma Gandhi's full approval, that I should take up this second volume after I had completed the former book interpreting his ideas. In both these tasks I have had the affectionate sympathy of John Haynes

Holmes, who shares my own thoughts concerning Mahatma Gandhi. It has been a joy to me to claim his friendship in a common cause."

The Rev. John Haynes Holmes is the egregious individual who wrote of India:—

" I dream of her, I fervently pray for her, that **she** may no longer be in bondage to strangers. . . . With the stroke of midnight on December 31st, 1929, things in India began to happen—and have **been** happening ever since—the All-India Congress . . . **formally** declared the independence of India and **raised to** the breezes of Southern Asia the **Indian** National flag. Gandhi, the sainted leader of **the** people, pledged himself for the first time to *Swaraj' interpreted flatly in terms of national independence, and agreed to lead in person the 'non-violent' revolt in India against the British Raj."

Of the Simon Report he wrote—

" This report came still-born from the Press, It appeared beneath the engulfing flood of Indian ridicule and contempt, and will not be heard of again. Meanwhile Britain keeps law and order **through** ordinance and the lathi."

For sheer effrontery these dicta of **the** reverend gentleman would be hard to beat.

His Own Story discloses that long before Mr. Gandhi had reached an age when he could have been capable of understanding the British-Indian relationship, or forming a judgment thereon, he must have been heavily inoculated with anti-British virus, the venomous effect of which throughout his life has been cumulative.

He writes that at the age of 13, while he was at school, a wave of " reform " was sweeping over Rajkot, and he came under the influence of a school friend who said to him:

" We are a weak people because we do not eat meat. The English are able to rule over us because they are meat-eaters."

" A doggerel of Narmad's was in vogue amongst us schoolboys as follows:—

" Behold the mighty Englishman;
He rules the Indian small,
Because, being a meat-eater.
He is five cubits tall.

" All this had its due effect upon me. . . . It began to grow on me that meat-eating was good, that it would make me strong and daring. That if the whole country took to it, the English could be overcome. . . ."

" The ancient Hindu writers classified mankind under four varnas or ' orders,' with reference to their occupations, namely: (1) the learned, literate, and priestly order, or Brahmans; (2) the fighting and governing classes, who were grouped together as Rajanyas or Kshatriyas, irrespective of race, meaning by that term ancestry; (3) the trading and agricultural people, or Vaisyas; and (4) common, humble folk, day labourers, and so forth, whose business it was to serve their betters." *Oxford History of India.*

The four classes above named have, in the course of centuries been divided into numerous sub-castes and outside the sub-divisions of these four main orders, come the Untouchable communities who have

" initiated the Hindu caste organisation and developed an elaborate system of castes of their own, which may be described by the paradoxical terra ' OUtcaste castes.' " *Oxford History of India.*

Mr. Gandhi is a member of the Bania Caste (retail traders) a sub-division of the Vaisyas.

The Vaisyas like the Jains are strict adherents to the Ahimsa doctrine (Le. respect of animal life) and orthodox members of this Caste have an abhorrence of meat-eating. Mr. Gandhi states that his parents were particularly staunch in their faith and that although at that time being only 13 years of age he had never heard the word "Swaraj" (self-government)—he knew what freedom meant and being blinded by "the frenzy of reform" he decided to become a meat-eater and conceal the fact from his parents.

Thus it is evident that from his earliest years Mr. Gandhi's overmastering passion has been to "defeat the English" in the mistaken belief that India thereby would be made free.

Obsessed with one idea—that "the existing Government and all it stands for is Satanic," and (as certain passages from his book which I quote later, clearly show) bent on its destruction, he has never hesitated in furtherance of his Civil Disobedience Campaign to manufacture grievances from the flimsiest material, completely indifferent to the consequences.

Speaking in Calcutta on this subject in December 1930 Lord Irwin said:—

"The fact that Civil Disobedience claims to rest on the harmless gospel of negation has not prevented its rapid development into a challenge to constituted Government and a grave menace to order. Those who have summoned from the deep this spirit of law-breaking in support of a so-called non-violent movement, do not escape responsibility when their gospel leads ill-balanced minds to resort to the methods of violent terrorism of which you have had experience."

"Mahatma" means "Great Soul." I am unaware who bestowed this title on Mr. Gandhi

but as he has assumed it he obviously considers it appropriate. His more extravagant admirers, **not** satisfied with describing him merely as "Great Soul," claim for him parity with the Creator. Romain Holland designates him as "The **man** who became one with the Universal Being"; the Eev. C. F. Andrews as "A Saint and a Redeemer"; Rene Fulop Miller as "The Holy Man"; the Rev. J. H. Holmes as "Christ returned to Earth"; and so on *ad nauseam*. Therefore, it was with considerable interest that recently I studied the pages of *Mahatma Gandhi—His Own Story*, thinking possibly they might disclose the reasons that prompt his worshippers thus to deify him. In this expectation I was disappointed, as a careful study of the Mahatma's own version of his life left on me the impression that by no stretch of the imagination can his writings and sayings be regarded as the message of one inspired, and that he has yet a long way to travel before he can be described as "The man who became one with the Universal Being."

The Mahatma's account of his school days does not err on the side of modesty, portraying as it does a youthful Gandhi, hyper-sensitively conscientious—in fact so unctuously good that the average schoolboy would regard him as insufferable. He writes:—

"I do not remember having ever told a lie during this short period of my life. . . .

"Books and lessons were my sole companions. It was my daily habit to be in school at the stroke of the hour and to run back home as soon as the school was over. . . . I was by nature blind to the tauts of elders. . . . As a rule I had a distaste for **any** reading that went beyond my school books. The daily lesson had to be done, because I disliked being

taken to task by my teacher as much as I disliked deceiving him . . . but always enjoyed the affection of my teachers. Certificates of progress and character used to be sent to our parents every year and mine were always good.

"I very jealously regarded my character. The least little blemish drew tears from my eyes. When I merited (or seemed to the teacher to merit) a rebuke, it was quite unbearable for me. Once I received corporal punishment. The punishment itself did not affect me so much as the fact that it was considered my desert. When it happened I wept piteously."

The gem of the above quotation is Mr. Gandhi's qualification "or seemed to the teacher to merit." Evidently he holds the view that while at school he was so immaculate that even in rebuking him his teachers erred.

After this certificate of his own to the perfection of his character as a schoolboy and his love of truth, it is almost refreshing to read his admission of certain lapses during his school-days, and to find that for a brief period he became normal and like the majority of small boys succumbed to the temptation to flirt with "My Lady Nicotine."

He recounts how he and his friend having no money, pilfered stumps of cigarettes which had been thrown away by his uncle but finding these were not always available they "began to steal coppers from the servants pocket money in order to purchase Indian cigarettes" and smoked in secret but he now considers smoking to be "barbarous, dirty and harmful." He also relates how later he stole a bit of gold from his meat-eating brother's armlet and in another passage writes of himself at this period:—

" One thing took deep root in me . . . the conviction that morality is the basis of all things, and that Truth is the substance of all morality. Truth now became my sole objective. Truth began to grow in magnitude every day—since then my definition of Truth has ever been widening. . . . ' Return good for evil ' became my guiding principle—it became such a passion with me that I began numerous experiments in it."

I have only referred to the above trivial incidents because Mr. Gandhi's version of them indicates that even in such minor matters he is the victim of " chaos of thought," for his claim that during this period he so loved truth that he never told a lie, and that " the least little blemish in his character drew tears from his eyes," seems somewhat incompatible with surreptitious smoking and the blemish of stealing.

I do not propose to quote from Mr. Gandhi* somewhat unnecessary dilation on the carnal desires of his youth and early manhood. Presumably his object in referring to the subject was to prove to the world that by "the abandonment of the married life for one of entire abstinence " he now has almost attained to " perfect purity."

Mr. Gandhi early imbibed his strong antipathy to the Christian religion. In his autobiography (page 53) he writes:—

" Many things combined to inculcate in me a toleration for all faiths. Only Christianity was at that time an exception. I developed a sort of dislike for it. . . . Those days Christian missionaries used to hold forth pouring abuse on Hindus and their Gods. I c/mld not stomach this. About the same time I heard of a well-known Hindu having been converted to Christianity. It was the talk of the town that

when he was baptised he had to eat beef, and drink liquor; that he also had to change his clothes and that henceforth he began to go about in European costume including a hat—these things got on my nerves. Surely thought I a religion that compelled me to eat beef, drink liquor and change one's clothes did not deserve that name. . . . All these things created in me a dislike for Christianity."

I am glad that the Rev. C. F. Andrews, the editor of Mr. Gandhi's memoirs, had the decency to publish the following foot-note on the above fantastic story.

"This passage in the autobiography was challenged by Mr. Scott, the Missionary, who was living at Rajkot 40 years ago. Mahatma Gandhi accepted Mr. Scott's repudiation and pointed out that he had simply stated what he as a young boy had heard."

This being so, why repeat the fable in this recent autobiography?

The Rev. C. F. Andrews explains in his Preface that these memoirs were dictated by Mr. Gandhi in his own mother-tongue to one of his fellow prisoners during the years 1922-24, and were published in serial form in India and America: they have been published since in book form. It would be interesting to know whether in these publications Mr. Gandhi has taken the trouble to correct this gross misrepresentation.

LIFE IN LONDON.

When 18 years of age Mr. Gandhi came to England and read for the Bar. In his description of his experiences in England it is difficult to detect indications of advance towards perfection such as one would expect in a man for whom

it is now claimed that he has " become one with the Universal Being."

Some of the incidents he records appear rather trivial for a budding " Mahatma." He writes:—

" England I could not bear, but to return to **India** was not to be thought of. Now that I had come I must finish the three years, said the inner voice. . . . Daily I would pray for God's protection, and get it."

He describes in considerable detail the care he bestowed at this time on his personal appearance, obtaining clothes " suitable for English society " from the Army and Navy Stores, an evening dress suit made in Bond Street and a double watch chain of gold which he persuaded his brother to send him. He relates that he wasted ten minutes every day before a mirror arranging his tie and parting his hair in the correct fashion. Being desirous of attaining the accomplishments that he assumed " go toward the making of an English gentleman," he took lessons in dancing, French and elocution. He states that " this infatuation lasted about three months " but " the punctiliousness in dress persisted for years " adding—

" Let no one imagine that my experiments in dancing and the like marked a stage of self-indulgence in my life. Even then I had my wits about me, and this period of infatuation was not unrelieved by a certain amount of introspection on my part. I kept account of every farthing I spent. . . .

"Forty years ago there were comparatively few Indian students in England. It was a practice with them to affect the bachelor, even though they might be married. . . . I, too, caught the contagion, and did not? hesitate to pass myself off as a bachelor, though I was married and the father of a son. But I was none the happier for being a dissembler."

Mr. Gandhi's admission that he "dissembled" is rather difficult to reconcile with his statement, that at this time, he was "daily praying for God's protection and getting it," and would appear to indicate some backsliding from the degree of perfection he had attained while still at school, when he never told a lie and "so jealously regarded his character" that "the least little blemish drew tears from his eyes."

CHAPTER XII.

INDIA AND SOUTH AFRICA.

After spending three years in England, Mr. Gandhi returned to India. On Page 87 of *Mahatma Gandhi—His Own Story*, he writes:—

"After becoming disappointed about getting practice in Bombay I left that city and went back to Rajkot, where I set up my own office. . . ."

He states that while in Rajkot he got the first shock of his life. His brother who was under a charge of having given wrong advice to the late Rana of Porbandar, urged Mr. Gandhi to intervene on his behalf with the Political Agent whom Mr. Gandhi had met when in England. Mr. Gandhi admits that he had no right on this account, to attempt to influence the Agent, feut nevertheless secured an appointment and on reminding the Agent of their previous acquaintance, was aggrieved when the Agent replied that he presumed he had not come there to abuse that acquaintance. Mr. Gandhi persisted in submitting his case until he provoked the reply—

"Your brother is an intriguer. I want to hear nothing more from you. I have no time. If your brother has anything to say let him apply through the proper channel."

#While Mr. Gandhi admits that this answer was perhaps deserved he still persisted in addressing the Agent, who losing patience told him he must

go, but as Mr. Gandhi ignored this request the Agent asked a servant to show him the door. The servant, on entering, finding that Mr. Gandhi still hesitated to leave, placed his hand on his shoulder and put him out of the room.

Mr. Gandhi immediately wrote to the Agent whom he accused of having insulted him, and—through his servant—assaulted him threatening proceedings unless the Agent would make amends. He writes:—

"Quick came his answer through his orderly. 'You were rude to me. I asked you to go out **and** you would not. I had no option but to order my servant to show you the door.' Even after he asked you to leave the office you did not do so. He therefore had to use enough force to put you out. **You** are at liberty to proceed as you wish."

Mr. Gandhi referred his grievance to Sir Phirozeshah Mehta who happened to be in Rajkot, who advised him that he would gain nothing by legal action. He writes:—

"The advice was as bitter poison to me, but I **had** to swallow it. I pocketed the insult, but also profited by it. 'Never again,' said I to myself, 'shall I place myself in such a false position; never again shall I try to exploit friendship in this way.' This shock changed the whole course of my life. **No doubt** I was at fault in going to the Political Agent. . . . He simply could not endure my talking. He could have politely asked me to go, but power **had** intoxicated him.

"Meanwhile I began to learn something of **the** petty politics of the country. Conspiracies of officers for power were the order of the day. Such **an** atmosphere appeared to me to be poisonous."

At this time Mr. Gandhi had some work to do in Porbandar when he found the Administrator

with whom he had to deal " though an Indian to be even worse than the Sahib in arrogance. . . . In the end I became exasperated and wished to get away from the whole intriguing surroundings."

While Mr. Gandhi was in this irascible frame of mind, an opening came for him to visit South Africa. He writes that he " wanted to leave India " so accepted the " tempting opportunity of seeing a new country and having new experience." On arrival in Durban he was met by his employer Abdullah Sheth and remarks that on landing he was the object of some curiosity, as wearing a frock coat and small turban, his dress marked him out from other Indians.

A few days later he was taken to the Durban Courts. He writes:—

" The magistrate kept staring at me, and finally asked me to take off my turban, which I refused to do, and left the Court. So here, too, there was fighting in store for me.

"I wrote to the Press about the incident. . . . The question was much discussed in the papers. . . . Thus the incident gave me an unexpected advertisement in South Africa within a few days of my arrival."

The passages I have quoted in this Chapter indicate that at this time when Mr. Gandhi was in the early twenties he was an impetuous and opinionated young man—and that even in those days he was hopelessly incapable of viewing a situation in its right perspective.

If his own version of his passage at arms with the Political Agent is accepted, the Agent's action obviously was justified and his attitude

throughout was correct in every respect. Mr. Gandhi's mission to the Political Agent was typical of the attempts that, in India, are constantly being made to "influence" officials. Happily, for the Indian community at large, the standard of honour in the Indian Civil Service is exceptionally high, yet the atmosphere of intrigue which for centuries has afflicted India is still so prevalent that the average Indian seeking some official favour almost invariably attempts to circumvent the "proper channel" for pursuing his application.

Mr. Gandhi admits that he knew he had no right to approach the Agent and that the Agent's answer was perhaps deserved; yet he threatens proceedings, but ultimately decides to "pocket the insult," coming to the wise decision that never again would he try and exploit friendship. Mr. Gandhi proceeds to state that "this shock changed the whole course of my life." If this be true, it must be the record instance of utter lack of any sense of proportion. Presumably this trivial incident, in which Mr. Gandhi admits he was at fault, finally launched him on his anti-British career. It is some satisfaction to find that he subsequently encountered an Administrative Officer who, though an Indian, was "even worse than the Sahib in arrogance" and that in Kathiawar — Mr. Gandhi's own country.

"Petty intrigues between States and conspiracies of officials (all Indians) for power were the order of the day. The Princes were at the mercy of sycophants and the atmosphere (a wholly Indian atmosphere) was poisonous."

His account of his arrival in Durban and "the turban incident" is instructive; he appears to have been an aggressive youth looking for trouble and delighted to find it.

"So here too there was fighting for me. . . . I wrote to the Press,"

and he is obviously gratified that the incident gave him an "unexpected advertisement."

This latter sentence is the key to Mr. Gandhi's subsequent career. Throughout the pages of his autobiography—beneath a veil of pious humility—there is clearly discernible a keen sense for dramatic effect. Even his admissions of certain frailties are so recounted as to throw into relief the stoicism with which—in his pursuit of perfection—he claims to have triumphed over them.

In 1896 Mr. Gandhi returned to India for a few months. While in Pretoria prior to his return, he writes of himself—

"I found myself all the while in search of God and striving for self-realisation."—(Page 123.)

On his arrival in India Mr. Gandhi set in motion an agitation on the condition of Indians in South Africa. He wrote a pamphlet on the subject, several thousand copies of which were distributed throughout the country. He enlisted press support, interviewed Indian political leaders and delivered speeches in Bombay, Poona and Madras. While in Calcutta he was recalled by cable to South Africa, but by that time—

"The agitation in India had reached enough importance as news for the principal Indian newspapers to notice it in their columns, and for Reuter to send cablegrams about it to England."

Mr. Gandhi returned to Natal in the S.S. "Courland" carrying: about 4(H) **Indian** passengers—another steamer carrying an equal number arriving at the same time. The Europeans of Natal already incensed by cabled summaries of Mr. Gandhi's speeches in India, which he states were distorted—assumed that he was bringing these 800 passengers to Natal as a first step to flooding Natal with free Indians. Accordingly they passed a resolution advocating that these passengers should be prevented from landing—the bubonic plague having broken out in India—the steamers were held in quarantine for 21 days. Meanwhile Mr. Escombe, a Member of the Natal Government, pacified the Europeans and persuaded them not to interfere with the landing of the passengers. He sent word to Mr. Gandhi, however, that while his family might land at any time, he advised him to defer landing until the evening, when he would send the Police Superintendent to escort him home, but Mr. Laughton a friend of Mr. Gandhi's persuaded him to disregard Mr. Escombe's advice. Accordingly Mr. Gandhi disembarked and accompanied by Mr. Laughton proceeded on his journey. Soon he was recognised and surrounded by an "enormous" hostile gathering.

" The crowd began to abuse me and showered upon me stones and whatever else they could lay their hands on. . . . I was about to fall unconscious when I held on to the railings of a house nearby. For a while I took breath and when the fainting was over proceeded on my way. At that time I had almost given up any hope of reaching home alite, but I remember well, that even then iny heart did not arraign my assailants.

" **While** I was thus slowly wending my way, the wife of the Superintendent of Police at Durban, Mrs. Alexander, was coming from the opposite direction. We knew each other well. She was a brave lady . . . she opened her sunshade for my protection and began to walk by my side. . . . The injuries, therefore, which I received after she joined me, were not serious. . . .

. . . " I reached Rustomji's house without further trouble. . . . The Medical Officer of the ' Courland/ who was present, began to examine my wounds; there were not many of them, one blind wound in particular was very painful. . . .

. . . " All this appeared in the newspapers the next day. Sensible people among the Europeans admitted their mistake. . . . This enhanced my reputation as well as the prestige of the Indian community. . . . Whenever I think of that day I feel that God was preparing me for the practice of Satyagraha."

News of this episode was cabled to England and at the request of Mr. Chamberlain, who at that time was Secretary of State for the Colonies—the Natal Government offered to prosecute Mr. Gandhi's assailants if he could identify them—but he replied:—

" I might perhaps be able to identify one or two of them, but had already made up my mind not to prosecute anyone/ What information they had, they had obtained from their leaders, and it was too much to expect a crowd to judge whether it was correct or otherwise. If all that they heard about me was true it was natural for them to be excited **and** do something wrong in a fit of indignation. Excited crowds had always tried to deal out justice In that manner."

I have quoted at some length from Mr. Gandhi's vivid account of his perilous experiences because—

- (1) Mr. Gandhi admits that the Natal Europeans were Incensed—*prima facie*— with some justification at a distorted summary of his speeches against them in India.
- (2) That having been stoned and kicked until about to fall unconscious—having fainted and almost given up any hope of reaching home alive—he was fortunate when slowly wending his way home to meet the kind lady who under the shelter of her sunshade protected him from the frenzied mob so that his additional "injuries were not serious."
- (3) That considering the prolonged and murderous attack on him, as described by himself, he was singularly fortunate to find when his wounds were examined, that "there were not many of them," and apparently that only "one blind wound in particular was very painful."
- (4) It is noteworthy that the modest Mr. Gandhi once again secured a good Press and obviously was highly gratified at the "enhancement of his reputation."
- (5) In the paragraph I quote last, Mr. Gandhi makes a remarkable admission. Paraphrased it reads thus—

"It is too much to expect a crowd to judge whether information obtained from its leaders is correct or otherwise. If false and inflammatory news be circulated it is natural for a crowd to become excited and commit excesses."

Had Mr. Gandhi allowed his realisation of this vitally important fact to control his conduct in India, there would have been saved thousands of lives, infinite misery and untold financial loss.

In Chapter IX. of *India on the Brink* I quoted extracts from the Indian National Congress Bulletins, **and** referring to these I wrote:—

"Thousands of these cyclostyled sheets have been published, or should I say 'fabricated' daily, from the day Mr. Gandhi commenced his Civil Disobedience Campaign. The lies they contain are so vile and outrageous, that, if read only by intelligent people, they would defeat the end of their inventors, but their object is deliberate and obvious, **viz.**, to arouse by any means the passions of the people to the pitch of revolution. Unfortunately they circulate among masses of illiterate folk who, having no other source of information, believe them to be true."

I am unaware that Mr. Gandhi has ever condemned these publications.

CHAPTER X i n .

THE BOER WAR.

Certain claims in respect of Mr. Gandhi's services during the Boer War were dealt with in correspondence which appeared in the *Morning Post* in August last, from which I quote below.

On the outbreak of the war, Indians in South Africa, deliberated as to whether they should offer assistance to the British. Mr. Gandhi states that " One of the charges levelled against the Indians was that they went to South Africa only to fatten themselves." A powerful section urged that—

" The British oppress us just as much as the Boers do. If we are subjected to hardships in the Transvaal we are not very much better off in Natal or the Cape Colony. . . . A small nation like the Boers is fighting for its very existence. Why should we be instrumental in their destruction? Finally, from a practical point of view, no one will take it upon himself to predict a defeat for the Boers. . . ."

Mr. Gandhi however contended that although " it must largely be conceded that justice is on the side of the Boers" their duty as British subjects was—

" not to enter into the merits of the war . . . jbut . . . to render such assistance as we can. . . . we came to the conclusion that if we had the will God would grant us the ability to serve."

Mr. Gandhi's view prevailed and an Indian Ambulance Corps 1,100 strong was trained by Dr. Booth who became its Medical Superintendent. The leaders having obtained certificates of medical fitness, offered their services to the Government stipulating that they should not work within the firing line. Later, when an emergency arose, they voluntarily waived this stipulation, and Mr. Gandhi writes:—

"We were only too willing to enter the danger zone. . . . We therefore welcomed this opportunity but none of us received a bullet wound or any other injury."

While in no way wishing to belittle the value of the service Mr. Gandhi and the Indian Ambulance Corps rendered at this time, it is interesting to note in his account above quoted, a reluctant admission that Indians in South Africa were a little better off under the British than under the Boers; also, despite the fact that in aiding the British they would be "instrumental in destroying a small nation fighting for its very existence," he considered that it was the clear duty of Indians, as subjects owing allegiance to Great Britain, "not to enter into the merits of the war, but to render such assistance as we can."

Had Mr. Gandhi adhered to the principles he professed at this time, India to-day, with the loyal co-operation of all communities, would have been well advanced on the road to self-government and not, as it is, a land honeycombed with sedition and riven with communal strife.

In a glowing tribute to Mr. Gandhi at St. Edmund's Church, Lombard Street, E.C. on the 10th June 1931, the Rev. C. F. Andrews, said:—

"He (Mr. Gandhi) was asked to go into the thick

of the rifle fire to rescue the wounded and he immediately did so, winning the admiration of the British troops who saw his heroism. At the battle of Colenso he helped to carry the only son of Lord Roberts, who was mortally wounded, from the battlefield to Chieveley Camp, a distance of many miles."

Major-General Sir T. J. Gallwey, K.C.M.G. commented on the above statement as follows:—

"I was present at Colenso and so I ought to know. I do not know anything about Mr. Andrews and I do not know what claim he has to speak about Gandhi, but I am perfectly prepared to meet him and to question him as to the sources of his information. Gandhi came to see me on December 9th and said that he could collect 2,000 indentured coolies to act as stretcher bearers. I accepted his offer; but he made the definite stipulation that he and his men should work only along the lines of communication and not under fire. He would not have had time to organise his coolies by December 15th when the battle took place.

"I was principal Medical Officer at the time and I distinctly remember that at Colenso the stretcher bearers were Europeans working under British officers. It is of course just possible that some coolies may have come up at the end of the engagement to have a look round but I do not think that they did. In any case they were not under fire for there was a kind of armistice while British and Boers collected their wounded.

"I repeat that Mr. Andrews' statement regarding Lieutenant Roberts is absolutely without foundation. Gandhi could not have come into contact with him. I was present and I put him into the train which took him to Chieveley. The only occasion when Gandhi and his coolies took an official part as stretcher bearers was at Spion Kop when they carried the wounded from Mount Alice to the rail head and then they were not under fire."

Colonel Brazier-Creagh, who was Staff Officer under Major-General Sir Thomas Gallwey, states:

"I was on the field under Sir Thomas Gallwey until the battle ceased. . . . I saw all the wounded evacuated. Every single casualty was carried away by British men under British officers and there is not a word of truth in any suggestion that Gandhi was present at that stage. At about two o'clock in the morning I returned to Chieveley, where was the nearest stationary hospital. . . . Captain Roberts was lying badly wounded and obviously near death but full of courage. . . . I helped to carry him 200 yards or so to the railway and put him into my ambulance train. He died soon afterwards and from two o'clock that morning until his death I had not left him for one moment. Therefore I can guarantee that Gandhi's men never assisted him in his last moments in spite of what has been said. I kept a full diary at the time and can vouch for the truth of everything that I have said. . . . To sum up—the nearest that I can place Gandhi to Colenso is at three miles distance. At Spion Kop he can have encountered no more in the way of 'firing' than stray bullets."

Replying to the statements of Sir Thomas Gallwey and Colonel Brazier-Creagh, the Rev. C. F. Andrews wrote to the *Morning Post*:—

"The Authorities I have consulted do not bear out Major-General Sir T. J. Gallwey's recollections of the Indian Ambulance Corps at Colenso and Spion Kop. They arrived by a forced march just in time to render invaluable assistance to the British wounded at Colenso, and among those carried back to Chieveley base hospital was Lord Robert's son. . . .

"Mr. Gandhi in 1927 relates the same story thus —'die action at Spion Kop found us within the firing line. We had the honour of carrying soldiers like General Woodgate' . . . the narrative is given

independently by Mr. Vere Stent, Editor of the *Pretoria News*. 'I saw/ he writes, 'the Indian mule train moyed up the slopes of the Kop carrying water to the distressed soldiers. The galling rifle fire did not deter them. As one Indian fell, another tuietly stepped forward to fill the vacant place. Afterwards the grim duty of the bearer corps, which Mr. Gandhi had organised, began. It was on such occasions the Indians proved their fortitude, and the one with the greatest fortitude was Mr. Gandhi.' "

Commenting on the Rev. C. F. Andrews' reply, Colonel F. S. Irving wrote to the *Morning Post*:

"I was at that time an officer of the 10th Brigade Field Ambulance. This was the most advanced Field Ambulance in the engagement and was located on the slopes at the foot of Spion Kop. I personally received General Woodgate on admission to the Field Ambulance to which he had been conveyed from the firing line by British soldiers and I had him under my care until he left the following day. The morning following his admission the Field Ambulance received orders to evacuate all sick and wounded immediately. . . . The Boers had allowed just two hours within which to get wounded away unmolested. It was during the period of cease fire that the Indian Ambulance Corps arrived . . . and thanks to their assistance all the wounded were despatched . . . in the stipulated time.

" General Woodgate was mortally wounded and was one of those sent back by bearer transport. There was neither rifle nor gun fire during the period the Indian Ambulance Corps was at the Field Ambulance and my recollection is that the column of bearers carrying stretchers as well as the horsed ambulance wagons got back safely over the pontoons without exposure to fire but nevertheless *the stretcher bearers performed a very exhausting and laborious task with great credit."

When asked which of the above versions was true Mr. Gandhi said:—

"The Indian Ambulance Corps, numbering over 1,100, reached Chieveley Camp near Colenso after dusk, just after the battle in which Lieutenant Roberts was killed. I received orders from Colonel Gallwey that the deceased Lieutenant's body had to be removed immediately. We had then hardly pitched our tents; but I sent seven men—not coolies—but educated men who returned late at night and I received special thanks from Colonel Gallwey for prompt attention to orders and I was next day invited through Dr. Booth to meet him in his tent.

"It is quite true that on this occasion there was no question of a firing line, hostilities having been suspended for the collection of the wounded. . . . After the reverse at Spion Kop . . . General Buller . . . said—he would be grateful if we would enter the firing zone in order to remove CO wounded from the foot of Spion Kop. My companions and I were delighted to have this privilege and led by Major Bapte we crossed the pontoons, entered the firing zone and removed the wounded including General Woodgate, Major Scott-Moncrieff and other officers and carried them on stretchers 25 miles. We were again within the firing zone at Vaal Krantz soou after Spion Kop."

On being shown Mr. Gandhi's reply, Colonel Brazier-Creagh said:—

"If Gandhi was at the foot of the hill, the only bullets which he can have encountered must have come right over the hill as the activity would be on the other side."

The quotations above given in connection with these incidents are instructive. It will be noted

t (1) That the Rev. C. F. Andrews stated specifically that Mr. Gandhi went into the thick of the rifle fire to rescue the wounded, winning

the admiration of the British troops who saw his heroism, and that he helped to carry from the battlefield Lieutenant Roberts who was mortally wounded; also that at Spion Kop Mr. Gandhi was within the firing line and carried General Woodgate when the latter was wounded.

(2) Mr. Gandhi admits that the Indian Ambulance Corps only reached Chieveley Camp after the battle, adding, "it is quite true that on this occasion there was no question of a firing line, hostilities having been suspended for the collection of the wounded." Thus, it is clear that Mr. Gandhi's own statement directly refutes the claim made for him by the Rev. C. F. Andrews.

(3) With regard to the claim made, that at Spion Kop Mr. Gandhi, while under fire, assisted in removing General Woodgate and other wounded, Colonel Irving specifically states that "there was neither rifle nor gun fire during the period the Indian Ambulance Corps was at the Field Ambulance."

(4) With reference to the claim repeated by Mr. Andrews that while moving up the slopes of the Kop "carrying water to the distressed soldiers the galling rifle fire did not deter them. As one Indian fell another quietly stepped forward to fill the vacant place," the most conclusive refutation of this claim is contained in Mr. Gandhi's recent Autobiography in which he writes of the experiences of the Indian Ambulance Corps in the Boer War:—"None of us received a bullet wound or any other injury." This being so, if,

at any time they were under the galling fire of perhaps the finest marksmen in the world, they must have been singularly fortunate.

It would appear that Mr. Gandhi's ardent disciple, the Rev. C. F. Andrews, in his anxiety to magnify the Mahatma, has not hesitated to credit him with deeds of heroism performed under a galling fire which, on investigation, are proved to be purely apocryphal.

Over a century ago Abbe Dubois, the great French missionary, wrote of the history of the wars of the ancient Kings of India—

"Hindu authors carry exaggeration even to puerility. . . . Facts are so interwoven with foolish, senseless efforts of the imagination, that it is impossible to disentangle the truth . . . only that which is extraordinary and extravagant has the power of pleasing the Hindu. . . . The maxim * *Rien n'est beau que le vral, le vrai seul est aimable*'—would be rank heresy in good Hindu literature."

It must grieve the Mahatma—whose "sole objective " is truth—to find his disciple emulating these imaginative methods.

CHAPTER XIV.

MR. GANDHI FOUNDS THE PHOENIX SETTLEMENT—ZULU REBELLION— ORIGIN OF THE WORD " SATYAGRAHA " —TOLSTOY FARM.

After the Boer War Mr. Gandhi resided in Johannesburg where he states that his " legal practice continued to increase " until he was at his " wits end " to cope with it.

In 1904 he launched his Journal *Indian Opinion* he writes:—

" Week after week I poured out my soul in Its columns."

It was in 1904 that he purchased for £1,000 an estate near Durban of 100 acres and formed the Phoenix Settlement "on which everyone should labour drawing the same living wage."

Mr. Gandhi stated that he;

" Tried to draw to Phoenix those relations and friends who had come with me from India to try their fortune, and were engaged in some business or other. They had come in search of wealth and it was a difficult job to persuade them but some agreed. Of these I can only single out Maganlal Gandhi's name. The others went back to business."

This passage is worth noting as in 1896 Mr. Gandhi visited India to conduct an agitation against the harsh treatment of Indian settlers in South Africa, both by the Boers and the British.

Were this treatment as intolerable as he described, it is strange that on his return to South Africa he should have brought with him "relations and friends" prepared in this hostile environment "to try their fortune in search of wealth." He, at any rate, I presume will admit that they and, indeed, all Indians in South Africa went there of their own free will.

ZULU REBELLION.

In 1904 the Natal Government sent a punitive expedition against Natal Zulus—as "a Zulu Chief had advised non-payment of a new tax and had assegaied a sergeant who had gone to collect the tax."

Mr. Gandhi states that he "had grave doubts about the 'rebellion' itself" and adds "whatever may be the case my heart was with the Zulus." Nevertheless he volunteered to raise an Indian Ambulance Corps and collected "a party of twenty-four" and was given the temporary rank of Sergeant-Major. He writes:—

"I was greatly delighted on reaching headquarter to be told that our main work was to nurse the wounded Zulus. . . . The white soldiers at first would peep through the railings that separated us from them and try to dissuade us from attending the wounds. As we would not heed them they would be enraged and pour abuse on the Zulus . . . wherever we went I am thankful that we had God's good work to do."

I fear when penning the above lines that Mr. Gandhi's vision of his "sole objective" must temporarily have become obscured—for I am convinced that in this anecdote, there is precisely the

same amount of Truth as in the epic of his "heroism" under a "galling fire" in the Boer War.

ORIGIN OF THE WORD " SATYAGRAHA."

The word " Satyagraha" was coined in the following manner. Mr. Gandhi writes:—

"I could not for the life of me find a new name (for passive resistance) and therefore offered a nominal prize through *Indian Opinion* to the reader who made the best suggestion. . . . Manganlai Gandhi coined the word ' Sadagraha' (SAT—truth AGRAHA—firmness) and won the prize. But in order to make it clear I changed the word to ' Satyagraha ' which has since been current in Gujarati as a designation for the struggle. The history of the Satyagraha struggle is for all practical purposes a history of my life in South Africa and especially of my experiments with Truth, in that sub-continent."

TOLSTOY FARM.

Mr. Gandhi undertook to train the boys at Tolstoy Farm, Johannesburg, a settlement similar to Phoenix Settlement in Natal. He writes:—

"I saw that I must be an eternal object lesson for the boys and girls living with me."

On one occasion an unruly boy roused Gandhi's anger to such an extent that he struck him with a ruler. The culprit wept, not from the pain of the blow for, as Mr. Gandhi says, being a stout fellow of seventeen " he could—have paid me back in the same coin "—but because he realized the pain he had caused me in driving me "to this violent resource." Even to this day Mr. Gandhi is worried as to whether he was " right in using

the ruler " as " it **was** prompted by **anger**. **Had** it **been an** expression only of distress " **he** would "**have** considered it justified."

" Once when I was in Johannesburg I received the tidings of the moral fall of two of the inmates of the Ashram . . . this news came to me like a thunderbolt . . . I felt that the parties to the guilt could be made to realize my distress and the depth of their fall, only if I did some penance for it. So I imposed on myself a fast for seven days and a vow of having only one meal for a period of four months **and a half**.

" . . . I did not know the technique of fasting, **especially** the necessity of drinking plenty of water."

CHAPTER XV.

A DOMESTIC DIFFERENCE— BRAHMACHARYA.

Mr. Gandhi narrates with doubtful taste, but with admirable candour against himself, details of a quarrel he had with his wife in 1898 while they were living in South Africa, when he forcibly ejected the weeping woman from his house. While expressing contrition for this act, he writes that:—

"The incident in question occurred in 1898, when I had no conception of Brahmacharya (celibacy).

"Let no one conclude from this narrative of a sacred recollection that we are by any means an ideal couple, or that there is a complete identity of ideals between us. Mrs. Gandhi herself does not perhaps know whether she has any ideals independently of me. It is likely that many of my doings have not her approval even to-day. We never discuss them; I see no good in discussing them. . . . But she is blessed with one great quality. And it is this: Willingly or unwillingly, consciously or unconsciously, she has considered herself blessed in following my footsteps."

I only mention this incident, because, as it occurred when he was twenty-nine years of age and had been married for sixteen years, it would appear *prima facie* rather to discount certain claims he makes for himself in earlier chapters of his autobiography; e.g., that even

when still at school he "so jealously regarded his character that the least little blemish drew tears from his eyes, that the precept—"return good for evil"—had become his guiding principle—that even when he was in London eleven years before this incident, he was "daily praying for God's protection and getting it," that when in South Africa three years prior to the incident, he found himself "all the while in search of God and striving for self-realisation" and felt "that God was preparing him for the practice of Satyagraha" (his name for "passive resistance").

From the last portion of the passage above quoted, one cannot escape the impression that even to-day the Mahatma's attitude to his wife is one of supreme condescension.

Mr. Gandhi, six years after the incident above quoted and after twenty-two years of married life took a vow to observe Brahmacharya (strict continence) and details at some length the difficulties he personally had to surmount in keeping this vow and in disregarding his wife's protestations.

Surely the Mahatma would have been well advised and would have displayed more respect and consideration for his wife, had he refrained from broad-casting to the world, details of intimacies that concern them only, which even he describes as sacred recollections.

CHAPTER XVI

SATYAGRAHA IN NATAL.

In the early years of this century indentured Indian labourers in South Africa were subject to a poll tax of three pounds per head on the termination of their contracts.

Mr. Gokhale, an Indian political leader, came to South Africa to negotiate with the Union Government for the removal of this objectionable impost. He interviewed General Smuts, the Premier, and returned to India under the impression that the Union Government would secure the repeal of the tax within one year. The necessary legislation was delayed owing to objections raised by the Natal Europeans.

The obvious remedy for this unfortunate situation, was to call on the Government of India, who were entirely in sympathy with the grievances of their Indian subjects in South Africa, to exercise pressure through the British Government on the Government of South Africa to repeal this unreasonable tax without delay. Such constitutional methods however did not appeal to Mr. Gandhi who was burning for an opportunity to put to the test his new device" of Satyagraha. In *Mahatma Gandhi—His Own Story*, he writes:—

"An occasion arose for offering Satyagraha In Natal soon after Gokhale's departure. . . . General Smuts ought to have brought forward the necessary Bill in the Assembly.

" But he did nothing of the kind; and provided us with the welcome opportunity of including this despicable impost as a cause of 'war' . . . the breach of a promise made to such a representative of India as Gokhale was, was not only a personal insult to him, but also to the whole of India, and as such could not be taken lying down. It was impossible to pocket an insult offered to the mother country, . . . This . . . opened up a fresh field of recruitment for our ' army.' . . . "

Mr. Gandhi admits that the 60,000 indentured labourers practically all of whom would be "Untouchables" in India—were illiterate and could neither read nor write. Therefore they knowing nothing of Satyagraha would have to be "educated to take part in it" but he was very doubtful as to " which of them would participate in the struggle." At this juncture Mr. Gandhi states:—

"As if unseen by anyone God was preparing the Ingredients for our victory . . . an event happened which none had expected."

A judgment in the Cape Supreme Court declared that only marriages celebrated according to Christian rights and registered by the Registrar of Marriages were legal. Mr. Gandhi decided " it seemed best not to appeal against this unspeakable insult—had he done so, this preposterous judgment would most certainly have been reversed, but this was a risk he must avoid at all costs for its reversal would mean that the God-prepared " ingredients " for a Satyagraha victory

would evaporate and he thus could reap no advantage from this "unexpected event." So he decided instead of appealing to organise a campaign "to offer stubborn Satyagraha" and his volunteers were instructed to deliberately break certain laws until they were arrested.

Finding that "there were not many men ready to go to gaol" Mr. Gandhi—rather than his plan should fail, decided to sacrifice the women—SQ appealed to them to court arrest by defying the law. He sent them from Natal into the Transvaal without permits, but nothing happened. He then started them hawking goods without a licence but the police still took no notice of them. Beginning to fear that he would fail to get these poor illiterate women arrested, he "now decided to take a step" he "had reserved to the last." He writes:—

"That was to be my final offering to the God of Truth. . . . If the sisters were arrested upon entering Natal, well and good, but if they were not arrested, it was arranged that they should proceed to and post themselves at Newcastle, the great coal-mining centre in Natal, and advise the indentured Indian labourers there to go on strike. . . . If the labourers struck in response to the sisters' appeal the Government was bound to arrest them along with the labourers, who would thereby probably be fired with still greater enthusiasm. . . . This was the strategy I thought out, and unfolded before the Transvaal sisters."

The Government of Natal, like the Government of the Transvaal, ignored the breach of the law by these women in entering their territory without a permit, but when the women went to the great Natal Coal Mines, with the deliberate object

of fomenting trouble "according to the plans previously settled," Mr. Gandhi writes:—

" Their influence spread like wildfire. The pathetic **itory** of the wrongs heaped up by the three-pound **tax** touched the labourers to the quick, and **they** went on strike. I was pleased. I was not prepared for this. The Government could not now any longer leave the brave Transvaal sisters free to pursue their **activities**. They too were sentenced to imprisonment for the same term, three months." . . . These event* Itirred up the hearts of Indians not only in South Africa, but also in the motherland, to their very **depths**.

" The women's imprisonment worked like a charm upon the labourers in the mines, who laid down their tools and entered the city in succeeding batches. . . . How **was** I to house and feed this ever growing multitude? A huge concourse of men . . . generally ignorant of the laws of sanitation.

" some of them had been to jail for criminal offences such as murder, theft or adultery. But I did not consider myself fit to sit in judgment over the morality of the strikers. It would have been silly of me to attempt at distinguishing between the sheep and the goats. My business was only to conduct the strike. . . .

" I thought out a solution of my problem. I must take this "army" to the Transvaal and see them safely deposited in jail. . . . It was no joke to control a multitude of live to six thousand men."

Mr. Gandhi eventually was arrested and placed in Bloemfontein jail. He writes:—

"The prospect of uninterrupted study for a year filled me with joy. . . . I had warned my co-workers against allowing any more labourers to go

on strike. There were about sixty thousand of them in all. . . . With such a large body of men It would be impossible to prevent a breach of the peace. But when the flood-gates were opened there is no checking the universal deluge. The labourers everywhere struck work. . . . Government now adopted a policy of blood and iron. The slightest disturbance on the part of the labourers was answered by rifle fire—wounding many and killing some."

Under pressure from the Government of India the Union Government appointed a Commission to enquire into the grievances of Indian settlers,, and Mr. Gandhi was released after six weeks' imprisonment.

In South Africa at this time there were a few thousand traders mostly of Mr. Gandhi's own "Bania" caste who, like Mr. Gandhi and his "friends and relations" had elected "to try their fortune" in South Africa in "search of wealth." In addition to these traders approximately there were 60,000 indentured Indian labourers, i.e. labourers enlisted in India to serve on contract in other parts of India or abroad usually for a period of five years. This labour force is recruited almost exclusively from the untouchable community in South India and is engaged mainly for work on plantations or in mines. Those who enlist, do so of their own free will, and in many cases they settle in the country to which they have migrated, finding life there more endurable than in their native land.

When, in 1896, Mr. Gandhi visited India and started his agitation on the condition of Indians in South Africa, I imagine he would admit their

conditions at that time, were in most respects better than they would have had to endure in their own country, where they would have been treated as Pariahs.

The Indian traders in South Africa who had gone there in " search of wealth " apparently had little to complain of. Had it been otherwise, being free agents they could have returned to their own country. Mr. Gandhi could obtain from them but little support, financial or otherwise, for his campaign of Civil Disobedience.

• Apparently, the 60,000 indentured Indians were not discontented with their lot until Mr. Gandhi intervened, and even then he had to resort to the employment of women to work on their feelings and persuade them to come out on strike, but he had achieved his object. His deliberate incitement of women to court arrest in order that he might put to the test his new-fangled Satyagraha gospel, was, I submit, a wholly discreditable action.

Admittedly Indian settlers in South Africa at this period had two legitimate grievances. There was no justification for the poll tax of three pounds per head but negotiations for the removal of this tax were afoot though a decision was delayed. There can be no shadow of doubt that had the Government of India, who were in full sympathy with their Indian subjects on this point, put pressure on the Union Government, it would in due course have secured the abolition of the tax, but Mr. Gandhi who had long been searching for

• a pretext to experiment with his newly-invented plan of Civil Disobedience thought this too good an opportunity to let slip.

In the case also, of the unreasonable judgment **I contend** there is no doubt that had **an appeal been lodged and** supported by **strong representations** to the Union Government by the Government of India, it would have secured its reversal. Yet the Mahatma, although he knows full well that were these poor misguided "sisters" in their own country, the majority of his Congress colleagues would regard them as "too degraded to touch"—rather than sacrifice this "providential" opportunity for creating trouble—he "unfolds" to them his brilliant "strategy" that they should sacrifice themselves by defying the law until they compelled the Government to arrest and imprison them.

It is clear from Mr. Gandhi's account of this campaign, that the Union Government ignored as long as possible, the breaches of the law by these ignorant women, and obviously only with great reluctance arrested them for inciting a strike amongst men who had no grievance in connection with their employment. But Mr. Gandhi had attained his object. He had "stirred up the hearts of Indians—in the Motherland" until their "blood boiled at the thought of these women lying in jail."

These two legitimate grievances of indentured Indians could, and in due course would have been remedied under pressure from the Government of India, but Mr. Gandhi preferred to seize this golden opportunity to put to the test his Civil Disobedience theory, and incidentally to thrust himself into the limelight and achieve wide notoriety.

That in conducting his experiment "some were killed—many wounded " and great suffering caused to thousands of ignorant and innocent people, presumably does not weigh on Mr. Gandhi's conscience.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE GREAT WAR—MR. GANDHI'S SERVICES IN RECRUITING.

Mr. Gandhi returned to India in December, 1915 during the Great War. In 1918 the Viceroy invited various leaders of public opinion in India, including Mr. Gandhi, to a War Conference in Delhi. Mr. Gandhi writes:—

" On my reaching Delhi . . . Andrews [that patriotic Englishman! the Rev. C V. Andrews raised a question about the morality of my participation in the War Conference. How could I participate in the Conference, asked Andrews, if England had entered into secret treaties of a predatory character with another European power? Lord Chelmsford invited me to discuss the question . . . as a result I agreed to take part in the Conference."

" The Viceroy was very keen on my supporting the Resolution about recruiting. I asked for permission to speak in Hindustani, the Viceroy acceded to my request but suggested that I should speak also in English. I spoke but one sentence to this effect: ' With the full sense of my responsibility I beg to support the Resolution.'

" Many congratulated me on my having spoken in Hindustani. The discovery that I was the first to speak in Hindustani at a Viceregal meeting hurt my national pride. I felt like shrinking into myself. What a tragedy, that the language of the country

should be tabooed in meetings held in that country, for work relating to the country. Incidents like these are reminders of the low state to which we have been minced. . . ."

Mr. Gandhi states that he attended a Conference in Gujerat but felt ill at ease in "this atmosphere of servile submission." He spoke at length but could say nothing to please the officials. This is not surprising inasmuch as in the recruiting leaflets he issued he used the following argument:—

" Among the many misdeeds of the British rule in India history will look upon the Act depriving a whole nation of arms as the blackest. If wo want the Arms Act to be repealed, if we want to learn the use of arms, here is a golden opportunity. If the middle classes render voluntary help to Government in the hour of its trial, distrust will disappear, and the ban on possessing arms will be withdrawn."

If the passages above quoted were penned deliberately, they must be branded as disingenuous. The more charitable view would be to attribute them to Mr. Gandhi's "chaos of thought/' Methinks he "doth protest too much," in connection with the language incident which he created deliberately, the Viceroy having acceded to his request that he might address the Conference in Hindustani, when he says that he " felt like shrinking into himself and describes the incident as a " tragedy."

It would be difficult to find a more extreme case of an imaginary grievance magnified into a great wrong. The Viceroy invites various people to a Conference which in accordance with

common practice is conducted in English. Mr. Gandhi apparently being in a contrary frame of mind, requests permission to speak in Hindustani, which is granted, though the Viceroy, evidently fearing that some of those present might not understand Hindustani, asks Mr. Gandhi also to speak in English. Could any treatment have been more courteous? No: I fear even then Mr. Gandhi was looking for trouble, for he must be aware that Hindustani is spoken by less than half of the peoples of India and that it would be Greek to an actual majority of them.

Mr. Gandhi also must be aware that—

" among the educated minority, English is the means of communication, not only for official purposes **but** for any form of intercourse on an All-India basis; no single vernacular tongue has so wide a range. The language with the widest currency among the general population is Hindustani in its two forms and scripts Urdu and Hindu. Urdu was the language of the camp and Court of the Mohammedan invader, **and** Moslems generally prefer to use the Arabic script. Hindus, while speaking the same tongue employ a Sanskritic script, but Hindustani is far from being generally understood all over India; the census enumerates altogether 222 vernaculars. A man who wished to make himself generally understood in all parts of India would have to be master of as many separate tongues as a linguist who was prepared to accomplish the same achievement throughout Europe."— (S.R. Vol. 1. P. 13.)

Nearly all the debating in the various Legislatures is conducted in English; and if I am not mistaken English is the language mostly used at the meetings of the Indian National Congress/ *The Congress Bulletins* certainly are printed in English.

Even more baseless than Mr. Gandhi's grievance on the language question is his invective against the Arms Act. When, during the war, for a brief period, Mr. Gandhi undertook to assist recruiting for the Indian Army (an effort which his friend, the Rev. C. F. Andrews, an Englishman! ! endeavoured to dissuade him from making, on the plea that " England had entered into secret treaties of a predatory character with another European Power " he issued leaflets asking people to enlist as recruits stating that—

" Among the many misdeeds of the British rule in India history will look back upon the Act depriving a whole Nation of Arms as the blackest ... if we want to learn the use of arms here is a golden opportunity."

Apart from this naive admission by Mr. Gandhi of the motive that prompted his temporary exhibition of loyalty to the Empire; viz., " the golden opportunity to learn the use of arms," he definitely states that the blackest misdeed of the British rule in India was the Act depriving a whole nation of arms. If this be the gravest accusation Mr. Gandhi can bring against British rule in India, it proclaims the hollowness of his Civil Disobedience agitation. He must know that no one in England may possess arms without a licence. Surely he must recognise that if such a law is considered necessary in England, vastly more so must it be in India, with its age-long conflicts between diverse races and creeds. Mr. Gandhi exaggerates when he says that a whole nation has been deprived of arms. An » Indian, just as easily as an Englishman, can obtain a gun licence, though both have to show that they are fit and proper persons to hold a

licence and to give a sufficient reason for wishing to possess one. On one occasion when I was leaving India, I had no difficulty in obtaining a gun licence for my bearer who was a keen Shikari, and I should be surprised if the number of Indians holding gun licences does not far exceed the number of British. There is one possibility Mr. Gandhi should not overlook. Were firearms possessed by the whole nation it is more than probable that the disparity in population between, Moslem and Hindi would be speedily redressed.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MR. GANDHI MAKES THE ROWLATT
REPORT HIS PRETEXT FOR LAUNCHING
HIS FIRST CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE
CAMPAIGN, THUS COMMITTING
"A HIMALAYAN MISCALCULATION."

Shortly before the termination of the Great War, Mr. Gandhi was taken ill and when peace was declared he writes:—

"Whilst I was thus tossing on (he bod of pain . . . the news that I had no more to worry myself about recruiting came as a very great comfort to me."

He was recovering from his illness when the Report of the Rowlatt Committee, details of which I give in Chapter VI., was published. After conferring with Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel, Mr. Gandhi decided that if the measure became law they should at once offer Satyagraha in defiance of it. He therefore organised an agitation against the Report which "gathered intensity"; meanwhile news was received that the Rowlatt Bill had been published as an Act. Mr. Gandhi writes:—

"That night I fell asleep while thinking over the question. . . . I was still in that twilight condition between sleep and consciousness when suddenly the idea broke upon me, it was as if in a dream . . . that we should call upon the country to eull a general Hartal. . . ."

A hartal involves a complete suspension of business and compulsory closing of all shops. The date fixed for the observance of the hartal throughout India was April 6th 1919, but in Delhi it was observed on March 30th and its tragic results are described in Chapter VII. of this book. Mr. Gandhi writes:—

" The story of happenings in Delhi was repeated with variations in Lahore and Amritsar. From Amritsar, Drs. Satyatal and Kitehlu had sent me pressing invitations to go there . . . I communicated to them my intention to visit Amritsar after Delhi. The Hartal in Bombay was a complete success.

" Full preparation had been made for starting civil disobedience . . . in respect of such laws only as easily lent themselves to being disobeyed by the masses. The Salt Law was extremely unpopular. . . . I therefore suggested that the people might prepare salt from sea-water in their own houses in disregard of the salt laws."

He also arranged for the widespread sale of proscribed literature and organised meetings for the administration of pledges to commit Civil Disobedience. These meetings however were poorly attended. Commenting on this Mr. Gandhi writes:—

"I have noticed this characteristic difference in the popular attitude—partiality for exciting work together with dislike for quiet constructive effort. The difference has persisted to this day."

On April 7th Mr. Gandhi started for Delhi and Amritsar but Government fearing that his presence would lead to a disturbance of the peace prohibited him from entering the Punjab and served him with an order to this effect while he

was en route. He was told he must return to Bombay but declining to do so was escorted back there by an Inspector of Police. On arrival in Bombay he was informed that he was now free and a friend told him that the news of his arrest had "incensed the people and roused them to a pitch of mad frenzy" and that at Pydhuni which is in the mill area of Bombay an outbreak was apprehended every minnte and that already a Magistrate and the Police were on the scene. Proceeding to Pydhuni, Mr. Gandhi writes:—

"I saw that a huge crowd had gathered. On seeing me the people went mad with joy and the sky was rent with the shouts of 'Bande Mataram,' and 'Allaho Akbar.' As the procession . . . was about to proceed towards the Crawford market It suddenly found itself confronted by a **body** of mounted police who had arrived there to prevent them from proceeding further in the direction of the Fort.* The crowd was densely packed. It had almost broken through the police cordon. There was hardly any chance of my voice being heard in that vast concourse. Just then the officer in charge gave the order to disperse the crowd and at once the mounted police charged upon the crowd, brandishing their lances as they went. For a moment I felt that I would be hurt. But my apprehension was groundless. . . . The ranks of the people were soon broken and they were thrown into utter confusion which was soon converted into a rout."

The crowd having dispersed, Mr. Gandhi called at the Police Commissioner's office and lodged a complaint against the conduct of the Police. He told the Commissioner that he thought "it was quite unnecessary to send that contingent of mounted men"—as he must have known **that**

*" The Fort " Bombay is the European buainees quarter.

" **the** horses were bound to trample on the people." The Commissioner replied, "You cannot judge that . . . we police officers know better than you the effect of your teaching on the people. If we do not start with drastic measures the situation would pass out of our hands. . . . Do you know what is happening in Ahmedabad and what has happened in Amritsar? People have everywhere gone nearly mad. . . . I did not want the procession to proceed to the Fort as a disturbance was inevitable and as—the people would not listen to persuasion . . . the responsibility of all these disturbances lies on you." Mr. Gandhi replied:—

"I assure you I shall readily take it upon myself wherever I discover it, but I should be deeply pained and surprised if I found there were disturbances in Ahmedabad. I cannot answer for Amritsar."

On receiving confirmation that in Ahmedabad "the mill hands had gone mad—committed acts of violence and a sergeant had been done to death," Mr. Gandhi writes:—

"I proceeded to Ahmedabad. On the way I learnt that an attempt had been made to pull up the rails near Nadiad railway station, that a Government officer had been murdered in Viramgam, and that Ahmedabad was under martial law. The people were terror-stricken. They had indulged in acts of violence and were being made to pay for them with interest. . . . Mr. Pratt, the Commissioner,] found in a state of rage: I spoke to him gently and expressed my regret for the disturbances. I suggested that martial law was unnecessary and declared my readiness to co-operate in all efforts to restore peace.

"Martial law was withdrawn . . . I tried to bring home to the people the sense of their wrong. . .

I declared a penitential fast of three days for myself and appealed to the people to go on a similar fast for a day and suggested to those who had been guilty of acts of violence to confess their guilt.

" Just as I had suggested to the people to confess their guilt so I suggested to the Government to condone the crimes. Neither accepted my suggestion.

"I had already made up my mind to suspend Satyagraha so long as the people had not learnt the lesson of peace.

" Almost immediately after the Ahmedaba* meeting I went to Nadiad. It was here that I first used the expression ' Himalayan miscalculation' with regard to my failure to see what would happen. Even at Ahmedabad I had begun to have a dim perception of my mistake. . . . On reaching Nadiad . . . it suddenly dawned upon me that I had committed a grave error in calling upon the people . . . to launch upon civil disobedience prematurely. . . .

". . . It may be rightly argued, ' How can a people who are in the habit of frequently evading laws, as most people are, suddenly grasp the significance of civil disobedience or keep themselves within its strict bounds?' I admit that it is no easy matter for thousands and hundreds of thousands of people to fulfil the ideal conditions mentioned above."

When Mr. Gandhi returned to Bombay he endeavoured to raise a corps of volunteers to interest the people in the " peaceful side of Satyagraha," but he comments sorrowfully " as the days passed by the number of fresh recruits began to dwindle. Thus I realised that the progress of the training in Civil Disobedience was not going to be as rapid as I had first expected."

•
Mr. Gandhi repeatedly requested to be allowed to visit the Punjab to conduct an enquiry

into what he describes as " the Punjab atrocities " and he was permitted to do so on October 17th. He writes:—

The scene that I witnessed on my arrival at Lahore can never be effaced from my memory. The railway station was from end to end one seething mass of humanity. The entire population had turned out of doors in eager expectation, as if to meet a dear -relation after a long separation, and was delirious with joy."

Mr. Gandhi states that in the course of **his** enquiry he came across tales of the Government's tyranny that "filled him with deep **pain.**" **He** expresses no sorrow for the appalling tragedies that had compelled the imposition of martial law and for which he alone was primarily responsible.

At a special session of the All-India Congress held in September 1920, Mr. Gandhi sponsored a Resolution that Congress should adopt his policy of non-co-operation as a means of attaining "Swaraj" (self-government). One or two speakers wished to limit the Resolution to "**Swaraj** " within the British Empire but Mr. Gandhi states they could obtain but meagre support. Thus from that date the goal of Congress has **been** complete independence.

The passages quoted in this Chapter are illuminating.

In the quotations I have given from Mr. Gandhi's own account of the genesis of his Civil Disobedience Campaign and its development, the following facts should be noted. *

- (1) It was during his "twilight sleep" the wonderful revelation came to him, that to remedy

what he conceived to be a grievance, the right course was to incite the illiterate masses to break the law.

- (2) That such laws only as easily lend themselves to being disobeyed by the masses should be broken.

e.g. The Salt Law.—A Tax on Salt has been levied in India from time immemorial. To Indians it is symbolical of authority. For this reason Mr. Gandhi selected it for his first line of attack as the most spectacular method of defying Government. The Salt Tax works out approximately to one hundredth part of a farthing per day per head of the population.

- (3) Mr. Gandhi states that he has noticed "this characteristic difference in the popular attitude — partiality for exciting work together with dislike for quiet constructive effort."

This indicates clearly that the apparent success of Congress in collecting large crowds for its demonstrations, is due to their partiality for excitement, rather than to serious interest in Congress policy.

- (4) Mr. Gandhi admits that when he deliberately disobeyed the Government prohibition of his entry into the Punjab, the news of his arrest roused the people in Bombay "to a pitch of mad frenzy,"—that an outbreak at Pydhunl was apprehended every moment, and that the dense crowd had almost broken through the police cordon. Indeed, when he arrived there, "for a moment he felt that he would be hurt," yet he protests to the Commissioner of Police because the latter considered the time had arrived to disperse this frenzied crowd

which threatened to break through into the European quarter. The Commissioner's action probably prevented a repetition in Bombay of the tragedies that he knew had already occurred at Ahraedabad and Amritsar.

I submit that Mr. Gandhi's description of his interview with the Police Commissioner must convince any impartial person of the hopeless futility of his reasoning.

- (5) When fuller details of the tragedies resulting from the lawless movement initiated by Mr. Gandhi became available, he had the grace to admit that he had committed a "Himalayan miscalculation" in launching the movement, but apparently the realization of his grave error only came to him slowly—as he makes the amazing statement that "even at Ahmedabad I had begun to have a dim perception of my mistake."

At Ahmedabad he must have known of the brutal murders of Bank Managers and others, and of the burning alive of a Magistrate at Viramgam. If some of the most appalling crimes ever perpetrated—the direct outcome of his instigation to lawlessness—could only arouse in Mr. Gandhi "a dim perception of his mistake," both his mentality and conscience must be abnormal.

- (6) He admits that it is "a difficult task to Interest the people in the peaceful side of Satyagraha."

CHAPTER XIX.

SUMMING UP.

In my preface I stated that I should quote somewhat extensively from Mr. Gandhi's writings and utterances in order to appraise the true value of his apparently hypnotic influence. I have done so, and I will now sum up my conclusions.

Mr. Gandhi was bred in an anti-British environment and from his earliest years, long before he could have been capable of judging for himself, he was instilled with the ambition "to defeat the English."

As a boy he was obviously self-conscious and rather overwhelmed by the multiplicity of his own virtues.

When, as a youth of 18, he came to this country to read for the Bar, he states, "England I could not bear." His sojourn here was uneventful and his account of his experiences might represent those of any Indian student. He was not immune from the little vanities to which many young men are prone. In dissembling as to his marriage he temporarily lost sight of his "sole objective — Truth," and at this time although "even then he had his wits about him" there was nothing to indicate that he was a Mahatma in embryo,

His account of his altercation with the Political Agent in Kathiawar (quoted in Chapter XII.), apparently supplies the genesis of his hostility to the British Raj, causing him to devote his life to its destruction. While he admitted that he was in the wrong over this incident, he nevertheless states that it "changed the whole course of his life." His "guiding principle"—return good for evil—was not strong enough to heal his injured pride.

Herein I am firmly convinced we have the key to the motive that has inspired the anti-British campaign he has since waged with ever increasing bitterness. The shock that changed the whole course of his life was a shock to his abnormal sense of his own importance. Having studied closely both his writings and utterances, I am driven to the conclusion that his cloak of excessive humility covers an overweening vanity—it projects in every chapter of his autobiography.

Time after time he delights in recording such phrases as the "unbounded enthusiasm" his presence inspired and how the public on seeing him went "delirious with joy." This perhaps is not surprising, for this plant of self-esteem which even in his school days showed such sturdy growth, has since been richly manured with nauseatingly extravagant adulation by a weird medley of cranks of both sexes—Little Englanders and avowed enemies of Great Britain.

One of the most capable British officials that ever served in India, who is held in the highest regard both by Europeans and responsible Indians, and who has wide sympathy with legitimate Indian aspirations, told me that his conversation* with Mr. Gandhi had convinced him that

the Mahatma is so deeply impressed with his own importance and infallibility that any argument with him is unavailing.

When, at the age of twenty-one Mr. Gandhi returned from England to India, he spent a few years in practice as a barrister. Not meeting with success in Bombay, he tried his fortune in his birthplace, Rajkot (a small Indian Native State) but finding the atmosphere "poisonous" and wishing to "get away from the whole intriguing surroundings" he accepted an offer to go to South Africa. There is nothing in his version of his experiences up to this time to indicate that he was other than quite an ordinary though distinctly a self-opinionated young man. The Mahatma's rapid rise to notoriety and the foundation of his reputation for holiness, dates from his landing in South Africa.

Let us examine this foundation. He leaves the "poisonous atmosphere" of his birthplace, for South Africa, of his own free will, but nursing a sorely wounded self-esteem, to salve which he must search for a pretext to "defeat the English." Within a few days of his arrival in Durban, in a comparatively trivial incident he finds his first pretext:—

"So here too there was fighting for me—I wrote to the Press—the incident gave me an unexpected advertisement."

From Mr. Gandhi's own version of his activities in South Africa, it is clear that the aggressive spirit which he displayed immediately he arrived in the country, and which gave him "an unexpected advertisement" increased in intensity until **it dominated completely his course of action.**

Passages I have quoted from the Mahatma's writings will enable my readers to judge whether "the soul of the Mahatma is the soul of Christ" or whether they indicate that "he has become one with the Universal Being," or "will live in history and in Heaven with Buddha, Socrates and Jesus." Phrases such as these have been applied to Mr. Gandhi by so many peculiar people that he evidently has come to believe they must be true. That in itself is immaterial, but the danger lies in the fact that the fame of the Mahatma's legendary deeds and powers has spread throughout the length and breadth of India, gripping the imagination of millions who now literally regard him as a Saint. Vast numbers of people, illiterate and easily excited, will blindly obey the Mahatma's mandates, even though they be wildly impractical and certain to be productive of disastrous results.

The greatest contributor to Mr. Gandhi's fame has been the Government of India. In 1919 Mr. Gandhi launched his first law-breaking campaign and despite the fact that when he realized its tragic results he ordered its suspension, admitting that he had made a "Himalayan Miscalculation," he soon resumed his policy of courting arrest by defiance of the law, until in 1922 he was arrested and lodged in Yerravda Jail, Poona. His arrest caused no trouble in India; indeed the situation rapidly improved, and for two or three years the political atmosphere was comparatively peaceful. The new Legislative Assembly, established under the Government of India Act 1919, was functioning satisfactorily and Civil Disobedience was practically non-existent.

In the year 1924, while still in jail, he was taken ill with appendicitis and operated on by a

British **surgeon, who** undoubtedly saved his life. Mr. Gandhi writes:—

" I have more than once publicly expressed my gratitude to Colonel Maddock and his staff for all the kindness with which they overwhelmed me."

Directly Mr. Gandhi was convalescent Government released him unconditionally. Had he then shown his gratitude by throwing all his great influence into making the working of the Reforms Scheme a success, to-day a contented India would have been far advanced towards her goal of self-government, and would have been saved the bitter strife of the last two years, with its appalling train of tragedies. But Mr. Gandhi preferred to show his gratitude, by supporting the malcontents who were pledged to wreck the Reforms Scheme, and utilised his liberty in organising his second campaign, the history of which is recorded briefly in earlier chapters of this book. It speaks for itself.

When, about three years ago, Mr. Gandhi was passing through Calcutta en route to Burma, whither he was bound with the object of stirring up disaffection, the local Congress Committee organised a big procession to meet him on arrival, which was to march through the principal streets of Calcutta and make a bonfire of foreign cloth in a public place. The Commissioner of Police, Sir Charles Tegart, prohibited the procession, and informed the Congress Authorities that, should it be attempted, he would be compelled to disperse it. In defiance of his orders the procession started, was duly dispersed and the Commissioner, who had never been informed that Mr. Gandhi was above the **law, arrested him, but under the**

orders of a benign or possibly a nerveless Government, Mr. Gandhi was released the next day—a singular method of strengthening the hands of the Commissioner who the Extremists more than once had attempted to assassinate; indeed, on one occasion another man was mistaken for him and shot dead. It is said that the Extremists have sworn to "get him."

Had Mr. Gandhi been detained on this occasion, he would have been unable to launch his second Civil Disobedience movement but once again he devoted his liberty to perfecting his plan of campaign, evidently in the belief that Government was afraid to take action against him.

When, on the 2nd March 1930, Mr. Gandhi warned the Viceroy that on the 12th of March he intended to launch a new campaign of Civil Disobedience he should have been informed forthwith that if he did so he would be arrested. Instead he was allowed for several weeks to march through the country preaching sedition and inciting the masses to break the law. Ultimately, Government was compelled to arrest him. In July 1930, while he is still in jail, the Viceroy, through intermediaries, enters into negotiations with him and his colleagues the Nehru's, only to give them the opportunity of rejecting with scorn his conciliatory offers.

On the 26th January 1931, Mr. Gandhi and his companions in sedition are released unconditionally, just at the moment when, well-informed opinion holds, the Civil Disobedience Movement was on the verge of collapse. Thus, this action of Government gave the movement new life.

In February 1931, the ex-Viceroy received Mr. Gandhi at Simla, almost as though he were a

victorious foe, and in large measure conceded his demands in a Peace Pact, which from the day it was signed has been treated openly by Congress only as a truce. The effect of all this was to enormously enhance Mr. Gandhi's prestige and correspondingly lower the prestige of Government. Later when Mr. Gandhi visited the new Viceroy at Simla he was permitted the use of a motor car, a privilege which, on account of the dangerous nature of the hilly roads, is reserved solely for the Viceroy and Commander-in-Chief and which never yet has been granted even to a Ruling Prince. This may seem a trivial matter, but those who know India will appreciate the significance that would be attached to it by the masses.

It must be recorded to Mr. Gandhi's credit that for many years past he has advocated the abolition of Untouchability. These are his words:—

"We are all guilty of having oppressed our brothers. We make them crawl on their bellies before us and rub their noses on the ground. With eyes red with rage we push them out of railway carriages. Has the English Government ever inflicted anything worse on us? Indeed, there is no charge that the Pariah cannot fling in our faces and which we do not fling in the face of Englishmen. . . . It is idle to talk of the liberties of India, of * Swaraj, so long as we do not protect the weak and helpless."

The author of "Gandhi The Holy Man," writes:—

"The breath, even the shadow of an Untouchable pollutes the members of a higher caste; the Pariahs are obliged to live apart from the rest of the people outside the towns and villages and they may not use the public wells. Their children are excluded from the ichook, they are damned and accursed."

But for the fact that Mr. Gandhi is blinded by his absorbing passion to eliminate British influence from India, he must know that should his ambition be realised, India's sixty million Untouchables would be thrust back into the damnable helotism from which British rule has slowly but surely been redeeming them. He knows, as well as anyone, that a Brahmin can no more change the fundamentals of his creed than "can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots," and that he never will do so.

Recently in broadcasting his "message" to America, Mr. Gandhi claimed for Congress "that in this struggle for self-purification we have assigned the foremost place to the removal of this curse of untouchability." This claim was promptly traversed by Mr. M. C. Raja, who represents the Untouchables in the Legislative Assembly. He issued a statement to the Press saying that—

"Congress support has been confined to passing platitudinous resolutions which it never puts into action."

The truth of this contention was confirmed last year, at Nasik, a Brahmin stronghold, when the Untouchables put these "platitudinous resolutions" to the test, and were denied permission to enter the local temples. This occasioned serious rioting, and if my memory serves me, the Untouchables appealed in vain to Mr. Gandhi for support.

Mr. Mudalayar, a representative of the non-Brahmins of Madras stated recently:—

"The Congress organisation was the negation of democracy, as it led to dictatorship."

Dr. Ambedkar, addressing the All India Depressed Classes Congress in August 1930, speaking of the Brahmin Controlled Congress said:—

"To give unrestricted power in the hands of people of this sort is to arm the hangman with a knife,"

and speaking later as the representative of the Depressed Classes at the First Round Table Conference, he said:—

"They had welcomed the Britishers, their deliverers from age-long tyranny and repression by the orthodox Hindus. Before the British we were in the loathsome condition due to our Untouchability."

Perhaps the most striking instance of Mr. Gandhi's "chaos of thought" is in connection with his acts of penance. Equipped with a remarkable flair for dramatic effect, Mr. Gandhi has, on various occasions, resorted to fasting as an ostensible act of penance, and thus, has established for himself a reputation for sanctity among millions of people steeped in superstition and too ignorant to appreciate the futility of such acts. I credit Mr. Gandhi with too much intelligence to believe that he has any faith in the efficacy of fasting as a practical form of atonement for misdeeds or mistaken actions. If I am wrong in this surmise and assuming that he believes in the justice of making the "punishment fit the crime," then he must be amazingly lacking in any sense of proportion, for when, in South Africa, he—

"received the tidings of the moral fall of two of the inmates of his Ashram—this news came upon him like a thunderbolt,"

and he imposed upon himself "a fast for seven days and a vow of having only one meal for a

period of four months and a half" (this, be it noted, was when the Mahatma "did not know the technique of fasting"). Yet some years later, in 1919, when presumably by periodical practice he had become an expert in the art, he "declared a penitential fast of three days for himself" to atone for the hideous murder of many Europeans and the burning alive of an Indian magistrate—the direct outcome of his First Civil Disobedience Campaign. Surely, if the moral lapse of his **two** Ashram inmates, called for a seven days fast, no period of fasting could be long enough to atone for this "Himalayan Miscalculation."

In *India on the Brink* I described Mr. Gandhi as a visionary, but at the same time a singularly astute politician. I might have added that he has attained supreme skill in the art of self-advertisement. By adopting the habits of an ascetic, and taking care that the world should be kept apprised of the smallest details of his renunciations and privations—such as his weekly day of silence, his clothing himself with a loin-cloth, his observance of Brahmacharya, etc.—he has created for himself a mystical reputation which has served to attract to him his enormous following.

By the influence thus attained, he hopes to realise his life's ambition, to secure for India complete independence of British control.

Mr. Gandhi's autobiography shows clearly that he realises to the full the value of publicity, especially in the form of cabled news. He writes: "A subject which is considered worthy of being communicated by cable becomes invested with an importance it does not intrinsically possess."

When negotiating with Lord Willingdon as to whether he would attend the Round Table Conference, "at first he said he would, and then he

said he wouldn't," on each occasion keeping the cables busy, but finally he decided that he would.

Interviewed while en route to England, he was informed by a Press representative that during his visit special arrangements for his protection had been made. He replied: "If anybody wants my poor life he may have it, my life is all I have to give in the cause of India's independence. God is my only protector."

This illustrates Mr. Gandhi's flair for seizing opportunities to *get* widely disseminated, especially by cable, such items of news about himself as are likely to make an emotional appeal to the ignorant, for Mr. Gandhi knows well that nowhere would his life be safer than in England, incomparably safer than, shall we say, the life of an Englishman in Calcutta.

The main impression that *Mahatma Gandhi—His Own Story* has left on me is not that it is the inspired word of "the man who has become one with the Universal Being," but on the contrary that it is a book brimming over with bathos. To give only one instance, I cannot imagine "Buddha, Socrates, or Jesus" inciting people to break the law, and then relating with evident gusto that

"after they got into the habit of courting arrest, they would often not, give their names just for the fun of the thing."

Very rarely Mr. Gandhi endeavours to appear impartial by paying tribute to some British deed, but it is usually a case of damning with faint praise and beneath this occasional veneer of goodwill there is plainly discernable a calculated and

inflexible determination to undermine the British Raj by bringing it into contempt.

The official inquiry into the recent Cawnpore massacre proved conclusively that while its immediate cause was the attempt by Congress to enforce Moslem shopkeepers to observe a hartal as an expression of indignation at the execution of the assassin Bhagat Singh, its root cause was Mr. Gandhi's Civil Disobedience movement, which in the preceding months had produced in the ignorant and easily inflamed people of Cawnpore a complete contempt for law. Since the Cawnpore massacre there have been outbreaks of serious communal strife in Chittagong and other places which, but for British intervention, would have spread like a prairie fire.

Mr. Gandhi, speaking in Bombay on August 8th 1931 to the All-India Congress Committee, said:—

"When I find Hindus and Moslems quarrel over political matters I hold myself responsible for it. I feel a sinner because I am responsible for the present awakening."

That Mr. Gandhi has come to this realisation is a sign of grace and sheds a glimmer of hope that even at this, the eleventh hour, he also may come to realise that his Satyagraha device (i.e. Civil Disobedience theoretically to be conducted with non-violence) has failed and never can succeed because in practice it inevitably must lead to violence. Can he be brought to acknowledge this truth?

The legitimate goal of British-India is, "responsible Government as an integral part of the Empire." Distinguished Indians, whose

patriotism is beyond question, but whose judgment has been preserved unwarped by anti-British prejudice, have brought within measurable distance, by their loyal co-operation, the attainment of this goal — such men as Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Sir Atul Chatterjee, Mr. Srinivasa Sastri and Sir Bhupendra Mitra, to name only a few. If Mr. Gandhi would join hands with them, abandoning once and for all his advocacy of Satyagraha; recognising that from its inception he has been pursuing a chimera; and if he would whole-heartedly throw in his great influence on the side of constitutional progress, he yet could atone in some measure for the infinite misery which the prolonged prosecution of his fatally mistaken doctrine has inflicted on his country.

Mr. Gandhi then might live to see a peaceful and progressively prosperous India, in which communal strife would have no place and in which the curse of untouchability and its attendant extreme poverty would be removed—an India a contented and honoured partner in the greatest Empire the world has ever known.

ADDENDUM.

Within the last two or three weeks the march of events has been rapid. While the preceding chapters of this book were being printed the final plenary meeting of the second session of the Round Table Conference was held on December 1st and the same day (a White Paper) Command Paper No. 3972 (Indian Round Table Conference) defining the Indian policy of His Majesty's Government, was presented to Parliament.

On December 2nd Mr. MacDonald sought the approval of the House of Commons to this policy. A debate lasting two days ensued, at the close of which, on a division being taken, the House endorsed the motion of approval by a majority of 326.

Having read the speeches delivered at the final session of the Conference and in the Parliamentary debate thereon, I was at first disposed not to proceed with the publication of this book, the object of which, as I state in the Preface, is to assist in acquainting the electors of this country with certain facts essential to the formation of a correct judgment on the vital issues at stake. But the electors can control those who represent them in Parliament and even yet they may be the final arbiters, so I decided to issue the book, and despite the bewildering rapidity with which the situation changes almost daily, there is nothing I have written therein that I would wish to withdraw,

In *India on the Brink* I urged that the British Government should state in unmistakable language its final limits of concession, specifically defining the conditions under which these limits can be reached so that no misunderstanding could arise from ambiguous phrasing, as has so often been the case in the past and I expressed the hope that such a declaration would embody certain clauses including the following:—

Adherence to the pledge given on March 9th, 1921, "for the progressive realisation of responsible government in British India as an integral part of the British Empire."

Continued control of the conduct of Foreign Affairs, the Defence of India, and the preservation of Law and Order so long as may be necessary.

Guaranteeing adequate protection to all minorities.

Amelioration of the condition of the Depressed Classes.

No unfair discrimination against British interests.

In the debate in the House, Sir Samuel Hoare, Secretary of State for India, said:—

"The White Paper clearly set out the position of the Government . . . they were prepared to make an advance to responsible Government both in the Centre and in the Provinces on certain definite and specified conditions. There were two conditions in particular, the first of which was, that the responsible Government at the Centre must be an All-India Government representing both British India and the Indian States; the second condition was that certain obligations which had resulted from our long association with India must be safeguarded just as much in the interests of India as ourselves. . . . SAFEGUARDS. —Until India was in a position to defend herself our

command of the Army must be clear and undisputed—and our control of foreign affairs must be preserved: secondly, our relations with the Princes must be retained by the Crown. Financial stability must be effectually safeguarded and so ultimately must be internal security. Minorities must be protected and there must be no unfair economic or commercial discrimination against the British trader. The rights of services recruited by the Secretary of State must be safeguarded. These safeguards were just as much in the interests of India as of ourselves. They were not shackles upon India's future; they were rather stays that were needed to ensure the Indian Constitution, the stability which it would so much need."

Mr. Churchill, who had moved an amendment to the motion of approval of the Government White Paper, offered to withdraw this if the Prime Minister would incorporate in his motion the substance of Sir Samuel Hoare's speech above quoted. The Prime Minister replied:—

"everything that was in the speech of the Secretary of State for India is in the White Paper"

and the Secretary of State for India himself said in reply to Mr. Wardlaw Milne:—

"everything in my speech was included in the White Paper and everything in the White Paper was included in my speech."

On these definite assurances, the House voted its approval of the motion.

Provided the safeguards specified by Sir Samuel Hoare are unassailably secured, I am convinced that none would welcome more gladly, as an honoured partner in the British Commonwealth of Nations, a self-governing prosperous and

contented India, than those, who somewhat **unfairly have been branded as "die-hards" and "reactionaries."**

From *The Times* Report of Mr. Gandhi's speech **at** the final session of the Round Table Conference I note that he said:—

- (1) "That Congress represented 55 per cent, of the people of India."

This statement is a monumental untruth.

- (2) "He had been accused of running a parallel Government and he endorsed the charge."

This unhappily is true, and it has gravely aggravated the trouble of the last two years. A Government worthy of the name never would have tolerated for a single day such a deliberate attempt to undermine its authority.

- (3) "He held no brief for terrorists—he would strain every nerve to secure an honourable settlement, without exposing millions of Indian men and women to the terrible ordeal of Civil Disobedience, but if it had to be faced he would do it with joy. The safeguards suggested were not in the interests of India."

Mr. Gandhi's idea of an "honourable settlement" was expressed in the following reply which he **and** the Nehrus made to Lord Irwin's overtures **in** the summer of 1930:—

"If India is now to attain full responsible Government it can only be on an absolutely voluntary basis leaving each party free to sever partnership or

association at will. So long as the British Government or the British people regard this position as impossible or untenable, the Congress must in our opinion continue to fight for freedom.

I am unaware that Mr. Gandhi has ever withdrawn this condition which Congress insists is fundamental to a settlement, and as under no conceivable circumstances can it ever be granted—unless Mr. Gandhi will abandon the claim—he was undoubtedly correct when, in his final speech at the Round Table Conference he said:—"it seems somewhat likely that we have come to the parting of the ways."

That Mr. Gandhi, after the tragic consequences of his seditious campaigns in 1919 and 1930, can now contemplate "with joy" again "exposing millions of men and women to the terrible ordeal of (renewed) Civil Disobedience"—surely indicates clearly, not only that he is afflicted with a hopelessly warped mentality, but that he and his supporters are intransigents with whom it is futile to negotiate further.

Already there are rumblings of renewed disturbances, as it is reported that Mr. Gandhi's lieutenant, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has issued notices calling on the peasants of the Allahabad district not to pay rents or land revenues, and the Bengal Provincial Congress has just passed a resolution that there shall be intensive boycott of all British goods and British business concerns.

It is satisfactory to learn from the Secretary of State that the Government of India is at last "fully prepared to deal effectively with any new

developments " in breaches of the " **peace** pact," and provided that Government in its anxiety to achieve a settlement is not tempted in the process of conference and negotiation to whittle down the essential safeguards specified by Sir Samuel Hoare in his recent speech, all will be well.

It is the duty of the electors of this country to guard against this risk by keeping an unremitting watch on the progress of these negotiations.

Let Government now resume the rightful and elementary functions of Government, viz., the preservation of law and order, guaranteeing to all law-abiding citizens adequate protection from persecution and intimidation. Then, it will rally to its support tens of millions of people whose one desire is to be able to pursue in peace their daily avocations but who, from recent happenings, have had every reason to fear that the British Raj was on the verge of collapse. With the loyal co-operation of all parties, save the extremists, directly the Indian communities can compose their own differences and agree to work a new Constitution, under which, subject to the essential safeguards already specified, they will govern themselves, their great country will enter an era of peace, progress and prosperity such as it has never experienced in its long and chequered history.

10th of December, 1931.

ERRATUM.

t P. 38, Line 3. For "Chapter XXII." read "Chapter XVIII."

[By the same Author.]

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