

琉球大学学術リポジトリ

「Y o u n g I n d i a」13巻16号

メタデータ	言語: 出版者: 公開日: 2018-04-16 キーワード (Ja): キーワード (En): Yanaihara Tadao 作成者: - メールアドレス: 所属:
URL	http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12000/37806

矢内原忠雄文庫

史料名	「Young India」13巻16号 1931年
封筒番号	592
原文所所蔵者	琉球大学附属図書館
撮影年月日	平成 17 年 11 月 29 日
撮 影 者	富士写真フイルム 株式会社
備 考	

矢内原忠雄文庫

封筒番号： 592

史料名	「Young India」13巻16号 1931年
資料形態	新聞？
枚数	4
頁数	8
縦 (cm)	
横 (cm)	
厚さ (cm)	
書誌的事項	マハトマ・ガンディーによる編集 今泉分類記号：

The Cult of Violence

Reg. No. B. 1222

Subscription: Inland { Single copy as. 2 One year Rs. 5 Six months Rs. 3 Foreign Rs. 7 or 12 s.

Young India

A Weekly Journal

Edited by M. K. Gandhi

Vol. XIII

Ahmedabad: Thursday, April 16, 1931

No. 16

Weekly Letter

Parsi Rajakiya Sabha, Karachi

This weekly letter is frankly a misnomer inasmuch as it does not cover even's of the week which were crowded out in the last number by more important topics. But I may not omit them altogether and shall therefore overtake them in a week when there is nothing particular to note.

Let no one think from the heading that the body of which I am about to talk is by any means a 'communal' body, in the present-day sense of the term. 'Communal' has come to acquire almost a special meaning now-a-days, and is regarded as a synonym for 'anti-national.' The Parsi Rajakiya Sabha of Karachi, which owes its existence to the efforts of Sjt. Jamsheer Mehta, Sidhwa and Barjorji Bharucha, is in no way anti-national: it is indeed national in every sense of the term. It has for its object the propagation of political education, Khadi and Swadeshi propaganda and prohibition. It is communal only in the sense that its membership is confined to Parsis, but there too the rules of the Sabha have made it assume a national character inasmuch as no Parsi who does not believe in Swadeshi or prohibition may be a member of the Sabha. Having this and similar restrictions and with the fulfilment of some items of the national programme as the end in view, all communities may have organisations like the Parsi Rajakiya Sabha. In a word any organisation meant to help a particular community fulfil the national programme ceases to be communal; and any organisation which restricts its activities to serving the narrow interests of a particular community is communal. The former lays a special emphasis on the duties of the community to the nation, the latter on the rights and interests of a particular community as apart from those of other communities or apart from those of the body politic.

If this enunciation of the principle is unobjectionable, and having already stated that the body in question is not communal in the light of this principle, I may say that the question for discussion suggested by Sjt. Sidhwa to Gandhiji, who was invited to address the newly started organisation in Karachi, would seem to jar on one's national instincts as it did on Gandhiji's. And he immediately applied the corrective in his own happy manner: "I did not suspect that my Parsi friends were so timid, but Sjt. Sidhwa has disillusioned me. Let me therefore reassure you that the Parsi community's interests do not need to be safeguarded in any scheme of Swaraj—inasmuch as the handful of men and women belonging to that adventurous

and resourceful community have never found any difficulty in any corner of the globe wherever they may have chanced to go. There were for instance only a few Parsi families in Poindandar in the days of my childhood when my father was Prime Minister there. But those families had carved out a status for themselves in the State. Why? Was it because their interests had been specially safeguarded by the State? Parsi Ru-tomji of happy memory enjoyed a unique position in the public life of the Indian community in South Africa not because he enjoyed any special privileges but because he had that resourcefulness and tact and public spirit with which Parsis are specially endowed.

"And who am I to safeguard your interests under Swaraj? Proportionately, perhaps, out of a population of a hundred thousand your community had more jail going Satyagrahis and Khadi wearers than any other community, or at any rate the Hindus. I have never met with a Parsi anywhere in the world content with the lot of an under-dog and wherever you have gone you have made your way in the world. What need have you for any special guarantees or safeguards? Supposing you were given proportional representation on the legislatures and on the cabinet, how many of you would be elected? But by your qualities of head and heart your men hold the foremost positions everywhere. I would therefore ask you to cast off such fears. You are called fire worshippers keeping the fires eternally blazing. I assure you that your sun is never going to set."

Let other small communities apply these remarks *mutatis mutandis* to themselves and feel secure in the knowledge that there will always be some nationalists who will prefer to lay down their lives to sacrificing the interests of a minor community.

'Equal Rights'

In the light of Gandhiji's remarks quoted in the note above, his speech in the old Council Hall at Delhi, on the occasion of the annual meeting of the federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce, which he was invited to address, will be better understood. That it was delivered in Hindi may well worry the *Times of India* which might now have to add to its staff a number of Hindi-knowing reporters and correspondents. In fact one may assure the journal that with a better knowledge of Hindi and therefore of India it will in future be guarded against perpetrating amusing howlers like the one of making the province of Utkal a place in Khulna district. But it did not worry the merchants who understood and appreciated it better than they would have done English. But the *Times of India's* sarcastic reference to Gandhiji's Hindi

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A Proud Record

really illustrates with peculiar force the truth of Gandhiji's remarks at the meeting of the Federation. Because there were half a dozen Europeans at the meeting who will not learn Hindi (they will pardon the assumption if it is not correct, but should blame not me but the *Times of India* for it), and perhaps because there was the reporter of the paper also who will not learn Hindi (or who knew better Hindi than Gandhiji), he should have addressed the whole Federation composed of 43 different commercial and mercantile associations drawn from all parts of India in English seems to be preposterous. But it is on a par with the Englishman's talk of 'Safeguards.' Having said this, I reproduce elsewhere for the benefit of the Englishman ignorant of Hindi a resume in English of that important speech. Perhaps the Englishmen will understand the speech better in the light of this brief but necessary exposure of the Anglo-Indian journal's claim that Gandhiji should have addressed the Federation in English.

Join the Congress

In the course of the address I have just referred to, Gandhiji made an appeal to the mercantile class to join the Congress, rather than expect the Congress to consult with them whenever economic questions were being discussed and decided upon by the Congress. Not that the Congress would not confer with the merchants. It has on its Public Debt Committee and other Committees well known Indians who are not Congressmen. But the appeal to join the Congress has been made not only to the merchants; it was made to the Parsis at Karachi, it was made to all the members of the Federation, it was made to the youths, and it was made to the Ulema (the Muslim divines) who had assembled in Conference at Karachi. I shall reproduce here only that part of the speech at the Ulemas' Conference, which contained this appeal, although the whole speech has an importance of its own:

"It is not right to say that the Congress is a Hindu organisation. What is the Congress to do if Muslims would not care to go into it? The Congress is based on adult franchise, and any adult Hindu or Musalman can join the Congress. No community is excluded. Ask the Muslim friends who are members of the Congress, and they will tell you that they have not come to grief by having joined the Congress. I ask you therefore not to suspect that the Congress is a Hindu organisation. I ask every one of you to join the Congress and to take charge of it. But one cannot take charge of it by force. It can be done only by willing service. Ever since the Congress was started, those who have served it have had charge of it. And yet the Congress does not belong only to them, does not stand only for them, it belongs to and stands for all. It is the Swaraj Government in embryo. Its prestige is ever so much superior to that of the British Government, and the Congress President is greater than the Viceroy. Only minded people and men in high places know the Viceroy. One needs a motorcar to reach the Viceregal House. But the poorest man knows the Congress President (at present Sardar Vallabhbhai) and can walk up to him. The Sardar has dedicated himself to the service of the country, and he who serves the poor is great in the eyes of God. If you want to be in power under Swaraj, I invite you to assume the reins of the Congress now by joining it in large numbers. It is the most powerful organisation in the country, join it. We will welcome you."

M. D.

For the first time during its ten years' existence those in charge of the Gujarat Vidyapith—Sjt. Kakasaheb Kalelkar the Principal and Sjt. Narahari Parikh the Registrar—allowed themselves to yield to a feeling of gratification at the progress achieved during the year by the Vidyapith. Kakasaheb said in effect that the Vidyapith had justified its existence during the year and that the students had had the unique opportunity of receiving an education which was worth the name. That however need not and cannot mean that the Vidyapith had no record in the past to be proud of. In fact the last year's achievement was the perfected fruit of the concentrated endeavour of the past ten years towards giving the students a training for life. The Gujarat Vidyapith has as its motto: 'that education is education which makes for freedom,' and the whole Vidyapith with its staff and students plunged wholeheartedly into the fight for freedom. Here is the record: 'Four teachers and 16 students went as a pilot party ahead of you when you started on your march. Of these 9 were ultimately absorbed in the marching contingent. Then the Vidyapith sent 6 batches for Satyagraha propaganda. In this there were 6 teachers and 25 students. The Vidyapith professors, teachers and associates are 41 strong, 27 of whom participated in the fight and 17 went to jail. Of the 77 students above the age of 16, 65 joined the struggle and 45 went to jail.'

But that is not all. The details behind the figures reveal a prouder record. Among the professors who went to jail was Sjt. Narahari Parikh, the Registrar, who, unbowed stood though bleeding under a shower of *lathi* blows, got his head broken and immortalised himself and the Vidyapith on the field of Dharasna. Even the *Times of India* paid a tribute to his bravery, and the whole of Gujarat felt that in the absence of Gandhiji pure non-violence had incarnated itself in Narahari Parikh. Among the students many had their share of the *lathi* blows, and the ladies who were either students or graduates of the Vidyapith or on its staff did not lag behind. In fact their part in the fight was described by Gandhiji in his speech as the crowning triumph of the Vidyapith. Shrimati Khorsheed-behn Naoroji was in charge of the picketing in Ahmedabad district. Shrinatus Mridulabehn and Ramabehn gave all their time to picketing of foreign cloth and kindred activities. Shrinati Khorsheed-behn went thrice to jail. Among the old students of the Vidyapith Shrinati Manibehn Patel went twice to jail and Shrinatis Indumati Saeh, Tara Mashruwala, Vasundhara, Jyotsna and Pramila rendered splendid service. The report is naturally silent about the contribution of the members of the Senate. The bulk of them too were imprisoned as Satyagrahis.

The contribution of those who were reserved for non-combatant service was in no way meagre. With Kakasaheb at their head, so long as he was out of jail, they trained 127 young men in the principles of Satyagraha. They prepared several valuable books, one of them being a spelling dictionary of the Gujarati language. The students who remained behind turned out a fair amount of manual work.

For the first time in its existence the Vidyapith gave diplomas without examination, those who had passed the test with distinction—and who had not?—

in the fight for freedom getting a special diploma. There was also a shorter course for those intending to dedicate themselves to village work. Their course was less literary and more manual and touched mainly the village problems.

Gandhiji's speech this time struck an entirely new departure. It was addressed not so much to the students of the Vidyapith as to the soldiers of Swaraj:

"I hope the village *dikshits* will not think less of themselves than the *snataks*. There is no small task. I should not be surprised if the former beat the latter by their record of work. I for one would say that there is more need for these *dikshits* than for *snataks*, for I have been saying since the inception of the Vidyapith that we must reach the villages through the Vidyapith. The *snataks*' ambition should also be to qualify themselves for service in the villages. We have not yet fully realised how the Vidyapith has served the nation."

Having said this, he paid a well deserved tribute to those who had taken a worthy part in the fight for freedom:

"I am delighted beyond measure to know of the part you have played in the great struggle. The Bihar Vidyapith and Kashi Vidyapith also distinguished themselves in a like manner. When the history of the fight comes to be written, the contribution of our Vidyapiths to the struggle will occupy a large space in it. Even the world will be proud of your glorious record. When in jail I read something about the students and teachers of the Vidyapith, I naturally drew a comparison between Government educational institutions and the national ones, and I felt that our programme for boycott of Government educational institutions had more than justified itself. When I say this, I do not lose sight of the fact that Government schools and colleges are still full of students. There is also the more painful fact that students are so eager to go to those institutions that they do not hesitate to sign the most abject apologies and to pay fines to get admission to them. I have known circulars by heads or directors of the educational department that those who may have directly or indirectly taken part in the struggle or who may have gone to jail may not be readmitted until after the previous sanction of these heads. What is one to say of those students and of those directors of education? I wonder if you know anything about the Government's attitude with regard to the Hindu University. It would have lost its grant, but for the fearlessness and the readiness for sacrifice of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviyaji. But even if the grant had been forfeited, Malaviyaji would not have shed a single tear. He was determined that the university should rather go without the grant than that any teacher or student who served the country be penalised for his service.

"Let the proud record of the Vidyapith fill the *snataks* and *dikshits* with pride that they are the alumni of no less an institution than the Gujarat Vidyapith. Let them not feel that they had joined the institution through sheer helplessness. Let them not be depressed by the thought that they are a handful. Though a handful they are like the ocean, and though the students of Government institutions resemble by

their numbers the ocean, they are as unreal as mirage. For the education that they receive and the life they are taught to live cannot give them the vital energy to win Swaraj, whereas an institution like the Vidyapith can do so in a large measure as one can see from the last year's record. Let those who have helped to maintain the Vidyapith realise that their money has been spent to noble purpose and that it has come back to them with compound interest. Let them study the Registrar's report and see if any institution in India can boast of a prouder record. I invite their attention to Kakasaheb's appeal for funds and and trust that the money needed will be paid up automatically."

But that led him to the question of economy in national expenditure and the duty of those who would have to run the Swaraj Government in future:

"I want you to study the Vidyapith accounts. You will see that strict economy has been maintained. I do not think any one can beat me in my passion for guarding and expending public money like a miser. The reason is obvious. Public money belongs to the poor public of India than whom there is none poorer on earth. That is why I asked the Sardar to make drastic cuts in the next year's budget for Gujarat. I am hoping that the provisional settlement may lead on to permanent peace, and I shall leave no stone unturned to achieve it. But man is often powerless before Nature. I at any rate cannot strive with Nature, and Nature seems for the time being to be against us. And if God wills that there should be no peace, you may be sure that the next struggle will be fiercer than the last and will engulf us all. And it may have to be fought without any resources. Gujarat may be always ready to contribute funds, but even the resources of Gujarat are not inexhaustible. Let us therefore think twice before we expend a pie and curtail our expenditure in all directions. I have often wondered where we get all our cars from, and whether we need them really. I know I often use motorcar but let no one follow my bad example. Let the *snatak* and the *dikshit* of the Vidyapith make a point of going out to the villages on foot whenever possible. Let us be worthy of Swaraj when it comes. Let us remember that we have 20 points now instead of 11 which contain the quintessence of Swaraj, and let me tell you that it was not I who fixed the maximum salary of the Swaraj Viceroy at Rs. 500 but Pandit Jawaharlal. He has given his thought to the problem and he has deliberately fixed that amount. And if that is to be the salary of the Viceroy, what is to be the remuneration of an ordinary worker? Let us keep that ideal in mind and cut our coat according to our cloth. The Government of today collects taxes by force and recovers revenue at the point of the bayonet. In Swaraj we shall not be able to do so, we will have numerous Gadhwalis to refuse to use arms against their brethren. Let us therefore order our affairs in the terms of the poor of the land. Let us not go to sleep, now that there is a provisional settlement. We have to be more wakeful, more cautious, more careful and let us be ready to account for every pie that we receive from the public."

M. D.

Young India

The Cult of Violence

(By M. K. GANDHI)

Mr. Peddie's murder and the making of the murderer of Mrs. Curtis a hero at the Sikh League meeting bring out in clear light the tragic fact that the cult of violence has still many votaries. The extolling of murderers is being overdone. The extolling of praisers of every murderer because the murder has a political motive behind it, we should proceed from praising the deed to the deed itself. The praising of Sajjansingh as a hero raises a doubt in my mind about the wisdom of my having been the author of the Congress resolution about Bhagatsingh. My motive was plain enough. The deed was condemned. The spirit of bravery and sacrifice was praised. The hope behind was that we would thereby be able to distinguish between the deed and the motive, and ultimately learn to detest deeds such as political murders, no matter how high the motive might be. But the effect of the Congress resolution has been perhaps quite the contrary. It seems to have given a passport for extolling murder itself. I repeat my deliberate opinion that whatever may be true of other countries, in India at least political murder can only harm the country. This is much more true whilst an experiment on the largest scale yet known to the world is being made to win liberty through strictly peaceful methods. He who runs can see that the experiment has proved its merit beyond all expectation, and is almost on the point of succeeding. I make bold to say that had the experiment not been interrupted by political murders and the violence in thought and less often in speech and still less often in action of civil resisters, India would by this time have been free.

Non-violence is the weapon not of the weak but of the strong. Non-violence means forgiving an injury and not retaliating. "Forgiveness is an ornament of the strong," says a Sanskrit proverb. Yudhishtira gave an exhibition of this quality when he even though provoked beyond measure by Virata not only forgave him but took extraordinary measures to protect him against the wrath of his brother Arjuna who would but for those precautions have killed him for insulting and injuring the great king Yudhishtira.

Non-violence is not a mechanical performance. It is the finest quality of the heart and comes by training. When it comes, it seems, because it is, natural, and the possessor wonders that it should have cost any trouble at all in its attainment. What can be more natural than to return blow for blow, says the beast in us. What can be more natural or more human than that we should return a blow with forgiveness, says the man in us. He who gave the blow was ignorant and forgot himself. Why should the injured person betray ignorance and forget himself? Are the many wives who suffer the brutalities of their brutal husbands more than human because they forgive their husbands? They would of course do better if

क्षमा वीरस्य भूषणम् ।

they would not add pampering to their forgiveness and would withdraw co-operation from their husbands for the latter's own sakes.

But let me not go into deeper waters. Those who profess non-violence should realise their strength and be non-violent in thought, word and deed. Let those, who still doubt the efficacy of the non-violent method and are not sure of that of the violent method, ponder over the following:

1. India's millions have no tradition of the violent method.
2. They, the villagers, have never been known to have combined on any large scale to use the violent method.
3. They have no definite idea as yet of political freedom in terms of India as one country.
4. Where as in Europe the people have gained their freedom by the violent method, the people were more or less trained in the use of arms.
5. They, the peoples of Europe, gained their freedom by being able to use greater violence than the enthroned authority.
6. It is at least doubtful if they, not excluding the English, have got real freedom. The masses there still feel that they are being ground down by the moneyed classes who have the reins of government in their hands. Look at their varied problems ever increasing in perplexity.
7. In India on the other hand we know that it is through the non-violent method alone that the phenomenal mass consciousness, including the awakening of women, has come into being.
8. We know as a proved fact that where the people erred and became violent, they lost ground, became demoralised and were cowed down.

If I were to give more thought to the past twelve months I could elaborate the list. But as it is, it is perhaps enough for my purpose.

To those who have settled convictions in favour of the violent method, I say: 'You will give me the same credit that you claim for yourselves for lots of the country. If so, you should accept my testimony that by mixing your method with mine you protract the agony. The belief which, I know, some of you hold that an occasional murder of an official helps the cause is wholly unfounded. On the contrary I know that every murder has hampered me in my pursuit. I know that you are as anxious as I am, you will probably say you are more anxious than I am, for the release of all political prisoners. You must admit that the terrorist method can only retard their discharge. Constituted as this Government is, all governments are, they will not discharge political offenders convicted of violence when political violence takes place. All things considered, therefore, you will do well to listen to my advice and reject, and suspend your activities whilst the nation is giving a trial to my experiment.'

To Subscribers

Government not having still returned the confiscated machinery, we are encountering great difficulty in bringing out the paper in time. Subscribers will therefore kindly excuse us if they receive their copy a day later than usual.

Manager, Young India

An Englishman's Dilemma

(By M. K. GANDHI)

India knows the Englishman who carried my letter containing the eleven points to the Viceroy and who waged a ceaseless struggle in the face of heavy odds in England whilst the civil disobedience was going on. Mr. Reginald Reynolds now writes the following plaintive letter:

"I was very glad to hear from you in reply to my letter. Before this reply came the newspapers had already informed me, of course, of all that happened at Delhi, which from my point of view so badly needed explanation.

"I must frankly confess that your letter leaves me entirely unconvinced. No one who knows you would doubt your sincerity, and so long as you can still speak for India, it is hardly the business of any Englishman to criticise your actions. Nevertheless, you will be the first to recognise my complete right to disagree with you, which I do emphatically on the following points:

"1. The Government is not pledged to grant Purna Swaraj, and it would be thrown out if it attempted to do so. Macdonald only remains in office because he has not the courage to deal justly with your country, and justice would cost him that office. If you accept less than Purna Swaraj, less than your birthright, that is to say, where does the Independence Resolution at Lahore come in, and how does it differ from 'Dominion Status'? What advance was made, and what did the pledge really mean?

"2. Oppression still continues. How do you hope for freedom from the hands of those who defy Indian public opinion and use their armed forces to drive bargains with you on your own soil for a 'truce'? Where is the 'change of heart'?

"3. From time to time you have put forward terms—the Delhi Manifesto of November 1929, your own Eleven Points, the terms you gave to Slcombe, the 'Gandhi-Nehru Terms.' What has become of these? The Government meets them in graceful 'concessions' whereby a few are to be fulfilled in some measure at its own 'discretion.' But they have not pledged themselves to anything in the way of self government.

"Nothing secures the proper and adequate representation of Congress in the forthcoming Conference (where you may easily be swamped by reactionaries appointed by the Government as supplied or the previous Conference).

"There is no promise of the conditional release of all political prisoners (including those in jail before the present campaign).

"And so on—you know the points infinitely better than I do.

"I wish you Indian leaders could realise how extraordinarily difficult this makes things for those who want to help and look to you for leadership. If you do not stand by your terms, what surety is there in our case? We believed your terms to be minimum terms, from which you would never depart. Instead, we find you bargaining and whitening these terms down. How can we even speak with certain regard, and who would believe us if we did?

"4. From the purely tactical point of view I cannot see what you have gained. Civil

disobedience was commenced, I take it, because the Government would not accept the Delhi Manifesto. They have not accepted it to-day—not one of your four points. The arguments you use now for conciliatory methods are the very arguments which were then used by many to dissuade you from your course and bring you to the Round Table Conference. Those arguments you then rejected; why do you now advance them? The country has suffered terribly, but what for? Many are still in prison, much confiscated property is unreturned, so are the dead, and the work of the lathi cannot be explained—what have you to show for this? What offer has Lord Irwin made that he was not ready to make before civil disobedience began? With the exception of the small concession in the matter of salt, I can see no single right or principle that has been established. The truce does not even represent the *status quo ante bellum*: it is a partial and patronising restoration on the part of the Government of some of its spoils acquired during the struggle, but not of any of those rights for which the struggle itself was fought.

"You will, I know, forgive my bluntness. I have neither age nor experience, but I have, I believe, enough commonsense to appreciate such a situation as this. You will see that I attack your position from two sides, as it were. Firstly, because it is too moderate, and secondly because (having regard to the moderation of your final position) your methods seem to me now needlessly drastic. Had you been moderate throughout I should have disagreed but understood. But to adopt the method of a non-violent revolution with all its suffering in order to gain nothing at all—that is a policy I do not understand. Will India understand it?

"I would like to venture one more final criticism. You live for the Indian masses—for the peasant and the labourer. Everywhere in this country I have made that clear, and done my best to dispel the common idea that Swaraj means the rule of the Brahman and the Bania, and the oppression of the poor. How then can the reactionary proposals of St. James' Palace in any way satisfy you? There has always been one point on which I have agreed with our worst English reactionaries such as Churchill—though I doubt whether they seriously care about it. They say that the so-called 'reforms' are only designed to benefit and conciliate the propertied classes of India and increase their power over the illiterate millions. I agree with this, and I have always said, 'Swaraj is not that: it is the opposite of that: it is the overthrow of the present conspiracy between British Imperialism and Indian Capitalism, and its replacement by a living and conscious democracy, which alone can protect the classes now socially or economically depressed. If this is true,—and nothing less would have led me to the service of Swaraj,—what do you hope from Conferences of princes, Zamindars, industrialists and the like? I know there are men among them who are above the interests of class; but what do these as a body represent that is not more bound up with British Imperialism than with Indian democracy?"

I have removed nothing from the letter except domestic and personal references. I publish the letter at Mr. Reynolds' wish. And I do so with pleasure as I know, that though by reason of amazing faith in me the Congress endorsed the pact, there are Indians who share this brave Englishman's views. There must be also some Englishmen, be they ever so few, who are puzzled like Reynolds over my moderation and so-called inconsistency. I must, therefore, attempt to answer Reynolds' complaints for his and their sakes. India will want their active help and sympathy for many a year to come.

The charge of moderation I must admit. Friends who know me have certified that I am as much a moderate as I am an extremist and as much conservative as I am a radical. Hence perhaps my good fortune to have friends among these extreme types of men. The mixture is due, I believe, to my view of *ahimsa*.

Inconsistency is only apparent. It appears so to many friends because of my responsiveness to varying circumstances. Seeming consistency may really be sheer obstinacy.

The real point is this. Charges of moderation or extremism or inconsistency ought not to matter. What must count with a public servant is the approbation of his own conscience. He must be like a rudderless vessel who, leaving the infallible solace of his own conscience, ever seeks to please and gain the approbation of the public. Service must be its own and sole reward. Whether therefore the argument and facts I am about to set forth serve their purpose or not, it must be sufficient for the reader as it is, I am aware, for Reynolds to know that in entering upon and advising the acceptance of the settlement, I have done what in my opinion was not only right but obligatory.

Now for the facts and the arguments. Reynolds and those who think like him have been led into confusion because he and they have missed the historical perspective. A single new factor may change a whole situation. Reynolds mentions four events: (1) The Delhi Manifesto of November 1929, (2) The Eleven Points, (3) The terms given to Mr. Slocombe, (4) The Gandhi-Nehru terms.

The Delhi Manifesto was an answer to Lord Irwin's famous declaration and was therefore just confined to that declaration.

The Eleven Points letter was written as a precursor to civil disobedience and set forth the conditions on which civil disobedience could be averted. It had therefore to be different from the November Manifesto.

The terms to Mr. Slocombe were given just after the commencement of civil disobedience. There was therefore a slight variation from the eleven points letter but no reduction of it.

The Gandhi-Nehru terms were given during the height of the movement and whilst we were all in custody and thus by being shut out of the world at a disadvantage. In all the four stages the Round Table Conference had not been held, the Government policy was not declared.

The settlement is the natural evolution from the first stage. Whatever the variations between the stages, they are due to the varying situations. Unlike as in the four stages, the Round Table Conference had been held and the Government policy declared before the fifth stage, *i. e.*, the settlement was reached.

At no other time was it possible to offer co-operation at the Round Table Conference because the

British Government would not declare its policy and the intention of the delegates to the Conference was not known. But at Delhi last March the demand of the Conference delegates was known as was also known the British policy. The demand was Dominion Status. The British policy was a declaration tantamount to the acceptance of the demand.

Not that either the Indian demand for Dominion Status or the British declaration satisfy the Congress requirement, especially as they are hedged in by the so-called safeguards which, according to the Congress notion, certainly are not designed in the interest of India.

Nevertheless this is an unmistakable advance upon the past uncertainty. And when it was ascertained that it was possible for the Congress to press forward its view to the fullest extent, it was felt that the Congress would put itself in the wrong if it had declined to put forth its demand and press for its acceptance at a Round Table. The Congress would have been bound at any stage to enter upon a discussion of its claims after such declaration as has been made by the British Government. A Satyagrahi never misses, can never miss a chance of compromise on honourable terms, it being always assumed that in the event of failure he is ever ready to offer battle. He needs no previous preparation, his cards are always on the table. Suspension or continuation of battle is one and the same thing to him. He fights or refrains to gain precisely the same end. He dare not always distrust his opponents. On the contrary he must grasp the hand of friendship whenever there is the slightest pretext. The pretext here was the unexpectedly unanimous Indian demand, the British response inadequate though it was and the utter sincerity running through Lord Irwin's conversations.

I have never claimed any change of heart on the part of the powers that be. That has still to come. When it comes, there will be a settlement not merely provisional but absolutely permanent. Then there will be full surrender on the part of the Satyagrahi; for change of heart means surrender to the Indian demand *in toto* and without any mental reservation.

Lastly throughout all the stages there never has been a lowering of the flag. Dominion Status was given up on 23rd December 1929. It is now Complete Independence, *i. e.*, association if possible with the British on equal terms and with the right to either party to dissolve it at will. That this may not be attained through Conference as yet is quite possible; that the so-called safeguards may remain halts that they are is also highly possible. If so the Congress will not be responsible for failure, but it will come out with enhanced moral prestige and its demand more fully known and equally fully justified. It is true that all the political prisoners are not discharged. Their discharge could not be demanded as part of the *provisional* settlement. They will be discharged if full settlement is reached. If it is not reached, those who are temporarily out will then be in and increase the army of political prisoners. For a Satyagrahi a prisoner's life is no disability, no unhappiness. Prison for him is the gateway to freedom.

Lastly let there be no mistake as to what *Purna Swaraj* means to the Congress. It is full economic freedom for the toiling millions. It is no unholy alliance with any interest for their exploitation. Any alliance must mean their deliverance.

Notes

Malaviyaji and Working Committee

A reader asks: "You explained to the Subject's Committee at Karachi why you kept out the members from the South, you never explained why you kept out Pandi Malaviyaji." The explanation was so obvious that nobody called for it. There could be no question of offending Malaviyaji. He is above being offended. No organisation can add to his status or importance by enrolling him as a member. His membership can add to its prestige. The Working Committee deliberately kept him out in order to preserve his independence and freedom of action at a given moment. Without being a member, since the release of leaders, he has always been attending the Working Committee meetings and taking an active part in its deliberations. Valuable as his work on the Committee has been, the members thought that his being subjected to the Committee's discipline might prove embarrassing to him. Indeed Dr. Ansari was so eager for Malaviyaji to be on the Committee that he preferred to be dropped out in favour of Malaviyaji. But the consideration I have just mentioned was so effectively urged by Jammaalji that Dr. Ansari too became reconciled to Malaviyaji being kept out. This arrangement permits the Committee to avail itself of Malaviyaji's advice at its deliberations and at the same time leaves intact his freedom of action. Indeed even the Government has recognized his unique position in society by separately inviting him to the R. T. C.

Boycott through Khadi

Last year saw a striking increase in the production and sale of Khadi all over the country. This was in the main due to the phenomenal demand stimulated by the struggle of which Khadi at once became the symbol. Sales so far outran the demand that workers were hard put to it to organise new fields of production to meet the sudden rise in demand.

The ground thus gained during the year of national awakening should not be lost, but on the contrary, should be made the basis of still further expansion. The devotion of war time must continue during the period of peace, if the fruits of the work are not to be lost. The Congress attitude in favour of Khadi remains the same in spite of the recognition of indigenous mills as a part of the boycott programme. It must not mean supersession of Khadi. Mill manufacture is to supplement Khadi where the latter is absolutely unobtainable. But at the present moment Khadi can overtake all the demand that can be made upon it. Khadi holds the key position in the foreign cloth boycott programme. Not merely is no effective boycott of foreign cloth possible without working up the vast possibilities of Khadi production, but if the fruits of the national boycott are to benefit the millions of our village population and not merely the monied few, it can be done only by the widest possible spread of the life-giving wheel. That is why the Congress at Karachi has again emphasised the unique position of Khadi in the boycott programme, and has appealed to all Congress organisations and allied bodies to intensify foreign cloth boycott by increasing Khadi propaganda. The experience of the last year has shown the capacity of Khadi production to respond promptly to any increase in demand; and

we have to maintain not merely the existing work, but extend the spinning activities still further. The least that we must do is to reach the level of last year if we cannot show a substantial increase upon it.

M. K. G.

Question of Safeguards

[The following is a condensed translation of Gandhiji's speech before the Federation of the Indian Chambers of Commerce at the old Council Hall, Delhi, on the 7th March.]

I hope the English friends here will forgive me for addressing you in the national language. I recall on this occasion the War Conference in Delhi which was held in this very hall in 1918 and in which after some discussion with the Viceroy I consented to participate. But when I consented to do so I requested the Viceroy to permit me to address the Conference in Hindi or Hindustani. I knew there was no need to ask for this permission, but courtesy required that I should do so, lest my speaking in Hindi should shock the Viceroy. In this very same hall today I propose to follow the same practice. And I would suggest to you, members of the Federation, that it is your duty to carry on your proceedings in the national language, looking to the fact that the members of the Federation are all Indians and that you are allowing yourselves to be influenced by the present national spirit. Whilst I was listening to the President's address with attention, I wondered whether in speaking in a foreign language he would succeed in making you and on me the impression that he desired. In no other country, dependent or independent, was such an anomaly to be met with. In South Africa, which is a thinly populated country, there has been a long struggle for precedence between English and Taal (a dialect of Dutch) with the result that the English colonists had to yield to the brave Dutch in recognising Taal as the official language on the same footing as English.

Your President has dwelt at length on the insistence of the Englishmen that in any constitution which may be granted to India the rights of Englishmen, especially of the English commercial and mercantile firms in India, should be safeguarded. The Congress has considered this question carefully, and I should like to state its position. It has been said that Indian Swaraj will be the rule of the majority community, *i. e.*, the Hindus. There could not be a greater mistake than that. If it were to be true, I for one would refuse to call it Swaraj and would fight it with all the strength at my command, for to me Hind Swaraj is the rule of all the people, is the rule of justice. Whether under that rule the ministers were Hindus or Musalmans or Sikhs, and whether the legislatures were exclusively filled by the Hindus or Musalmans or any other community, they would have to do even-handed justice. And just as no community in India need have any fear of Swaraj being monopolised by any other, even so the English should have no fear. The question of safeguards should not arise at all. Swaraj would be real Swaraj only when there would be no occasion for safeguarding any such rights.

Not Prejudice but Clash of Cultures

How is it that the insistence on equal rights by Europeans comes to us with a shock of surprise?

How is it that it does not strike us as natural and legitimate? The answer puts me in mind of an incident in South Africa. You know that I fought General Smuts in South Africa for a number of years. With reference to the question of race prejudice and colour prejudice there he once told me a story which impressed me very much. "When I was about the same time as you studying in England," he said, "I had no race prejudice or colour prejudice against your people. In fact if we had known each other we should have lived as friends or brothers. Why is it then that now we have become rivals, that we have conflicting interests? It is not colour prejudice or race prejudice, though some of our people do ignorantly talk in those terms, but there is one thing which I want you to recognise. It is this. I may have no racial legislation, but how will you solve the difficulty about the fundamental difference between our cultures? Let alone the question of superiority, there is no doubt but that your civilisation is different from ours. Ours must not be overwhelmed by yours. That is why we have to go in for legislation which must in effect put disabilities on you." I understood what he said and recognised that we could not have any other standard there. I also appreciated the fear of being swamped in these days of swift communications. If, therefore, we wanted to live in South Africa, I said to myself, we must adopt their standard of life, so long as it was not against morality.

Let us try to understand the genesis of this talk of equal rights in the light of what I have said. With all deference I would tell the Englishmen that at the back of their insistence is their insistence on living their standard and civilisation. There is a wide gulf between our way of life and that of the Viceroy however good he may be. Our people, when they go abroad, adopt the manners and customs of those countries, but shed them as soon as they come back home, and if they retain them, they become strangers. It is a mercy that the Western way of life has not yet taken deep root in our country. But the fear at the back of the Indian's mind is lest he should be swamped by the onrush of Western civilisation. In this problem I invite the help of all Englishmen who, if they choose to stay here, must live in conformity with our way of life and as the servants of our country. The same cause has been at the root of the clash between the Chinese and the Europeans and the Chinese and the Americans. I want our English friends to understand what I am saying. The whole trouble arises out of the Englishman's insistence on living according to his Western way of life and according to Western standards. I am quite aware that our civilisation has its blemishes,—untouchability is an indelible stain on Hinduism and I have called it satanic,—but I do not want to give Hinduism up, for the simple reason that I was born and bred in it. I would purge it of its blemishes. If then we contemplate examining so-called vested rights in the light of India's interest, it is not because of racial prejudice but because of vital necessity. Their vested rights may not smother nascent indigenous enterprise.

Merchants and Congress

Your President has paid a tribute to the Congress, and suggested, that the Congress should confer with

commercial experts in economic matters. I welcome the suggestion. The Congress would always be glad of your advice and help. I may tell you that the Congress does not belong to any particular group of men; it belongs to all, but the protection of the poor peasantry, which forms the bulk of the population, must be its primary interest. The Congress must, therefore, truly represent the poor. But that does not mean that all other classes—the middle classes, the capitalist or zamindar—must go under. All that it aims at is that all other classes must subserve the interest of the poor. The Congress stands for the industrial prosperity and progress of India. The industrial classes are slowly coming within the Congress fold. During the past year they rendered it help for which we cannot be too grateful. In fact your invitation to me to address you is not due to my name, but because I am a humble servant of the Congress and representative of *Daridranarayan*. I cannot forget the services rendered by the commercial classes, but I want you to go a step further. I want you to make the Congress your own and we would willingly surrender the reins to you. The work can be better done by you. But if you decide to assume the reins, you can do so only on one condition. You should regard yourselves as trustees and servants of the poor. Your commerce must be regulated for the benefit of the toiling millions, or, as Pandit Malaviya would put it, you must be satisfied with earning the 'pure cowrie,' i. e., an honest penny. I do not for a moment believe that commercial prosperity is incompatible with strict honesty. I know businessmen who are absolutely honest and scrupulous in their dealings. It is thus easily open to you to take charge of the Congress. You know that there is no constitution more democratic than the Congress constitution, it has worked for ten years without a hitch. It is based practically on adult suffrage.

If we want your co-operation in our task, I want that of the Englishmen too. I want to remind them of the services rendered to the Congress in the past by distinguished Englishmen and Englishwomen like Hume, Yule, Wedderburn, and Dr. Basant. In fact the Congress owes its birth to the genius of a large-hearted Englishman. And I want Englishmen now to join us in our work of serving the poor. It is entirely a matter of good will, a matter of the heart. Give your heart to the poor of India. In conclusion I repeat that the Congress seeks to represent all. Our nationalism can be no peril to other nations, inasmuch as we will exploit none just as we will allow none to exploit us. Through *Swaraj* we would serve the whole world. In this task I invite your greater co-operation so that civil disobedience may not have to be resumed. With your material and intellectual co-operation heartily rendered, our demand for *Swaraj* would be absolutely irresistible.

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Printed at Navajivan Madrasalaya in Tankhavanji
Pole, Kalapur, and published from Navajivan Karyalaya,
Gandhi Road, Ahmedabad, by Mohanlal Majumdar Bhatta.