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FARM AND FACTORY IN CHINA

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*Aspects of the Industrial Revolution*

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**TO MY FELLOW-STUDENTS  
OF CHINA  
CHINESE AND FOREIGN**

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## FOREWORD

TWENTY years ago, the writer<sup>1</sup> and a Chinese friend visited a prosperous match factory. They were taken first to a large room in which young boys, standing at long benches, were packing matches into boxes. The process was accompanied by many flashes, as the matches, which were of the strike-anywhere variety, ignited through friction. Protection from fire, both for the boys' hands and for the building, was woefully primitive. Passing on, the visitors rapidly came to the mixing-room, where the phosphorus, together with the other ingredients, was stirred into glue to form the material for the heads of the matches. The room was a small one, with almost no ventilation; the phosphorus was the yellow (white) kind, which, unlike the inert red form, is intensely active and poisonous. For this reason its use is now widely prohibited.<sup>2</sup>

As the phosphorus was stirred in, in open mortars on a table in the centre of the room, frequent bursts of flame formed puffs of white fume. No hoods were provided, nor any artificial draught, and the air was thick and nauseating. When questioned as to the occurrence of phossy-

<sup>1</sup> Then a teacher of chemistry in China, with previous industrial experience in Lancashire.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 100.

jaw among the workers, the manager, a kindly man who had learnt the industry in Japan, confessed to having known fatal cases in the latter country and admitted that some of his own men had been obliged to give up work in his factory. He listened readily to information as to the use of red, non-poisonous phosphorus and, failing that, as to means for drawing off the fumes. In the latter respect considerable improvements were effected.

The making up of the match-boxes was done outside the factory by women and children, despite the fact that most of the employees in the factory itself were small boys, who did all but the heaviest work. Strips of wood, nicked at the right places, and strips of paper, were prepared on the premises, but the folding and pasting together were done in the homes at incredibly low rates. Here was a factory which was regarded in the immediate neighbourhood as a godsend, finding employment for many, reducing poverty and almost abolishing begging. Yet in it were exemplified all the evils of unregulated child-labour, the conditions which lead to "sweating," and lack of protection from the dangers of a trade particularly injurious to health.

This incident may serve to raise the questions : What is happening in China in the sphere of industry ? What does the process of being drawn into the main stream of the world's economic life mean for the people of this eastern land ? What, in its turn, does the line of China's in-

dustrial development mean for the world at large ?

The China of to-day is full of striking contrasts, of mediæval and modern ; she forms the field of the most intensive communist propaganda. Her people are making trial of modern industrial methods and fashioning a new industrial philosophy at a time when she has not only broken from her old moorings but is adrift on an as yet—to her—uncharted sea. Her strongest driving power is a passionate nationalism—and her economic problems bristle with international complications. How intimately the industrial phases of her changing life are bound up with the stirring and tragic events of recent years must be clear to all. We need only remind ourselves, to take one example, that the “Shanghai incident” of 30th May 1925 occurred in the course of a demonstration against the killing of a Chinese workman by his Japanese foreman. It is perhaps less clearly realized how profoundly economic change is transforming the social institutions in China and the daily life of her people.

The forces moulding modern China cannot be estimated without some knowledge of the traditional economy handed down from the past. This brief study accordingly begins with the village peasant and the handicraftsman of old, but still existing, China. The imaginative effort to enter into the simple life of these people who constitute some of the finest of human material,

is one of the essential conditions for understanding the needs and the tendencies of the present. The chief purpose of the book is to contribute something, however small, to such an understanding.

## CHAPTER I

### THE VILLAGE AND THE PEASANT FARMER

#### 1. THE PEASANT AND HIS VILLAGE HOME.

THERE is much that is attractive about country life in China, and at times its charm is strongly felt. To enter a village on the Great Plain in the autumn is to be presented with delightful pictures of still life and happy labour, set in scenes of varied colour and lighted with golden sunshine. The air is full of the joy of harvest, and everything conspires to awaken memories associated with some of the most treasured literature of the past. The open threshing floors of rolled or beaten earth are the centre of life and interest. Here the fruits of the season's toil are brought; the muzzled ox or ass treads out the corn or rolls the beans; the peasant winnows the grain by shovel or simple machine, or his wife winnows it by fan. In the fields men are ploughing the recently harvested land or sowing winter wheat. Touches of bright colour, lightening the customary drab, are provided by the cobs of maize sunning on the gently sloping roofs of peasants' homes and barns, and by the burden

of the fruit-trees. For a time, at least, the people's simple wants are met.

But there is a darker side to the picture which even the brightest sunshine is powerless to dispel. The sun may light up flood waters and ruined homes, or reveal the emptiness of the barns, and crops scorched by drought. China has recently been described as the land of famine.<sup>1</sup> The unevenness of the rainfall is such that in Chihli most of the precipitation occurs in a few weeks in the summer. A missionary living south of Peking crossed one of the largest rivers of the province dry-shod one July to find himself, three weeks later, prisoner in a flood which altogether covered twelve thousand square miles. And whether the year is good or bad the three spectres of poverty, ignorance, and disease are never absent.<sup>2</sup>

To those accustomed to the motor-buses and asphalted roads of, say, modern England, it is difficult even to imagine the isolation of villages in China, connected with one another only by footpaths, or by cart-tracks on the earth, which are ploughed over by the farmer in autumn or spring and are watercourses in the summer. Traffic may be at anything from two to four miles an hour—when it is possible at all. China has not even India's macadamized roads, though

<sup>1</sup> *China: Land of Famine*, by W. H. Mallory, American Geographical Society.

<sup>2</sup> For similar conditions in India, see *From Field to Factory*, by M. Read, pp. 32-33. S.C.M.

a "Good Roads Movement" is one of the signs of the times. The isolation due to lack of transport is intensified by the prevalent illiteracy. Literacy in the country villages in China is limited to a very small percentage of the people, being made especially difficult by the character of the language and the difference between literature and speech, which is as great as that between old Anglo-Saxon and modern English. The Renaissance in China is indeed creating a new literature, based on the vernacular, and the Mass Education Movement is making an attack on illiteracy, but it will necessarily be a long time before the effects of these movements are strongly felt in the villages. Soon after the Revolution in 1911, a farmer was asked what he thought of the Republic. Scratching his head, he replied that he had heard that the Emperor had had a quarrel with a man named Yuan; which was probably as much as three-quarters of the people understood about the change of government. The result of isolation, poverty and ignorance is a state of inertia and stagnation which only the most powerful forces can hope to move. Even the cheerfulness of the people in the face of calamity is only made possible by a considerable measure of callousness bred of lack of hope.

Under these conditions it is not surprising that the country districts are still living a self-contained, self-sufficing life to an extent not met with in our industrialized communities of the

West. Professor Buck of Nanking, in a study of 150 farms in one locality in North China,<sup>1</sup> found that these farmers marketed just over half their crops, and that on the average seventy per cent. of the entire family living was directly supplied by the family's own farm and labour. The village needs for outside goods are still largely supplied by travelling pedlars, annual temple fairs<sup>2</sup> and periodic markets; though in the larger centres shops are of growing importance. An interesting development in recent years has arisen in the successful efforts of the great oil companies (the Standard Oil Company and the Asiatic Petroleum Company) and the British-American Tobacco Company to persuade the villagers to light their homes with kerosene and smoke cigarettes. In the process they have covered China with a wonderful network of distributing agencies.

These isolated villages of illiterate peasants are the conservative strongholds of China's ancient life. Here still flourishes the "joint family," including in one homestead all the direct male descendants of the oldest surviving member, with their wives and families. The oldest member, or

<sup>1</sup> *An Economic and Social Survey of 150 Farms, Yenshan County, Chihli Province*, J. Loesing Buck, University of Nanking Publications.

<sup>2</sup> These temple fairs are often the great economic and social events of the year, accompanied by travelling theatricals, and attracting the villagers in hundreds and sometimes thousands from miles around.

his widow—for the distinction of this position overcomes even the disability of sex—is head of the family and exercises almost unlimited patriarchal power. He holds the family purse, controls even middle-aged sons, and must give his consent to every important departure on the part of any member of the family. Even marriage is a responsibility, not only of those entering upon it, but of the head and of all the members with him. If it brings the family a new worker in the person of the bride—and this sometimes seems to be the paramount consideration—her support and that of her children fall, not exclusively upon the husband, but collectively on the whole family.

This joint-family system has been the strength and weakness of China. Informed with the spirit of ancestor worship, it created at once the stability arising from filial piety and the stagnation resulting from excessive regard for the past; it has subordinated the young to the old, the living to the dead, and women to child-bearing, through early marriage and the reckless multiplication of the race.<sup>1</sup> It has made for social democracy—the brilliant scholar and the distinguished official being members equally with

<sup>1</sup> A Chinese friend points out that the social prestige of a large family saddles the older men with the support of the young. The fact is that young and old, men and women, are sacrificed to the family ideal. As the Chinese saying has it, parents are cow and horse for the children, providing their sustenance and performing their tasks.

the simple peasant who shares their glory—but it has laid a burden on the able which has often crippled their usefulness and which they have sometimes been unable to carry. It has been a powerful cement, binding together large groups in social and economic unity in a manner especially useful in the self-contained static conditions of the past, but it has equally formed a barrier beyond which social obligation has rarely been felt, rendering nepotism a religious duty and standing in the way of broader union. The sinister influence of nepotism, *i.e.*, undue favouritism to one's relations in the bestowal of appointments, etc., is widely apparent in both industrial and political life as one of the chief obstacles in the path of progress. To-day, however, this joint-family system, so central in the life of China, is being weakened among the more educated by the influence of new ideas, and among the poor (as we shall see) by the changing conditions of industrial life.

The village itself has been the simplest possible aggregate of these joint families, its affairs democratically managed by elders elected by the heads of the families. Land, speaking broadly, has been the freehold possession of the individual families, not the communal property of the village. In the south a small group of villages has usually been the scene of clan life, but in the north the clan is not important. When the village has coincided with the clan there has been common clan ownership of a portion of the land

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which has provided alms for the poorest of its members and income to defray the expenses of the clan festivals and the support of scholars. There has been no caste system, such as that of India, determining occupation and assuring status, and the feudal period passed away two millenniums ago. The common activities of the village are simple, including provision for temple worship, the entertainment of travelling theatricals, the lighting of the village street, the maintenance of peace and sometimes the collective protection of the crops.

Such is the setting in which the peasant lives, and of which he is largely the product. He himself is still the backbone of the country, he and his family forming probably over eighty per cent. of the population and furnishing an inexhaustible labour supply for city industry. Thrifty and industrious, sturdy and independent, patient even in adversity, he gives the impression of great possibilities. But here again there is the darker side. Village life is full of mutual suspicion. Generally honest, though honesty is unpleasantly associated in China with dullness, often wonderfully loyal, as the old man who through a winter's night stayed to staunch with his body a leak in the village dyke and was found frozen to death in the morning, but more often callous and indifferent, in their mingled strength and weakness these "farmers of forty centuries" are the warp on which the web of China's future must be woven.

## 2. THE PRESSURE OF POPULATION.

The insistence on the securing of descendants mentioned in connection with the joint family, renders it not surprising that there are many evidences of over-population. The size of a family for example is found to depend on that of the farm. The smaller holdings are inadequate for the support of those living on them. In a study of nearly 3000 families in various villages in Chihli, the average size of 372 families with less than half an acre per family was 2.7, and the number of persons per family steadily increased until the average of 14.8 was reached for 29 families with between 33 and 83 acres apiece. One family owning 170 acres consisted of 21 persons<sup>1</sup> Professor Buck found in a group of villages in the same province that about two-thirds of an acre seemed to be required per person.<sup>2</sup> A large proportion of the population fall below this ratio. Those with little land eke out a livelihood with subsidiary means of support, but the opportunities in this direction are woefully inadequate. Statistics are not available, but the impression of those who have considered

<sup>1</sup> "The Study of Chinese Rural Economy," C. M. Malone and J. B. Taylor, *Chinese Social and Political Science Review*, January and April 1919. The authors do not claim a high degree of accuracy for these figures, but believe they sufficiently indicate the general situation.

<sup>2</sup> Coll. of Agric. and Forestry, Univ. of Nanking, *Bulletin* 13. See Appendix, p. 106.

the question is strong that industry and colonization are not absorbing the surplus, and that chronic undernourishment, weakening the constitution, is causing a high death-rate among the poor.

From such figures as we have, population in China seems to bear more heavily upon the means of subsistence than in either India or Japan. In India in a recent census the most densely peopled area was Bengal, with a population of 1162 per square mile of cultivated land.<sup>1</sup> The United Provinces came next, with 816 for Oudh and 761 for Agra. Madras had 614 and Bombay 308. The figure for Japan was 2349, but that included not only the rural areas which we are considering but the cities as well, and Japan is no longer self-sufficing in the matter of food. In Chihli the figures in various villages ranged from 550 to over 2000. In Shantung they are believed often to exceed 2000. In several villages in the rice-lands of Chekiang the density ranged from 2270 to 6860 persons per square mile of cultivated land.

Some unpublished figures of Professor Buck's indicate a rather high rate of increase in the rural population, but sufficient data do not yet exist to permit of general conclusions. We do know that a few districts in South China have

<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that the figures give the population in relation not to total area but to that of cultivated land. The figures for China are therefore not comparable with those of the Post Office and other estimates.

supplied such an overseas migration that China, without any colonies, has over nine million of her people abroad. In the North the Chinese colonization of Manchuria and Mongolia will demand further notice. The outward pressure of China's population is a phenomenon of which we should hear a great deal more were there statistics to tell the tale and were China a powerful nation like Japan.

Professor Clay has pointed out that the increase in irrigated area in Egypt has not greatly benefited the individual fellaheen; it has simply increased the numbers of them. No form of economic development in China will be of any avail unless there is a fundamental change in social outlook affecting family life, the growth of population and the standards demanded by the workers.

### 3. THE FARMER'S LIVELIHOOD.

The chief cause of poverty in rural China is thus the pressure of the population on the land. The small size of the individual farm is caused by the continual division of the family patrimony as it has descended from father to sons. There has been no right of primogeniture in China, and the usual practice has been the equal division of the holding between the sons, though sometimes the eldest son has received a double portion to enable him to care for the aged members of the household and maintain the ancestral worship. This custom has made for a very wide distribution

of property in China, where land is the chief form of wealth, but in the absence of clear economic ideas as to what constitutes a sufficient basis for the support of a home, the division has gone too far.<sup>1</sup>

The commonest holding in the north, where irrigation is rarely possible, is only about 4 acres, 65 per cent. of the holdings, according to the sample results of Malone and Tayler,<sup>2</sup> lying between  $\frac{1}{2}$  and  $4\frac{1}{2}$  acres. In the wet rice-lands of the south, with their greater yields per acre, still smaller farms are the rule. A villager with a little land, say half an acre or so, is often worse off than one with none, because he clings to it instead of going forth and seeking a living elsewhere.

The farming is, of course, very different from any Western type. There is no dairy farming—China has no milk, no pasture-land (except rough pasture in the hills), and no hedgerows or fenced fields. The reason for this lack of pasture is that as much human food as possible must be won

<sup>1</sup> In regard to land tenure generally, the Chinese farmer is in a relatively satisfactory position. There are no restrictions on the transfer of land, which can be bought and sold freely, the deeds being stamped by the local magistrate. The buying up of land by wealthy men is a process of integration that to some extent offsets the process of division. In the north there are considerable districts in which over 90 per cent. of the land is farmed by occupying owners, but in provinces in the south tenant-farming is common. Sixty per cent. of the farms of Hunan are said to be cultivated by tenants.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix, p. 106.

from the soil, and the dense Chinese population cannot afford to put down to grass, land which can be cultivated for grain or legumes, *e.g.* beans. Long experience has enabled the Chinese farmer to work out a remarkably economical system, which secures this all-important result to a high degree.<sup>1</sup> In the south, where rainfall is plentiful, rice, for example, is grown for the most part under water in levelled fields, enclosed by low banks (which serve as footpaths). The rice is first sown in seed-beds and then planted out by hand, spear by spear. This involves immense labour, and is designed to save the land for other crops, which are maturing while the seed is sprouting. In this way two or three crops may be secured from the same land during the year, rape often being grown in the winter and wheat in the spring. The ploughing of the paddy-fields is done by the grey water-buffaloes, which are found all over South-eastern Asia and South India. The buffaloes are also used for raising water from the irrigation ditches to the fields, though this is sometimes done by the peasants, by means of a kind of treadmill.

In the north the staple crops are grains and beans. Wheat is planted in the autumn and harvested in the early summer. Millet, maize and kaoliang (Chinese for "tall grain," a kind of sorghum, which plays a great part in North China),

<sup>1</sup> F. H. King, an American agricultural expert, gives a most interesting statement of the excellences of Chinese farming in *Farmers of Forty Centuries*,

are sown in the spring or early summer and reaped in September. Reaping is all done by hand both north and south. Another great labour in the former is hoeing. After rain the ground has to have the surface loosened (mulched), in order to prevent evaporation, and this is done by hand, although a light cultivator pulled by a donkey would frequently do it nineteen times as quickly.

It is this lavishing of human labour, of which there is unfortunately such a superabundance, on their fields, which has led to Chinese farming being called intensive. But true intensive farming calls for heavy manuring and gives high yields, and neither of these is usual in China. The yield of wheat, for instance, is not nearly so good as on an English farm—is indeed no better than that produced by extensive methods on American prairies. The main fertilizer everywhere used is night-soil, which is all carefully preserved to return to the land. The implements employed are also very simple, the plough being a very light one made of wood and only tipped with iron.

The result of these conditions is that the average farm does not provide any but the most meagre living for an average-sized family. In bad years, in North China at least, a large part of the population has practically to hibernate through the winter months, making as little exertion as possible to economize food, and gradually bringing themselves back into condition

again in the spring. Moreover, the average farm does not afford sufficient labour to occupy the farmer's whole time. The studies by Professor Buck already referred to show that in both North and Central China few farmers put in much more than ninety full days directly in farm-work during the year, and many only seventy or eighty. Neither does the usual farm make good use of the animals. All this is evidence how little the economic point of view is grasped by the peasant, who is ruled by custom and sentiment. There is land that has been reclaimed from the foreshore of the Yangtse River by cotton magnates, which is rented exclusively for the cultivation of cotton at prices two or three times as high as those charged for similar land not far away on the same river, the cultivation of which is free from any such restriction. Rent is not yet entirely on an economic basis.

The small farmer is driven by lack of income and surplus of time to take up any subsidiary industry that may present itself. For instance, some of the peasants and small tenant farmers in the Yangtse valley will, during the slack winter season, turn travelling tinkers.<sup>1</sup> With portable furnace and anvil, tools and materials, bedding and so forth, made up into two bundles to carry at either end of a pole, they tramp from village to country town, doing their own cooking (the meal is limited to coarse rice and salted

<sup>1</sup> Bureau of Economic Information : *Chinese Economic Monthly*.

cabbage) and sleeping at the temples or in the open. It is said that they manage to live in this way for less than fourpence a day.

Some years ago much of the cheaper cotton cloth sold in Peking was imported from abroad. Some enterprising merchants began buying yarn from the mills in Shanghai and Tientsin and supplying it to the farmers in Kaoyang, a rural district south of the city. The men and their wives wove it on simple treadle-looms into a cloth which captured a wide North China market. The families made a little less than £4 a year with a loom that cost about the same sum. That is not much, but it is as much as is paid, in addition to his keep, to a farm labourer in the same district for a whole year's work.

There is no space, or need, to multiply examples; but it need hardly be said that, even in the aggregate, opportunities of a similar kind can only provide for a fraction of the needy, and that idle time in the winter, especially in the north, remains an immense economic loss.

What kind of a livelihood does the peasant gain as the result of all his toil? Some years ago Professor Dittmer made a study of the incomes and expenditures of some two hundred families in villages near Peking, and his results are in substantial agreement with later inquiries.<sup>1</sup> To say that the majority showed incomes of from

<sup>1</sup> *Quarterly Journal of Economics* (Harvard), November 1918. See also later studies by Dr T. Chen, *Chinese Economic Monthly*, October 1924 and February 1925.

£5 to £10 a year is to give figures that probably have as little meaning for us as those in which scientists state the dimensions of atoms. It will be wiser to describe the living in concrete terms and to add that many families obtain insufficient supplies even of the necessaries named.

The diet consists of grain cooked in various ways: as gruel or in strings like macaroni, as bread (steamed not baked) or cakes, or cooked with vegetable oil which takes the place of butter and lard in supplying the fat in the diet. In addition there are beans which act as a substitute for meat; together with turnips and cabbage. A meal containing two or more of these items is washed down with tea or boiled water. A little meat, usually pork, will be indulged in once or twice a year at the principal feasts.

Members of the household will make the family shoes with scraps of old cotton cloth, and its caps of better material, and will make up the clothes and the wadded quilts, though much will be second-hand and the main work that of patching and repairing. In the north the house is built of adobe brick, that is of bricks dried in the sun but not burnt. The body of the wall is composed of these, which are then plastered over with mud mixed with chopped straw. The window is of paper, the bed a raised platform of earth or brick, with a flue running through it by means of which it can be heated at night. For this purpose a few handfuls of dried grass, roots and twigs, raked up by the old men and boys, are

used, and the house is often not otherwise heated. There is little that the peasant cannot find or make for himself, except perhaps some of the timber for the house. The floor is simply earth. In the south, bamboo plays the leading rôle: the houses are better but there is more overcrowding. Sanitary conveniences consist mainly of a hole in the ground behind a screen of reeds or kaoliang stalks.

Such in briefest outline is the living of the poor in the villages of China.

#### 4. NEW INFLUENCES : VILLAGE RECONSTRUCTION.

There is as yet probably much less change in the Chinese than in the Indian or Japanese village. In the latter countries the Governments have promoted far-reaching rural policies. But in China, too, modern influences are beginning to affect the peasant. Near Shanghai, for example, considerable changes are taking place in the villages. For a while Shansi was known as the model province because of the comprehensive programme of educational and other reforms which the governor initiated some years ago, but, unfortunately, there is evidence that the force of that movement has spent itself. What will be the outcome, if any, of the Farmers' Unions recently organized by some of the Nationalists in the south it is too early to say. The fact of their formation is sufficient to indicate that, at least in such provinces as Canton and Hunan,

new rural movements are possible if skilfully organized.<sup>1</sup> In some provinces, notably Fukien, local rivalry has done a good deal to promote education. Modern education, indeed, is penetrating everywhere—more or less slowly. An important feature of the educational situation is the fact that attention is now being focused in both government and missionary circles on the problem of fitting education to the needs of the village community. The Mass Education Movement, which is endeavouring to grapple with the problem of illiteracy, has experimented with its methods in a rural area with some promise, and in order to reach the farmer more effectively is studying rural life, agricultural economy and co-operative enterprise in relation to one another.

On the agricultural side, farmers are being supplied with improved seed both by agricultural colleges and by interested commercial parties—for example, with tobacco seed and the tested eggs of the silkworm. Experiments are being carried on in a number of centres, and some extension work is bringing improvements to the notice of the farmers. Several American missionary societies are sending agricultural experts to assist their rural missions.

A small but very promising beginning has been made with co-operative village banks on the lines laid down by Raiffeisen in Germany, which have proved their value wherever a population of

<sup>1</sup> The writer, however, is not competent to discuss this movement, with which he has had no contact.

peasant proprietors is found. These banks consist of groups of farmers who pledge their joint credit in making loans from central banks. They are allowed to lend to their own members only, and each loan must be for a specified purpose approved by the responsible committee. They have been found to exert an excellent moral as well as economic influence wherever they have become established. Study is now being planned of the possibilities of co-operative arrangements for the supply of the villagers' needs and the marketing of the produce he sells. It is very necessary that the peasants should combine together in co-operative ways, otherwise they will be unable to avail themselves of the new and more scientific methods now being introduced. These inevitably require not only larger capital but greater adaptability and a spirit of enterprise. It is only through co-operation that the countless small-holders can meet this changing situation.

Assistance in the matter of co-operation is being given by the China International Famine Relief Commission, which is also promoting river conservancy and protection against floods. The American Red Cross has assisted in road-making, but a foundation for rural progress can only be found in an education which will create new social ideals and a new economic outlook. Rural China may not inaptly be compared to Denmark when, humiliated and stripped of some of her provinces by Germany and ruined economically by the competition of cheap grain from America,

She found herself confronted by the problem of completely transforming her agricultural organization. The Folk High Schools, which had been created by the genius of Grundtvig, proved one of the main factors in enabling her to meet her difficulties and to become, despite her lack of resources, one of the most progressive and prosperous communities in the world. Directing the strong national feeling of the day to the task of internal reconstruction and utilizing the national history and literature for a purpose at once idealistic and practical, those schools succeeded in creating an alert and responsive peasantry imbued with a spirit of comradeship in a common enterprise and so laid the foundation of that co-operative commonwealth which we know as the Denmark of to-day. China likewise, to make real progress, must find means to create a new rural life. The task is there—but China still awaits her Grundtvig. There is no undertaking that calls more urgently to the Chinese patriot, for the farmer's standard of living is the baseline for the country as a whole, and little can be hoped—at least for the unskilled city worker—unless the peasant can be lifted to a higher economic and cultural plane.

## CHAPTER II

### THE HOME AND WORKSHOP INDUSTRIES OF CHINA

#### 1. TYPES OF CHINESE INDUSTRY.

CHINA has long been famous for her artistic products: her jade and porcelain, lacquer and carved work, silk and cloisonné, scrolls and paintings, which reveal the artistic feeling and skill of her craftsmen. Many of these crafts were highly developed before the days of Marco Polo, the great Venetian traveller of the twelfth century. Their wares still tempt the foreign tourist in the great cities of China and adorn the homes of the wealthy in many lands.

These luxury trades all belong to those phases of industrial development that we associate with the mediæval and early modern periods: the handicraft system and the form of domestic industry which preceded the factory system. In the same economic classes, too, are the humbler trades which supply the wants of the common people, their rice-bowls and chopsticks, their ploughshares, millstones and sickles, their kettles and boilers, the woman's ornaments and man's umbrellas. Even to-day the great majority of

Chinese industries are conducted in these immemorial ways, and some glimpses of them will be necessary to an understanding of the present industrial situation.

These traditional industries of China differ greatly in size and exhibit a great variety of detail in their organization. Some are extremely simple. Many toys and other small articles are made in the homes out of bamboo, kaoliang stalks, paper, wood, mud, and what not, and are sold directly by the makers, who peddle them on the streets or at markets. In the large cities the industries tend to group themselves. Thus Chopstick Street is one of the features of Wuchang. On a fine day one sees the workers sitting on trestle stools in front of their shops dexterously splitting and then trimming the prepared lengths of bamboo or wood, and marvels at the speed and accuracy with which they work.

In Peking there is a Flower Market Street. At 6 o'clock every morning the market<sup>1</sup> is attended by families which have been making artificial flowers of paper or silk. Some 1500 families, it was revealed by a recent study,<sup>2</sup> were engaged in this trade, all living in the immediate vicinity of the market. It is usual for one family to specialize in one kind of flower. The leaves and stems are made by separate families. In this case each family is independent, buying its own

<sup>1</sup> Peking contains numerous markets which open at or before daybreak for a couple of hours or so, and then close for the day.

<sup>2</sup> See *China's Industry and Finance*, D. K. Lien.

materials and marketing its own products. The tools are simple and inexpensive and the materials, which can be readily obtained in small quantities, include Indian silk, silk waste, cloth, Chinese and Japanese paper, paraffin wax, wheat flour, copper and iron wire, peacock feathers, imitation silver thread, cotton and various dyes.<sup>1</sup>

In other cases the small home worker depends for the supply of his materials and sometimes for his tools upon some merchant who is interested in marketing the product. The Kaoyang weaving industry already referred to is an example of this (p. 27).

At the other extreme are industries, such as porcelain and fur, in which the number of workers may rise above a hundred in a single firm. At Pengcheng, in South Chihli, a local clay deposit has been made the foundation of an industry occupying over 300 firms, employing perhaps 10,000 workers. In almost all cases the firm consists of a single family. The capital is small, varying from £300 to £1000, according to the number of kilns operated. There are no banking facilities except an old-style money shop, charging a high rate of interest, usually 30 per cent. per annum. These firms make bowls and jars for common use, not the famous porcelain-ware of Kingteh Chen, Kiang-Si.<sup>2</sup> The less skilled men generally, such as those who grind and

<sup>1</sup> *Chinese Economic Monthly*.

<sup>2</sup> See *China's Industry and Finance*, by D. K. Lien, for an account of the latter.

prepare the materials, are paid by the day, and receive ten to seventeen pence ; those who paint on the designs are paid by the piece, and receive pay averaging from 2s. to 2s. 5d. per day. Chief of these are the potters, who shape the bowls and jars. They receive a share of the amount realized by the sales, varying from one-third to a half, from which they pay their helpers. They thus have a very direct interest in the quality of the work.

In order that the potters need not wait too long for their share in the proceeds, they are often paid on account in advance, a system which seems to have serious drawbacks.

The technique followed is rule of thumb and has not changed for generations. The owners are pessimistic about the future, but intensely conservative, refusing to adopt any new pigments, improved methods or fresh designs, even when brought to their notice. The workers are extremely complacent, believing themselves without peers and confident of their position. So secure do they feel, that they please themselves when and for how long they will work, often leaving early in the afternoon to frequent the tea-shops.<sup>1</sup>

Trouble arose between the employers and the workers in 1922, and strikes, lock-outs, and lawsuits continued for two years. The magistrate

<sup>1</sup> This is of course very unusual, but for a similar case among the skilled jade carvers of Canton, see *Chinese Economic Journal*, Vol. I. No. 1.

in whose jurisdiction the town lay, organized an industrial council, composed of three representatives of the firms, three of the workers, and two of the local gentry. Little notice, however, was taken of this; the employers organized their federation while the potters and painters established separate unions.

The housing is distinctly unusual. Large caves, 20 to 30 feet wide and 60 to 80 feet deep, each with a door and four ventilation holes high up, are used both for workshops and for store-rooms. The former are the larger, and the workers without their families with them live in these; the store-rooms house the families. The better-paid skilled men, however, live in their own houses and not in these caves.

The iron industry in Shan-Si, again, is still carried on by the methods used hundreds of years ago—the unit of production being very small. The iron ore is often raised by a hand-windlass, exactly like those used in country houses for raising water from a well; coal is drawn out of the mines by men walking up a low sloping adit or passage-way. Each village engaged in the industry specializes in some one type of article, and its products are still carried to considerable distances by pack-animal until some serviceable river or railway is reached.

How laborious are the processes employed may be gathered from a single example. The right mixture of crushed coal and ore is filled into cylindrical fireclay crucibles, 4 feet high and

6 inches wide, which are arranged on a bed of coal in a pit and covered over with clay. The coal is fired from below and the whole charge is allowed to burn for two days. Then the cover is removed, the crucibles are broken up and a spongy mass of iron is obtained from each. This is melted into ingots of a suitable size, and these are beaten out by hand, with incredible labour, into spades, or whatever the article may be. In other cases cast-iron is produced, and the articles, such as large boilers for cooking and heating water, are formed by pouring into moulds.

Trades such as these have developed their own marketing organizations. The china-ware of Pengcheng and elsewhere is usually sold through commission houses. The heads of these are expert licensed brokers, who often combine the function of broker with that of innkeeper. There are also special markets which have some of the characteristics of exchanges. Two miles from where these lines are being written is a grain market. There are nine brokers, united in a guild, who pay £120 a year to the magistrate of the district.

Adjoining the brokers are the stores of the city grain dealers. The farmers of the neighbourhood bring their grain to the brokers. The latter fix the price and take 10 per cent. of the grain as commission from the farmers and a sum of money as commission from the dealers. The farmers and dealers do not come into direct relations.

A little farther away, at one of the gates of Peking, is a fruit market. Here the brokers, who are licensed by a guild in the city, are innkeepers. The peasants from the western and northern hills come one day with their fruit, stay the night and return next day. The city shopkeepers are the buyers. If there are no offers for the fruit on the day it is brought, the peasant can leave it there to be disposed of by the broker at the first opportunity.

## 2. CHARACTERISTICS OF THESE INDUSTRIES.

There are certain features common to most types of Chinese industry. They are usually on a family basis.<sup>1</sup> The small business not only belongs to one family, but all the labour is supplied by members of the family. The women and children often play an important part. In South China and to a less extent in Central China, women bear their share of heavy, outdoor work, plying the sweeps or long oars on junks and river-boats, carrying heavy loads as coolies, working in the fields, and so forth. In the north women have been more secluded—and incidentally foot-binding has been more extensively practised. Children begin to help as soon as they were old enough to be of any use at all.

The work being at hand in the home, the working hours have often covered the whole

<sup>1</sup> *E.g.* see p. 35.

period of daylight, except for two breaks for meals, and when business is urgent much of the night may be spent in labour if the work does not require too good a light. What might result in exceptional cases may be gathered from the example of some coal-mines in Shantung. The mines being difficult to enter and leave, it was desired to keep the men there for as long as possible at a spell. The shifts were accordingly arranged at 20 hours on, followed by 12 hours off. But even in China men do not work for 20 hours at a stretch, and the nominal 20 apparently means 16 of actual work. Hours as a rule, however, are not fixed or definite, and in normal times the worker who is his own master can take a rest when he feels he needs it. Generally speaking, there is no great intensity of application, especially as trades are frequently—perhaps generally—overstaffed. This is true both of workshops and shops or stores. There seems to be no doubt, however, that the young are often driven mercilessly by those above them.

In all this industry there is nothing to spare the muscles. One watches the beating out of ingots of iron, or pairs of labourers bathed in perspiration spending days sawing planks out of big logs that a band-saw would reduce in an hour or two; elsewhere it may be coolies fighting for the privilege of carrying heavy loads a day's journey for the cost of a few bowls of rice, or six or eight men dragging cargo through the city streets which one man and a mule could deal

with more effectively. In the north, much of the traffic is by wheel-barrow. Waiting at a wayside inn at dusk on a dry frosty winter's evening one is deafened by the strident creaking of the large wooden wheels as the barrowmen arrive. Singly and in groups they continue to drop in well on into the night. Their barrows, with loads up to four hundredweights, are left in the unflagged courtyard. The simple meal is soon disposed of, washed down with hot water or weak Chinese tea. There is a respite of an hour or two spent in the hilarious but sometimes quarrelsome comradeship of the road, then one by one the quilts are unrolled, or the men simply stretch themselves in their wadded overcoats side by side on the raised earthen or brick platform, covered with reed matting, which constitutes the bed.

Before dawn the next morning they are on the road again, not breakfasting until perhaps ten or eleven o'clock, passing the day on two meals only. In this way they tramp hour after hour with but brief rests, pushing and balancing their heavy loads in the grooves worn by others before them, crossing and recrossing the cart-roads, with their deep ruts smothered in inches of dust, mounting banks several feet high by the roadside or crossing a ploughed field to cut off a corner; with nothing to save their muscles except when they can mount a sail.<sup>1</sup> So they go on—it may

<sup>1</sup> The wheel-barrowmen sometimes carry sails to fix on their barrows, when the strong steady winds are favourable.

be through biting wind, in twenty or thirty degrees of frost or in blinding dust that penetrates and envelops everything, day in, day out, until they have covered two hundred miles or more from Shantung to some city of the north.

The standard of living supported by industry approximates to that of the peasant in the village, allowing for the differences between town and village life. The workshop is often a narrow room, 9 to 10 feet wide, fronting on the street, but running well back. Being deep and only lighted from the front, it is often dark and generally grimy, and work is trying for the eyes. The squalor amid which beautiful carpets, cloisonné and other art products are wrought is in striking contrast to the products themselves. No less so is that between the tolerance of these indescribable working conditions and the remarkable artistic faculty of the worker who accepts them. In the rug shops, dysentery is prevalent during the summer, owing to insanitary conditions, and the consequent debility of the workers is so serious as to cause a notable falling-off in output and quality, despite the fact that in summer the longer daylight means longer working hours and better illumination. Moreover, meals are taken in the workshop, and if there are hired workers they often sleep there. There is little wholesome amusement, the main forms of indulgence being story-telling, theatricals, and some form of gambling.

### 3. GUILD CONTROL.

The outstanding feature of Chinese industry is that its control has continued to be in the hands of guilds, which have a history in China of many centuries. The Government has not until recent years attempted to exercise any direct control of industry and trade. The Government has given to the guilds a semi-official status, using them for the collection of taxes and recognizing their regulations.

The number of guilds has been very great. China is said to have more voluntary associations than any other country in the world. Guilds have been of different kinds. There have been provincial guilds, which are really clubs, including the members of one province carrying on business in another; and there have been large guilds of bankers and merchants; but for our purpose the most important are the smaller local guilds, which have covered industry, trade, and such services as water-carrying and sewage disposal. Even the beggars have had their guilds—often quite powerful ones.<sup>1</sup>

The guilds have necessarily been numerous, because of the fact that for most goods the market is a small local one. Wherever two or three families have been engaged in the same trade there has almost certainly been an under-

<sup>1</sup> For guilds, see especially Gamble's *Peking: A Social Survey*, pp. 163-204; Morse, *Guilds in China*, deals with the large provincial and merchant guilds.

standing in regard at least to minimum prices—not in regard to maximum prices, as the unwary foreigner quickly discovers. The initial price asked will probably be at least three times the amount which is acceptable, and anything above the latter is fair gain. But the tradesmen will not undersell one another as a rule.

For the larger industries there are well-organized guilds which regulate not only prices but the entrance to the trade through apprenticeship, wages, hours, weights and measures, and a number of other matters. The guilds take steps to enforce their decisions and bring defaulting members to book. The degree to which businessmen submit to guild inspection is a revelation to western merchants. All their books are open to the guild officers, who may be rivals in the trade, serving in rotation. As a matter of fact, however, membership of a guild is so essential that rules are rarely broken. The business-man has no protection against the extortion of officials, and no security except the guild; business in the static conditions of Chinese industry has sought to establish itself not by competition but by combination, and life is so precarious for any who fall out of the system, that no one could afford to be outside. The Chinese with insufficient land to support his family has to face a fierce struggle for a place in the economic system and knows that once he has lost it he is liable to go under altogether.

The apprenticeship has sometimes been limited

to sons and near relatives of members. It covers a period of years often much longer than is necessary for learning the trade. The lot of an apprentice is a hard one. The long hours fall very heavily upon him. Apprenticeship has immobilized labour but it has given some security to the worker. The abuse of apprenticeship under modern conditions will receive separate notice.

The guilds in China have on the whole been more democratic than in Europe. In Europe the guild passed increasingly into the hands of the wealthy. Something of this tendency is met with in China, but it has not developed nearly as far as it did in the West. How they are relating themselves to trade unions and chambers of commerce will appear later.

## CHAPTER III

# THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION BEGINS IN CHINA

### 1. BEGINNINGS AND EXTENT OF MODERN INDUSTRY.

SUCH is the milieu into which modern enterprise has been introduced in China. Though the contact of China with Western Europe and America began before the age of steam, it was the conquest of the ocean by the steamship which really broke down China's long isolation. At first her interest was in trade only, and it is significant that the first modern enterprise in China was a steamship company.<sup>1</sup> In comparison with India and Japan, China has made both a late and a slow start in industry, late because of the conservatism of the people, slow because of special features in Chinese life. It was the officials who moved first, actuated not only by the desire for individual wealth, but by the hope of national strength which industrial development brings. They were urged forward by foreign capitalists, anxious to find profitable investments and to develop the very considerable resources of China for the sake of the world economy they were

<sup>1</sup> The China Merchants Steam Navigation Company, 1873.

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building up, and which they envisaged China herself entering. For many years very exaggerated notions were held of the extent of the mineral wealth of China, and these undoubtedly attracted the attention of concession hunters. The work of the Geological Survey, one of the most efficient departments of the Chinese Government, has brought fuller knowledge and soberer estimates. These show, however, that in comparison with other Far Eastern countries, China is favoured with abundant coal and other resources.

The early ventures were initiated either by great Viceroys, like Chang Chih Tung, who created iron and steel works, an arsenal and textile mills in Central China, or by the associates of such men, such as Tong Kao Sing, the friend of Li Hung Chang. At this stage, mints and arsenals, naval dockyards and other enterprises of direct value to the Government were prominent, but a beginning was also made with shipbuilding, engineering, textiles, mining and railways. A new phase began after the Sino-Japanese war, one of the stipulations of the treaty which followed being that foreigners should be free to carry on industry in China. Except under the grant of a special concession this privilege is confined to the Treaty Ports. In consequence, these are now much more than mere commercial, warehousing and banking centres; some of them are important manufacturing towns as well.

After the Revolution which initiated the Re-

public, the old opposition based on "fengshui" disappeared and a new impetus was given to development. The conservatism of Old China has, in fact, been replaced by the radicalism of Young China, which has broken with the past and is all too impatient for a speedier rate of change. Young China shows none of the hesitations in regard to industrialization that mark important sections of Indian opinion led by Mahatma Gandhi and Tagore.<sup>2</sup> When Dr Sun was thrust aside by Yuan Shih Kai after the setting up of the Republic, he spent much of his time in elaborating schemes for the development of railways, new ports and great industries in China. The adoption of modern technique with the deliberate object of raising the standard of living in China, is one of the main purposes of the Nationalist Party. The interest of this party in labour organization, co-operation, and similar movements, is one of the factors which is likely to exercise an important influence in the future (see Chapter VI).

Under the Republic, industry began to break away from the leading-strings of the Treaty Ports, and large factories made their appearance even in an interior province such as Honan. The more recent growth has been due mainly to unofficial Chinese enterprise, though there has been a notable increase in Japanese controlled

<sup>1</sup> Literally "wind-water," a system of necromancy concerned, among other things, with the effect on local well-being of innovations.

<sup>2</sup> *From Field to Factory*, by Margaret Read, p. 16. S.C.M.

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industry, not only in South Manchuria, where their influence is predominant, but in the textile and other manufactures in Shanghai and Shan-tung. This modern expansion was checked by the outbreak of civil war, and during the last few years has been almost completely arrested. Many Chinese and some foreigners consider that this slowing down of development is a distinct advantage, as it gives time for a better understanding of the problems involved and for the growth of a sound policy before any wide extension occurs.

The Chinese are splendid industrialists. Abroad they have been remarkably successful, perhaps most notably under British rule in Malay. A brief visit to India convinced the writer that the Chinese peasant is a much better factory hand than the Indian ryot, with greater gifts as a mechanic, less impatient under the monotony and confinement of factory life (and so less prone to absenteeism and to rapid change of employment), and with perhaps a stronger urge to secure a higher standard of life—judged at least from the material standpoint. It is a significant fact that despite the low customs duties in China, the Japanese have found it profitable to invest tens of millions of dollars in China in recent years. In relation to their low wages at any rate Chinese labour efficiency is high.

But for the present, expansion in China is delayed by the breakdown of all effective government, owing to political instability and military

chaos. Behind the present confusion lie two great facts: the break with old traditions, customs and sanctions, which, until new are created, leaves the people without a compass and the warring factions unrestrained, and the curious diarchy which has been apparent in Chinese civilization. The social and economic life of the people, alike in the country and the town, has been based on the democratic institutions of village and guild, while above the people and in very loose connection with these popular institutions, which have been recognized by, but hardly a part of the official system, has been the Government autocracy, centring in the Son of Heaven, from whom all political authority proceeded. Resort to the magistrates and the law courts has always been avoided wherever possible. It is quite clear, therefore, that a great deal of construction will be necessary, even when peace comes, before the Government in China can effectively play the part that an industrial economy demands of it. The problem is not merely that of shaping a new political system to take the place of the Emperor and the official hierarchy, but also of creating a body of accepted doctrine on which this system can rest. Until the Revolution, the Confucian ethics provided an unwritten constitution for the Empire, setting standards which if not complied with by the rulers justified revolt, and forming the basis for the decisions of the Board of Censors, which furnished some sort of check on the arbitrary

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action of officials. The attainment of political stability demands not simply the forging of new governmental institutions, but the working out of a new philosophy of life, a new social ethic with which the institutions shall accord.

Meanwhile the weakness of the Government reacts in many ways. Under the Manchus it led to suspicion of the foreign expert, which limited his usefulness and prevented the Chinese from profiting from his services and acquiring his knowledge as, for instance, the Japanese did. To-day the lack of effective authority places almost insuperable obstacles in the way of factory supervision and of the application of commercial law, prevents the investment of capital and is throwing industry back on the Treaty Ports. Added to all this are the facts that officials have depended upon the perquisites of their office, not upon a definite salary, so that graft is universal; and that the nepotism resulting from the family system is nowhere more in evidence than in official circles.

The net result of half a century of effort is that in a country of four hundred million people—one which if superimposed on the map of Europe would stretch from within the Arctic Circle to the coast of Africa and from Liverpool to Leningrad—there are some seven thousand miles of railway, rather more than a dozen modern coal-mines, a few iron and steel, ship-building and other engineering works, and about a thousand modern factories. The most numerous

are cotton- and flour-mills and match factories, which all exceed a hundred each; there are eighty electrical plants, fifty telephone exchanges and important oil, tobacco, cement, printing and soap works and numerous silk filatures. In addition, there are some thousands of smaller semi-modern factories. Shanghai is estimated to possess 275,000 to 290,000 workers in modern plants, without counting the wharf, barrow and rickshaw coolies. The larger industrial undertakings are grouped in and around Shanghai, in what may be called East China, on the northern coal-fields (including Manchuria) and their ports, and up the Yangtse River in Central China, especially at the Wuhan centre. It is notable that, though the south has flourishing indigenous industries and its people have been prominent in new developments elsewhere, the south itself has not become the scene of large-scale operations except at Hong-Kong.

It is doubtful whether those connected with large-scale industry in China, together with their families, number more than four millions or one per cent. of the population. If this number be doubled to include these in semi-modern plants, it is clear that only an insignificant part of the whole population has yet been drawn into the new system. These facts must be remembered if we are to see modern industry in true perspective. Its importance in China does not lie in its present extent, but in the fact that it has undoubtedly come to stay, and that, as soon as

political conditions become favourable it is certain to spread very rapidly. Small as the beginnings are, they have already made possible new standards for skilled labour, have given rise to a new labour movement and have created new city population with problems of their own.

## 2. LOSS AND GAIN.

The gain arising from the introduction of modern technique is perhaps nowhere so clearly seen as in the case of improved transport. The first railway in the country was a narrow-gauge line running from Shanghai to Woosung, which was torn up within a few months from its opening in 1876 because of official opposition from Peking.<sup>1</sup> The officials took advantage of the excitement caused locally when an unknown coolie threw himself before the train and was run over. Undiscouraged by this failure, a small group of Chinese, backed by the famous Viceroy, Li Hung Chang, co-operating with some British friends, quietly went ahead with other plans. This group was the one that formed the first Chinese steamship company, and, as that required coal for its operation, it had opened mines near the coast in the north. A railway was wanted to carry the coal to the sea. The Peking authorities at first refused permission and a canal was dug. It was found, however, that the latter could not be brought nearer than six miles from the pit-

<sup>1</sup> *Railways in China*, P. H. Kent.

mouth. With remarkable faith in the future, the engineer planned his six miles of railway on such lines that it could be made the starting-point of a national system. He insisted on the adoption of standard gauge. With the boiler from a winding engine, wheels that had been bought as old iron, a frame of channel iron from the head-gear of the No. 1 shaft of the mine, he built the "Rocket of China," which was duly christened on the 9th of June 1881, three years after the mine had been opened. Gradually, as the reward of vision, perseverance, and tact, the confidence and support of the officials were won, the fears of the people allayed, and the track extended until it stretched from Peking to Mukden—the first of the Chinese Government Railways. Thus was written the most romantic chapter in the history of China's railways, the leading part being played by one of the many individual foreigners—in this case a Briton,<sup>1</sup> who, content to work unostentatiously within the limits set by Chinese conditions, under Chinese auspices and with Chinese interests at heart, have rendered lasting service to the Chinese people.

The economic value of railways to China has since been strikingly set forth by no less influential a Chinese patriot than Dr Sun Yat Sen, the founder of the Nationalist Party and father of the Revolution of 1911. In his lectures on "The People's Livelihood,"<sup>2</sup> he explains that,

<sup>1</sup> Mr C. W. Kinder, C.B.

See *The Nineteenth Century*, for May 1927, pp. 663-677.

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before the days of railways, the goods brought from the hinterland of Canton to that port were carried on the shoulders of coolies. A coolie could carry a load of about 100 catties (133 lb.) for a distance of some 50 li (17 miles) per day. From Hwangsha, 170 miles to the north by rail, an engine pulling a train of 20 trucks, each containing a load which would require 500 carriers, can do the journey in eight hours. Thus in eight hours the engine makes a haul which would have taken 10,000 coolies ten days.

But the advantage of the railway is much more than merely economic. We have seen something of the system which mechanical transport displaces; a system which, while it supplies a meagre, almost animal existence for many, limits social and economic intercourse, leaving local areas of necessity self-contained,<sup>1</sup> and keeps those engaged in it very much beasts of burden. One realizes very vividly in China the boon conferred by those inventions which have taken the heaviest work off the thews and sinews of men, made possible feats otherwise beyond human accomplishment and multiplied the productivity of labour manifold. One cannot but agree with the desire voiced by Dr Sun to see China liberally supplied with all the equipment and technique of

<sup>1</sup> A striking example of this is furnished by experience of fighting famine in North China. The large reserves of grain in Manchuria would have been useless without the railways. Within a comparatively short distance men and draught-animals consume as much as they can carry.

modern factory production and mechanical transport, not only for the sake of a greater output of wealth, but for the prospect of a more humanized life for the worker, of which it holds out a prospect.

But there have been many indications that the coming of modern industry is by no means pure gain. Examples like that of the match factory given in the Foreword could be multiplied to show how easily unhealthy conditions arise. In an asbestos works, for instance, the mineral fibre was beaten out in a room which, speaking from memory, was about 30 feet across. This was done by twanging in the fibre a thong of gut stretched across a heavy wooden bow. A prodigious amount of dust was created by the activities of a considerable number of men simultaneously engaged in this work. There was no attempt to perform the process under cover or to draw off the particles. Consequently the cloud of dust was so dense that it was impossible to see across the room. The men breathed through little bags of sacking covering the nose and mouth, and these, as the pores became choked up with dust, expanded and collapsed as a kid glove does when held over the mouth.

In this works, too, there was a system of home work, the spinning of the fibre into coarse thread being put out. Not only did this tend to sweated conditions, but, like child labour, it tended to depress adult wages by eking out the family earnings.

The nature of these two occupations made the neglect of health provisions particularly harmful in both cases, but the same neglect was generally evident in other industries. The need for special health measures, for safety devices on machinery, and for all those provisions which are the special care of the factory inspector, are not realized at the outset by those accustomed to a less exacting regime. The appearance of undesirable conditions seems to be the invariable accompaniment of rapid industrial change everywhere, except in those instances in which the employer has come to regard the welfare of the worker, to the fullest extent that the industry makes possible, as one of his primary responsibilities.

How far in actual practice the worker has benefited from modern industry can only be learnt from a broader survey of the facts, to which it is now time to turn.

### 3. RESULTING CONDITIONS.

#### i. *Conditions of Work.*

In studying the effect of modern factory technique in China, it will be convenient to distinguish the modern from the semi-modern factories. By the former are meant large factories or mills, using power-driven machinery and organized in an up-to-date manner; the latter include industries which are new, but in which, if power is employed,

it is only for some parts of the process, and hand labour still plays an important part.

Let us turn first to the textile mills which have attracted so much public attention in recent years. Labour conditions tend to be best in the largest and best equipped mills on which capital has been most fully spent. In cotton-mills there has been steady improvement in the type of structure erected in China, the newer mills paying decidedly more attention to lighting, ventilation, sanitary arrangements and so forth, as well as to provision against fire and for the safeguarding of machinery than the earlier ones. And yet even the modern mills produce an unfavourable impression on observers fresh from the West. For one thing they are more crowded. A cotton-mill in Shanghai working with, say, Lancashire machinery and producing the same "counts"<sup>1</sup> as a Lancashire mill, will employ about four times as many workers as the latter. There is less discipline. After the free and easy basis of family industry the training of the Chinese worker to greater precision, orderliness and speed is not an easy task. Westerners do not always remember that the great advances in sanitation and personal hygiene which we enjoy to-day only go back a generation or two. In China they are only just beginning, and the habits of the people do not yet make possible as high a standard as is found, say, in English or American mills. The real question is whether the mill-owners are doing all

<sup>1</sup> The count measures the fineness or weight of the thread.

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that is possible to them in their strong and responsible position to raise the standards as far as their own workers are concerned.

The Child Labour Commission appointed by the Shanghai Municipal Council reported<sup>1</sup> in July 1924 of factories generally and of cotton-mills in particular in very similar terms :

“ In many cases the atmospheric and dust conditions are bad. The sanitary arrangements in the majority of mills and factories leave very much to be desired.

“ In many cases little attention is paid to the state of the latrines, and the stench near such places is very marked.”

Bad as these conditions are, there are still worse in many of the semi-modern factories and small workshops. The silk filatures belong largely to this category. Colonel Malone says of those he visited :—

“ . . . the main shed of a silk filature, where the majority are employed, is the reeling shed. This contains a row of metal benches. On one side the women sit, on the other the children stand. Some of the children could not have been more than seven years old, and some were probably even younger. The children on their side of the bench have a basin, to which boiling water and steam is laid on, in which they stir

<sup>1</sup> The Report is printed in Cmd. 2442 (1925), pp. 113-130.

the silk cocoons, frequently scalding their little hands. . . . There is ample water surface to provide steam to fill the whole shed, besides leaks in steam-pipes, etc. The atmosphere was stifling and would be terrible in summer. There was absolutely no means of artificial ventilation for drawing off the steam or providing fresh air. All the women were dripping with perspiration, the whole shed being full of a hot damp vapour. There was a pungent stench from the dead cocoons on the floor.”<sup>1</sup>

The fact is that the old lack of control is carried forward into these semi-modern plants often with very serious consequences. Such features as living in the workrooms frequently appear. Mr J. W. Nipps, speaking of the silk filatures of Chefoo reports :—

“The workers (in this case men) almost universally wear no clothing above the waist. They can readily be recognized in any crowd by their sallow complexion. All workers must live in the factories. Those completing their work before night are free to go where they please, but they must return by dark. This means that only a few men get out of the factories except on special occasions. When they finish their work at night, they pull out their roll of bedding and sleep on the floor, on stray boards laid across benches, or on the ground in the courtyard. They rise at day-

<sup>1</sup> *New China*, Pt. II, Labour Conditions, p. 6.

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break, roll up their blankets and stack them in some corner until night. Thus they work, eat and sleep in the same quarters.”<sup>1</sup>

There is no need to multiply descriptions of this kind, which apply with variations to most of China's industries.

### ii. *Child Labour and Apprenticeship.*

No phase of modern industry in China has attracted so much attention as the employment of Child Labour. The only two Labour Commissions yet held have both been occupied with it—namely, those of Hong-Kong<sup>2</sup> and Shanghai respectively. The evils are undoubted. The children are employed at excessively tender years. They are obliged to work inordinately long hours, and that under conditions tending to great fatigue. The Shanghai Municipal Council's Commission reports:—

“ It is difficult to state definitely the lowest age at which the children commence work. The Commission, however, saw many children at work who could not have been more than six or seven years of age. Some of these children are not on the pay-roll, but are allowed to be brought by their mothers in order that

<sup>1</sup> Cmd. 2442, p. 35.

<sup>2</sup> For details of the Hong-Kong Commission's work and the resulting regulations, see *Humanity and Labour in China*, pp. 52 ff., by Dame Adelaide Anderson.

they may be under their care. In many mills the conditions during the night-shift are, according to Western ideas, most unusual. Rows of baskets containing babies and children, sleeping or awake as the case may be, lie placed between the rapidly moving and noisy machinery. Young children who are supposed to be working, but who have been overcome by fatigue or who have taken advantage of the absence of adequate supervision, lie asleep in every corner, some in the open, others hidden in baskets under a covering of raw cotton. The discipline appears to be lax, and those in charge seem to wink at much that goes on in this respect. The Commission noticed that on its advent a warning whistle was given, and many of the children were awakened by their immediate neighbours and hurried back to the machines.”<sup>1</sup>

In the silk filatures the evil of standing long hours is, apparently, still worse, and many children develop a “peculiar regular and rapid up-and-down movement of the body by means of alternately relaxing and then straightening their knees.” After referring to humidity the Commission says :—

“It was stated that fainting (of workers) in hot weather is not uncommon. . . . In the main they present a pitiable sight. Their physical condition is poor, and their faces are

<sup>1</sup> Cmd. 2442, p. 117.

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devoid of any expression of happiness or well-being. They appear to be miserable, both physically and mentally. The adults are given a certain number of cocoons from which they have to produce a certain quantity of silk. Should they fall short of this quantity they are fined. They then frequently revenge themselves by ill-treating the children working under them. The Commission is satisfied that the conditions under which these children are employed are indefensible.”<sup>1</sup>

The statement as to the medical evidence gathered by the Shanghai Commission concludes :—

“ It was agreed by all the medical witnesses that the existing industrial conditions in Shanghai are extremely adverse to the bodily and mental welfare of the Chinese child employee. Such children, as a body, were said to be physically inferior to those not so employed, but no definite measurement or other particulars were given. Industrial accidents were largely attributed to fatigue and carelessness following on long hours of monotonous work.”<sup>2</sup>

The facts gathered and weighed by the Commission constitute a sufficiently sweeping condemnation of child labour as it exists in Shanghai, but fortunately the difficulties to be faced in remedying the situation, though real, are not

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 115.

insurmountable. Among the difficulties may be mentioned the lack of birth certificates, making proof of age impossible. The parents desire to have their children with them in the mills, partly for the sake of their earnings and partly because their homes are so crowded and insanitary. There are very few educational facilities to keep the children better employed, and there are no Government regulations in force. A beginning in the right direction has been made by a few leading firms, but the improvement of factory conditions meets only one side of the situation. A suggestion as to further policy will be found in Section V.

Related to the question of child labour, which as we have considered it, is one for the modern factory, is that of apprenticeship, which affects mainly the smaller industries.<sup>1</sup> Little heed has been paid to the lot of the apprentice at any time, but the new conditions are intensifying the problem. It is a significant fact that under modern conditions whenever an old industry has expanded rapidly, say because of a large demand for export, guild control has broken down. A striking instance is seen in the case of "Tientsin" carpets, which are largely exported to America.<sup>2</sup> Many of the smaller workshops that have sprung up to meet this demand are run by one or two skilled workmen, assisted by ten, twenty or more apprentices. The latter are brought in to Tientsin

<sup>1</sup> See also p. 44.

<sup>2</sup> T. C. Blaisdell and C. C. Chu, "The Rug Industry in Peking," *Chinese Social and Political Science Review*.

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or Peking from country villages and work, eat and sleep in the workrooms. They receive no money wages except a few dollars at the New Year, and are entirely under the authority of the employer. Their apprenticeship lasts for about three and a half years, and, as they become proficient in a few months, they supply cheap labour for the rest of their term. When that is over, they are no longer wanted, and the majority are thrown on the labour market to find such unskilled work as may offer. Under these circumstances true apprenticeship ceases to exist, and passes into a form of contract labour, subject to no control by Government or industrial organization.

#### 4. HOURS AND WAGES.

The long hours of the old industries in China have influenced her modern development. Shifts of twelve hours are common, and thirteen, fifteen and more hours are worked in some trades. Long hours under the factory system are, however, not the same thing as under the old-style industry. The factory introduces two new elements into the situation: definiteness, regularity, and a greater monotony on the one hand, and the setting of the pace by machinery on the other. The comparative lack of "drive" in the past, the lack of outside interests, amusements and recreations, and the absence of over-specialization all tended to make long hours less irksome.

To-day it is necessary to allow for regular breaks and periods of rest. The slogan "one day's rest in seven" has been taken up by the Christian Church, and where this is not granted, one, two or three days a month are sometimes allowed.

The large numbers employed in spinning-mills are the result of an effort to avoid the strain imposed by long hours at the pace set by machinery. Shorter hours and greater efficiency will have to come together. The four Chinese who do the work of one Lancashire lass do not get as much out of the machines in their long shift as she does in eight hours. A young Chinese engineer connected with a coal-mine equipped with modern machinery and organized on the basis of eight-hour shifts, described the difference between the old style of mine and his. In the former the men banded themselves together in gangs. A gang entered the mine when they liked, worked at their own pace, and left when it suited them. They were paid by output, large or small; "But," the engineer added significantly, "when they come to us they must work." Even the eight-hour shift does not always secure this. In another modern mine where the eight hours' system had been in operation for some years, a newly appointed welfare officer found that the underground men, who were engaged by contractors, were putting in forty-five shifts a month, that is to say that on alternate days they worked double shifts—and there were no Sundays.

This situation is the result of low wages, the

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pressure of which is very generally felt. Modern industry in China has not yet produced its Henry Ford, stimulating high productivity on a high wage as Mr Ford has done in his motor works at Detroit. It is not only the hired workman who feels the difficulty. In Peking there are some three hundred knitting-machines, making socks, stockings, belts, etc. The industry is mainly a home one, a family having one, two, or, at most, a few machines. So finely are the prices cut, that the men complain that they have to work sixteen or seventeen hours a day to make ends meet. This new industry is another example of the guild not yet having come in to fix minimum prices as it does in customary trades.

In turning to consider wages, two difficulties are met with. In the first place, the lack of reliable statistics makes representative average figures difficult to get; in the second place Chinese life is so different from Western that it is almost impossible, in making a comparison, to pass from terms of money to terms of well-being. A few general statements may, however, be attempted. The more highly-skilled workers in, for example, the mechanical and electrical trades, for whom the expansion of industry has created a relatively high demand receive wages that secure for them and their families a considerable measure of comfort from the Chinese point of view, and enable the thrifter to make provision for old age. The skilled artisans in the older trades, such as carpentry, in many parts of

the country at least, can support a family, though without any real margin. The less skilled men generally receive wages which will not support a family, even according to the most modest standards, and their wives and children are driven to work to supplement the men's earnings. The position of the unskilled is appalling and, apart from a new social outlook changing the whole situation, hopeless. Colonel Malone in 1926 estimated the average wages of rickshaw coolies, wharf coolies and cotton-mill hands in Shanghai at 16s., 18s. and 24s. a month respectively. Yet the Shanghai Municipal Child Labour Commission had previously estimated the needs of a man and wife of the poorest class, without children, at 32s. per month, at a time when living was cheaper than in 1926. A later estimate of the needs of a family of five placed it at 42s. 8d. Thus low as is the standard of living which the Chinese worker deems satisfactory, it is only reached by a comparatively small minority.

In comparison with English workmen in a similar grade of work, the Chinese often earn between a fifth and seventh the wage. But to make any real comparison it is necessary to know what the wage will buy in the two countries. Seebohm Rowntree in his book, *The Human Needs of Labour*, gave details of what he considered a model diet for an English working-class family. A calculation made a few years ago showed that the Chinese workman could secure the same amount of nutriment (at Peking prices) for a third

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of the cost of the English diet. It is true that the Chinese diet would be considered less palatable by the Englishman, who would only be induced to take it by extreme hunger, but it is enjoyed by the Chinese accustomed to it, and who is to judge of the relative satisfactions in the two cases?

Many more comparisons of this kind will soon be possible, because the study of Chinese social and economic life is now being undertaken scientifically and systematically.<sup>1</sup>

### 5. THE LABOUR SUPPLY AND THE SYSTEM OF EMPLOYMENT.

It must already be clear that the efficiency of the workers could be considerably increased by a wise policy. An American employer in Shanghai said that he had watched the efficiency of Chinese workers in a particular line increase in a few years from fifty to ninety-five per cent. of American efficiency. The abundant supply of cheap labour has led employers to neglect this

<sup>1</sup> It is hoped the studies will include the productivity of the worker, his money wage and its purchasing power in terms, not directly of commodities, since these vary from country to country, but of subsistence wants and higher wants they satisfy, according to scales that have yet to be fixed. It will then be possible to make such a statement (to take a hypothetical case and figures), as that the textile workers of Shanghai might be paid one-sixth the wage of corresponding Lancashire workers for one quarter the output, while their money might go three times as far. It is probable that such studies would reveal some curious anomalies.

side of industry, and only too often the labour has been in the hands of contractors, alike in textile mills, the building trade, mining, and other industry. The Shanghai Commission make repeated reference to this fact, and say :—

“The contract system of employment is common. Under this system the contractor supplies the requisite labour and is paid on production. This system is open to grave abuse. The Commission heard evidence to the effect that in some instances contractors obtain young children from the country districts, paying the parents two dollars a month for the service of each child. By employing such children in the mills and factories the contractor is able to make a profit of about four dollars a month in respect of each child. They are frequently most miserably housed and fed. They receive no money, and their conditions of life are practically those of slavery.”<sup>1</sup>

Even with adult men the contractor's power is very great. The men are usually far from their homes and depend on the contractor for food and shelter, payment for which is deducted from their wages. Through fines or gambling debts they frequently fall still more completely into his power, and he is not slow to exploit his position. A few years ago a large concern, whose underground workers were engaged through con-

<sup>1</sup> Cmd. 2442, p. 116.

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tractors, was the scene of a strike, which resulted in an increase of rates. Subsequent investigation showed that the strike had been engineered by the contractors, who had taken sixty per cent. of the increase, passing only forty on to the men.

Even when the contractor system does not obtain, the handling of labour is frequently in the hands of quite ignorant foremen, and little or nothing is done to train them in sound methods. Complaints by the workers of their treatment have formed one of the most fruitful causes of strikes.

Some deeply-rooted Chinese customs make a new Labour policy both difficult and urgent. The local clannishness and the reluctance to break with the old village home lead to many consequences. The water-carriers in Peking all come from certain districts in Shantung; the carpenters in towns over a wide area in North China are originally from a small county in South Chihli. In some cases the men bring their families with them, in others the latter stay on in their village homes and the men visit them at long intervals. Over a hundred thousand Shantung, Honan and Chihli peasants tramp or travel hundreds of miles by special cheap boat and trains every spring to the fertile and thinly peopled land of Manchuria. There they spend the whole agricultural season, returning to their distant homes in the winter. Year after year they repeat this process rather than take their

families away from the ancestral family village to settle in ampler quarters in the North.<sup>1</sup>

A Famine Relief Committee in 1918 had immense difficulty in persuading farmers, whose land was under water and would continue submerged for two seasons, to colonize rich virgin soil secured for the purpose in Manchuria. The result of such habits is to bring to new industry a constantly shifting population which does not settle down to family life in the new surroundings unless these can be made sufficiently attractive.

Yet even this reluctance to leave the old home cannot disguise the enormous outward pressure of population from the rural districts which is the dominant feature of the "labour market" in China. The poorer peasants, inured to hardness, accustomed to want, content with almost any labour if it brings them food, make the problem of unskilled labour in China intensely difficult.

<sup>1</sup> It is believed that on account of the conditions arising from civil war and banditry the number reached a million in 1927, and there is a growing tendency to family settlement in Manchuria.

## CHAPTER IV

### SOME SOCIAL ASPECTS OF INDUSTRY IN CHINA

#### 1. CITY HOUSING CONDITIONS.

It is interesting to compare living conditions in the new commercial and industrial cities with the village life of which we have already had a glimpse. The Shanghai Child Labour Commission thus sums up the evidence it received as to the effects of city life upon the children engaged in industry :—

“ It was stated that country children in China are of good physique, whilst those living in the cities are, generally speaking, below the standard of Western countries. Tuberculosis is particularly prevalent in the towns. . . . The crowded living conditions are to a great extent responsible for the poor physique observed.”

“ The crowded living conditions ” of Shanghai have recently been described by Mr M. Thomas Tchou, Labour Specialist of the Commercial Press,

<sup>1</sup> Cmd. 2242, p. 115.

the leading publishing house in the East. They are, he says, best in houses supplied by the factories for their own workers at comparatively low rents. Outside house property has to earn fifteen per cent. for its owners, and with the high price of land in Shanghai this means as a rule only one room per family, or at best two. The better type of house is of two stories, fairly strongly built, but there is only one water-tap per row and no separate water-closet. The passages between the rows are very narrow and are littered with garbage. The second-grade houses are of only one story and are flimsily built, leaky roofs being a common source of trouble. To eke out space, the tenants create an upper story within the houses by setting up platforms reaching three-quarters of the way across the rooms. In these dwellings the noise, smell and other evils are intensified to a point at which they react on health and temper.

For the accommodation of men without their families, there are tenements which are crowded with up to five men per hundred square feet. These tenements are said to be dens of gambling, opium-smoking and other forms of vice, and to be invariably infested with vermin.

But the worst conditions of housing in Shanghai occur in the case of labourers who come from a distance from the city and speak a different dialect. Finding it impossible to gain a footing in any but the very lowest paid work, they cannot afford even the poorest accommodation.

These people go just outside the city<sup>1</sup> and build themselves wattle huts, so that Shanghai is surrounded with colonies totalling thousands of huts. The catalogue of the troubles of these hapless folk is not yet complete. They are the most neglected of communities, living without public utilities of any kind: no water supply, no lighting, no medical attention, no removal of garbage, no sanitation, nothing of the nature of social welfare. Moreover, they are subject to floods carrying sewage filth, to fire—for much of the material of the huts is inflammable—and to being evicted as the land becomes more valuable or is wanted for other purposes.

This matter of housing is an example of the not infrequent cases in which numbers make all the difference. A single hovel in the country, blown upon on all sides by the winds of heaven, may be just as bad as any individual hut in a collection such as has been described, but its evils are largely neutralized by its surroundings, and it does not become the menace to its inhabitants and their neighbours that is found in every dense group.

## 2. THE LABOUR MOVEMENT.

The last few years have witnessed an extra-

<sup>1</sup> It should, perhaps, be explained that Shanghai consists of the settlements under foreign control, and the old Chinese city and suburbs under Chinese authorities. The latter are now endeavouring to bring the areas for which they are responsible under a unified, modern, municipal administration.

ordinary growth in the Trade Union movement in China. Changes have been so rapid in Shanghai that even those on the spot have felt it extremely difficult to keep pace with them, and those who have been away for but a few months are quite out of date. It is too early to foretell to what the movement will grow, but it is clear that it is one that must be reckoned with and that should be understood.

Some fifteen years ago a few Socialist teachers in the Government universities, and their student associates, got into touch with rickshaw coolies and railway and industrial workers. Winning their confidence through educational and other help rendered, they began to organize them into unions. The first-fruits of their activities were the formation of the National Labour Party in Shanghai in 1913, with a branch in the railway and mining town of Tongshan, and the Federation of Labourers and Farmers in Shanghai in 1916, which advocated joint action by these two groups in the spread of Socialist teaching.

They found the men responsive to suggestion. The spirit of association is strong, as we have seen in connection with the guilds. It has not been difficult to bring the employee members of the guilds together on the one hand, or to form labour unions in those modernized forms of transport and industry in which the guild has gone or has not appeared. There is thus a closer relation between the guild and the union in China than there was in Europe; they are

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found side by side as members in the same federation and in some cases the one passes into the other. In March 1927 Canton city officially reported 180 unions, of which fully 70 were re-organized guilds.

Trade unionism in the West has travelled far since the workers in industry took up the bitter struggle against the combination acts, and the fact of the modern international labour movement has naturally profoundly influenced the situation in China. The Chinese workman, if left to himself, would probably not have gone as far as he has in the organization of the modern type of union. He has generally been too conscious of the grim struggle for life under the old order, too thankful to have enough to keep body and soul together, to have begun to think of the new industry as a "system," under which he might not receive justice. In the old days he was ready to strike if wages fell below the modest standard he set as necessary, or in the face of any specific injustice, but that did not require any permanent organization. He was free from, or at least was not conscious of any economic disability or injustice against which he was called upon to fight either the Government or the employers as a class. When modern industry came, there was no hostility against machinery, though there was strong objection to mechanical transport by those who expected to be displaced by it. Ignorance and illiteracy set no definite goal to work for. Consequently it is not surprising

that the movement in China is largely due to fostering from the outside, that it still depends to a noticeable but decreasing extent upon educated sympathizers as spokesmen and secretaries, and that its growth has been very much influenced by political factors.

The first important strike in the modern movement was that of the seamen in January 1922. This led to a number of sympathetic strikes, which practically held up the life of Hong-Kong until a settlement was effected. The success of the strike led to a great extension of the union movement.<sup>1</sup> The seamen's union is one of the strongest. The mechanics' union is also powerful, and more recently the textile unions have become important. From a Western point of view, however, even these stronger groups have very small funds, and the less well organized have no very definite membership.

The movement differs greatly in character in different parts of the country, varying with the state of industry, the political conditions and the character of the people. It is weakest in the north, where the workers are more phlegmatic and less responsive to new influences, though they are likely to excel in staying power when they do move. In Canton at the other extreme the movement has been fostered by the Nationalists,

<sup>1</sup> It was as a result of this strike that the Canton Government abrogated Article 224 of the Provisional Penal Code, which rendered strikes illegal. This Code is still in force in all parts of China not under Nationalist control.

partly no doubt from genuine sympathy, but also for political reasons. In the important mining districts of Hunan, labour has been very aggressive. The workers took control in some mines and paid themselves high wages for short hours until business came to a standstill on account of rising costs. At some metal mines in the same province a similar state continued until a military governor put an end to it—and to some of the leaders.

For several years, because of the influence there of the Nationalists, Canton was the centre of the movement, the first All China Labour Congress being held there in May 1922; but recently the most significant developments have taken place in Shanghai. On 30th May 1925 occurred the "Shanghai incident," when the police of the International Settlement fired on a crowd advancing on one of the police stations. The occasion was a demonstration organized by students and labour unions to protest against the killing of a workman by a Japanese foreman. The result is known to all the world. There followed many strikes which were part, not of internal politics but of the Nationalist movement for the abolition of foreign privileges.

It would be a mistake, however, to give the impression that the movement is mainly political. There is genuine labour activity which is growing in strength. Strikes for economic reasons have indeed predominated. Dr T. Chen states that out of 1098 strikes occurring in the period 1918-

1926, but excluding 134 directly connected with the Shanghai incident, 580 arose from purely economic causes (low wages and rising prices), 283 over cases of alleged ill-treatment of workers (by foremen) and 64 were connected with popular movements. In strikes for industrial causes the workers have been successful in a majority of cases. There can be no doubt that the pressure exerted by the union movement has helped to better conditions and to stimulate a more liberal policy on the part of employers.

The General Labour Union which was inspired from Canton is an organization with communist leanings, but there are other unions growing in importance which are definitely anti-communist and they are federating in opposition to the General Labour Union. They are, however, weaker financially than the latter, which has had outside backing. The future of the movement will depend upon which group gains the support of the workers. That in turn will be influenced by the attitude of employers and the public. Those who are in close touch with the workers believe that the majority wish to be wisely led, and so they are desirous of seeing the promotion of workers' unions on a sound and constructive basis.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The opinion of some of the wiser workers was expressed by one of them when he said, "If the employers and the authorities would recognize the unions, steady men would go into them, and their leadership would be in the hands of men who know the trades—not in the hands of the agitators."

Until the political situation becomes clearer it would be unwise to attempt to forecast the attitude that Government is likely to assume to trade union organization if and when China again passes under unified control. All shades of opinion exist, from the most radical nationalist to reactionary militarist. There is danger, on one side, of the subordination of industrial to political interests if the doctrinaire extremists gain power, and on the other of a reactionary, repressive policy which can only breed trouble. China has long been familiar with combination in industry, and provision for discussion and conciliation would be in line with the history and genius of the Chinese. It must be admitted that the influences making for industrial strife and class-war are too powerful to be ignored, but it would be a calamity of the first magnitude if they were allowed to gain the upper hand.

### 3. TENDENCIES IN INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATION.

This matter of avoiding class-war in China is one which is exciting a good deal of concern with many Chinese. China has been singularly free from any form of class feeling and from social segregation into distinct classes. The idea of hostile social camps is repugnant to the instincts and contrary to the philosophy of thoughtful Chinese. One of Dr Sun Yat Sen's main criticisms of Marx is just this, that class-war is neither desirable nor inevitable. The practical

conclusion that follows is that modern industry in China should pay special regard to all means of preserving the solidarity of employer and employee, whether on lines developed in the West or on others suggested by Chinese experience. In China, for example, under the regulations of an earlier Peking Government, the first function of a Chamber of Commerce is to bring about friendly relations between merchants (or manufacturers) and workmen; and it is possible that, as the guilds which the Chambers now largely represent are replaced by employers' federations on the one hand and trade unions on the other (as they tend to be), the Chambers might for certain purposes contain representatives of both, and come to exercise this function of conciliation in an improved way.<sup>1</sup>

From a more purely economic point of view also, many Chinese are asking whether the Western forms of industrial organization are necessarily the best for them. When efforts were made to improve cotton cultivation in China, it was found that in the north the best results were obtained with American seed, but that in the Yangtse valley improved strains of Chinese cotton did best, as the dampness of the autumn did not suit upland cotton. Similarly it is felt that in some industries there are native forms of organization which will prove more

<sup>1</sup> See Gamble's *Peking*, pp. 451-8, for the regulations, and Vinacke's *Problems of Industrial Development in China*, Chap. VI, for a discussion of this subject.

successful than those copied directly from the West. Unfortunately too little study has been made of older types of Chinese industry, which present a great variety of detail in regard to such matters as the organization of the market, the position of the worker and the sharing of profits.

For instance, in a localized paper industry in Chihli using the inner bark of the mulberry, groups of seven workers form a unit under a merchant. Five of them do the less skilled work, preparing the materials and drying the paper; a more skilled man makes the paper, and the head man finishes and smooths it. The merchant keeps the books, sees to the marketing, and supplies all the capital needed. In some of the groups there is an interesting system of profit-sharing. Thus out of a profit of, say, \$600, the merchant takes \$200, one-half of this reckoning as due to him as manager, and the other half as return on his capital; the foreman (finisher) gets \$90, the paper-maker \$80, and the other five \$40-50 each.<sup>1</sup> In the South Chihli pottery industry already referred to, the 300 producers sold their wares through a "Chih Huo Tien". This interesting institution combined the functions of an inn and a broking establishment. The master received a ten per cent. commission from the producers but had to entertain gratuitously the merchants who came to buy. His relation with the makers was, however, ill-defined, and on

<sup>1</sup> "Study of Chinese Rural Economy," *Chinese Social and Political Science Review*, April 1924.

account of the dishonesty of a recent master, the Chih Huo Tien now handles only one-quarter of the current business.

Hitherto the joint-stock company has not flourished in China. Business in the past having been in the hands of a single family or of two or three close friends, usually connected by marriage, the basis of business morality has been family loyalty. Where this is lacking, as in the joint-stock organization, it is found that a new conscientiousness has to be developed before successful working can be secured. This is one reason why the industrial development of China cannot or should not outrun the development of new moral standards adequate to the situation.

#### 4. SOCIAL REACTIONS.

In the preceding pages an attempt has been made to present the more obvious results of the initial stages of China's entrance into modern world economy. Many points have necessarily been passed by. The influence of commerce, the growth of new wealthy classes in the Treaty Ports, with new tastes and imported luxuries—all this has been ignored. But we have seen industry causing far-reaching social changes, undermining old institutions, like the joint family and the guild, breaking old village bonds and the connection with the land, creating new situations by bringing the workers into the cities, with their crowded, insanitary conditions, throwing the

sexes together in closer and freer intercourse outside the family circle, necessitating a new knowledge of science and medicine and of the art of municipal government, making fresh demands on capacity and character, and calling for new moralities. The Chinese themselves are deeply conscious of the changes that are taking place in social thought. The traditional division of society into scholars, farmers, artisans and merchants has become an anachronism. The co-operation of students, workers and merchants in common action to realize national aims, the beginnings of union between farmers and industrialists, are felt to have a significance which foreign observers may easily miss.

All this social change has been happening as one phase of the many-sided revolution through which China is passing, at a time when the most diverse and conflicting influences are agitating the life of the country and especially the minds of the young. Traditional Chinese thought is to-day contending with the science of the schools, with Russian propaganda and with Christian teaching. Ideas that have any vogue almost anywhere in the world are crowding in on those who, having broken with old standards, are still for the most part without new ones to take their place.

At such a time the business-man, whose industrial activities are indirectly responsible for so many of these changes, has a peculiar responsibility in regard to them. It is incumbent upon him to see that the needs created by the changes

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are anticipated and met. While directly responsible for the well-being of his employees during their work he cannot evade the wider responsibility for helping to make provision for the new wants which their changed conditions necessitate, and for making his business a constructive force building up a stable and progressive industrial community.

## CHAPTER V

### TOWARDS AN INDUSTRIAL POLICY

#### 1. THE HUMAN FACTOR IN INDUSTRY.

THE far-reaching social consequences of economic changes described in the previous chapter, emphasize the importance of the human factor in industry. This from the more technical or business side is concerned with labour efficiency and the absence of industrial unrest, and on the broader social side with the well-being of the working population. The desire to avoid the evils which arose from the Industrial Revolution in the West can only be realized in China if measures based on the best Western practice in dealing with labour under the conditions of modern industry are adopted from the outset. Had all mills been run as Robert Owen ran New Lanark, the Industrial Revolution would have produced much happier results. His methods would be equally effective in China if employers could be persuaded or coerced into adopting them.

Within the business this policy would mean the fuller application of the science of employment management. Great progress has been made in

the West in regard to the engagement of workers, the fitting of the man to the job and the job to the man, the elimination of waste time and effort equally with waste of material or energy, the study of the conditions of work and of the reduction of fatigue and discomfort ; but all this is inadequately realized by all but the exceptional employer in China. Employment management in other words has become a profession demanding both practical and theoretical training. Its adoption in China means the elimination of the contractor and the training of the foreman. Some Sino-British enterprises in China, anxious for a better understanding of the worker and more intelligent treatment of him, as well as more satisfactory housing conditions, have engaged ex-missionaries for the purpose. But there is still a need in China for men who have had thorough training and varied experience in England or America to advise with those in local touch with the workers and to train Chinese who, given the necessary experience and character, are obviously better fitted for these duties than the foreigner.

Such men would rapidly improve labour efficiency in those industries in which it is at present low. They would be charged with the improvement of the conditions of labour and would be responsible to the management for discovering in what ways discussion and conciliation between them and the employees could be provided for. Schemes for pensions, profit-sharing or copartner-

ship would fall within their scope.<sup>1</sup> Business men in China bear testimony to the responsiveness of the Chinese worker to any consideration shown him, and his willingness to submit to quite rigorous discipline at the hands of those of whose justice he is convinced. What is wanted is a modern substitute for the family spirit in industry.

The large firm also has specially favourable opportunities for proving itself of service to China through collective provision for the needs of its employees. China is adopting new standards of living. This does not mean slavishly copying the West, but rather the adaptation to Chinese conditions of those methods for promoting health and comfort, for enlarging intellectual interest and social intercourse, and for providing means for the enjoyment of music, art, and the drama, which have developed so greatly in some countries during the last century. The possibilities of life for the more highly-skilled artisan are being studied by those interested in his well-being, and great improvement would be possible if the larger businesses actively co-operated in the effort to create the most wholesome standards—*as indeed some of them have already begun to do.*

<sup>1</sup> The outstanding, almost the only, example of accomplishment in some of these directions is the Commercial Press. A small number of undertakings, both foreign and Chinese, are attempting one or more forms of industrial welfare. Unfortunately, these efforts are unconnected; a pooling of experience and concerted action would give a strong impulse to the whole movement.

## 2. EDUCATION AND INDUSTRY.

For the worker and for industry the most fundamental of all needs is education—of the right kind and quality. The need for technical training of foremen, staff, and higher grades of workers is widely recognized. Immense sums have been spent on the university education of Chinese youth, both in China and abroad, but there have been very few industrial concerns into which they could enter. The present need is rather for the training in close touch with industry itself, of the classes just named. A beginning is being made in Shanghai, under the direction of Professor Joseph Bailie.<sup>1</sup> But even more important, if possible, is suitable cultural education, to do for the industrial population what has already been indicated as desirable for the rural. A basis must be given for an understanding of the new life in the city on which they are entering, with an appreciation of the requirements of hygiene, of the responsibilities and privileges of citizenship, and many similar subjects which will occur to anyone familiar with the worker's life. Several forms of education will be necessary if the whole community is to be reached. These include the education of the children of workers and a system of part-time education for young people employed in industry up to some age limit, say fourteen. In the West this system has been outgrown but has been pro-

<sup>1</sup> Of the Institute of Technical Training, Shanghai.

posed in a new form and at a more advanced stage in the Fisher Bill in England ; it is urgently needed in a country like China without compulsory education. Finally, there is required some form of adult education, not only to provide for the present generation but to give to those with experience of life what cannot be appreciated by the young.

### 3. SMALL-SCALE INDUSTRY.

The evidence seems to suggest that small-scale organization fits better into Chinese economy than large scale. It could make fuller use of the partially employed rural population and it secures a greater degree of total satisfaction to the average man, because it leaves him a larger amount of initiative and freedom. It would afford wider opportunity to the Chinese to follow their own bent. A rubber planter in Malay based his preference for Indian labour on the fact that the latter was content to follow instructions, while the Chinese had their own way of doing things, and before one knew it were running the show in their particular fashion.

Small-scale industry, however, can only be made a success in these days if considerable numbers of small producers federate together and secure expert scientific assistance, standardize their products, and create co-operative agencies for the supply of their needs and the marketing of their products. With the cheap transmission

of electrical power and the improvement of road transport, the diffusion of industry is becoming daily more practicable. Large-scale enterprise has offered big prizes for the few, and it has attracted the largest share of thought and experiment, but it is not at all certain that, in China at least, small units working on a federated basis would not surpass it in efficiency in some industries, if equal thought were given to it. Improvement in small-scale industry is not possible, however, unless the workers can be awakened from their conservatism and rendered as scientifically-minded and co-operative as the Danish peasant.<sup>1</sup> This is a matter in which guilds and Chambers of Commerce should interest themselves. As soon as possible, central and provincial governments should initiate an active industrial policy to explore the possibility of securing these ends.

<sup>1</sup> See p. 31f.

## CHAPTER VI

### INTERNATIONAL ASPECTS

#### 1. FOREIGN ENTERPRISE IN CHINA.

So far industrial enterprise in China has been described without differentiating between that under Chinese and that under foreign control. Some of the Powers, notably Japan, Great Britain and to a less extent America, have considerable undertakings owned and managed by their nationals in China. The British were granted early mining concessions which have since become Sino-British; they have developed engineering and shipbuilding works; they have long had a few leading cotton-mills, and they are concerned with tobacco, wool-cleaning and other enterprises. The Japanese, who entered the field later, have coal- and iron-mines, a larger number of cotton-mills and various flour-, oil-, and bean-cake-mills, albumen factories, chemical plants, and other enterprises. Through investments they have control of the largest iron plant in the country, and much else.

There are three aspects of the situation which call for consideration: (i) the influence of the foreign employer on industry in China; (ii) his position in relation to the national demand for

the revision of the treaties defining his privileges and status; and (iii) the possibility of foreign business co-operation in the realization of China's national aims.

(i) The character of foreigners as employers in China has recently attracted a good deal of attention and been the occasion of some controversy. It is claimed by their friends that the influence of the leading foreign capitalists has been wholly beneficial, that they have raised standards and introduced humanitarian principles, but their enemies represent them as ruthlessly exploiting the Chinese labourer. With every desire to be impartial the writer would state his judgment: (1) that in regard to such matters as the conditions of work, the rates of pay and the hours of work the influence of the foreign firms has, generally speaking, been distinctly beneficial to the Chinese workman; (2) that the average foreign business-man in China has been no more altruistic than business-men are apt to be, and that the adoption of humanitarian principles owes a good deal to the pressure of the workers and the efforts of their friends; and (3) that, for reasons to be stated later, the conception of the part that foreign industry might play as a constructive force has not been adequately grasped, and that on this side there has been at least comparative failure.

There are, of course, great differences between individual employers, but here we are concerned

with broad aggregate results. Within the sphere of actual business relations the average foreign firm compares very favourably with the average Chinese. The earlier foreign activities in China were commercial rather than industrial. The relations of merchant with merchant, of British, for example, with Chinese, have on the whole been excellent. In matter of strictly commercial morality; in keeping their contracts when prices or exchange have gone against them, in delivering goods according to sample or specification and so forth, the British have been generally faithful to the traditions to which they owe their position in international trade. This fact has, in the past, borne fruit in dealings with the Chinese merchant, of whom it was long said with truth "that his word was as good as his bond." Unfortunately in the abnormal post-war period, with its exchange problems, breaches of contract by traders of various nationalities and of the Chinese became more frequent, and the situation has grown worse.

Also on the side of their dealings with workmen, the foreign industrialist in China has on the whole a good record. The oldest British cotton-mill in China had no strike until the great political strike of 1925. This may be taken as typical. The Japanese in their recent industrial expansion in China have apparently resolved to be second to none, and in the comparatively new Nagai Wata Kaisha mills, for instance, they have set a high standard. Among

the progressive firms who have attempted to promote the well-being of their employees, Chinese, Japanese, British and American—to mention only the nations most concerned—all have a place, the Americans ranking higher in this than in commercial standards. The foreign employer has advantages in comparison with his Chinese confrères. He has behind him the slowly-developed traditions of accumulated experience and a large supply of technically-trained men to draw on. In technical matters: caring for machinery, building up reserves, providing for depreciation, and so forth, his policy is sounder. To set against this the Chinese employer has the fact that he is much nearer to the worker (from whom the foreigner is frequently separated by a contractor or comprador) and has a much better understanding of their ways, their needs and their possibilities. On the face of it there would seem to be a good case for co-operation between the two.

Also, the foreigner is separated as a rule by more than an intermediary. He is divided by race, by language, by social outlook. He usually lives in a foreign community in which he finds most of his social life. Western business tends to a narrow outlook and a self-contained character—“business is business” with an inadequate ethic, and this is a serious shortcoming in a situation such as that in China. As Nurse Cavell said of patriotism in an international situation it “is not enough,” so one is tempted to say of industry in China, commerce alone is not enough.

(ii) But the problem in China is not purely an industrial one. Because of the anomalous relations obtaining between China and the Powers, it is also political. America saw her railways developed by French and British capital without misgiving, and Japan, when she had made up her mind to enter the path of industrialization, quickly picked the brains of the experts she employed and then dispensed with their services. But in China it has been a different story. There is not space even to summarize Chinese-foreign relations down to the present embroglio. There is much to regret on both sides, and foreigners strengthen their position by frankly confessing their share in the mistakes made. Speaking of the effect on the Chinese of the scramble for concessions in the latter part of last century, Professor Sargeant says:—

“ . . . commercial concessions were inevitably and unfortunately associated in the Chinese view with foreign political and territorial aggression.”<sup>1</sup>

Foreign business in China should make it its aim to dissociate itself from this legacy of political complications and to come into harmony with Chinese national policies for economic development. Under the treaties made from time to

<sup>1</sup> *Anglo-Chinese Commerce and Diplomacy*, A. J. Sargeant. Clarendon Press.

time large commercial and industrial interests have been built up. A developed commercial life, with banking institutions, credit, specialized markets, intricate communications, large-scale undertakings, can only function under a modern type of government. The treaties through the growth of Chinese nationalism and of a more sensitive international morality have become repugnant to the Chinese and to many foreigners, to a degree which makes them impossible in their present form. The task not only of statesmanship but of all foreigners connected with China is to endeavour to establish such co-operative arrangements for the control of joint interests as will facilitate the realization of China's aspirations not only for sovereignty in her own borders but in modern municipal government and economic development.

## 2. CHINA AND INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS.

In entering into the main stream of the world's life, China should be given to feel that she does so with interest, goodwill and, as far as is consistent with her freedom to choose her own way, the active assistance of the people of other lands. On the lower plane of self-interest it should be realized that for the sake of standards everywhere, it is desirable that Chinese standards of living should be raised. On the side of labour, low standards in China tend to depress those

elsewhere; on the side of industry, a wealthy China would mean much more world trade. As Chinese industry grows, individual trades may suffer and adjustment be required, but the total volume of trade between China and other countries will enormously increase.

On the higher plane of international goodwill various groups have manifested their interest in appropriate ways. Philanthropic and humanitarian sympathy, especially in America, has led to the subscription of immense sums for famine relief. Organized labour in various countries has sought to help the Chinese worker. When Chinese employees were on strike in Japanese mills in Shanghai over the treatment of a coolie by a foreman, the workers in Japan organized a demonstration in support of the Chinese. The Labour Party in England sent out Colonel Malone in 1926 to report on labour conditions in China, and he has proposed certain practical measures of assistance of a more permanent kind. But the two groups which call for fuller notice here are the International Labour Office and the Christian missionary movement.

With regard to the former, it is true that hitherto China has been expressly excluded from the operation of the international standards proposed by the Washington and later Conferences under the International Labour Office. But the latter body has already exerted an influence which raises the hope that with political stability once established, it will be of considerable direct

assistance. It is believed that it was largely the inquiries and suggestions made from Geneva and supported by the interest of foreign sympathizers in China which led to the promulgation of the factory regulations of March 1923 by the Peking authorities; and though political conditions rendered that first step abortive, it may yet prove the promise of better things to come. The influence of the I.L.O. is seen again in the prohibition by the same ministry of the use of yellow phosphorus for match-making as from 1st January 1925. Although this prohibition has not been enforced, it has led to a partial substitution of the red for the yellow form, despite the fact of the greater popularity, higher selling-price and lower cost of the matches made with the yellow variety. This is distinctly a good augury and should make the way easier for the future.

With regard to the Christian movement, a keen interest is being taken by a number of groups in the welfare of the worker, whether he be country peasant or city factory hand. Several of the Christian universities have agricultural departments or colleges, which are studying the technical problems of the farmer and helping him to improve his methods. Rural education under missionary auspices is paying increasing attention to the social and economic needs of the villagers, and attempts are being made to meet those needs through the schools. Indeed there are now mission schools with agricultural

experts, especially under the American and Canadian societies, serving various local areas. The rural co-operative movement is also finding some of its best friends among the Christian community.

Other Christian groups are equally interested in the welfare of city workers, especially perhaps of those employed in the newer types of industry. Their interest extends both to working and living conditions, including housing, as well as to moral and social welfare. It was through the preparatory efforts particularly of a small but active Christian group that the Shanghai Municipal Council's Child Labour Commission came into being, and the services of Dame Adelaide Anderson, for many years His Majesty's Chief Woman Inspector of Factories, were secured for it.<sup>1</sup> The Christian movement is concerned not only with creating right attitudes and a public conscience on some of the questions involved, but it feels the need of bringing the right kind of technical knowledge to bear on them. The teacher and doctor have long been familiar members of the missionary force. The circumstances of the day are driving home the conviction that workers with an intimate knowledge of industrial life and training in the methods of industrial welfare are as much needed as the medical man. Moreover, the fact that modern industry has come from the

<sup>1</sup> See *Humanity and Labour in China*, Dame Adelaide Anderson. S.C.M. 10s. 6d.

West, and that mainly from the lands most concerned in Protestant missionary enterprise, creates a feeling of fuller responsibility for the welfare of those who have been drawn into the new and strange conditions of city life.

Missionaries are frequently charged by extreme Nationalists in China with being the "running dogs" of the foreign capitalist. The foreign capitalist often takes a very different view of missionary activities. The truth is that the Christian desires to co-operate with all alike, Chinese and foreign, employer and worker, for the attainment of those conditions on which alone permanent prosperity can be secured and a satisfactory life attained for the people of China. In the settlement we hope will emerge from the present chaos, China's greatest need in all directions will be for men of character, and it is in helping to train these that the Christian Church can render China most valuable aid.

### 3. INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION AND NATIONAL AIMS.

Is it too Utopian to speak of foreign co-operation in the realization of China's broader national aims (as distinguished from the ultra-nationalistic aims of some of her extremists) in these days of internal disorder and international strain? Is it not rather the only direction in which a solution can be found and peaceful

progress achieved? Beneath the surface strife of military factions and political cliques, forces of constructive thought and social impulse are slowly gathering strength and power, underpinning even the deeper centres of recurrent weakness in China. The justification and the security of the foreigner in China alike depend on discovering and co-operating with the new and still nascent movements which are the result of China's contact with the better features of Western life. It has been when this has been done in the past that contact has been fruitful and relations cordial. The fact that the West has so often failed in this respect is a principal cause of the present difficulty.

A concrete instance of such failure may make the meaning clear. When a Mayor of Greater Shanghai was recently appointed by the Chinese authorities with the object of bringing the districts surrounding the International Settlement and French Concession under a unified, modern municipal government, the first difficulty that was encountered was the absence of trained Chinese administrators.<sup>1</sup> After eighty years of international intercourse in that great port, which has grown to include eight hundred thousand Chinese under international authority, there were practically no Chinese with the experience which would qualify them to establish higher types of municipal government in their own cities.

<sup>1</sup> See article by Dr V. K. Ting, in the *North China Herald*.

In the industrial sphere it is too early as yet to say in what direction growing experience of industry and the reflections of her thinkers will lead China, but it may confidently be expected that the broader human ends and aspects of industry will be more stressed by the Chinese than they have been in the West. China's heritage is pre-eminently the great body of social ethic which forms the most distinctive part of her traditional culture. To-day, when Confucius is regarded in many quarters as a reactionary, with his eyes on the past and his thought inextricably bound up with the old imperial system, Chinese scholars are turning to less orthodox but not less profound thinkers, of whom Mo-tzu is one of the greatest. His teaching is that society can only be organized about the two principles of "love" and "profit." If we may take the latter in the broad sense of social welfare which harmonizes it with the former, his thought serves as the basis for the development of a science of social economics at once scientific and ethical, as all social science must ultimately be. We cannot remind ourselves too often that the search for social righteousness is the deepest and best thing in Chinese life and the one that Western contacts should above all seek to strengthen. It is hoped that the view taken in this little book is not inconsistent with this aim.

For Anglo-Saxons, who will form the majority of its readers, it is well to remember that while China has drawn and should draw inspiration

from many sources, the main spring of her new national ideals has been Anglo-Saxon liberalism and especially American democracy. However far China may ultimately go, the best Western industrial practice and social ideals are urgently needed and, generally speaking, warmly welcome to-day; and for the sake of future world-development, the West cannot afford to be represented by any but her best.

## APPENDIX A

### SIZE OF FAMILY IN RELATION TO SIZE OF HOLDING. VILLAGES IN CHIHLI.

(From Study of Chinese Rural Economy, Malone and Tayler.)

1 Size of Holdings.	2 Number of Holdings (or Families).	3 Percentage of Total Holdings.	4 Percentage of Total Land.	5 Persons in the Families.	6 Percentage of Total Population.	7 Average Size of Family.
Under 3 mu *	372	12·6	0·9	1,006	5·2	2·7
3	595	20·3	3·4	2,399	12·6	4·0
6	658	22·3	7·4	3,145	16·5	4·8
11	660	22·4	15·8	3,773	19·8	5·7
26	335	11·4	18·5	2,807	14·7	8·4
51	201	6·9	21·3	2,181	11·4	10·8
101	89	3·0	18·1	1,146	6·1	12·9
201	29	1·0	11·9	430	2·2	14·8
501-1000	...	...	...	...	...	...
Over 1000	7	...	2·6	21	0·1	21·0
Without land	2940	...	...	16,908	88·6	5·7
	592	...	...	2,190	11·4	3·7
	3532			19,098		5·4

\* 6 mu = 1 acre.

## APPENDIX B

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Among the many works dealing with various aspects of Chinese economic life, the following may be recommended :—

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*Farmers of Forty Centuries.* F. H. KING. I. Cape.  
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*Humanity and Labour in China.* Dame ADELAIDE ANDERSON.  
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*Problems of Industrial Development in China.* H. M. VINACHE.  
Princeton University Press.  
*Commercial Handbook of China.* 2 vols. J. ARNOLD. U.S.A.  
*Explaining China.* J. E. BAKER.  
*Peking: A Social Survey.* S. D. GAMBLE. Doran.

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published by the Government Bureau of Economic  
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Chen.  
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a frequent contributor.  
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THE  
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I

A PRELIMINARY modesty becomes a new professor; and a deprecatory preface to his inaugural discourse is not only a decency, but also a debt, when the new professor is sitting uneasily in a new chair to expound a subject which, he well knows, many of his hearers will regard as certainly nebulous, probably dubious, and possibly disputatious. Happy is the Cambridge man, with history bred in his very bones, who returns to Cambridge, after years of devotion and service, to declare the ascertained mysteries of the muse Clio; but unhappy, thrice unhappy, is the Oxford man, who comes to Cambridge for the first time, dripping from seven years of immersion in

the bewildering complications of the University of London, to profess an uncertain subject about which he has already forgotten more than he ever knew. To come to Cambridge—the home of exact knowledge, where men walk on the razor's edge of acute analysis—and to come, with such an equipment, for the exposition of such a subject, is a bold and desperate thing. I can only promise, as I do with a genuine sincerity, to attempt to ascertain the nature of my subject; to seek to discover the facts, if such there be, which form its basis; and to try to analyse, as best I can, their significance and implications. And I may perhaps be allowed to take some measure of comfort from the reflection that such experience of affairs as I have had in London during the last seven years may give to my lectures that tang of reality which my subject especially needs. No philosophy of human life can live by books alone; and political philosophy, no less than other forms, must

study the busy hum of affairs in the cave before it can move into the upper light of contemplation.

You will not expect me, after what I have said in my preface, to begin the body of my discourse by any precise definition of my subject. It is a subject which has come to be known in this place by the name of Political Science. I am not altogether happy about the term "Science." It has been vindicated so largely, and almost exclusively, for the exact and experimental study of natural phenomena, that its application to politics may convey suggestions, and excite anticipations, which cannot be justified. If I am to use the designation of Political Science, I shall use it, as Aristotle used *πολιτικὴ ἐπιστήμη*, to signify a method, or form of enquiry, concerned with the moral phenomena of human behaviour in political societies. I should prefer to call such a method or form of enquiry by the name of Political Theory, because I should

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hope, by the use of that name, to avoid the appearance of any excessive claim to exactitude, and I should be indicating more precisely the nature of the enquiry, as simply a "speculation" (*θεωρία*) about a group of facts in the field of social conduct, a speculation intended to result in a general scheme which connects the facts systematically with one another and thus gives an explanation of their significance. If that name be adopted, a respectable and honourable antiquity may readily be vindicated for the subject I have to profess. It was studied by Aristotle; it was expounded by St Thomas Aquinas; it was discussed by the venerable Paley, a light of this University, in his *Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy*; and it has been treated continuously, during the last seventy years, by a succession of distinguished men in both of the older Universities.

In the cultivation of political theory as a subject of University study Oxford has perhaps

been more systematic, if less many-sided, than Cambridge. The Oxford school of *Literae Humaniores*, the glory of my old University, has produced what itself may almost be called a school of thinkers (for Oxford naturally runs to "schools" and "movements" of thought) in T. H. Green and F. H. Bradley and Bernard Bosanquet. Nurtured on a double inspiration, the ancient oracles of Greek philosophy and the modern mysteries of German idealism—blending Plato with Hegel, and Aristotle with Kant—these Oxford thinkers have advanced to the creation of original philosophies on the principles of political obligation, the duties of social station, and the general theory of the State. Their influence on generations of Oxford men has been profound; some who have sat at the feet of their political wisdom have in after days been called to handle the political destinies of their country; and they have shown that they had not forgotten the lessons which they once learned.

Cambridge, always more individualistic, has never produced a single dominant mode or prevalent body of opinion in the field of political theory. But Cambridge has none the less been the nursing-mother of a rich and various speculation. Now it has fostered a philosopher, and now an historian—now a lawyer, and now a churchman—who has turned to the study of politics and made, from his own particular angle, some new and vigorous contribution to its development. There is the honoured name of Henry Sidgwick, a philosopher who took both politics and economics for his province, and who, steeped in the teaching of John Stuart Mill, expounded with a rigorous integrity, and a scrupulous analysis, the purely English tradition which makes the utility of individuals the canon of all institutions and the criterion of every policy. There is Sir John Seeley, Regius Professor of Modern History, one of the earliest discoverers of the existence of the

British Empire, a scholar of masculine vigour and a robust realism, who regarded political science as the fruit on the branches of history, and, drawing his principles of politics from a study of the modern working of the English constitution, turned the attention of Cambridge scholars towards that study of political institutions which has continued to be endemic. There is Lord Acton, Seeley's successor, *clarum et venerabile nomen*, a profound and pregnant thinker on all European affairs, "as well civil as ecclesiastical," who cherished a delicate and fastidious love of liberty, believing that the independence of the Church in the State had been, and should continue to be, its bulwark, and dreading those nationalist enthusiasms which seek to make a national State into a destructive tyrant "crushing all natural rights and all established liberties for the purpose of vindicating itself." No influence has been more profound in this place than that of Acton; and I would commemorate

among those who felt and propagated that influence the name of Neville Figgis, whom I was proud to call a friend; who adorned with incisive wit and industrious scholarship all the themes of political theory which he touched; who loved and prophesied the cause of liberty, both political and religious (I shall never forget his taking me round the garden of the house of the community in which he lived at Mirfield, and suddenly exclaiming, "Barker, I really believe I'm a syndicalist"); and who, if he had lived, would have been an occupant as proud as he would have been worthy of the chair to which, in his stead, I am called. I cannot but glow as I think of his memory. Admiration and affection were his due; and he had his due from many. And there is another name which comes last, but is very far from being the least—a name which also kindles a glow in the minds of those who have heard his voice and fed on his thought—the name of one who

was worthy, in his field, to be counted by the side of Acton, and who, along with Acton, filled the mind and determined the thought of Figgis—the name of Maitland. I can cite no greater name. I can only record the measure of the debt which I owe to the man who wrote, in his own inimitable style, the opening chapters of the *History of English Law*, the introduction to *Political Theories of the Middle Age*, and the essays which deal with or touch on the problems of politics in the three volumes of his *Collected Papers*. How massive was the monument which he erected; how stately and delicate was the style of its architecture; and how far-reaching has been the influence which his teaching, and in particular his teaching about the character of associations and the nature of their personality, has exerted.

I cannot but reflect, as I think of the writings of these Cambridge scholars, how many of them were vowed to the cause of liberty. If Oxford, with its strong corporate

sense, about the origin of which I have often wondered, has professed the cause of the body politic, Cambridge, once the apostle of Protestantism and always the apostle of freedom, has followed the banner of individual autonomy. It is the banner which claims my allegiance; and I am proud and comforted to think of the great men who formed the tradition which I shall follow. The chair of Political Science is a new chair; but behind it stretches a line of solemn and majestic shadows. There is Sidgwick, with his scrupulous regard for the canon of individual liberty: there is Acton, for whom history was above all the history of freedom: there is Maitland, whose dissertation for his fellowship at Trinity was "an historical sketch of liberty and equality as ideals of English political philosophy," and whose theory of associations has nerved both defenders of the liberties of Trade Unions and champions of the rights of churches in the modern State.

Thinking of these things, and seeing behind me these great figures, I may say of my efforts, as with infinitely less reason Ranke said of his in his inaugural lecture, *Non attingunt metam, sed meta posita est.*

## II

Among the precursors whose names I have mentioned there were at least four—Seeley and Acton, Figgis and Maitland—who had devoted themselves to the study of history; and Sidgwick himself, philosopher as he was, had studied the development of European polity. There is an obvious affinity between history and political theory; and it may well be a way to the better understanding of the nature of political theory if I turn to consider how far it proceeds on the ground of history, and how far it takes wing and transcends the bounds of historical study. Herodotus, the most garrulous and lovable of story-tellers, could not tell the story of the Persian wars

without passing into political reflections; and in his third book he makes a number of Persian grandees, after compassing the death of the false Smerdis, proceed straight from assassination to a calm discussion of the inherent merits, and the inevitable defects, of monarchy, aristocracy and democracy. The austere Thucydides mingles a pithy and astringent philosophy with his severe narrative of the Peloponnesian war; and alike in the Melian Dialogue, the funeral speech of Pericles, and the passage on sedition in his third book, he gravely attempts *rerum cognoscere causas*. As the historians of Greece became philosophers, so the philosophers became, if not historians, at any rate students of history. Plato himself, idealist as he was, and however cavalier he might generally be in his treatment of history, attempts a review of the lessons of the past, in the third book of the *Laws*, before he proceeds to build an ideal State. The *Politics* of Aristotle is built on the

solid foundations of Greek experience; and its political theory was compacted and corroborated from a study of 158 constitutions, of which we possess an example in the treatise on the Constitution of Athens. The practice of the Greeks may seem to confirm the theory which Seeley expressed in a well-known jingle, "History without Political Science has no fruit: Political Science without History has no root." And if this be so, history will be but philosophy—political philosophy—teaching by examples; and political philosophy in turn will be simply history precipitated in a patterned shape of generalities.

But I take leave to doubt whether Professor Trevelyan should be termed a root, and, still more, whether I deserve the appellation of fruit. History and political theory march together for all the length of their frontiers; but they are separate and independent studies. Let us assume, for the purpose of argument, the truth of Croce's proposition

that "every true history is contemporary history"—that it is a history of the present regarded as containing the past, or, if you will, of the past regarded as constituting the present. Let us further assume the truth of another saying of Croce, that "dead history revives, and past history again becomes present, as the development of life demands them," or, in other words, that in a given present some element of a distant past, acquiring a new vitality from a new congruity with the life of that present, may become once more a creative force, as the Greek past did at the Renaissance. On these assumptions we may proceed to admit that there is much political theory which has been bred partly from the stimulus of present experience, but partly also from the study and stimulus of some congruous past which has become alive and present from its congruity with present experience. The political theory of Rousseau, for example, was born of Rousseau's ex-

perience of the Republic of Geneva and of his study of the parallel city-states of the Greek past in the biographies of Plutarch and the dialogues of Plato. The political theory of the Whigs in the seventeenth century sprang equally from a mixture of contemporary political experience and the study of precedents and analogies in a congruous past—particularly, perhaps, the reign of Richard II, which was affected by the Whigs for its records of constitutional opposition and its example of a king's deposition. But while we may readily admit the debt of such political theory to the study of history, we must equally admit the possibility of a great and influential theory of politics which has no definite basis in history. It may be the method of a political thinker to assume as his axiom certain views about the nature of the human mind and the end of human life, and to deduce a systematic theory from those views. This was the method of Spinoza; it was the

method of Plato when he wrote the *Republic*; and it is fundamentally the method of Aristotle, who—however historical, and even empirical, he may appear—was none the less purely philosophical in his explanation of the existence, his conception of the purposes, and his derivation of the institutions, of the true or normal State. In this way, and in this sense, history and political theory may be independent, if conterminous, powers. You may have a political theory which is a good theory without being rooted in historical study, just as you may have history which is fine history without issuing in any fruit of political science. For to relate what actually occurred, *wie es eigentlich gewesen ist*, is a task worthy of the greatest historian; and he who tells some noble and stirring story in noble and stirring prose may mix true art with genuine history and carry every vote.

Not only is political theory a study which is, or may be, independent of the study of

history. We may go further, and say that it is a study which loses its true nature, and puts its neck unnecessarily under the yoke of happening and the routine of historic sequence, if it occupies itself largely with problems of history. It is concerned with questions of being rather than with those of becoming: it has to discuss what the State is *semper et ubique*, rather than what it was at this time or in that place, or how it developed from one form into another. It is true that John Stuart Mill once wrote that the fundamental problem of all social speculation was "to find the laws according to which any state of society produces the state which succeeds it." He was following Comte and the Positivist theory of successive stages in a superseding process of development, by which, for example, the industrial regime ejects the military as "positive" thought ousts "metaphysical." But to anatomize the history of society and thought into separate sections divided by

deep abysses—as if it were a desert of Arizona traversed and split by great cañons—is to forget the continuous eternities both of society and of thought. There are questions of political theory which are the same yesterday, to-day and for ever. Why does the State exist? What are the purposes for which it exists? What are the best and most congruous means of realising them? These are fundamental problems; and the State is thus concerned less with historic processes (however generally and even abstractly they may be conceived) than with the fundamental realities—essence, purpose, and value—which transcend the category of time. We must admit, indeed, that the State exists in time, and may vary in form, if not in substance, from age to age. We must equally admit that political speculation has often dressed itself in historical language,<sup>1</sup> and that the theory of the Social Contract, for instance, has sometimes been expressed in terms which suggest an historical account of

the actual genesis of the State. But even the theory of the Social Contract is, at bottom, a philosophical theory rather than an historical narrative. It is an attempt to explain, not the chronological antecedents, but the logical presuppositions, of the State—to show, not how it came to be, but on what assumptions we can explain its being. Hobbes himself, after an account of the state of nature which imposes the necessity of a social contract, remarks “It may peradventure be thought that there never was such a time. . . .and I believe it was never generally so. . . .howsoever it may be perceived what manner of life *there would be*, where there were no common power to fear.” In a word, the whole theory is a matter of an hypothesis, or assumption, on which the existence of the State and its government can be explained; and it does not profess or claim historical validity. There is a profound remark of Hobbes which may serve as the conclusion of the whole matter.

Philosophy "excludes history as well natural as political, though most useful—nay, necessary—to philosophy; because such knowledge is but experience, and not ratiocination."

"Most useful—nay, necessary." Nurtured as I have been in history, I should be the last to decry its utility, and, indeed, its necessity, for the purposes of my subject. Any true philosophy must be one which has been immersed in experience—and yet has escaped the peril of submersion in its wide and brimming flood. A philosophy of politics must especially be immersed in a double experience—that of the past and that of the present. It must be based, in the first place, on a knowledge of what Sidgwick called "the development of European polity"—a knowledge of Greek democracy, of Roman imperialism, of mediaeval institutions both feudal and ecclesiastical, and of the mingled parliamentarianism and nationalism

of modern Europe. It must be founded, in the second place, on a real acquaintance, deeper than can be derived from the study of books alone, with the forms—and not only the forms, but also the spirit and working—of contemporary institutions. The parallel chair in the sister University bears a double designation: it is a chair of political theory and institutions. In this University too the study of political institutions has been cultivated, for many years past, by a number of lecturers; and one of the papers set in the first part of the Historical Tripos is primarily concerned with “a comparative survey of Political Institutions and their development, with some reference to the history of Political Theory.” Such study, and such survey, have a natural and obvious fascination. Who is there who cannot read with delight the memorable works of Bryce on *The American Commonwealth* and *Modern Democracies*, or President Lowell’s lucid treatises on *Governments and Parties in*

*Continental Europe and The Government of England?* From this point of view I can well understand why the University, even if it has not specifically used the word institutions in the designation of the new chair, has included in the Professor's terms of appointment a generous clause which permits his absence, during one term in every three, in order that he may study abroad the actual working of institutions or the actual development of theory. I have thought how I could best take advantage of this permission, and while I may take some liberty to myself, I am inclined to think that I shall not fly away much, or for long, from the cage in which I am more than content to sit and sing. There are some far flights (I can think of three) which I desire to undertake during my tenure of the Chair; but I believe that I may occasionally desire to spend the academic year in the company of my colleagues. For one thing, my own bias leans towards the side of theory, and it is

probably best for me to run with the bias. Other professors will contribute, in time to come, what I have failed to give; and the subject of the Chair is vast enough to permit some measure of selection and specialisation. Meanwhile I am happy to think that a number of University lecturers in the field of history are lecturing, and will continue to lecture, on political institutions. I will help whenever I can, and wherever I have fresh knowledge to contribute; and though it may not be given to me to survey mankind in China and Peru, I will remember that Capetown and Delhi and Washington are not inaccessible, that vacations are sometimes long, and that continental journeys are often short. For the rest, I will cultivate my garden in Cambridge, and I will comfort myself with the austere reflection that though absence might endear me more, presence may make for greater continuity of study and instruction. The uninterrupted movement of a University's

life, as I have had some occasion to observe, does not pause for the absence of any Professor; nor does the business of any other body or society in which he may be interested. And I feel it the duty of a Professor of Political Science to interest himself, as far as he may, in the life and affairs of the community in which he lives. It is difficult, I confess, for a professor to practise what he professes; but *χαλεπὰ τὰ καλά*—all good things are difficult.

I seem to have diverged from history into an autobiography of the future; and I must return from green fields into the dusty road. I have spoken of history and political theory as separate things: let me put them together and treat of the history of political theory—or, as it is often called, the history of political ideas. It is a fascinating subject, just as the history of philosophy is a fascinating subject. And just as, I imagine, you must know something of the history of philosophy to be a good philosopher, so you must certainly

know a good deal of the history of political ideas to be a tolerable political theorist. In thought, as well as in action, the roots of the present lie deep in the past; and Hegel had his foundations in Plato, as Bosanquet, in his turn, had his foundations in both. The more the development of political ideas is studied, the richer will be the development of political theory—provided, I hasten to add, that it is studied as a means and not as an end, and provided again that it is studied in its breadth as well as its depth. Let me explain these two provisos. The first is simple. To study and to understand previous theories about a subject does not absolve a teacher from the duty of himself understanding the subject itself. It is possible, but not perhaps very useful, to know all political theories without attaining a theory; and there may be more wisdom in less knowledge, if it is brought to a point and used as a tool of original thought. The danger of some subjects of speculation—

I would cite in evidence literary criticism as well as political theory—is that they may be choked, as it were, by the history of their own past. The second proviso which I have made raises larger considerations. When I speak of considering breadth as well as depth, I mean that besides political theory there is what I would call political thought, which is as broad and wide as the general community from which it proceeds, and which, in any study of political ideas, must be considered no less than political theory, however deeply such theory may delve. Political theory is the speculation of individual minds, self-conscious and analytic; political thought is the thought of a whole society, often but dimly conscious of itself, and yet pervading and shaping political life and growth. The complex of political ideas which we may call by the name of political thought is implicit in, and has to be gathered from, its own actual and historical results—the development of Athenian de-

mocracy, the growth of the English constitution, the general unfolding of national ideas and aspirations in modern Europe. It is embedded in institutions, from which it must be disengaged; and it may even be, as it were, interred in the political vocabulary of a language, from which it may have to be exhumed, as Professor Myres has shown in a recent work on *The Political Ideas of the Greeks*, by a patient study of etymologies and the nuances of meaning attached to political terms. Whatever the sources from which it may be discovered, it is a matter of profound moment; and no history of political ideas can be complete which does not reckon with *Staatsgedanke* as well as with *Staatslehre*.

I have spoken long of history in its relation to political theory. If I speak but briefly of a study cognate to history—the study of law—my brevity must be regarded less as the measure of my respect than as the index of my ignorance. But I hasten to say

how readily I admit that political theory can never afford to neglect the study of legal ideas, and how gratefully I recognise the debt which my subject owes to a succession of great legal thinkers. Legal ideas have formed, or contributed to form, the institutions of the State; and they are still the bony substance, or supporting *vertebrae*, of its subtly compacted organs. The family is a legal rather than a natural institution—an institution which was thought into existence by the primitive lawyers who made its rules, rather than brought to birth by innate instincts<sup>1</sup>: property, too, is a conception of the lawyers; and the State itself, in one of its aspects, is a legal framework which lawyers have largely built and whose anatomy they have discussed in treatises on *Staatsrecht*. In England, indeed, with its unwritten constitution and its conception of the general sovereignty of a single

<sup>1</sup> Eduard Meyer, *Geschichte des Altertums*, I. i (3rd edition), p. 17.

law, there has never been any separate *Staatsrecht*; and the study of constitutional law has been part and parcel of the general study of common law. But perhaps for that reason, and because there has been no separate compartment of study, but only a disengaging of broad constitutional principles from the body of our law, the thought of the lawyers has exercised all the more influence on political ideas and speculation. Blackstone is justly famous; the name of one of his successors in the Vinerian Chair—that of Dicey—deserves to be had in lasting remembrance; and I have already celebrated the name of a great occupant of the Downing Chair of the Laws of England in this University, Maitland, who not only showed that the history of English Law was an essential part of the history of English politics and political ideas, but made his exposition, by his style and his genius, a part of English literature. In the more general field of Jurisprudence Cambridge

produced Maine, if Maine adorned Oxford; and Maine, pursuing an historical method of enquiry, made the general history of law at once illustrate and check political theories, whether of the patriarchal origin of society or of the formation of the State by a Social Contract. Nor, outside England, and not to mention other English names, such as that of Austin, can I forget the work on my subject done by the lawyers of the continent—Bodin, Grotius and Montesquieu, Gierke and Jellinek, Duguit and Esmein. The debt is profound; and I cannot, even at the risk of egotism, forbear to mention what I owe to the teachers of law in my own old University with whom I have had discussions, or, I had perhaps better say, from whom I have had expositions. I will only add that I hope to be allowed to renew the indebtedness here. Political theory and its teachers must consort not only with history and historians, but also with law and the lawyers.

### III

Before I turn from history and the cognate study of law to consider philosophy, I desire to say some few words about psychology, which is, as it were, a half-way house on the road I am travelling. If in the days of Seeley, and in the general tradition of Cambridge, the study of politics has been mainly connected with the study of history; if, again, in the days of T. H. Green and his successors, and in the general tradition of Oxford, it has been connected with the study of philosophy—in the world outside it has come more and more to connect itself with the growing study of psychology. Political theory would sometimes seem to be turning itself before our eyes into social psychology. Theorists of an older type are censured for basing their theories on a very imperfect observation of the human mind and the tendencies of human conduct, and the new science of mental and moral behaviour is

promising to supply the defect. There is some justice in the censure, and some actual delivery accompanies the promise; nor can I be blind, even if in this matter my eyes are a little held, to the new substance and new inspiration brought into social studies by writers such as Tarde, McDougall and Graham Wallas. But I cannot but say to myself—it may be from hardness of heart and an obstinate clinging to the gospel I once received—that psychology is a fashion (I have seen, in my life-time, more than one fashion of thought); that fashions change; and that the quiet hodden-grey of philosophy endures.

In its modern form psychology runs into the mould of natural science. Like physics, it decomposes its subject-matter into atoms and electrons which it calls by the name of instincts. Like biology, it works from the primitive to the present; it explains the present in terms of evolution from the past; and it may be led to refer the behaviour of civil-

ised man to the instincts developed in man's rude beginnings. Decomposing the mind into instincts, it may miss the unity secured to the mind by a pervading and freely moving reason which "passeth and goeth through all things by reason of her pureness," and makes the mind move freely as a whole towards its chosen purposes. Referring the present to the past, and explaining social behaviour to-day by primary and primitive instincts, it may forget any standard of value, and blend the high with the low in a common continuous substance. The dignity of man may suffer, and he may become not a little lower than the angels, if the study of his mind is treated as the study of so much mechanism. On the other hand there can be no doubt that the study of psychology in its various forms—and there are very various and divergent forms of the study—has added new substance to political theory. If the study of political institutions and legal principles brings us face

to face with what Hegel would call Mind Objective—mind concrete and deposited in a solid and stable fabric—the study of psychology presents us with mind subjective, the subtle spinning of mental processes which forms the living stuff of Society and the State—the play of emotions, sentiments, instincts and habits—which lies behind and peeps through political and legal systems. Nor does social psychology only add to knowledge: it may also claim to be a practical and applied science. I have been told that its aim is entirely practical; that it might be described as a sort of social therapeutics; that just as the doctor studies physical processes with a view to stimulating or inhibiting or modifying those processes, so the social psychologist studies psychical processes with a view to similar control. In a word, he wishes to know how normal man behaves in the presence of a given stimulus in order that he may discover how far you can change his behaviour

by changing the stimulus. Perhaps there may be a remedy for the evils of states if psychologists are kings, or kings have the spirit and power of psychology; and a statesman who has studied psychology may be the better aware both of the difficulties which he has to face in men's instincts and modes of behaviour, and of the methods by which he may overcome those difficulties. But there is a certain danger in that form of applied psychology, not unknown to statesmen, which leads to spell-binding and *réclame*; and there is also a tendency even in pure students of the subject to let their view of human nature suffer from their observations of the working of the human mind. The political theorists who used psychology even before it existed—and one may perhaps speak in such terms of Machiavelli and Hobbes and Bentham—were apt to think that mankind was a little breed. Greater knowledge has bred greater respect; but even now the

observation of mass-behaviour may lead the psychological student of "human nature in politics" to feel—half in sadness, and more than half in kindness—how little real wisdom goes to the government of the world.

The affinities of psychology, when it is regarded or studied as a branch of natural science, are affinities with biology. If it be true that psychology has added new content to political theory—and of that, whatever else may be said, there cannot be any doubt—it is also true that biology has laid it under a debt. It is not only a matter of the theory of evolution, which has influenced all thought in every field, and has turned political theory to the study of social development; nor is it a matter merely of the idea of adaptation to environment, which has led some political thinkers to regard a people's political ideas and institutions as a way of life adjusted to suit regional features and needs. The service which biology can render to political theory

goes further than these things. What has happened in the past is that biologists have elaborated their own theories in their own field, and that students in other fields have borrowed these theories and applied them to their subject without adequate consideration of their relevance or validity in the study of that subject. Ideas of struggle for life and survival of the fittest, which have their value in the domain for which they were elaborated, have thus been, as it were, lifted and transported to the alien domain of human society. It is the natural fate of new and seminal theories that, by being applied too generally—as if they were panaceas or universal “open sesames”—they should again and again be misapplied; but neither Darwin nor Einstein can be blamed for the indiscriminate zeal of those votaries of novelty who find the secret of the universe in each new discovery. I need not, however, linger over what has happened in the past. What has now begun

to happen in the field of biology, and what is likely to go further, holds far more promise. Instead of sustaining a sort of theft, biologists are beginning to lend. They have turned their attention to "the biological foundations of society," if I may quote the title of a work by an old colleague of mine, the late Professor Dendy: they have taken into their province (to quote again, and this time from the title of a lecture by a great Cambridge biologist, Dr Bateson) the study of the relation between "biological fact and the structure of society." The growth of Eugenics—a subject of profound importance for political theory—is an example of the contribution which biology may make when it turns to the study of biological fact in its connection with social structure; and that is perhaps only one example of what we may justly expect. Biology has perhaps greater contributions to make to the study of human welfare than any other science. And in this place, celebrated by the

names of great biologists, it is fitting for a Professor of Political Science to acknowledge existing debt, to anticipate further obligation, and to promise neither to neglect biological fact in his own enquiries nor to be slow in grasping any chance of co-operation with students of biology in the general field of social investigation.

#### IV

I come in conclusion, and I come with a genuine feeling of modest stillness and humility, to the great subject of which I conceive the subject of this Chair to be a province; a border-province, if you will, but none the less a province. That subject is philosophy, and especially moral philosophy. As I see it, political theory is primarily concerned with the purpose, or purposes, which man proposes to himself as a moral being, living in association with other moral beings, who at once desires and is forced to pursue his purpose

or purposes in the medium of a common life. It is a study of ends, and of the modes of realisation of those ends; and since ends have supreme value, and determine the value of other things which serve as their means, it is a study of value or values. Here it may be said to touch the sister science or theory which is called economics. Economics is also concerned with values; and if originally it concerned itself only with money value, it has been led inevitably to the study of social value and the measurement of the difference between the one and the other. "This consideration," Marshall has remarked, "will be found to underlie nearly all the most serious modern economic studies." Economics and politics thus run up together into philosophy; and moral philosophy (or moral science) is the basis, or apex, common to both. For such philosophy is a study of ultimate value; and that is a necessary criterion for those who pursue the study of social value, whether in

the field of political life and institutions, or in that of economic life and production.

It is here, and in this conception of political theory as moral philosophy applied to the life of the whole community, that Plato and Aristotle still remain masters. Plato combined ethics and politics in a single dialogue which he entitled, "polity, or concerning righteousness"—the dialogue which we call the *Republic*. Aristotle wrote separate treatises on *Ethics* and *Politics*; but the one is related to the other, and both are concerned with the study of the human good, which is "the same for the individual and the state," though it "appears a greater and more perfect thing to have and to hold" when it is exhibited in the life of a good community. In the *Elements of Politics* and the *Principles of Political Obligation* the methods of Henry Sidgwick and T. H. Green are fundamentally similar. Whatever the difference of their views, both of these thinkers postulated a

conception of the human good, and both of them attempted to determine, on the basis and by the criterion of that conception, the system of relations which ought to be established in a political community. In its essentials the problem of political theory is a constant. It has to determine the end, or ultimate value, which governs and determines the life of political society: it has to discover the appropriate and congruous means by which that end may be realised, that ultimate value actually enjoyed. But in one age one aspect of the final good may be emphasised, and in another another; and the means of realisation also vary, not only with variations in the aspect of the final good selected for emphasis, but also with the variations of the medium—by which I mean the congeries of contemporary institutions, customs, conditions and problems—in which realisation has to be achieved. That is why political theory is always new as well as always old,

and why it is constantly changing even while it remains the same.

Is there any aspect of social well-being which particularly needs emphasis to-day; and is there any means for its attainment which offers particular promise and demands particular study? If I can answer these questions, I shall have given some clue to the prepossessions with which I start and the lines which I hope to follow. I will say at once that there is one aspect of social well-being which lies heavily on my mind at the present time. I assume that the general end of society is the development in each member of a full personality, which on the one hand issues in the individual doing or enjoying of things worth doing or enjoying, and on the other hand flows in the channels of harmonious co-operation with other and like personalities. The human good, in the form in which it is pursued in the state, is the energy of individual moral wills acting for their own

appropriate objects in a regular system of organised co-operation. On the one hand individual energy, on the other social co-operation; on the one hand free initiative, on the other organisation. The pendulum swings slowly from this side to that in the development of humanity; and now it may seem to pause here, and now there. Yet freedom remains a precious thing; and an individual moral will, even when it has to act in harmony with other and similar wills, must essentially be free if it is to be moral—for free action only is moral. The cause of liberty was proclaimed by Mill, as it was proclaimed by Milton: it seemed a cause which was accepted: it is a cause which is being threatened. Its enemies wear no ignoble faces. There is the puritanism of administrative zeal, concerned for the setting in order of a thickly populated and sadly complicated society, full of contacts and conflicts of interest which seem to cry for adjustment. There will always

be men who would fain leave the world a tidier place than they found it; and we cannot readily blame them for a misguided zeal. There is, again, the passion of social enthusiasm, aflame for a creed and consumed by desire for grasping quickly the sorry scheme of things and re-moulding it instantly new. Such passion will not readily stay to gain consent, and it may move to its end like a rushing impatient wind, taking ultimate acceptance for granted, and ready to impose a dictatorship until it comes. Liberty is thus threatened alike from the right and the left—at once by the sober administrator and by the ardent reformer. And meanwhile the methods by which men once thought that liberty could be made secure have themselves fallen into discredit. It is not so long ago since democracy was a word of power, and men were ready to suffer for the cause of free parliaments and a free suffrage. To-day the word and the cause are under suspicion; and there is a

It is true that the people, too vast to be moved except in moments of passion, when movement may become a tyrannical frenzy, are a managed multitude which the controllers of the machine can manipulate at their will. We have to face a reaction against the old faith in liberty and popular government; we have to admit that the political hopes in which men once dressed themselves were sanguine. But the faith and the hopes abide. There is no better way for the management of men than the way of self-management; and in the long run it is the only possible way. It is true that the burden of self-government is heavy. It makes great demands on the intelligence and the interest of every citizen. But the demands which it makes are its justification. A form of government which elicits and enlists the mental and moral energy of a whole civic body for its working is a good form of government. Yet the justification will only be theoretical unless the energy is really pre-

sent. And it will only be really present if electorates can develop an instructed and interested public opinion, which is neither tyrannical in its occasional pressure nor apathetic in its general laxity. The formation of such a public opinion is the crux of our politics.

If liberty is the aspect of social well-being which needs emphasis to-day, and if liberty demands a living body of public opinion for its realisation, is there any means for attaining such a body of opinion which offers particular promise and demands particular study? There is an answer which is painfully obvious, but which, in the hope that the obvious may also be true, I shall none the less venture to give. That answer is "education." It is an old saying that we must educate our masters. It is an older saying, repeated again and again in the *Politics* of Aristotle, that the citizen must be educated in the spirit of the constitution under which he lives. That saying, with a

new application, and, it may be, with a new depth of interpretation, is one which may well be repeated to-day. The theory of education is essentially a part of political theory. It is not so much a matter of psychology, with which it has been generally connected in the Universities and Training Colleges where it is taught (though I admit that the study of psychology has a value for the theory of education, as it has for political theory in general): it is rather a matter of social theory—of grasping and comprehending the purposes, the character and the needs of Society and the State, and of discovering the methods by which the young can best be trained to achieve these purposes, to maintain and even improve that character, and to satisfy those needs. To Plato the State was essentially an educational society, and its activity was first and foremost a training of its members to understand, and understanding to fulfil, the duties of their station in the community.

I believe that we shall come to take the same view. A national system of education is a comparatively new thing with us; and we only see in part the services it can render, and the significance it may assume, in the scheme of our national life. That it may give us the instructed and interested public opinion which we need for the safety of democracy is only one of the expectations we may perhaps legitimately form. It may also help to form, and even to strengthen, civic character, banishing some of those shadows—the shadow of a restless instability; the shadow of a gregarious and imitative habit—which have been cast upon it by the urbanisation of our life. It may train men not only to do their work in the world, but also to use the time of their leisure—that time which is the growing-time of the spirit; that time in which the spirit of man, casting aside its shackles, can expand and exult in the free play of its faculties, released, and at the same time

realised, in the delight of music and literature, the joy of thought and discussion. For to bring the matter to a clear and simple point, I cannot but believe that it may well be part of the function of the State, and a part which ought to be emphasised in political theory, that it should promote from its own funds, and encourage by its own institutions, not only education in the narrower sense in which we habitually use the word, but also (if I may use a word soiled by some dubious use) that broader and more general culture which includes, among many other things, the hearing of good music and the seeing of good plays.

But this is too exciting a theme for the end of a lecture; and I must fall into a quiet final cadence. I know enthusiasts who would call the theory of education the core and centre of social theory; and I am almost persuaded to be such an enthusiast myself. I do not wish, in devoting myself to political theory, to

relinquish the interest which I have more and more come to feel in the matter of education. I believe, on the contrary, that in virtue of that very devotion I am likely, and indeed bound, to feel an even greater interest. Any scheme, therefore, that may be launched in this University, either for its fuller participation in the training of teachers, or for its sharing, in other ways, in the preparation of social workers (and are we not all such?) in other fields—any plan intended to secure, in the noble words of the Bidding Prayer, “that there may never be wanting a succession of persons duly qualified for the service of God in Church and in State”—must necessarily command the fullest measure of my attention. Not that I come with any scheme which I wish to press. *μη γένοιτο*. I only come with a desire to learn and a wish to help.

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**WITH GANDHIJI IN CEYLON**

V 2 w M 69

*Kelap*

# With Gandhiji in Ceylon

A JOURNAL OF THE TOUR WITH AUTHORISED  
VERSION OF ALL IMPORTANT SPEECHES

BY  
MAHADEV DESAI

*Forge the Link Stronger.*—GANDHI



S. GANESAN,  
PUBLISHER, TRIPLICANE, MADRAS.  
1928

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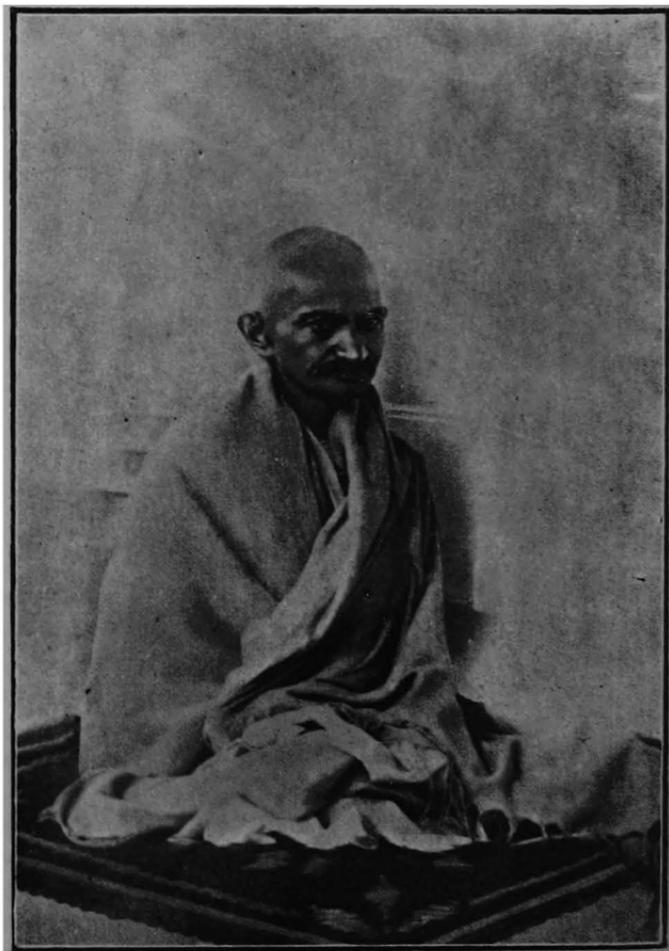
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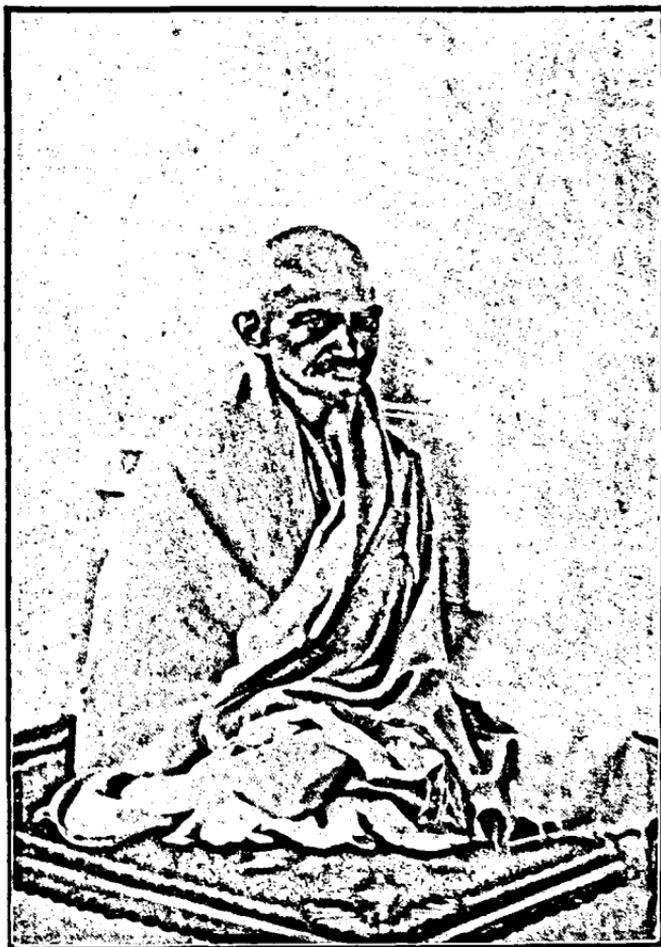
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**Mahatma Gandhi.**



**Mahatma Gandhi.**

# Gandhiji in Ceylon

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## CHAPTER I

### IN LANKA: THE ENCHANTED ISLE

#### *The First Week*

LANKA, a name by which every Indian child knows Ceylon, Lanka which our first knowledge associates with Ravana whose insolent might was humbled by Rama, Lanka which knowledge of history teaches every Indian to connect indissolubly with Bharatavarsha, as the land where Lord Buddha's teaching spread and fructified and still abides, Lanka which has ever been culturally one with India, inasmuch as it claims with India innumerable cultural traditions, Lanka, of which the people, in spite of the rather drastic social conquest by the British, still look like the Indians' kith and kin,—Lanka is a land which Gandhiji in his wanderings of over ten years has ever longed to visit, no less with the object of seeing the land whose surpassing beauty makes it 'a pearl in the islands of the earth,' and for studying living Buddhism at close quarters, no less

with the object of studying the life of a people whom Bishop Heber abused in his ignorance, whilst he admired 'the noble island in all its natural riches,' than with the object of sympathising with, and if possible, guiding, a people, alike denationalised as his own, and alike ravaged as his own, by what passes as 'Western civilisation,' but which, in the language of an English historian, 'with its wine and bread and saltpetre' came as a scourge upon the Island.

But the visit, when it actually came about, happened, as Gandhiji said to the Civic Fathers in Colombo with engaging candour to be a 'mercenary' visit.

And yet the receptions and welcome that he had from the day of his landing at Colombo on the evening of the 13th could compare favourably with the warmest and the most enthusiastic ones that he has received anywhere in India. The Colombo Municipality, a more or less Government body, presented a felicitously worded address which was read by the Chairman who is a member of the Civil Service. H.E. the Governor offered Gandhiji a warm welcome through his Colonial Secretary and invited him to a friendly meeting. For both of these Gandhiji was entirely unprepared. It was no wonder, then, that the people's reception was something overwhelming in its spontaneity and enthusiasm. Thousands thronged the thoroughfares through which he was announced to pass, and at most places crowding had to be controlled by regulating admission by tickets.

The Buddhist and the Christian Ceylonese vied with the Hindu Ceylonese and Indians in according their tributes of welcome and tokens of sympathy for the cause that took Gandhiji to Ceylon. They refused to regard the visit as a 'mercenary' one, and understood it instead to be a humanitarian one. All alike contributed their mite for the Khadi fund, the Ceylonese no less than the Tamilians, Government servants no less than private individuals, Members of Council no less than

the common shopkeepers, the students no less than their parents and guardians, and the clerks and the cooks and the barbers and the labourers claimed their right to help in a cause which was as much their own as of their more fortunate brethren.

Part of the house where we had been put up was converted into a Khadi shop, and from morning until night the shop was besieged by customers drawn from all sections of the people. In giving Gandhiji this tremendous reception, the people of Ceylon claimed him as their own, and assured him that his visit was likely to bind Ceylon into more an indissoluble union, if possible, with 'Mother India,' an expression used in the labour address which touched Gandhiji to the depths.

It were futile to attempt to give an idea of the various meetings or a summary of the various speeches. I can but mention some of the salient features.

Two Chettiar friends whose acquaintance we made in Chettinad — Sjts. Kashivishvanath Chettiar and Pichappa Subramanyam—had volunteered to precede us to Ceylon and organise the Chettiar merchants there. The Chettiars' meeting,\* the first in Ceylon, was a triumph of their efforts, and their contributions—those of the clerks more than of their masters—were a credit to them. The students' contributions were no less than those by students in different places in South India. The labour meetings,†—a mammoth gathering,—which had to be addressed through two interpreters simultaneously, was a triumph of orderly arrangement and organisation, and their handsome purse and the quiet work of their volunteers were entirely the result of Sjt. Goonasinhe's endeavours.

In very few places in India does one find labour so well organised as here. The barbers—Maruthwakulas—only twenty

\* (Vide page 43 for full speech)

† (Vide pp. 45 do. )

or so in number came to Gandhiji's residence with their hand some contribution of Rs. 400.

Just as in Madras, the intellectuals in Colombo exacted from Gandhiji their toll of speeches, but it was inevitable. Those in Madras had no excuse having heard him frequently but for the Ceylonese this was the first occasion.

The reception by the Buddhist Congress was an impressive one—over five hundred priests in their yellow robes seated in the spacious hall of the Vidyodaya College to chant their benediction on Gandhiji. Gandhiji's reply\* contained in brief his tribute to the Enlightened One, and his conception of the ultimate unity of Buddhism and Hinduism. He tried to clear what in his opinion were the three misconceptions about Buddhism, and in doing so summed up his message to the Buddhists.

The speech † at the Y. M. C. A. was not an address to the Ceylonese Christians, but to all the Christian missionaries going to the ends of the earth to preach the gospel. It was delivered with a warmth and passion perhaps never before reached during recent years. It was an appeal to each and all to turn the searchlight inwards, 'to live the life, to live the religion and to let it speak for itself.' It was a speech originally intended to enlist the sympathy of the audience in his search for truth and also its sympathy for the cause for which he was living and for which he would love to die. But the discussion of the first became so elaborate and intensive that he had no time left for dealing with the bearing of Jesus' message on Khadi.

\* (Vide pp 54 for full speech).

† (Vide pp 60 for full speech).

CHAPTER II  
LIFE AND RELIGION

*The Second Week*

THE visitor to Ceylon, so long as he is in Colombo, sees nothing beyond the beautiful harbour, which with its 20 million tonnage of mercantile vessels entering and leaving the port, ranks sixth in the world, and beyond some of the parts of the town which remind one of Mylapore and Chowringhee. In modern towns what can one expect to find but a sort of dull drab uniformity of huge piles of buildings and of a superficial culture? And Colombo, where the "unifying" agency of the Western civilisation has been perhaps busier than elsewhere, has the look of any other modern town. But as you go into the interior,—or as the Ceylonese say 'Upcountry,'—you begin to have the smell of Ceylon's 'spicy breezes.'

We motored along the coast north up to Chilaw and thence entered the hill districts near Karunegala, finally reaching Kandy, having taken numerous places on the way. It is through a magnificent road with forests of huge rubber and cinnamon trees, with tea, coffee and cocoa in between, that one reaches the beautiful city encircled by an amphitheatre of hills. But the proud Kandyan tells you, as you begin going into raptures over the scenery around you, that you have seen nothing yet. I realised the truth of the remark when we went next day to the central district of Badulla, and from Badulla to Nuwara Eliya, and thence to Hatton and other tea plantations and back to Kandy, and then again from Kandy to Colombo.

European travellers have written pages upon pages on the exquisitely lovely scenery of this natural park of the world, and have tried to describe the kaleidoscopic vision that passes before

one's eyes as one moves from scene to scene. Some of them rest content with comparing the boldness of scenery around Nuwara Eliya with that of Snowdon, whilst others find in the neighbourhood of Badulla something more charming than the Sussex downs. The whole prospect, another exclaims, is 'more like enchantment or a dream of fairyland, than sober reality.' The truth of the matter is, that on such vast subjects as these great works of Nature, as the Countess of Oxford says, "even the superb vocabulary of a Ruskin will probably not be more illuminating than what the schoolboy writes in the visitor's book at Niagara, 'Uncle and all very much pleased'" Better perhaps than attempting the impossible is the attitude of these who stand in silent prayerful awe, because they cannot find utterance to express their sense of the might, majesty and glory of the Almighty's works, and the humiliating feeling of their own littleness.

To Gandhiji, as to Wordsworth, 'there was not a nook within that solemn grove, but were an apt confessional,' and he wondered why man was unable to satisfy himself with these imposing temples that Nature had reared before him, and sought to find his God in brick and mortar which he called a temple!

Gandhiji concluded his long speech\* at Badulla with this reference to the curse of drink: "As I was coming to-day from Kandy to this place, I passed through some of the finest bits of scenery I have ever witnessed in my life. Where Nature has been so beneficent and where Nature provides for you such innocent and ennobling intoxication, and gives you invigorating air to breathe, it is criminal for man or woman to seek intoxication from that sparkling but deadly liquor."

But that brings me to the people of this enchanted isle. Out of a total population of 4.5 million people, 2.9 millions are Sinhalese, and 1 million Tamilians, out of whom over half a

\* (Vide pp. 79 for full speech.)

million are working as labourers on the tea, rubber and other estates. Ceylon has before it therefore not only the problem of the harmonious relationship between the Sinhalese and the Tamilian, but also of the conditions of labour on the estates.

The bulk of the population which is agricultural finds its livelihood from the paddy and cocoanut crops, which latter covers a million out of the total four million acres under cultivation. The tea industry which has grown to stupendous proportions—17 crores of pounds of tea being exported every year—is principally in the hands of the European planter. Rubber, of which the area planted has increased sixteen times to what it was in 1904, is another principal industry, 12½ per cent. of the world's production being claimed by Ceylon. That also belongs largely to the European planter. Among minerals the graphite industry is substantial, providing employment for about 30,000 Sinhalese men and women. But the bulk of the labour in the Island—whether on the plantations or on the plains and roads—is drawn from Tamil Nad in India. No doubt the immigrant comes to Ceylon because he cannot make both ends meet in Tamil Nad, parts of which are subject to years of successive famines. But there is little doubt also that the Tamilian is necessarily more industrious than the Sinhalese and is usually preferred by the estate managers. This disinclination to work is no doubt due to Nature's bounties. Even Knox, the English captive, in 1681 found the Sinhalese 'not laborious and industrious,' incapable of utilising the 'plenty of cotton growing in their own grounds, sufficient to make them good and strong cloth for their own use.'

The Buddhists have still retained not only the caste system of Hinduism, but even untouchability. In spite of the first command of Lord Buddha they eat meat and some of them even beef, in spite of the fifth command the 'civilised' ones think it respectable to drink liquor, and in spite of the last

command they have enshrined what they regard as a genuine tooth relic of the Buddha in fine cases of gold, two of them being inlaid with rubies! In an article written some time ago Anagarika Dharmapala thus bewailed the lot of his coreligionists: 'The flower of the land, the rising generation of Sinhalese youth, has come under the influence of Christian propagandists. . . . Practices which were an abomination to the ancient noble Sinhalese have to-day become tolerated under the influence of Semitic sociology. . . . In the days of Sinhalese kings no liquor was sold, no animals were slaughtered.' 'Apes of the West,' 'more denationalised than any other people' 'strangers in their own land' are some of the epithets that Ceylonese writers themselves have given to the present generation of English-educated men and women.

But let me not be unfair to the Sinhalese Buddhists. They have kept the word of the Master intact, preserved his teachings unsullied and unadulterated. They have a wealth of Buddhistic literature in their colleges and viharas to which every student of Buddhism must turn. But they do not seem to have followed out to its logical conclusion the doctrine of *ahimsa*. They do not seem to realise that many of their present practices are inconsistent with their profession of *ahimsa*. Imagine for instance the Ahimsa Society of Kandy claiming in its address that the Ceylon Buddhists have practised and preserved the *Ahimsa dharma* for 2500 years. And the President of the Kandy public meeting welcomed Gandhiji as 'the most powerful propagandist, of the doctrine of *ahimsa* which our master preached for the benefit of mankind,' little realising what Gandhiji's *ahimsa* meant. Gandhiji had very little time at Kandy to refer in his speech to these claims, but his two speeches before the Buddhists in Colombo sum up his appeal to the Buddhists for a real Buddhistic revival.

And what will one say of the Government which, though

it has more than doubled its revenue during the last ten years, derives 11 millions of rupees from arrack, rum and toddy, out of a total revenue of 126 millions! So long ago as 1872 a conscientious Governor of the Island, Sir William Gregory, sounded this note of warning which is yet unheard: "English rule has given to Ceylon many blessings which the inhabitants are ever ready to acknowledge. . . . but we have at the same time extended a curse throughout the island which weighs heavily in the other scale, namely drunkenness. Some years ago a drunken Kandyan would have been disgraced in the eyes of his fellows. Now the occurrence is so common that the disgrace has passed away. . . . I have had some remarkable petitions on the subject. They say, 'restrict the places of sale, and thus discourage intoxication and diminish the great moral and social evils that flow from it.' In these recommendations I warmly concurred. In restricting the sale of intoxicating liquor, some diminution of revenue was to be expected, but, in the words of the petitioners, any decrease under that head would be more than compensated by an improvement in the general well-being of the community and in the reduced cost of establishment for the suppression of crime." Here are words of wisdom by a Governor who knew his duty, which a Government claiming to have conscience should lay to heart.

But whatever may be the failings of the Sinhalese, he has a big heart, and wherever we went we met with nothing but large-heartedness. During our tours in India we occasionally came across places, like those in Travancore for instance, where people, however wealthy, have yet to learn to give. But the Ceylonese seem to have learnt to give. The total collections at the end of the first week were in the neighbourhood of 60,000 rupees. This amount of Rs. 60,000 included purses from wayside places and from places like Kandy and Badulla, purses from students, and individual contributions. The mention of 'students

reminds me of the students of the Dharmaraja College whose Parsi Principal collected a purse from his students for presentation to Gandhiji, and of the Zahira College—an institution for Mussalman boys. The speech of the Principal of this College, wherein he referred to Gandhiji's services to the Muslims in South Africa,—with a touching reference to Mir Alam's murderous attack on Gandhiji,—and to his services in the cause of Islam in India, was particularly felicitous and the purse of Rs. 400 quite handsome. The collections include those from the Tamil Union—gentlemen and ladies—in Colombo, as also from the Parsi community in the city. These latter had given their contributions to the general purse, but they felt that as a community they must invite Gandhiji in their midst and offer a special purse. The brief speech \* that Gandhiji addressed to them was one paean of praise of the sacrifice and large-heartedness of the Parsis and a warm acknowledgment of the debt he owed to them. The presence of the Parsis always makes Gandhiji feel completely at home, and when once he starts talking to them he finds it difficult to stop.

But I must come to the response which I prize much more than any other, and which leaves in the mind a feeling of regret that Gandhiji could not give more of his time to the humble labourers. I referred in the previous chapter to the mammoth gathering of the labourers in Colombo. During this week we saw many more such gatherings on the tea estates about Badulla, Nuwara Eliya and Hatton. What faith and yet what ignorance! I met groups of them as they were vainly trying to get a glimpse of Gandhiji above the vast sea of human heads surging before them.

'Why have you come here?' I asked.

A woman who was angered at the absurdity of the question

\* See page 99.

answered with a counter question: 'Tell me why *you* have come!'

Another meanwhile took up the conversation and said: 'Don't you know? We have come to see our god!'

'Your god!' I asked. Do you know him?'

'Of course, Gandhi.'

'Have you paid anything for the purse?'

'Certainly, a day's wage, 45 cents.'

'Do you know what use he is going to make of your money?'

'No. But surely he must have some good thing in view.'

We explained to him the purpose of the Khadi collections.

'Do you know what he advises you people?' I said. 'He asks you to realise the dignity of labour, to lead clean and straight lives, refuse to accept conditions which force you into unclean and immoral lives, and above all tells you that the drink habit is worse than a snake-bite, while the one kills the body the other poisons and corrupts the soul, and so he wants you to fly from the curse as you do from a hissing snake.'

But they were inattentive. We had unnecessarily distracted their attention. They had come to see Gandhiraja! And as we left them, we came across a few stragglers still showing the effects of drink, and one dancing in great glee with 'Mahatma Gandhiji-ki jai' on his lips!

This was at Hatton. Let not the reader, however, run away with the impression that this was the case everywhere. At Badulla there was a wonderfully quiet meeting which Gandhiji addressed for upwards of three quarters of an hour; and as he appealed to those who had not yet given their mite, money poured in like rain and as gently as rain, whilst the speech was going on. It was an unforgettable scene, nearly three hundred rupees being thus collected on the spot. At Nuwara Eliya the same thing happened; over and above the purse of Rs. 4,097 the meeting collections were about Rs. 500.

And no one was more pained than Gandhiji at the thought that he could not give more time to these simple folk, see them in their homes,—squalid even in a garden of Eden like Nuwara Eliya,—share and 'sup' their sorrows, and show them how to avoid diseases like hookworm, so common amongst them even on these health resorts! He would have loved to meet the planters and the Kanganis (agents), and moot proposals with them for the improvement of the labourers' lot, but it could not be. He could only leave for them the message of purity and abstinence. One can only hope and pray that it will reach them and their employers so that they may no longer allow this backbone of the Island labour to go to rack and ruin. It is *their* backbone as well, and they will remain straight and strong only so long as the backbone is straight and strong.

In the numerous speeches that Gandhiji had to make during these busy days he never, as usual, failed to strike an informal and intimate note. One of the men at one place asked if Kasturbai was Gandhiji's mother, and an old European lady who walked along by their car had the same impression. With amused joy Gandhiji said, 'Yes, she is my mother.' The next morning at a public meeting which she did not attend, people missed her and inquired why 'mother' had not come. Gandhiji said: "A gentleman did last night mistake her for my mother, and for me as for her it is not only a pardonable mistake but a welcome mistake. For years past she has ceased to be my wife by mutual consent. Now nearly 40 years ago, I became an orphan and for nearly thirty years she has filled the place of my mother. She has been my mother, friend, nurse, cook, bottle-washer and all these things. If in the early morning of the day she had come with me to divide the honours, I should have gone without my food, and no one would have looked after my clothing and creature comforts. So we have come to a reasonable

## LIFE AND RELIGION

Understanding that I should have all the honours and should have all the drudgery. I assure you that some co-workers will duly inform her of all the kind things you said about her, and I hope the explanation I have given will be accepted by you as sufficient excuse for her absence.

"You will forgive me for having taken up your very flimsy personal explanation. But if the men in general, and especially the women, will understand the serious nature of the explanation and appreciate the secret of it, I have no doubt that you will all be the happier for it. For I am sure it is not necessary for me to explain to a people inspired by the spirit of Buddha's life, that life is not a bundle of pleasures and privileges but a bundle of duties and services. That which separates man from beast is essentially man's recognition of the necessity of putting a series of restraints on worldly enjoyment. And that led on to the curse of drink, which makes man burn into a flame in every one of the speeches that he has made.

But I must close. There was the meeting with the Sinhalese ladies of which I should like to take note in this connection. But space forbids it this week. The speech at the Ceylon National Congress was a weighty one, and reproduced *in extenso* in the second part.

CHAPTER III  
THE HAUNTING MEMORY

*The Third Week*

The scene changes. From those vast expanses of uniform green, whether on the hill or in the valley, from those scenes of glorious forests and luxuriant vegetation and the mountain sides denuded of their trees, we return to the whole railroad from Colombo to Galle and Matara—the southernmost points of Ceylon—runs along the palm-fringed coast of the Indian ocean, sometimes scarcely a dozen yards from the surging sea.

The scene continues to haunt you not only because of the wonderful scenery you have left behind, but also because of the misdeeds of humanity you have seen on those mountain sides, from their distant homes in South India in the hope of a better day. 'And does the Tamil labourer find in Ceylon a happier day?' is the question that continues to occur to you. Edward Carpenter who was here 25 years ago was shocked at the odious commercialism which drives these gangs to these parts and sighs for the Tamil coolie who comes "as a slave and must remain so to the end of his days. That is not very long, however; for for food and thin clothing, and the mists and the cool airs of the mountains soon bring on lung diseases, of which the slight-bodied Tamil easily dies."

"I dare say 3d. a day seems a very small wage to you," said a planter to Edward Carpenter, "but it is really surprising how little the fellows will live on."

"It is surprising, indeed, when you see their thin frames, that they live," said Edward Carpenter.

"Ah," replied the youth, "but they are much worse off at home; you should see them when they come from India."

And Edward Carpenter exclaims in indignation: "This is how our tea, which we set so much store by, is produced in Ceylon and elsewhere. Commercialism somehow has a way of destroying all natural beauty in those regions where it dwells. Here the mountain sides are torn up, the immense and beautiful forests ravaged from base to summit, and the shaly escarpments, that remain, planted in geometrical lines with tea-shrubs... It is curious, when one comes to think of it, that such huge spaces of the earth are devastated, such vast amounts of human toil expended, in the production of two things—tea and wine—which, to say the least, are not necessities and which certainly in the quantities commonly consumed are actually baneful. If their production simply ceased what a gain it might seem!"

Well, the picture, so far as the ravages on the mountain sides are concerned, is naturally worse today, and so far as the labourers are concerned perhaps not much better. In 1924 over 18,700 deaths were registered in a population of something over six lakhs, and the principal causes of the deaths were pneumonia, bronchitis and dysentery, the victims being residents of the most healthy districts of the Island—Kandy and Nuwara Eliya. And this in spite of the improvement in the wages, and the reports of the Labour Commission, and government regulations about the housing of labourers! And as to production, it will not cease so long as consumption does not cease.

But I must pass on. Moratuwa, Panadura, Horanna, Kalutara, Balapitiya and many more places on the way to Galle were ready with their purses and addresses. There are very few Tamils in these low-country regions, but even the enthusiasm of the common Sinhalese villager, who had perhaps heard of Gandhiji for the first time in his life, was as unbounded as of the Tamil. One wonders at the spontaniety and the exuberance of the receptions all round.

There were a number of addresses and purses at Kalutara. Here at a wayside place the Salvation Army people waylay him. There at another small place not on the programme some Buddhist ladies stop the car and refuse to let it go. The Tiranagama Women's Buddhist Association has a purse and an address which Gandhiji dare not refuse! "After the lapse of centuries the touch of your saintly feet has ennobled the soil of this fair Isle of Lanka"—that is how the address begins, and records with joy the "happy memory of this visit of yours with the message of Khadi and the begging bowl on behalf of the suffering brothers in our common motherland."

At Balapitiya Gandhiji was presented with a beautiful little address on palm-leaf encased in a pretty little dagoba-shaped silver casket. "The permanent population of the Island have ever recognised and have never forgotten the kinship that exists between them and your countrymen," said the address and wondered why the latter still refuse the Buddhists' claims on Buddha Gaya.

At Galle the reception was practically in the hands of students, and at Matara the Chauffeurs' Union got the better of the other residents, monopolised the reception, organised a *perihara* (procession) of about a hundred fantastically decorated motor cars, read an address and presented a purse. The wife of the Indian District Judge, Mr. Prasad, offered her hospitality and the Reception Committee recognised her right to invite Gandhiji and his party.

At Akmimana Gandhiji was requested to lay the foundation stone of a weaving school for girls, and little villages between Matara and Galle had their little purses to offer.

#### GANDHIJI'S ADVISE

From the south we returned again to Colombo, the headquarters. It had yet many meetings in store for Gandhiji, and

many purses too, and yet no mass meeting in the real sense of the term. I may say that excepting labour meetings, mass meetings are unknown in these parts. The educated aristocracy live in rigid isolation from the masses but I have an impression that if the Reception Committee had tried to organise the masses too, the results, great as they were would have been greater. In Kandy, for instance, I was told that the purse of Rs. 4,000 was from a few individuals, and the masses had not been approached at all. These remarks became a fitting preamble to an account of what was advertised as a public meeting of the Sinhalese ladies in Colombo.

Gandhiji had looked forward to a meeting like one of those women's meetings in South India attended by thousands. But instead there was a meeting of little more than a dozen ladies in the drawing room of a stately palace. It was a misnomer to call it a public meeting.

'I am used to ladies' meetings where thousands of sisters come in their naturalness,' said Gandhiji, 'and there the hearts meet. I do not think I can say that about the stiff meeting.'

And stiff it was and a perfect study in contrasts—Gandhiji in his simple loin-cloth, in all his ease, and grace and absence of self-consciousness, inquiring where the simple women he wanted to meet could be, and finding instead a fashionable drawing room meeting.

For a moment it looked as though he would say nothing and go on to the next function on his programme. But he saw that the ladies were not to blame, they were what they were, and received their guest in the only way they could. So he gave them a talk, and I do not think the friends had ever had in their lives a more uncomfortable half hour. For he went for them with all the fervour and fire that he could command.

He gave them a picture of the starving millions, and said: "When Mahendra came to Ceylon the children of the motherland

were not starving either materially or spiritually, our star was in the ascendent and you partook of the glory. The children are starving to-day and it is on their behalf that I have come with the begging bowl, and if you do not disown kinship with them, but take some pride in it, then you must give me not only your money but your jewellery as sisters in so many other places have done. My hungry eyes rest upon the ornaments of sisters, whenever I see them heavily bedecked. There is an ulterior motive too in asking for ornaments *viz.* to wean the ladies from the craze for ornaments and jewellery. And if I may take the liberty that I do with other sisters, may I ask you what it is that makes woman deck herself more than man? I am told by feminine friends that she does so for pleasing man. Well, I tell you if you want to play your part in the world's affairs, you must refuse to deck yourselves for pleasing man. If I was born a woman, I would rise in rebellion against any pretension on the part of man that woman is born to be his plaything. I have mentally become a woman in order to steal into her heart. I could not steal into my wife's heart until I decided to treat her differently than I used to do, and so I restored to her all her rights by dispossessing myself of all my so-called rights as her husband. And you see her today as simple as myself. You find no necklaces, no fineries on her. I want you to be like that. Refuse to be the slaves of your own whims and fancies, and the slaves of men. Refuse to decorate yourselves, don't go in for scents and lavender waters; if you want to give out the proper scent, it must come out of your heart, and then you will captivate not man, but humanity. It is your birthright. Man is born of woman, he is flesh of her flesh and bone of her bone. Come to your own and deliver your message again."

And he cited for them the example of Sita defiant in her purity, and Miss Schlesin who with her defiant purity and

innate fearlessness commanded in South Africa the adoration of thousands including amongst them fierce Pathans, robbers and questionable characters, and rounded off by telling them wherein true honour lies.

“Do you know the hideous condition of your sisters on plantations? Treat them as your sisters, go amongst them and serve them with your better knowledge of sanitation and your talents. Let your honour lie in their service. And is there not service nearer home? There are men who are rascals; drunken people who are a menace to society. Wean them from their rascality by going amongst them as fearlessly as some of those Salvation Army girls who go into the dens of thieves and gamblers and drunkards, fall on their necks and at their feet, and bring them round. That service will deck you more than the fineries that you are wearing. I will then be a trustee for the money that you will save and distribute it amongst the poor.

“I pray that the rambling message that I have given you may find a lodgment in your hearts.”

There were as I said numerous meetings and numerous purses on the last day, every little association trying to beat the other. Gandhiji thanked them for their overflowing enthusiasm, and left a message for all the Indians in Ceylon, which was so compact that I must reproduce it *verbatim* for the benefit of all living in a foreign country:

“The one maxim of conduct that should guide us in life is, that we who come from another country must throw in our lot entirely with the people of the country of our adoption. Their welfare must be our primary concern. Our own must be subservient to theirs. That seems to be the only line consistent with dignity, and it follows along the lines of the great teaching that we should do unto others as we wish that they should do unto us. Thinking along these lines, as you know, I have repeatedly suggested to Englishmen in India

that they should subordinate their own interests to those of the people amongst whom they are living and nobody has questioned the propriety of this statement. There cannot be one law to govern the relations between ourselves and the governors who come to our land another for us when we go to another land. And though I consider that Ceylon is not a foreign land and though it has given me great pleasure to hear it owned by the Sinhalese that India is their motherland, it is much better to regard ourselves as foreigners when we wish to regulate our relations with them. *The safest rule of conduct is to claim kinship when we want to do service, and not to insist on kinship when we want to assert a right.* Indeed I have applied this rule of life, which I call the golden rule of conduct, even for inter-provincial relations in India. For instance, whenever I have gone to Bengal or to the Punjab or to any other province outside Gujarat, I have not hesitated to suggest to the Gujaratis that they should consider the welfare of the provinces to which they go as superior to theirs. I know no other method of preserving sweet relations in human affairs and I am fortified in my conclusion by an experience extending over a long period of years that, wherever there is an interruption in the servance of this golden rule, there have been bickerings, quarrels and even breaking of heads, and I have no doubt whatsoever that if you will govern your conduct according to that rule, you will cover yourselves with honour and glory, and your conduct will redound to the credit of the country from which we come and whose deliverance we are seeking with all our power."

And again at another meeting: "I would ask you to live as sugar lives in milk. Even as a cup of milk, which is full up to the brim, does not overflow when sugar is added to it, but the sugar accommodates itself to the milk and enriches its taste, even so would I like you to live in this Island, so as not to become interlopers, and so as to enrich the life of the people

amongst whom you are living. Take care that none of the vice we have in India are brought with you in order to poison the life; nor must we bring with us to these shores the curse of untouchability."

But I must hurry on. Not that I have finished Colombo. There are two more big items—the meeting of the Young Men's Buddhist Association and the farewell meeting. The speech at the Y. M. B. A is reproduced in extenso in the Second Part and part of the speech at the farewell meeting at the end of this Part for parting message refers to the whole of Ceylon.

## IN JAFFNA

We went straight to Jaffna from Colombo, much to the disappointment of the Eastern province, and not without regret that we could not see the ancient cities of Anuradhapura, the capital of Sinhalese kings for a thousand years and the place of the sacred Bo-tree reputed to be 2,250 years old and having some of the finest *dagobas* built by Sinhalese kings, Pollanaruwa which succeeded it as the capital and still reveals the glory of the great Parakramabahu Mahintale the sacred spot where kind Devanampriya Tishya with his people accepted the message of non-violence from Mahendra, and Sigiriya with its ancient Buddhist frescoes.

'I shall see all these places by deputy,' said Gandhiji, and sent Kakasaheb, who has been for some time with us, to go and study the ancient monuments, not with the eyes of the curious, but with the eyes of a devotee and an antiquarian.

Friends from Trincomalee, however, came all the way to Anuradhapura station at midnight, woke up Gandhiji and presented their purse!

To Jaffna at last. If I were to do full justice to Jaffna, it would require a chapter to itself, but I must content myself with a very brief account.

Jaffna students, it will be remembered, were the first to invite Gandhiji, and then the other friends took up the proposal. In more respects than one the Jaffna peninsula stands apart from Ceylon. Being almost exclusively populated by the Tamils it is a bit of South India. As one of the addresses said, 'We are nearer to Mother India than even the people of South India itself.'

The writer of *Ancient Jaffna* describes in much detail the fame of ancient Jaffna as the centre of a great weaving industry. "The Nagas," he says, "were so skilled in the art of weaving that the cotton stuffs manufactured by them have been compared to the 'sloughs of serpents,' to 'woven wind,' and 'vapour of milk,' and they are generally described as of such fine texture that the eye could not make out its warp and woof. And even to-day the young men of Jaffna bid fair to make Jaffna a centre of activity from which the other parts may draw inspiration.

There is a Hindu Board of Education which has considerably interested itself in the welfare of the 'suppressed' classes and the young men have made Jaffna 'dry'. They are making a laudable effort to revive the ancient village communities, and unlike Colombo and other parts, the Jaffna purse represents collections from the poorest villager in the peninsula. 'I went from village to village,' said Perinayagam of the Jaffna College who first invited Gandhiji, 'and have collected small cents from hundreds of those villagers who know Gandhiji and his work.' And though the programme at Jaffna was mercilessly heavy, Gandhiji, thank God, stood all, borne up, so to say, by the overflowing enthusiasm of the workers.

The Students' Congress was a grand affair and worthy of Jaffna with its numerous educational institutions. Gandhiji's message for the revival of ancient culture, with the charkha

the central symbol of non-violence which refuses to accept or desire what all the others cannot have, was rather too heavy for the students, but it was an independent contribution in the direction, and will be found in the Second Part. After the public meetings were done, Gandhiji was taken round to all the educational institutions,—about a dozen in number,—and though he was not expected to speak to the boys he gave them brief messages on the education of the heart, on the combined culture of the mind, the body, and the heart and the meaning of the charkha. And well did they deserve it, looking to the fact that the bulk of the Jaffna purse came from the students, some of whom had given Rs. 5 each.

The members of the Shaiva Managayar Sabai, all old girls of the Ramanathan Girls' College, managed by Lady Ramanathan, gave a splendid purse of Rs. 1,111 and a still better address, containing as it did a precious promise: 'We shall never forget this day,' it said, 'when we have had the privilege of seeing you. Your presence here is a great inspiration to us and we wish to commemorate it by inaugurating a new women's movement in Jaffna for the spread of Khadi and the introduction of the spinning wheel into every home. We also wish to keep the anniversary of this day sacred to be devoted to the collection of a contribution for the spread of Khadi.' A noble conception, nobly expressed, and in keeping with 'the exquisite taste and simplicity of the reception,' which, said Gandhiji, 'touched him to the core.'

The labourers here as elsewhere showed the greatest enthusiasm, and gave a generous purse, and the Indian community also did not lag behind. Their meeting was one of the best meetings we had, Mrs. Kantawala, the wife of the District Judge and Lady Ramanathan fully sharing the popular enthusiasm and helping to make auctions fetch over Rs. 800.

In his public speech at Jaffna Gandhiji spoke at length on

the right and wrong methods of carrying on temperance and prohibition campaigns. Though Jaffna is technically dry, it is open to the wine-bibber to get as much foreign liquor as he wants from neighbouring districts, apart from the liquor-vendor carrying on illicitly his nefarious profession. Only total prohibition can cure this state of things and the words that Gandhiji addressed to the workers were as necessary as they were timely :

“ It has given me the greatest joy to discover that you are very nearly on the point of becoming dry. Your closing of the pestilential taverns and liquor dens is a great step in the right direction. You deserve the heartiest congratulations of not only the people of this place, not only the people of Ceylon but of the motherland. It gives me additional joy to have your promise that you are determined to see that in the near future you have attained total prohibition. But I have discovered that you have internal difficulties in your way in the attainment of total prohibition. A correspondent has sent me a communication enclosing a pamphlet which is evidently designed to counteract the activities of those who are working for total prohibition. That pamphlet, I must confess, is ably written, and on the face of it, seems to contain, to my painful surprise, the support of some religious divines. In his eagerness to be witty and smart, the author of that pamphlet has not, I am sorry to say, hesitated to wound the susceptibilities of those whose mission he has set about opposing. He does not hesitate to laugh at the very artistic plantain leaf on which rice and curries are beautifully simply served. Nor does he hesitate to laugh at the simple life of those who are satisfied with a mere *dhoti* to cover themselves, and to call them half-nude. In spite of all my desire to be fair and just to him, I have not been able to discover the slightest connection between the serious subject of prohibition and this light-hearted laugh at the simplicity of his own countrymen, if

The author of the pamphlet is an Indian. But whether your difficulties are internal or external, I hope you will persist in your effort to bring about total prohibition.

“But as I always believe in giving the critics their due and believe in learning from the critics what is worth learning, I would like to make two suggestions which have been derived from this pamphlet. The first thing is to avoid the slightest shadow of compulsion or untruth. No reform worth the name has yet, in my humble opinion, been achieved by compulsion. For whilst compulsion may lead to apparent success, it gives rise to so many other evils which are worse than the original evil itself. But I must not be misunderstood. I do not regard legislation declaring total prohibition as in any shape or form compulsion. And when there is honestly and clearly expressed public opinion in favour of total prohibition, it is not only the right of the people, but it is the sacred duty of the people to declare that total prohibition by legislation and take all effective steps to enforce that legislation.

“Of instances of untruth cited by the author of his pamphlet, are examples, as he suggests, of people taking part in prohibition meeting themselves being given to the drink habit. If there are any such hypocritical people working this prohibition campaign I have no doubt that it is doomed to fail. In a cause so just, noble and humane, I hope that you will take special precautions to keep yourselves free of hypocrites.

“The second suggestion, which, it seems to me, I should place before you, is that having attained legislation you may not, you dare not sit still. The writer of the pamphlet insinuates that prohibition in America has been a failure. I happen to know better from Americans themselves. Difficult, almost impossible as prohibition for a big country like America may appear to us, it is not a failure, but it is gradually succeeding. Compared to the difficulties the brave reformers of America

have to face, you have very little. But I would like you to take a leaf out of the book of those brave reformers. They are not only not sleeping after the legislation which they have attained after an incessant struggle stretching over a long period, but they are doing great, gigantic constructive work. For when the drink devil takes possession of a man, it is the most difficult thing to wean him. Americans are therefore devising all kinds of means to deal with this class of persons. With the drunkard, the drink-craze is a disease. And you will have to take him in hand as you will an ailing brother or an ailing sister of yours. In the place of taverns you will have to give them refreshment rooms and all kinds of innocent recreations in order to keep the drunkards busy at something in which they may be interested. If you have got all the facilities for achieving this reform and if you are entirely successful you will set a noble example to all India.

“Lastly, you will not be impatient or angry with the opponents who may be working against you. I do not know whether the same condition prevails in Jaffna as prevails in India and other parts of the world. But I do know that in India, in England and in America, the Anti-Prohibitionists have not only on their side able but unprincipled writers to help them, but they have also brewers' money. But if you will follow the prescription of truth and non-violence, you will disarm all these clever writers inspite of the money at their back.”

CHAPTER IV  
MORE MEMORIES

I PROPOSE to put together here some of the things I could not include in the foregoing chapters.

It is now generally known that Christian missionaries everywhere seek Gandhiji out to have a talk with him on things of the spirit. But very rarely does one raise a question—like Mr. De Boer at Vellore did—as to what exactly Gandhiji means by ‘things of the spirit,’ and why. Sometimes it would seem as though they delighted in riddling him with questions like those that a Protestant might put to a Jesuit or *vice versa*, and as a result they get more confounded than ever. I cannot express my feelings in the matter better than a European lady did at the end of the Conference with the missionaries in Colombo. ‘I wanted,’ she said, ‘to ask Gandhiji about the spiritual meaning of Khadi, and what he expects us Westerners to do in that behalf. Instead these friends asked questions which were hardly of immediate concern.’ All friends are aware by now that only one mission and one alone takes Gandhiji from one end of the country to the other, and one would feel thankful if they took a leaf out of this lady’s book.

But far from doing this, a missionary friend in Kandy invited Gandhiji to his College, and inflicted on him manuscript eloquence covering several sheets, and introduced therein things which were anything but relevant. In a hall packed with school children scarcely over fifteen years of age, he attacked what he called Gandhiji’s eclecticism and what he had misread in the newspapers as Gandhiji’s characterisation of all the work of the Englishmen as wholly evil.

Gandhiji refused to be drawn into an elaborate defence and

simply said: "I appreciate your frankness, but what you have said about me is hardly correct. I have never considered all the work of Englishmen as unmitigated evil. I cannot recall any moment in my life when I dreamt that it was so. But I did say, and do say now, that the sum total of Government's work in India has been an unmitigated evil. With reference to my eclecticism and my attitude towards Christianity, the thing is I am afraid too deep for words. To the children I would say: Unless your education is founded on truth, good character, and purity of life, it is nothing worth. It will be like a house built on sand. I hope therefore that you will strive to be truthful in thought, word and deed."

But to turn to some of the questions raised by the Missionary friends at Conferences. Just as a Protestant would ask a Jesuit as to what he meant by the doctrine of obedience, a friend at the Colombo meeting asked what Gandhiji thought of the possibility of the forgiveness of sin. Gandhiji explained at length how there could be no forgiveness like the forgiveness that a criminal prays for and gets from an earthly king. It was a question of a change of heart brought about by true contrition and ceaseless striving for purification. In this connection Gandhiji referred to the case of the Plymouth Brother whom he has himself made historic by a detailed reference in the Autobiography.

"But the Plymouth Brother I met," said Gandhiji, "argued that there was no such thing as human effort. If you accept the fact of crucifixion, sinfulness would go altogether. I was astounded as I knew and was intimate with quite a number of Christian friends who were making a definite effort. 'Don't you fall?' I asked him. 'Yes,' he said, 'but my strength comes from the fact that Jesus intercedes for me and washes my sins away.'

Well, I tell you, the Quaker friend who had introduced

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me to the Plymouth Brother felt no less astounded. Asking for forgiveness means that we should not sin again, and the grant of forgiveness means that we would have power to resist all temptation. It is only after a persistent, untiring effort that God comes to our rescue as a wall of protection and there is a growing consciousness that we shall not sin.

In a famous controversy with Huxley, I remember Gladstone having said that when the definite grace of God was pledged to us we became incapable of sin. Jesus was incapable of sin from birth, Gladstone, said but we could be such by constant striving. So long as there is a single evil thought coming to our mind, we must conclude that there is not complete forgiveness or grace."

Another friend wondered if Gandhiji's position in matters of faith was not like living in a sort of half-way house.

'I certainly admire the friend who made that criticism,' said Gandhiji, 'but he may be sure that there is no half-way house for me. I have been described as an intolerable wholehogger. I know that friends get confused when I say I am a Sanatanist Hindu and they fail to find in me things they associate with a man usually labelled as such. But that is because in spite of my being a staunch Hindu I find room in my faith for Christian and Islamic and Zoroastrian teaching, and therefore my Hinduism *seems* to some to be a conglomeration and some have even dubbed me an eclectic. Well, to call a man eclectic is to say that he has no faith, but mine is a broad faith which does not oppose Christians,—not even a Plymouth Brother,—not even the most fanatical Musalman. It is a faith based on the broadest possible toleration. I refuse to abuse a man for his fanatical deeds, because I try to see them from his point of view. It is that broad faith that sustains me. It is a somewhat embarrassing position, I know,—but to others, not to me!'

At another meeting of the missionaries (at Jaffna) he developed this last thought, in reply to a question as to what he would wish India to be like in matters of religion. He reiterated his impatience with the missionary or the Musalman who thinks of getting hold of the untouchable for the sake of increasing his flock, and said that like the Dewan of Mysore he would ask them all to strive to make the untouchables better Hindus if they could.

"I should love," he said, "all the men,—not only in India but in the world,—belonging to the different faiths, to become better people by contact with one another, and if that happens the world will be a much better place to live in than it is to-day. I plead for the broadest toleration, and I am working to that end. I ask people to examine every religion from the point of the religionists themselves. I do not expect the India of my dream to develop one religion, *i.e.*, to be wholly Hindu, or wholly Christian, or wholly Musalman, but I want it to be wholly tolerant, with its religions working side by side with one another,"

One of the missionary friends wanted to know how the Bhagavad Gita and the New Testament compared as sources of comfort: so far as Gandhiji was concerned, and instead of giving a bald answer that he derived all the comfort that he needed from the Bhagavad Gita, he retold the story of beginnings of his religious studies in England, with which the readers of the Autobiography are in the main familiar.

All missionaries seem to forget that the men they approach with their gospel have their own traditions and their own religion which sustain them from generation to generation. Gandhiji told these friends that when he read the Sermon on the Mount he read nothing new, but found in it, vividly told, what he had learnt in his childhood: 'There is nothing much in giving a cup of water to one who gave you a cup of water, or

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saluting one who salutes you, but there is some virtue in doing a good turn to one who has done you a bad turn.' 'I have not been able to see,' he said, "any difference between the Sermon on the Mount and the Bhagavad Gita. What the Sermon describes in a graphic manner, the Bhagavad Gita reduces to a scientific formula. It may not be a scientific book in the accepted sense of the term, but it has argued out the law of love—the law of abandon as I would call it—in a scientific manner. The Sermon on the Mount gives the same law in wonderful language. The New Testament gave me comfort and boundless joy, as it came after the repulsion that parts of the Old had given me. Today supposing I was deprived of the Gita and forgot all its contents but had a copy of the Sermon, I should derive the same joy from it as I do from the Gita."

And as though summing up the argument with a great warning, he said, '*You know there is one thing in me, and that is that I love to see the bright side of things and not the seamy side,* and so I can derive comfort and inspiration from any great book of any great religion. I may not be able to reproduce a single verse from the Gita or the New Testament, a Hindu child or Christian child may be able to repeat the verses better, but those clever children cannot deprive me of the assimilation that is in me today of the spirit of the two books.'

That I am afraid is a big dose and too heavy to be included in a brief chapter of memories. I shall give lighter ones.

In Colombo autograph-hunters, if I may call them so, were as numerous as in any other 'civilised' part of the world, and Gandhiji had always his condition with which to present them, though he relaxed the part about spinning. He was satisfied if friends in Ceylon promised to wear Khadi habitually. Students in Jaffna, I may say to their credit, did not find it difficult to give the promise. But a lady in Colombo who was very anxious to have the autograph was rather taken aback

when she heard of the condition. She pressed her case as well as she could, then she presented her various difficulties—parties, official invitations, this thing and that thing. How could she wear Khadi on all occasions? Her husband tried to help her out of her supposed difficulties. But no, it was she who had to make the promise and not he. It was an awkward twenty minutes for her. Now she took the autograph book in her hand then again she placed it before Gandhiji, and repeated the process for a number of times. But her love of truth ultimately prevailed, and she said, 'I will remain without the autograph but will not hastily make a promise I may fail to keep.'

The lady I have talked of was a Christian lady, though I forget her name. I now give an instance where the friend who made the promise was better than her word.

Mrs. DeSilva, wife of the Hon. W. A. DeSilva, came one fine morning with her contribution for Khadi, and pressed Gandhiji to 'step into her house' one day. 'Yes,' said Gandhiji, 'if you will do some business with me. I can go to your place only as a Khadi hawker.' She smiled assent, and sealed her promise with an immediate purchase of over a hundred rupees worth of Khadi from our shop on the premises. The day on which Gandhiji fulfilled his part of the contract she was ready with some surprises to spring on him. Gandhiji had some Khadi with him. As the mother and the daughters inspected the stuff Gandhiji said, 'I hope you will take the whole lot.' Well, she took not only the whole lot, but gave a blank cheque so to say for all the Khadi, coarse and fine, that we had left at home, promised to popularise it in all the charitable institutions for which her husband's charity is responsible and promised also to send more orders in future.

I have already introduced Lady Ramanathan in the foregoing chapter. She is an American by nationality, and a Ceylon

lonese Indian, if I may say so, by marriage with Sir P. Ramanathan, an entirely self-made man, a philanthropist and a prominent figure in the public life of Ceylon. Gentleness itself Lady Ramanathan hates to obtrude herself on you. The arrangements she made for Gandhiji's reception at the Ramanathan Girls' College were a reflection no less of her gentleness than of her refinement, and one could not fail to notice her unobtrusive hand in the wonderful address that was presented at the College. But she was not satisfied with that. She came to see Gandhiji off at the station, with fruit and milk and what not, and of course with an additional collection made by the girls. One could almost read the wrench on her face as she got ready to part, and then the actual parting! will ever abide in the memory.

Very few people in Ceylon know Jayavardhana, possibly many Buddhists will wonder that there could be a Jayavardhana with Jayaramdas as his name. But however much he may avoid publicity he will have to face it, inasmuch as he has promised to spread the gospel of the charkha and Khadi on a more extensive scale than he has hitherto been able to do. Sjt. Jayavardhana was in the Ceylon Railway service and a keen student of *Young India* before he went to the Sabarmati Ashram to take a course in all the processes preliminary to weaving. He and the youngsters that accompanied him became members of the Ashram family for the time being, going through all the details of the daily routine of Ashram life and returned home after having finished the course. Today he and his family are perhaps the only people in Ceylon who are wearing cloth made out of their own yarn, and Sjt. Jayavardhana has promised Gandhiji not to hide his light under a bushel but to get into touch with friends who would be interested in the work, and have a sort of production centre in Ceylon. He has put himself in touch with some of the Buddhist Bhikkhus who have

promised to spread the cult of the charkha, and of non-violence and temperance more actively than before, and we may hope that, God willing, the grain of mustard seed may, in days to come, grow into a big tree.

Two pictures of commonfolk.

During the riots of 1915 there was a good deal of firing and bloodshed, and over and above the actual bloodshed, quite an amount of wounding of the feelings of the people and laceration of hearts.

The story goes that some one noticed that the sacred Tree at Anuradhapura had begun to wither away, presumably because of the wicked way in which the Word of the Enlightened One was being violated. Crowds upon crowds went to the Bo-Tree with pots full of milk, and poured it at the roots of the tree in poignant devotion. I should not have believed the story if I had not witnessed a similar example of devotion.

On the day Gandhiji visited the Dalada Maligawa or the Temple of the Tooth as it is called, there was evidently a great rush. It is not an easy thing for the common people to have a sight of the 'sacred tooth.' The tooth, the genuineness of which has often been questioned, is kept in several gold cases one over another, and some of them studded with jewels. How can humble folk see it, when the whole thing is kept under heavy and double or triple locks and keys? And so a pious woman had come that day to have her chance. The Chief in charge of the relic was showing everything in a most detailed manner, and many had their chance to have a full satisfactory look at it. But the poor woman who could not possibly stand in front of the crowds had to keep back, and the consequence was that she could not fulfil her heart's desire as the relic was put under lock and key as soon as Gandhiji had finished seeing it. Imagine the disappointment and distress of the poor woman as she stared at the crowd who had a sight of the tooth

whilst she had been kept away. Almost with tears in her eyes she entreated Gandhiji to somehow enable her to see the relic. Gandhiji had already spent a lot of time there, and had no more time to lose. But no. He requested the Chief to repeat the process of exhibition, if not for the poor women, at least out of consideration for his sympathy for her. It was done, Gandhiji again witnessing the ceremony, and the poor woman's joy knew no bounds! One may be sure that she felt that day as though she had the *darshan* of the *Buddha* himself.

Here is a picture of another variety also taken from the crowds.

A European, an advertising agent of some cigarette or tea company, I forget which, was one of the crowd that thronged the roads on the day Gandhiji spoke to the Young Men's Buddhist Association. He had with great difficulty scrambled to Gandhiji's car, perhaps succeeded in exchanging a word, or shaking hands with him—I do not quite know. But there at the gate I found him, jumping about and shouting in great exhilaration, 'Gandhi is a sport,' 'Gandhi is a sport!' I am sure if Gandhiji had heard it he would have appreciated this compliment, so spontaneously given, more than many others that are day in and day out being showered on him.

Having given these little bits, I propose to sandwich them between the first heavy item and the one which follows.

While in Colombo we had a pretty little encounter with the law students. They had promised to go to Gandhiji's residence to present their purse to him. Later it seems they got jealous of the smaller institutions that Gandhiji was visiting, changed their mind, and gave a sort of notice to the Reception Committee that they should either bring Gandhiji to their college or sacrifice a 'substantial purse'! The threat however was lost on the Committee, and the students thought it

discreet to keep their previous promise. So they came, but lodged their complaint against the Reception Committee for taking Gandhiji to private houses and to minor educational institutions and ignoring the Law College! But they had counted without their host? Gandhiji twitted them first with inaccuracy about facts, in that they had stated that Gandhiji had visited private houses,—whereas he had called only on Mrs. DeSilva and that as a hawker,—and with their inability to understand that Gandhiji should naturally give preference to those who were yet children and fathers of tomorrow over those who in all probability were fathers of today. The joke was enough to put them in proper humour, and they made amends by recognising the difficulty of the Reception Committee, and proceeded to turn the little time they had with Gandhiji to good account. 'How to spiritualise the legal profession' was the point on which they sought advice, which Gandhiji readily gave them :

"I am glad you have put this question. For I may say that if I cannot speak on this subject with authority, no one else can. For throughout my career at the bar I never once departed from the strictest truth and honesty.

Well, then the first thing which you must always bear in mind, if you would spiritualise the practice of law, is not to make your profession subservient to the interests of your purse, as is unfortunately but too often the case at present, but to use your profession for the service of your country. There are instances of eminent lawyers in all countries who led a life of self-sacrifice, who devoted their brilliant legal talents entirely to the service of their country although it spelt almost pauperism for them. In India you have the instance of the late Mana Mohan Ghose. He took up the fight against the indigo planters and served his poor clients at the cost of his health even at the risk of his life, without charging them a

single pie for his labours. He was a most brilliant lawyer, yet he was a great philanthropist. That is an example that you should have before you. Or better still you can follow Ruskins' precept given in his book *Unto this Last*. 'Why should a lawyer charge fifteen pounds for his work,' he asks, 'whilst a carpenter for instance hardly gets as many shillings for his work?' The fees charged by lawyers are unconscionable everywhere. I confess, I myself have charged what I would now call high fees. But even whilst I was engaged in my practice, let me tell you I never let my profession stand in the way of my public service.

"And there is another thing which I would like to warn you against. In England, in South Africa, almost everywhere, I have found that in the practice of their profession lawyers are consciously or unconsciously led into untruth for the sake of their clients. An eminent English lawyer has gone so far as to say that it may even be the duty of a lawyer to defend a client whom he knows to be guilty. There I disagree. The duty of a lawyer is always to place before the judges, and to help them to arrive at, the truth never to prove the guilty as innocent. It is up to *you* to maintain the dignity of your profession. If you fail in your duty what shall become of the other professions? You, young men, claiming as you have just done to be the fathers of tomorrow, should be the salt of the nation. If the salt loses its savour wherewith shall it be salted?"

## CHAPTER IV

### FAREWELL

Ceylon gave Gandhiji more than he had expected. When we left Colombo the figure of collections was Rs. 86,000. We were afraid Jaffna might not be able to finish a lakh. But it did much more. Every one who helped in the success of the tour deserves the warmest congratulations and has earned the blessings of *Daridranarayan*.

There was no special farewell meeting in Jaffna as there was in Colombo, but the parting from friends at both the places was as sad as it could be.

'I assure you,' said Gandhiji 'I am leaving Ceylon not without a heavy heart, and if I could at all have managed it I would have certainly stayed longer.' He would have certainly loved to have given some time to the many workers that this tour brought in close touch with him, Dr. Ratnam, Sjts. Peri Sundaram, Somasundaram, Amarsekere of Colombo, Sjt. George DeSila of Kandy, Sjts. Kumar Soopier and Handy Perinbanayagam and his young friends of Jaffna, is only for the furtherance of his cultural and humanitarian mission. He would have loved to know more of the leading men of Ceylon like Sjt. D. B. Jayatilaka, the Hon. W. A. DeSilva, and Sir P. Ramanathan, and of ladies like Mrs. DeSilva and Lady Ramanathan. He would certainly have loved to come in close contact with the priests some of whom promised to take up his mission. But I am sure they will all take the will for the deed. I am sure they all must appreciate the cultural message of truth and non-violence with its practical application in the shape of Khadi.

The triumph of his tour was, as Sjt. D. B. Jayatilaka said, nothing but Ceylon's homage to the ideals of truth, non-violence and self-sacrifice. Let us hope therefore that the parting message left by Gandhiji will abide and fructify in this land of Buddhism. I reproduce the message of the spinning wheel:

"I know, and I am happy to know, that you in this land are strangers to the gnawing pauperism in India which starves the millions of India from day to day. The spinning wheel has therefore perhaps no economic importance for you. But I have no doubt about its great cultural value for this fair land. Its living message of simplicity is applicable to all lands, and you will admit that if your boys and girls and even grown-up men and women gave about an hour a day to self-spinning and became self-contained regarding their clothing requirement, it would do no harm to you, but would give dignity and self-confidence to this nation. I have been watching, not without considerable anxiety, the craze for fashion which has now seized the young men belonging to the higher classes. Little do they know how by being slaves to this hypnotic dazzle from the West they are isolating themselves from their poorest countrymen who can never adopt those fashions. I cannot help thinking that it would be a great national catastrophe, a great national tragedy, if you were to barter away your simplicity for this tinsel splendour. But whether you appreciate this cultural side of the spinning wheel or not, you have from many a platform voluntarily declared your allegiance to India by affectionately calling her Mother India. You have by your generous purses given tangible evidence of that allegiance. May I appeal to you to forge this link stronger and make it a living thing by finding in your wardrobes ample room for Khadi.

I have no power in me to make any the slightest return for the lavish kindness you have showered on me. But I have no doubt that the dumb and the starving millions on whose behalf

you have opened your purse strings will bless you for the help you have rendered them, and as a self-appointed representative of these millions I can but pray to the Almighty that he may bless you and endow you with all that blessings that you may deserve."



## **PART II: SPEECHES**

## HOW TO BEHAVE IN A STRANGE LAND \*

Friends, I thank you for all these purses that you have presented to me in this eminently businesslike manner. I feel again like finding myself in Chettinad. The very pleasant recollections that I have of my recent visit to Chettinad have become vivid and fresh before me this afternoon. Their generosity and kindness, I shall never forget, and you are here in Colombo but repeating what I witnessed in Chettinad. The only consolation that I have in receiving all these gifts and kindness from you is that it is all being done for the sake of *Daridra Narayana*, and seeing that I regard myself as but a humble trustee for the millions of paupers of India, I not only feel no shame or humiliation in receiving these gifts, but I feel impelled by your generosity and kindness to ask for more.

Rich and generous corporation though you be it is really not possible for any single corporation to fill the millions of mouths of *Daridra Narayana*. If, therefore, there are still in your midst those who have not given at all, or given in a miserly fashion, I appeal to you to open out your purses and give as much as you can, on behalf of *Daridra Narayana*. I can conceive of no better investment for wealthy Indians, whether in India or outside, and let not your generosity end with merely giving money. If you will establish a living bond with these dumb millions, you must wear khadi which is produced by their sacred hands. If you will continue to think along these lines, you will find that it will become necessary for you, if you are to have that bond continuously with the dumb millions, to purify your lives. Wherever there is pure love, there is charity, there

\* Speech at the Nagarathar's meeting in Colombo on the 13th November 1927.

is personal purity, there immediately arises cohesion in that society. You will find that one step in your march towards purity leads on to another.

You are in what might be considered a strange land. Geographically and officially speaking, Ceylon is not considered part of India. You, as merchants living in this hospitable land, are expected to behave towards the indigenous population in an exemplary and honest manner. By your conduct will be judged the conduct of the millions of India. I hope, therefore, that your dealings with the people in this fair island are absolutely just and free from all reproach. Let your scales be absolutely correct, your accounts accurate and I hope that you regard every woman in this island as your sister, daughter, or your mother, as the case may be. Let possession of wealth not render us giddy. It must carry with it a greater sense of responsibility, if it is to be a blessing to the possessor and those in whose midst it is earned.

I must not detain you any longer to-day. I have hardly commenced my work in Ceylon yet and in the course of my tour in this island, I shall have many things to speak about. I would like you to follow whatever I have to say in the different places where I shall be taken and nothing will please me better than to find when I have gone away from this island that you have not forgotten the things that I may lay before you from the deepest recesses of my heart.

I thank you once more for all these generous purses and if there are any in this meeting who want to pay, they are at liberty to do so. Let me also inform you that if you want Khadi, you get it at the place where I am accommodated. May god bless you.

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## A LINK WITH THE STARVING MILLIONS\*

I thank you for your address and your purse. During the short time I had at my disposal I tried to glance through the report of the work of your Society and I beg to tender to you my congratulations on its many activities. Vivekananda is a name to conjure with. He has left on India's life an indelible impression and you will find at the present time societies named after him in many parts of India; and this is apart from the many branches of the Rama Krishna Mission.

But I see that I must not keep you long at this meeting. There are impatient crowds waiting outside. All that I would say at the present moment is that I wish every prosperity to this Society, and may I suggest that your activities will be incomplete unless you add to these the one thing that renders service to *Daridra Narayana* (God incarnated in the poor). Your purse to me is a token of your appreciation of the message of the spinning wheel. If Vivekananda is the name of your society, you dare not neglect India's starving millions, and the conviction is daily being driven home that without the spinning wheel it is impossible to serve the starving millions of India.

I have therefore no hesitation in making an appeal to the Indians, whether they are living in India or outside, that they should carry with them on their persons an emblem of the living bond between themselves and the starving millions in their motherland.

I wish to say to my sisters on the right and the fashionable Indians living in Colombo, or for a matter of that in all Ceylon, that it is now possible, after six years of continued activity, to give you all the fineness you can reasonably desire, even in Khaddar.

I pray to you that you will not despise the little service it is

\* Speech at the Vivekananda Society, Colombo on 13-11-27

possible for you to render to these starving millions of your countrymen and women by wearing Khaddar, rather than foreign and mill made cloth.

I thank you once more for your address.

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### MUNICIPAL PROBLEMS \*

Chairman and friends,—I must first of all apologise to you for not standing up and speaking to you. For years past I have been unequal to address audiences standing, and if I address you sitting and if I do not receive your address standing, I hope you will not put it down to want of courtesy on my part. I am sorry also that at the present moment, I have not a voice that would carry my speech far enough. I have also to apologise to you and the citizens of Colombo for not having arrived here in time, but of that the blame must rest on stronger shoulders—I refer to H. E. the Viceroy. It was he who invited me to go to Delhi and if you pass a vote of censure on him, I should certainly join you, but perhaps you will excuse H. E. the Viceroy and through him me also.

It is a matter of great pleasure to me to receive this address at your hands. I was totally unprepared for it. Mine if you would like to take it so, is a mercenary visit. I have come to Ceylon in reply to invitations from some of my own countrymen, and seeing that I have devoted this year, which is now about to expire, to making collections on behalf of the cause which is designed to serve the millions of paupers in India, the temptation that these friends gave me was irresistible.

I very nearly came to this pearl among the isles of the

\*Reply to the Colombo Municipal address on 15th November, 27.

arth in 1901. You may not know that I have many Mu  
an friends in South Africa, who are dear to me as life itself,  
nd some of them urged me to go to Ceylon on my way to  
adia and I would gladly have done so. Then I should have  
ome as a sojourner in your midst, to appreciate the unrivalled  
eauties of this Island and to enjoy also the open hospitality of  
s citizens, but I cannot say the same thing to-day. For I have  
y eye solely on business. Hence I said that I was not pre-  
ared for this address, because I least deserve it.

But I am a lover of municipal life. It never fell to my lot  
o serve a single municipality as its Councillor,—but I came, as  
itizen, in close touch with two premier Corporations, I mean  
urban and Johannesburg, and if you were to ask the Mayors  
f these two Corporations, they will perhaps testify that I  
erved them as much as a single citizen, humble like myself  
ould do.

I consider it a great privilege for a person to serve a place  
here he has cast his lot. I have been since studying the  
ethods of the great Corporations throughout India more or  
ess closely, and I have been in search of an ideally conducted  
unicipality. I must confess to you that I have not yet found  
ne in my own country. I should love to think that you are  
not ideal Corporation, but I am unable to say anything  
ecause of my great ignorance about your achievements.

Yesterday I asked for a copy of the latest report of your  
dministration, but it was not possible for me to go through the  
hole of that interesting document.

Having done plague work for myself in Durban and  
ohannesburg I turned over the pages referring to plague and  
gave me something of a shock when I read in those para-  
graphs that you were not yet entirely immune from that curse.

These two Corporations, Durban and Johannesburg, had  
also their share of the plague. In Johannesburg it was of the

most virulent type, but the Municipal Council counted no cost too great to protect the citizens against further inroads.

I won't take you into the very interesting history of how Johannesburg battled against the plague. Durban also did likewise. And it was in that connection that I had an opportunity of reading the very wonderful history of the Corporation of Glasgow and how Glasgow poured money like water in order to make that great city plague proof. And it succeeded. I don't know that since that visitation Glasgow has had another. I am speaking under correction, but I hope that my impression is correct.

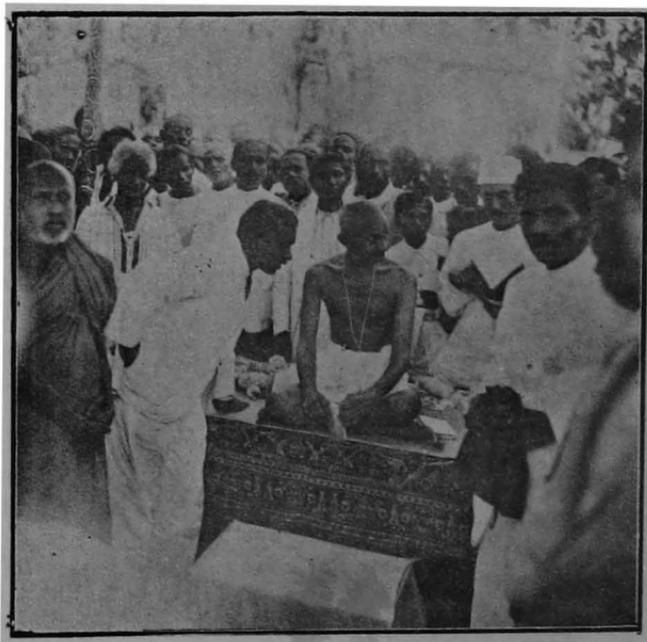
I can say from first hand knowledge that Johannesburg has not had a visitation again. Of course it has got a climate second to none in the world, which is in its favour, but the marvellousness of its citizens also stands out to its credit.

As you know Johannesburg is a cosmopolitan city. It has a great Bantu population; it has its share of the Indian population, and it has also its ghettos. Still Johannesburg is immune.

Here I find your difficulty with the Harbour Masters—that it is expensive to disinfect all the grain that comes to or passes through this beautiful harbour of yours. I think this Corporation should fight against these interests in order to make the city absolutely free from plague and invest a passing visitor like myself with a sense of perfect freedom. My medical advisers would tell me, "in your dilapidated condition you must not go to a place like Colombo." If I were inclined to listen to my medical advisers I should certainly not have come if I had read a report of that character beforehand.

That is one thing. The second thing I read in this interesting document was about your dairies.

I notice that you import dried milk from New Zealand. You are finding room for the dried constituents of milk, and then in that special language you reassemble the constituents.



**Gandhiji in Ceylon.**

and sell that liquid ; but as it appears under the name of milk, I wonder how your medical officers pass that stuff as milk at all.

I was sent by my friends, when I was having my convalescence in the Nandi Hills, a book on vitamins, and if writers distinguished and specialised are truthful they tell us lay people that milk is robbed of vitamins when subjected to a certain temperature ; but I know something of dried constituents of milk and I know that milk loses its vitamins when it reaches the dry state. And when you rob it of its vitamins you rob it of half of its richness.

You have many dairies here. I want to throw out a suggestion. You have inspectors and you have bye-laws and you have prosecutions. Why should you go through all this trouble and why not municipalise your dairies and take control of your milk supply. Believe me, you will then conserve the health of your babies and you will conserve also the health of those dilapidated people like myself.

There is a great labouring population for whom milk should be cheap ; it should be standardised like your stamps and people should be able to get milk absolutely guaranteed. If you want to ensure that you can't do better than to municipalise your milk supply and make it accessible to the poorest man in the city.

A third thing. I know that you have a very beautiful harbour. I have passed through the cinnamon gardens—a credit to any city in the world. I have noticed some of your palatial buildings—all very good indeed. But do the dwellers in the cinnamon gardens, or those residing in the city who do business, require trustees to look after their welfare? I fancy not. You are trustees for those who can't look after themselves ; you are trustees therefore for the welfare of the labouring population.

I have not been able to visit your slums to be able to see at

first hand what the conditions in the slums are. And if you are able to tell me that your slums will be just as sweet-smelling as your cinnamon gardens I would take you on trust and advertise you throughout my wanderings and say "go to Colombo if you want to see an ideal municipality," but I hardly think you will be able to gain this certificate of merit from me in reference to the condition of your slums.

I have been going into certain statistics, and I think that a place like Colombo, which certainly was dry in one respect can easily afford to go dry in another. If you are trustees for the welfare of the citizens of Colombo you will make Colombo dry as it is really possible for you to do. I think then you will earn the thanks not only of the citizens of Colombo and of a humble individual like myself but of all eastern municipalities.

May God help you, to keep always in the direction I have indicated. I thank you once more for the address and the kind things you have said of me.

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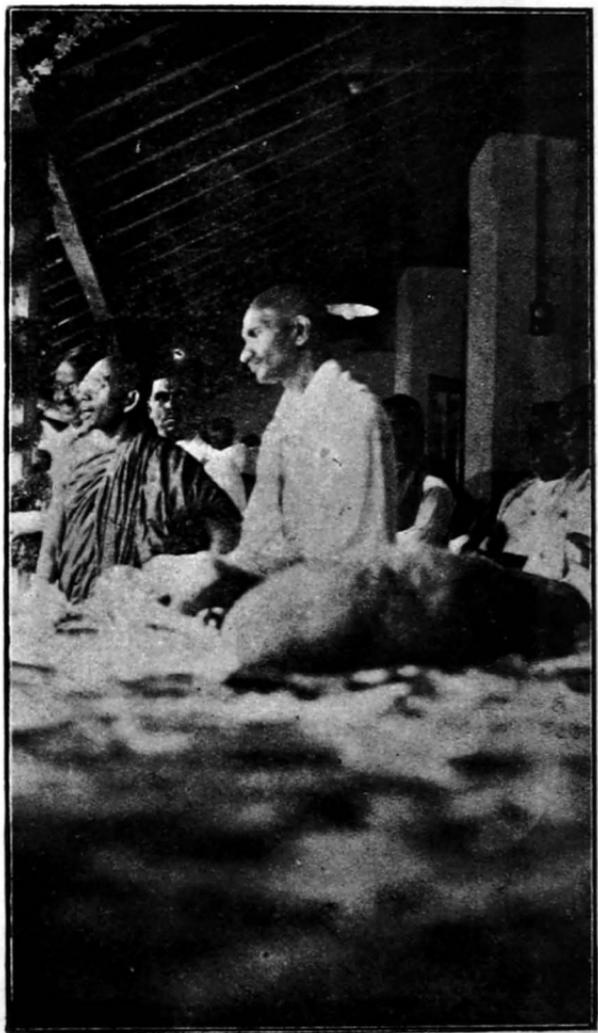
#### KHADI AND BUDDHA'S TEACHING\*—I

It has given me great pleasure to be able to come to Colombo and Ceylon and to make your acquaintance. Wherever I go, I love to see school children.

Here in Ceylon the majority of boys come under the influence of Buddhist teaching. That great master taught us what is known as the right path and you boys come to institutions of this character to learn the right path, and to learn the right path is not merely to pack your brains with many things that sound nice and sweet, but to do the right things.

The first maxim of the right path is to tell the truth, to think the truth and to act the truth and the second maxim is to

\* Speech delivered at the Ananda College, Colombo on 15-11-27.



**Gandhiji addressing  
students of the Ananda College, Colombo.**

love all that lives. Gautama Buddha was so filled with mercy and kindness that it was he who taught us to love not only the members of the human family, but to love all the animal world. He taught us also personal purity of life. Therefore, if you boys are not truthful, merciful and kind, if you are not pure in your personal conduct, you have to learn nothing in this institution.

Which of you can tell me where Gautama Buddha was born? (A boy promptly answered: He was born in Kapilavastu in India).

I suggest to all of you, boys, that you owe something to Gautama's countrymen. I am sorry to have to tell you, boys, if you do not know already, that in the land where Gautama lived and taught and which is hallowed by his sacred feet, there is dire distress and poverty.

The one reason why the millions in India are so poor is because they left their ancient industry or have been deprived of it and that was the spinning wheel. Now, they can revive the spinning wheel if everybody in India and others will wear the clothes that can be spun out and woven from it. The cloth is called khadi.

If you will render something unto Gautama's countrymen for the great message of mercy that he delivered to you and to me, you will certainly wear khadi. So far as I know, all the cloth that you little boys and others have worn has not been produced in Colombo or Ceylon, and seeing that you must buy some cloth in order to cover yourselves, it is your primary duty to buy that cloth which is woven by the famishing millions who are the countrymen of Gautama. If you will do so, you will then be in a position to act according to the second maxim in the right path that I mentioned you and what I have told you naturally applies with double force to your teachers and parents.

If you are clever, good and brave boys, you will discuss this

thing with your teachers and with your parents and ask them what it was that this strange man called Gandhi from India told you, and if I am not mistaken, they will endorse every word of what I have said to you. You have given this money to me for that very purpose and I thank you and the teachers for giving me this money and thinking of the famishing millions of India. To wear khadi is merely to follow up the step that you have taken to-day.

May God bless you all.

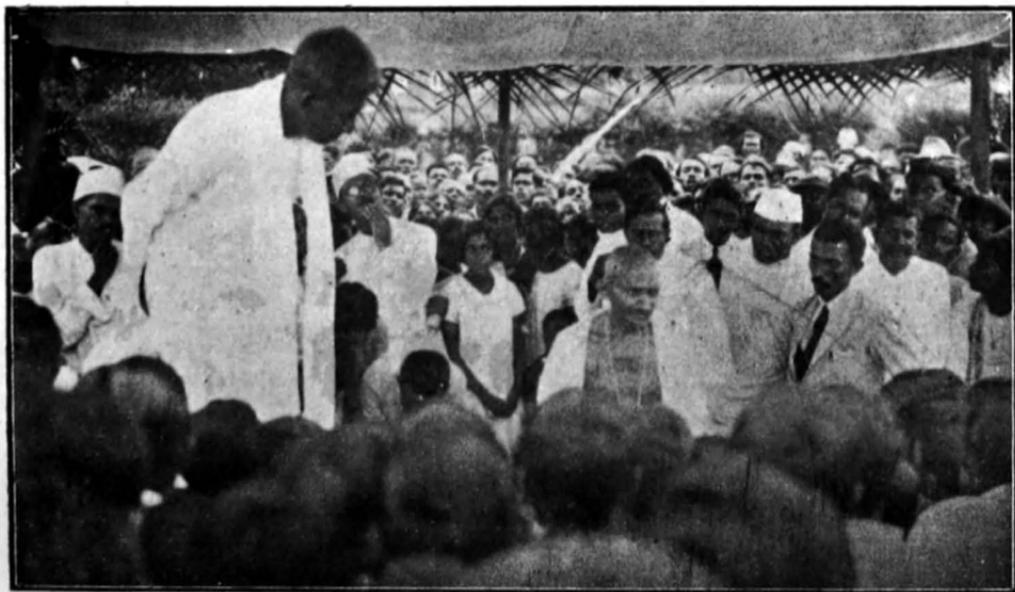
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#### KHADI AND BUDDHA'S TEACHING \*—II

Principal, teachers and boys,—I thank you very much for giving me this donation for the work which has brought me to this beautiful Island. I give me great pleasure to be able to make your acquaintance.

I propose to say to you what I have been just now saying to the boys of Ananda College. You are here being taught the path that the Great Buddha gave to the world. And if you do not represent the teaching of the Buddha in your own lives you having belonged to this institution will be considered useless, and you will not be true representatives of Buddha's teachings. Everything else that you will learn here will be perfectly useless unless you can reproduce the central teaching of Gautama in your own lives. His was the right path, right speech, right thought and right conduct. He gave us the unadulterated law of mercy. And the extent of the law as he defined went beyond the human family. His love, his boundless love went out as much to the lower animals, to the lowest life as to the human beings. And he insisted upon purity of life.

\* Speech delivered at the Nalanda Vidyalaya, Colombo on the 15th November 1927.



**Gandhiji addressing the Students of the Nalanda Vidyalaya, Colombo.**

I want to suggest to you that if you are fulfilling this law of mercy, love, kindness and human sympathy the least you can do is to render something unto the countrymen of the Buddha.

You know that he was an Indian and his message was delivered first of all to India. Painful though the fact is, nevertheless, it is unfortunately true that it is his countrymen who are to-day the poorest in the world. Millions are famishing but they need not famish if they will work at the spinning wheel and if we Indians and you people of Ceylon will wear khadi which can be produced from the spinning wheel.

You do not manufacture so far as I am aware any cloth in Ceylon. Every yard of cloth that you are wearing is imported from outside. And I suggest to you that if you will carry out this law of mercy that the Buddha taught and if you will make some return for the debt that you owe to Gautama, you will, until you are able to produce your own khadi, wear khadi that is manufactured in India.

My friend\*, the translator, proudly pointed out that the cloth he was wearing was manufactured in Ceylon. I would prohibit you from buying a single yard of khadi manufactured in India if he should be able to supply you with khadi. And you will certainly be still better followers of the Buddha if you will work with your own hands and manufacture khadi. If you will do that you will not only help India but you will help the whole world by setting a noble example. But meanwhile I suggest to you that you will be doing the right thing by following up your gift by yourselves wearing khadi.

Teachers and boys, I thank you once more for this gift of yours and for inviting me to this school. And I pray that God may bless you.

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\* Sri. Jairamdas Jayavardana.

## MESSAGE TO THE BUDDHISTS \*

I thank you very sincerely for the address that you have given to me. I appreciate the courtesy, in that you have supplied me with a translation of your address in advance. I am equally grateful to His Holiness and the priests for the benediction that they have pronounced just now. I shall always esteem it as a great privilege that I have received this benediction this afternoon, and I can give His Holiness and the priests in the presence of this assembly the assurance that I shall always strive to deserve that benediction.

Your address mentions it and His Holiness also just now mentioned the fact about the Buddha Gaya temple which is situated in India.

I have been interesting myself in this great institution for a long time, and when I presided over the deliberations of the Indian National Congress at Belgaum, I had the privilege of doing what was possible on behalf of the Congress in this connection.

I had sent to me by some unknown friend in Ceylon the controversy that took place in connection with what I did at the Congress in this matter. I did not think it proper to take part in that controversy nor do I desire even now to go into it. I can only give you my assurance that everything that was humanly possible for me to do to advance your claim I did and I shall still do. I must tell you, however, that the Congress does not possess the influence that I would like it to possess. There are several difficulties raised in connection with the proprietary rights. There are technical legal difficulties also in the way. The Congress appointed a Committee of the best men

\*Speech delivered on 15th Nov. 27 at Vidyodaya College, Colombo, in reply to an address presented by the All-Ceylon Congress of Buddhist Associations.



**Gandhiji entering Maligakanda Temple, Colombo.**

that were at its disposal to go into this matter and if possible even to come to terms with the Mahant who is at the present moment in possession of the temple. That Committee has already reported, and I take it that some of you have seen the report of that Committee. That Committee endeavoured to have an arbitration appointed, but it failed in its efforts to do so.

But there is absolutely no reason to lose hope. I tell you that all my personal sympathies are absolutely with you, and if the rendering of its possession to you was in my giving you can have it to-day.

In your address was mentioned another temple that is situated in Ceylon. I do not know anything about the controversy regarding this temple. I would therefore, like some of you to give me particulars about it, and tell me if there is anything that I can do in connection with it whilst I am in your midst. You may take it for granted that I should take a personal interest in it if I feel that there is anything that I can do, and I should do so not in order that I might oblige you, but in order to give myself satisfaction.

For, you do not know perhaps that one of my sons, the eldest boy, accused me of being a follower of Buddha, and some of my Hindu countrymen also do not hesitate to accuse me of spreading Buddhistic teaching under the guise of Sanatana Hinduism.

(I sympathise with my son's accusations and the accusations of my Hindu friends. And sometimes I feel even proud of being accused of being a follower of the Buddha, and I have no hesitation in declaring in the presence of this audience that I owe a great deal to the inspiration that I have derived from the life of the Enlightened One.

Indeed, at an anniversary celebration in the new Buddha Temple that has been erected in Calcutta I gave expression to this view. The leader in that meeting was Anagarika

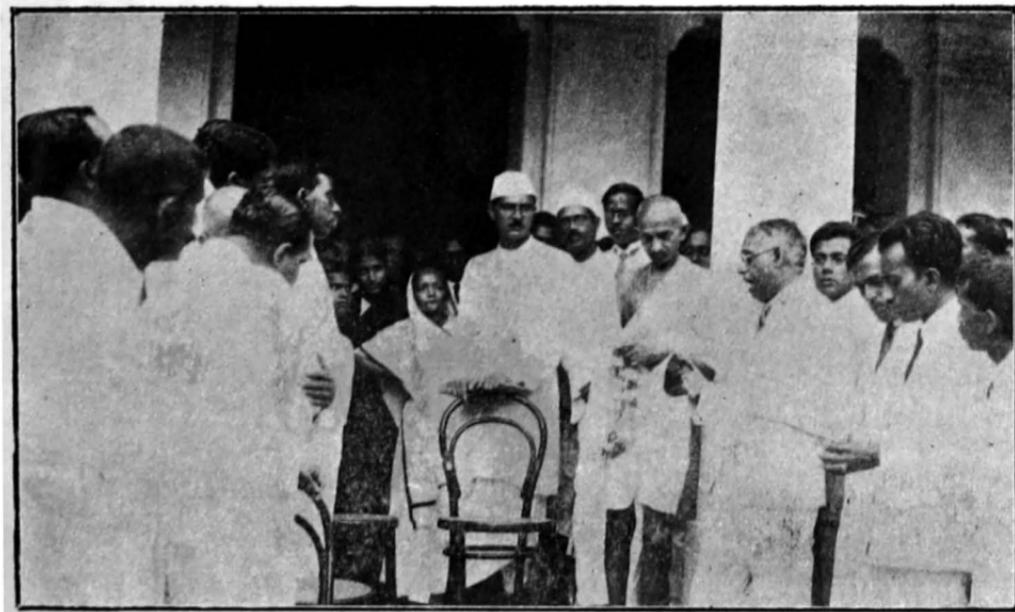
Dharmapala. He was weeping over the fact that he was not receiving the response that he desired for the cause which was close to his heart, and I remember having rebuked him for shedding tears.

I told the audience that though what passed under the name of Buddhism might have been driven out of India, the life of the Buddha and his teachings were by no means driven out of India.

This incident happened I think now three years ago, and I have seen nothing since to alter the view which I pronounced at that meeting.

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

"It is my fixed opinion that Buddhism or rather the teaching of Buddha found its full fruition in India, and it could not be otherwise, for Gautama was himself a Hindu of Hindus. He was saturated with the best that was in Hinduism, and he gave life to some of the teachings that were buried in the Vedas and which were overgrown with weeds. His great Hindu spirit cut its way through the forest of words, meaningless words, which had overlaid the golden truth that was in the Vedas. He made some of the words in the Vedas yield a meaning to which the



Gandhiji at Maliga Kanda Temple, Colombo.

men of his generation were utter strangers, and he found in India the most congenial soil.

And wherever the Buddha went, he was followed by and surrounded not by non-Hindus but Hindus, those who were themselves saturated with the Vedic law.

But the Buddha's teaching like his heart was all-expanding and all-embracing and so it has survived his own body and swept across the face of the earth. And at the risk of being called a follower of Buddha I claim this achievement as a triumph of Hinduism. Buddha never rejected Hinduism, but he broadened its base. He gave it a new life and a new interpretation.

But here comes the point where I shall need your forgiveness and your generosity, and I want to submit to you that the teaching of Buddha was not assimilated in its fulness whether it was in Ceylon, or in Burma, or in China or in Tibet. I know my own limitations. I lay no claim to scholarship in Buddhistic law. Probably, a Fifth Form boy from Nalanda Vidyalaya would plough me in a Buddhist catechism. I know that I speak in the presence of very learned priests and equally learned laymen, but I should be false to you and false to myself if I did not declare what my heart believes.

You and those who call themselves Buddhists outside India have no doubt taken, in a very large measure the teaching of the Buddha, but when I examine your life and when I cross-question the friends from Ceylon, Burma, China or Tibet, I feel confounded to find so many inconsistencies between what I have come to understand as the central fact of Buddha's life and your own practice, and if I am not tiring you out, I would like hurriedly to run through three prominent points that just now occurred to me.

The first is the belief in an all-pervading Providence called

God. I have heard it contended times without number and I have read in books also claiming to express the spirit of Buddhism that Buddha did not believe in God. In my humble opinion such a belief contradicts the very central fact of Buddha's teaching. It seems to me the confusion has arisen over his rejection, and just rejection, of all the base things that passed in his generation under the name of God. He undoubtedly rejected the notion that a being called God was actuated by malice, could repent of his actions, and like the kings of the earth could possibly be open to temptations and bribes and could possibly have favourites. His whole soul rose in mighty indignation against the belief that a being called God required for his satisfaction the living blood of animals in order that he might be pleased,—animals who were his own creation. He therefore, reinstated God in the right place and dethroned the usurper who for the time being seemed to occupy that White Throne. He emphasised and redeclared the eternal and unalterable existence of the moral government of this universe. He unhesitatingly said that the law was God Himself.

God's laws are eternal and unalterable and not separable from God Himself. It is an indispensable condition of His very perfection. And hence the great confusion that Buddha disbelieved in God and simply believed in the moral law and because of this confusion about God Himself, arose the confusion about the proper understanding of the great word *nirvana*. *Nirvana* is undoubtedly not utter extinction. So far as I have been able to understand the central fact of Buddha's life, *nirvana* is utter extinction of all that is base in us, all that is vicious in us, all that is corrupt and corruptible in us. *Nirvana* is not like the black, dead peace of the grave, but the living peace, the living happiness of a soul which is conscious of itself, and conscious of having found its own abode in the heart of the Eternal.

The third point is with regard to the low estimation in which the idea of the sanctity of all life came to be held in Buddhism's travels outside India. Great as Buddha's contribution to humanity was in restoring God to His eternal place, in my humble opinion greater still was his contribution to humanity in his exacting regard for all life, be it ever so low. I am aware that his own India did not rise to the height that he would fain have seen India occupy.

But the teaching of Buddha, when it became Buddhism and travelled outside, came to mean that sacredness of animal life had not the sense that it had with an ordinary man. I am not aware of the exact practice and belief of Ceylonese Buddhism in this matter, but I am aware what shape it has taken in Burma and China. Burma especially the Burmese Buddhists will not kill a single animal, but do not mind others killing the animals for them and dishing the carcasses for them for their food.

Now, if there was any teacher in the world who insisted upon the inexorable law of cause and effect, it was inevitably Gautama, and yet my friends, the Buddhists outside India, would, if they could, avoid the effects of their own acts.

But I must not put an undue strain upon your patience. I have but lightly touched upon some of the points which I think it my duty to bring to your notice, and in all earnestness and equal humility I present them for your serious consideration.

One thing more and I shall have done. Last night the members of the Reception Committee asked me to speak to one of these audiences of the connection khadi had with Ceylon. I have not left much time for myself to expand this message before you, but I shall try to summarise it in two sentences.

One thing is that you who regard Buddha as the ruler of our hearts owe something to the land of his birth, where millions of his descendants for whom he laboured and for whom he died are today living a life of misery, living in a state of per-

petual semi-starvation. I venture, therefore, to suggest that khadi enables you to establish a living bond between yourselves and the ruler of your hearts.

If you will follow the central fact of his teaching and regard life as one of renunciation, of renunciation of all material things all life being transitory, you will at once see the beauty of the message of khadi which otherwise means simple living and high thinking. Taking these two thoughts with you, I suggest to every one of you to dot the i's and cross the t's and make out your own interpretation of the message of khadi.

I thank you again for the great kindness that you have shown, for the address and for the benediction, and I hope that you will receive the humble message that I have given to you in the same spirit in which it has been delivered. Regard it as a message not from a critic, but from a bosom friend.

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#### MESSAGE TO THE CHRISTIANS\*

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

"One's own religion is after all a matter between oneself

\* Addressing a huge gathering in the hall of Y. M. C. A., Colombo, on 15-11-27 Gandhiji welcomed the occasion as one more instance of the close touch, in which he was daily finding himself with Christians throughout the world. 'There are some who will not even take my flat denial when I tell them that I am not a Christian,' said Gandhiji, and in trying to explain his own attitude to Christianity, gave in his simple way a message to the whole of the Christian world.

and one's Maker and no one else's, but if I feel impelled to share my thoughts with you this evening, it is because I want to enlist your sympathy in my search for truth and because so many Christian friends are interested in my thoughts on the teachings of Jesus.

"If then I had to face only the Sermon on the Mount and my own interpretation of it, I should not hesitate to say, 'Oh, yes, I am a Christian.' But I know that at the present moment if I said any such thing I would lay myself open to the gravest misinterpretation. I should lay myself open to fraudulent claims because I would have then to tell you what my own meaning of Christianity is, and I have no desire myself to give you my own view of Christianity.

"But negatively I can tell you that to my mind much of what passes as Christianity is a negation of the Sermon on the Mount. And please mark my words. I am not at the present moment speaking of Christian conduct. 'I am speaking of the Christian belief, of Christianity as it is understood in the West. I am painfully aware of the fact that conduct everywhere falls far short of belief. But I don't say this by way of criticism. I know from the treasures of my own experience that although I am every moment of my life trying to live up to my professions my conduct falls short of these professions. Far therefore be it from me to say this in a spirit of criticism. But I am placing before you my fundamental difficulties.

"When I began as a prayerful student to study the Christian literature in South Africa in 1893, I asked myself 'Is this Christianity?' and have always got the vedic answer, *Neti Neti* (not this, not this). And the deepest in me tells me that I am right.

"I claim to be a man of faith and prayer, and even if I were cut to pieces, I trust God would give me the strength not to deny Him and to assert that He is. The Muslim says He is and

there is no one else. The Christian says the same thing and so the Hindu, and if I may say so, even the Buddhist says the same thing, if in different words.

"We may each of us be putting our own interpretation on the word God,—God who embraces not only this tiny globe of ours, but millions and billions of such globes. How can we, little crawling creatures, so utterly helpless as he has made us possibly measure His greatness, His boundless love, His infinite compassion, such that He allows man insolently to deny Him, wrangle about Him, and cut the throat of his fellowman? How can we measure the greatness of God who is so forgiving, so divine?

"Thus though we may utter the same words they have not the same meaning for us all. And hence I say that we do not need to *proselytise* or do *shuddhi* or *tabligh* through our speech or writing. We can only do it really with our lives. Let them be open books for all to study. Would that I could persuade the missionary friends to take this view of their mission. Then there would be no distrust, no suspicion, no jealousy and no dissensions."

Gandhiji then took modern China as a case in point. His heart, he said, went out to Young China in the throes of a great national upheaval, and he referred to the anti-Christian movement in China, about which he had occasion to read in a pamphlet received by him from the students' department of the Young Women's Christian Association and Young Men's Christian Association of China. The writers had put their own interpretation upon the anti-Christian movement, but there was no doubt that Young China regarded Christian movements as being opposed to Chinese self-expression. To Gandhiji the moral of this anti-Christian manifestation was clear. He said:

"Don't let your Christian propaganda be anti-national, say these young Chinese. And even their Christian friends have

come to distrust the Christian endeavour that has come from the West. I present the thought to you that these essays have a deep meaning, a deep truth, because the young men who wrote them were themselves trying to justify their Christian conduct in so far as they had been able to live up to the life it had taught them and at the same time find a basis for that opposition.

"The deduction I would like you all to draw from this manifestation is that you Ceylonese should not be torn from your moorings, and those from the West should not consciously or unconsciously lay violent hands upon the manners, customs and habits of the Ceylonese in so far as they are not repugnant to fundamental ethics and morality. Do not confuse Jesus' teaching with what passes as modern civilisation, and pray do not do unconscious violence to the people among whom you cast your lot. It is no part of that call, I assure you, to tear up the lives of the people of the East by their roots. Tolerate whatever is good in them and do not hastily, with your preconceived notions, judge them. Do not judge lest you be judged yourselves.

"In spite of your belief in the greatness of Western civilisation and in spite of your pride in all your achievements, I plead with you for humility, and ask you to leave some little room for doubt, in which as Tennyson sang, there was more truth, though by 'doubt' he certainly meant a different thing. Let us each live our life, and if ours is the right life, where is the cause for hurry? It will react of itself."

The Y. M. C. A. has among its members Buddhists also, and the president had specially asked Gandhiji to say a word of advice to the Christian and Buddhist youth. He gave them the following message:

"To you, young Ceylonese friends, I say: Don't be dazzled by the splendour that comes to you from the West. Do not be

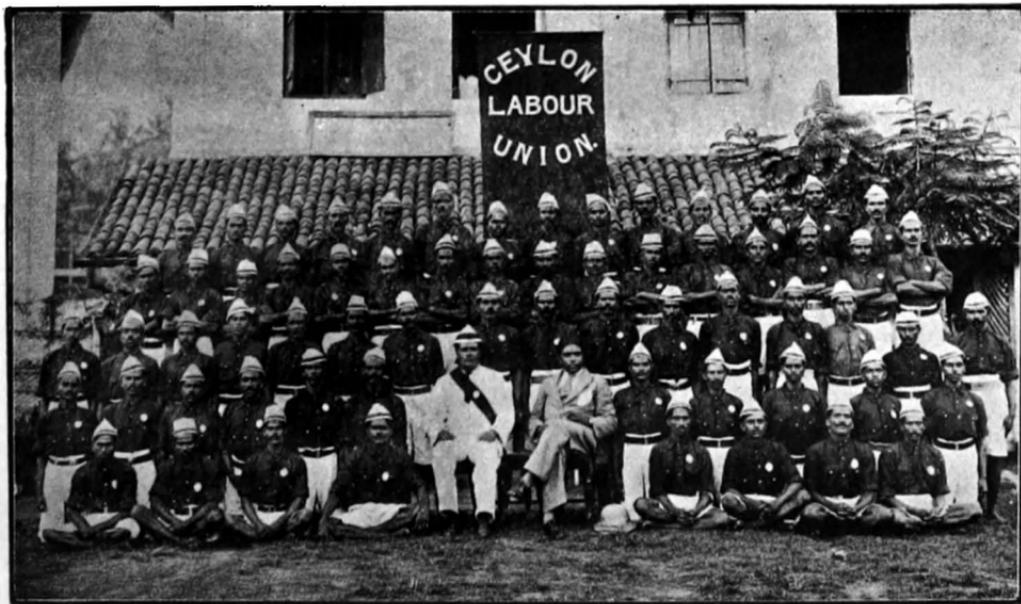
thrown off your feet by this passing show. The enlightened One has told you in never-to-be forgotten words that this little span of life is but a passing shadow, a fleeting thing, and if you could realise the nothingness of all that appears before your eyes, the nothingness of this material case that we see before us ever changing, then indeed there would be treasures for you up above, and peace for you down here, peace which passeth all understanding, and happiness to which we are utter strangers. It requires an amazing faith, a divine faith and surrender of all that we see before us.

"What did Buddha do, and Christ do, and also Mahomed? Theirs were lives of self-sacrifice and renunciation. Buddha renounced every worldly happiness, because he wanted to share with the whole world his happiness which was to be had by men who sacrificed and suffered in search for truth.

"If it was a good thing to scale the heights of Mount Everest, sacrificing precious lives in order to be able to get there and make some slight observations, if it was a glorious thing to give up life after life in planting a flag in the uttermost extremities of the earth, how much more glorious would it be to give not one life, surrender not a million lives but a billion lives in search of the potent and imperishable truth?

"So do not be lifted off your feet, do not be drawn away from the simplicity of your ancestors'. A time is coming when those, who are in the mad rush to-day of multiplying their wants vainly thinking that they add to the real substance, real knowledge of the world, will retrace their steps and say: 'What have we done?'

"Civilisations have come and gone, and in spite of all our vaunted progress I am tempted to ask again and again 'To what purpose?' Wallace, a contemporary of Darwin, has said the same thing. Fifty years of brilliant inventions and discoveries,



**The Ceylon Labour Union Volunteer Corps who served Mahatma Gandhi during his visit to Ceylon with Mr. A. E. Goonesinha, President of the Union.—**

he has said, has not added one inch to the moral height of mankind. So said a dreamer and visionary if you will,—Tolstoy. So said Jesus, and Buddha, and Mahomed, whose religion is being denied and falsified in my own country to-day.

“By all means drink deep of the fountains that are given to you in the Sermon on the Mount, but then you will have to take sackcloth and ashes. The teaching of the Sermon was meant for each and every one of us. You cannot serve both God and Mammon. God the Compassionate and the Merciful, Tolerance incarnate, allows Mammon to have his nine days’ wonder. But I say to you, youths of Ceylon, fly from that self-destroying but destructive show of Mammon.”

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#### ADVICE TO LABOURERS\*

Mr. Chairman, friends and fellow labourers: I thank you for presenting me with your beautiful address and handsome purse for the cause which has brought me to this pearl amongst the Islands of the earth.

I have called myself a labourer in addressing you as fellow labourers and I have done so for the simple reason that since 1904 I have been endeavouring to live to the best of my ability as a labourer myself.

But long before that date I began to understand and appreciate the dignity of labour and it was long before that date that I realised at the same time that labour was not receiving its due. And out of His infinite grace God so fashioned my life that I began to be drawn closer and closer to labour and to its service.

It therefore gives me great joy to be in your midst and to

\* Speech delivered at a mass meeting held under the auspices of the Labour union at Colombo on the 16th November 1927.

receive from fellow-labourers an address and also a purse on behalf of those who are, materially speaking, infinitely worse off than yourselves.

The use made by you in your address of the expression "Mother India" has touched me to my deepest recesses. The use of that expression, in my opinion, derives great significance because I know all of you are not Indians. Perhaps to those amongst you who are not Indians, the significance that I attach to that expression and which I shall presently explain to you was not before your mind's eye when you made use of the expression.

Legend—and legend at times is superior to history—, has it that in remote times a King called Rama came to Lanka to rid this Island of an evil King, and instead of exercising the rights of conquest by annexing this fair Island to India, he restored it to the brother of that evil King, called Vibhishan, and crowned him King of Lanka.

Rendered in modern language it means that Rama before trying the loyalty of the people of Lanka or the loyalty of King Vibhishan and putting either him or the people through a course of tutelage, gave them straight away complete self-government, dominion status.

Many changes have come about since the date assigned to the period of this legend both in this place and in India, and the two countries have undergone many vicissitudes of fortune, but the fact remains that the millions in India, even to the present day, believe in this legend more firmly than in any facts of history.

And if you, people of this beautiful Island, are not ashamed of owning some connection with your next door neighbour I would advise you and ask you to share the pride that millions of Indians have in owning this legend.

Now you can understand why I told you that you, who are

in my opinion, a daughter state did well in using the term "Mother India" for India when expressing your allegiance to that country.

I would also point out to you that whether Rama of the legend ever lived on this earth or not, and whether also the ten-headed Ravana of the legend lived in Lanka or not, it is true that there is a Rama who is living to-day and there is also a Ravana who is living to-day. Rama is the sweet and sacred name in Hinduism for God and Ravana is the name given in Hindu mythology to evil, whenever evil becomes embodied in the human frame. And it is the business, the function, of God Rama to destroy evil wherever it occurs and it is equally the function of God Rama to give to his devotees like Vibhishan a free charter of irrevocable self-government.

Let us all, whether we are labourers or otherwise seek to rid ourselves by the help of God Rama within us, of the ten headed monster of evil within us, and ask for the charter of self-government.

And you fellow labourers who have still to receive your due are perhaps in special need of Rama's help and Rama's grace in order that you may rid yourselves of evil and fit yourselves for self-government.

Don't believe it, if any one tells you that it was I who secured the comparative freedom for the indentured labourers of South Africa, or that it was I who secured freedom for the labourers of Ahmedabad or Champaran. They secured whatever they did, because they complied with the rules, the inexorable rules, governing self-government. They won because they helped themselves.

Let me briefly tell you what in my opinion you should do to come to your own. Combination amongst yourselves in the form of Unions is undoubtedly the first. But I can tell you from experience that your very Union can become one of the causes

of your bondage if you do not comply with other conditions which I shall presently mention to you.

Each and everyone of you should consider himself to be a trustee for the welfare of the rest of his fellow labourers and not be self seeking. You must be and remain non-violent under circumstances however grave and provoking. If you will be men and realise your dignity, you must give up drink in its entirety if you are given to that cursed habit. A man under the influence of drink becomes worse than a beast and forgets the distinction between his sister, his mother and his wife. And if you really believe me as your friend you will take the advice of this old friend of yours and shun drink as you would shun a snake hissing in front of you. A snake can only destroy the body but the curse of drink corrupts the soul within. This therefore is much more to be feared and avoided than a snake. You should also avoid gambling if you are given to that evil habit.

There is a still more delicate thing about which I was pained to receive a letter, only yesterday or today, from a friend who has given his signature.

He tells me that personal purity amongst labourers is somewhat conspicuous by its absence. He tells me that many of you, men and women, huddle yourselves together in a small space, irrespective of any restriction that modesty imposes upon us and demands from us.

One of the things that sharply distinguishes man from beast is that man from his earliest age has recognised the sanctity of the marriage bond and regulated his life in connection with woman by way of self-restraint which he has more and more imposed upon himself.

My dear friends, if you will realise your dignity as men and rise to your full height, as you ought to, you will bear this little thing in mind that I have told you, treasure it and give effect to it from this very night.

If your means do not permit you to have separate and sufficient habitations so as to observe the laws of primary decency you will refuse to serve under such degrading conditions and for such insufficient wages.

I would honour you as brave men if you would accept a state of utter starvation rather than that you should labour on such insufficient wages as would render it impossible for you to observe the primary laws of morality. I do not care whether you are Hindus, Buddhists, Christians or Mussalmans, the demand of religion is the same and inexorable, that every woman other than your wife must be treated by you as your sister or your mother, whose body must be held as sacred as your own.

I would advise you to use your Union as much for internal reformation as for defence against assaults from without, and remember that while it is quite proper to insist upon your rights and privileges it is imperative that you should recognise the obligation that every right carries with it.

Whilst therefore you will insist upon adequate wages, proper humane treatment from your employers and proper and good sanitary lodgings, you will also recognise that you should treat the business of your employers as if it were your own business and give to it your honest and undivided attention.

You must on no account neglect your children but should give them a decent education and properly so that they may be able, when they grow up, to play their part on the human stage nobly and well.

Lastly, while you have done well in thinking of the more unfortunate millions in India, I would advise you to establish a living bond between them and yourselves, especially if you still consider that India is the Mother State, the Mother Country; you will for the sake of the poor millions invest every pie or every cent that you spend on your clothing in khadi and nothing else.

I thank you once more for your address and your purse and for the patient attention with which you have listened to the few words I have said to you this evening.

I also thank your volunteers who have been silently and unselfishly serving me.

I hope and pray that the words I have spoken to you this evening will enter your hearts, and God will give you the wisdom and the strength to carry out such of my advice as may commend itself to you.

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#### ADVICE TO THE PUBLIC \*

I thank you for these addresses as also for the generous purses that you have presented to me.

You have in your addresses very kindly mentioned my wife also. But I am very sorry to have to inform you that she is not with me this morning. The fact is that we are not travelling in Ceylon to receive honours from you, but purely for the business which I have undertaken on behalf of the poor millions of India. As a matter of fact, people have often, as a gentleman did last night, mistaken her for my mother. For me, as for her also, I hope, it is not only a pardonable mistake, but a welcome mistake. For years past, she has ceased to be my wife by mutual consent. Nearly forty years ago I became an orphan, and for nearly thirty years she has been my mother, friend, nurse, cook, bottle-washer and all these things. If in the early hours of the day, she had come with me to divide the honours, I should have gone without my food. And nobody would have looked after my clothing and creature comforts. So we have come to a reasonable understanding that I should have all the honours and she should have all the drudgery. I assure you that some of

\* Speech at Matale public meeting on 18th November 1927.

the co-workers will duly inform her of all the kind things that you have said about her and I hope that the explanation that I have tendered you will be accepted by you as sufficient excuse for her absence.

You will forgive me for having taken up so much of your time over a flimsy personal explanation, but if the men in front of me, and especially the women will understand the serious side of the explanation and appreciate the secret of it I have no doubt that you will all be the happier for it.

I have no doubt that it is not necessary for me to draw the attention of a people whose country is dominated by the spirit of the Buddha, to the fact that life is not a bundle of enjoyments and privileges, but a bundle of duties and services.

That which separates man from the beast is essentially man's recognition of the necessity of putting a series of restraints, on worldly enjoyment.

I am therefore surprised to find that in this land of Buddha people are given, as they are given in other parts of the country, to drink.

In studying the statistics of this Island, I found that the drink revenue was a substantial part of the general revenue. I was still more shocked to discover that, unlike us in India, the drink habit did not carry with it a sense of shame and disrespectability.

You know that I belong to the country where Gautama was born, where he found his enlightenment, and where he passed his life. Whatever the Ceylonese scholars in Buddhism may say to the contrary, I want you to take it from me that this drink habit is totally against the spirit of the Buddha. Because in this land, Hinduism, Christianity and Islam are represented in abundance, I tell you that in Hinduism drink is a sin; I know that it is equally held abominable in Islam. I am sorry to confess that in Christian Europe drink is not considered disrespectful,

but I am glad to be able to tell you that hundreds, if not thousands, whose friendship I have the privilege to enjoy, have assured me that this drink habit in Europe is entirely contrary to the spirit of Christ.

I am in close touch with Christian America. You know how bravely these men in America are battling against the drink evil. I would therefore respectfully urge you all, whether you are Buddhists or Hindus, Christians or Mussalmans, to unite together in making a supreme effort to rid this country of this drink curse.

Whatever may be said about the medical necessity of drink in cold climates, every one is agreed that there is absolutely no occasion for drink in the climate of a temperate zone like this.

One of the things to which I would like to draw your attention is the existence of untouchability in the most liberal religion in the world—Buddhism. I wish you would take immediate steps to declare every man to be absolutely equal with the rest of you. You are denying Buddhism, you are denying humanity, so long as you regard a single man as an untouchable.

Lastly since you have been good enough to sympathise with my mission, I would ask you to broaden your sympathy by making your purchase of cloth in khadi alone, so long as your clothes are not manufactured in this beautiful Island.

My barber friends have presented me with an address and a purse. It is a manifestation from fellow-workers of sympathy for the starving millions, which deeply touches me. I would be happier if those, who have, will always think of those, who have not.

I thank you once more for the addresses and the purses.

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DUTIES OF MUNICIPAL COUNCILLORS.\*

Mr. Chairman and friends, I thank you very sincerely for the address that you have given me and the mention made therein to some services that I have rendered to my country and mankind in general.

I have been reading to-day something of the ancient city and the struggles that citizens have been undergoing, and a feeling of pain and sorrow has crept upon me. I have not yet finished this booklet, but I have read enough of it to realise the difficulties the citizens of this place are undergoing. I can only say to them through this audience that my whole heart goes out to them. I hope that all your right and lawful aspirations will be fulfilled.

As I said in Colombo, I am a lover of Municipal life. I do believe that Municipal service is a privilege and duty which every citizen should render to the best of his or her ability. That service can be rendered without becoming a member of the Municipality. It is not given to everyone to be elected a member.

I do not suppose that you, in Ceylon, are different from the people in India and therefore I fear that here, as in India, places in the Municipalities are often aspired after, and if that is so, the sooner we get rid of this idea the better for us.

I do not know whether you have any slums here. I fear you are not without them, and those who are Municipal Councillors owe a duty to the poor citizens more than to the rich ones.

I have had experience of Municipal work in Bombay, Calcutta and Allahabad and almost all the principal cities in India, and I have noticed that those who are powerful and wealthy are able to have Municipal service properly and

\*Speech at the Kandy Municipality on 18—11—27.

promptly rendered to them, but, the poorest people on the contrary hardly receive any consideration. No Councillor makes it his duty to serve the poorest. I will be wrong if I let you understand that that is the condition in all Indian cities. I may also say that this state of things is improving though the improvement is painfully slow.

I venture to suggest to you that, in Ceylon, you are happier, much happier, than we are in India, in that you have not huge masses of men to deal with. You have got a country second to none in natural beauty and climate. There is absolutely no reason why you should have plague, or the fear of plague. You should be able, as are some of the Municipalities in South Africa, to keep off such visitations. I may tell you that the Municipalities there make it their business, like the Cape Municipality to advertise their places and to draw people from all parts of the earth. They advertise their cities by making them gems of beauty and you here surpass even Cape Town.

The natural scenery that I see about me, in Ceylon, is probably unsurpassed on the face of the earth. If you will add to it by ideal town planning and sanitation with all efforts humanly possible, you can certainly advertise this beautiful spot and draw people from all parts of the earth much to their betterment and your own.

They will have much to learn in this Island which received enlightenment from the Great Buddha. You have a great religion which is not surpassed on the face of the earth. It is a religion which has ennobled humanity. It is professed by the largest number of the human race but your religion, as it stands at present, is not at its best because you do not put forth your highest possible effort. It is your duty to do so. You cannot begin better than by turning your places into little paradises on earth. I thank you again for your address of welcome.

## PLEA FOR PERSONAL PURITY \*

It has been my good fortune to feel at home and make myself at home wherever I have gone in any part of the world, and had I not been able to do so, probably I should have died without having had to commit suicide long ago. But I feel doubly at home when I see my Parsi friends. You cannot understand this really. And you might also think that I am joking. It is not joking. It is serious, because of my having been in closest association with Parsis in South Africa and in India, and having had personally nothing but treasures of love from them. Even now you do not know, of course, but it gives me great pleasure to own before you that some of my best workers are Parsis, and they are those three grand-daughters of the Grand Old Man of India.

But I must not detain you on my personal and family affairs. I thank you very much for this purse and I like this opportunity of having come to you.

As I told the boys of the Trinity College a little while ago your education is absolutely worthless, if it is not built on a solid foundation of truth and purity. If you, boys, are not careful about the personal purity of your lives and if you are not careful about being pure in thought, speech, and deed, then I tell you that you are lost, although you may become perfect finished scholars.

I have been asked to draw your attention to one thing. Purity consists first of all in possessing a pure heart, but what there is in the heart really comes out also and is shown in outward acts and outward behaviour. And a boy who wants to keep his mouth pure will never utter a bad word. Of course, that is quite clear. But he neither will put anything into his

\* Speech at the Dharmaraja College, Kandy on 18-11-27.

mouth that will cloud his intellect, cloud his mind and damage his friends also.

I know that there are boys who smoke, and in Ceylon perhaps you are as bad as they are in Burma, though boys are becoming bad everywhere so far as this wretched habit of smoking is concerned. And of course, Parsis as you know, are called or rather miscalled, fire-worshippers. They are no more fire-worshippers than you and though they see God through that great manifestation the Sun which is nothing but the God of Fire.

Some of you good Parsis never smoke, and you make it a point, whenever you have a number of boys in your care, to train the boys not to foul their mouths by smoke.

If any of you are smoking, you will henceforth give up that bad habit. Smoking fouls one's breath. It is a disgusting habit. When he is in a railway carriage, the smoker never cares whether there are ladies or men sitting about him who never smoke, and that the stench that comes out from his mouth may be disgusting to them.

The cigarette might be a small thing from a distance, but when the cigarette smoke goes into one's mouth and then comes out, it is poison. Smokers do not care where they spit. Here Gandhiji related a story from Tolstoy to explain how the tobacco habit was more disastrous in its effects than drink and proceeded:—

Smoking clouds one's intellect, and it is a bad habit. If you ask doctors, and they happen to be good doctors, they will tell you that smoke has been the cause of cancer in many cases, or at least that smoke is at the bottom of it.

Why smoke, when there is no necessity for it? It is no food. There is no enjoyment in it except in the first instance through suggestion from outside.

You, boys, if you are good boys, if you are obedient to your

teachers and parents, omit smoking and whatever you save out of this, please send on to me for the famishing millions of India.

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## AT KANDY \*

I am obliged to you for these numerous illuminated addresses, costly caskets and many purses.

I had hoped to be able to speak to you at some length, but your kind presentations of the gifts and the reading of those addresses have taken up over forty minutes out of sixty allotted for this meeting.

It has given me the greatest pleasure to be able to visit this beautiful Island of yours. I have come to understand some of the difficulties and sorrows of the people of Kandy during the few hours that I have been in your midst. I wish that it were possible for me to give you more than lip sympathy, but as it is, I have to be satisfied with assuring you of my hearty sympathy and with praying that your sorrows may somehow be alleviated.

You have, in one of your addresses, asked me to do something in order that you may have the Buddha Gaya restored to you. I can give you my assurance that I shall not fail to do everything that is in my power to restore the property to you. (Cheers). But I wish I could think that your applause was justified because, I fear that in spite of all my efforts, my power to help you is much less than you seem to imagine.

I would therefore warn you against building much hope on my assurance, and ask you to continue your effort to vindicate your right absolutely unabated.

I had hoped to be able to speak to you on the message of the spinning wheel as it is applicable to you, but I feel that it is

\* Speech in reply to the addresses at the public meeting at Kandy on 18-11-27.

my duty to occupy the few minutes at my disposal with more serious and more urgent problems before you.

I have heard and it has given me pain to learn that even with you the followers of the Enlightened One there is untouchability rigidly observed. I assure you that it is wholly against the spirit of the Buddha. And I would urge Buddhists and Hindus to rid the community of this curse.

There is again the drink curse prevalent in your midst, as it is in other parts of the world. In so far as I know it, it is opposed to the spirit of all the great religions of the world and most decidedly Buddhism.

I understand that you have the right of local option in your midst. It would give me the greatest satisfaction to learn when I have left your shores that you are making the fullest use of this right of local option in order to rid this beautiful Island of this curse.

I was distressed to learn that the estates and the plantations were not covered by the right of local option. I hope that the information given to me is not true. But whether that information is true or false, I hope that my voice will somehow or other reach the great planters who ought to regard themselves as the trustees for the welfare of the labourers on whom depends their marvellous prosperity. I venture respectfully to suggest to them that it is their duty to take a personal interest in the social welfare of the labourers whose bodies and even their souls are entrusted to their care. I regard it as their duty not only to put no temptation in the way of their labourers in the shape of drink, but to make an active effort to wean them from their errors.

I see that the time allotted for this meeting is over and I must conclude by repeating my thanks to the people of Kandy for the extraordinary kindness that they have shown to me.

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THE TRIPLE MESSAGE OF KHADI.\*

Mr. Chairman and Friends,—I thank you for your address and purse. It has given me the greatest pleasure to be in your beautiful Island.

I see before me thousands of labourers from the neighbouring plantations. I wish that I had time to go in your midst and look at the surroundings in which you are living and your habitations and mode of life.

You may not all know that nearly a generation of my life has been passed either in the midst of labourers or in closest contact with them and nothing would have given me greater pleasure than to have passed a few days in your midst, understanding your wants and aspirations, but I hope that the cause which prevents me from doing so will be accepted as sufficient excuse for my not coming in your midst and living with you for a time.

The cause is that I am travelling just now as a self-appointed representative of millions in India who are infinitely worse off than any of you here. It is for their sake that these purses, that you have seen presented to me, have been given.

Every rupee of this purse will go to find employment in their own huts for 16 women at least per day. These are men and women who cannot afford, even if they semi-starve, to leave their own homes, huts and fields. Out of the monies that are being collected throughout the year, nearly every year 50,000 women are being supported in their own homes through the spinning wheel industry.

Behind these spinners, several thousand weavers, dyers printers, washermen and others are also being supported who but for this revival of spinning, would have been without any work.

\* Speech at the public meeting in Badulla on 19-11-27.

This work is being done through the agency of an all-India organisation called the All-India Spinners' Association which contains several self-sacrificing men, either sons of millionaires or of proved merit and integrity.

Whilst for this cause I gladly collect sums from monied men, it gives me great joy to be able to collect also from poor men like those of you who are sitting in front of me. Every cent, every anna received from a willing heart is just as welcome as the rupee or ten-rupee note received from a rich man.

I know that many of you who have graced this occasion with your presence have not had the opportunity given to you to subscribe to this fund. If my guess is correct, and many of you have not subscribed, I invite you before you leave this meeting, to give your mite to this cause if you are so minded.

I am glad to be able to inform you that whilst I am making this appeal to the audience, a member has already sent me evidently all the money that he had in his pocket, Rs. 8 and odd.

But a more serious thing to which I wish to refer is that you should all establish a living bond with these starving millions by wearing khadi, which is produced by them out of these funds. All these monies will be perfectly useless if I do not find customers for the khadi that I manufacture. I see that the response has already commenced before my appeal, and if every one of you put your hands into your pockets, and give your eyes to the men who are collecting and ears to me, I shall easily deliver the message I am about to give you.

There is an important matter which I want to discuss with you. A Wesleyan friend informed me this morning that hundreds of looms used to work here and he told me sorrowfully that owing to importation of foreign cloth and foreign yarn, all these looms were lying idle and this old industry had all but died out in this district.

I have told this gentleman that if he wants the assistance of experts in order to teach all the processes from ginning to hand spinning, he can have it in Ceylon itself. There is near Colombo a family which has already learned all the processes and manufactures its own cloth from raw cotton.

There is no doubt whatsoever that if there are really needy men and women in this fair island, nothing can be better than that you should clothe yourselves out of cloth of your own spinning and weaving. I therefore hope that you will help this Rev. Gentleman with all your hearts for his work and progress and make use of all the industry and skill that he may place at your disposal.

I understood from another visitor this afternoon that you are without any organisation here for doing this class of social work or political work of any nature whatsoever, and indeed nothing would please me better than to find that as one of the results of this meeting, you had such a working organisation manned by selfless workers.

Still another friend came to me and asked me what was the message of the spinning wheel for the people of Ceylon. He told me that there were men and women in this Island who also needed work, and in answer to my cross-questions, he told me also that he wanted me to show a way whereby the youth of this fair land can be weaned from hasty and indiscriminate imitation of the West.

A fourth friend writes to me, saying that all the beautiful garments that I see on some of the women of Ceylon and all the faultless European style dress that I see on so many young men must not be taken by me to be an indication of the possession of wealth by the wearers. This correspondent tells me that many of these stylishly dressed men often find themselves in the hands, I am sorry to say, of Chetties or Pattan money-lenders.

Well the spinning wheel has a message for all this class of people. To the starving man or woman who has no work possibly for him or her to do, the spinning wheel says:—

“Spin me and you will at least find a crust of bread for yourself.”

That is its economic message, but it has also a cultural message for one and all. The spinning wheel says culturally to you and to me:—

“Seeing that there are millions on the face of this earth who are compulsorily idle for want of work, and since I am the only instrument that can be placed in their hands without taking work away from a single month, will you not spin me for the sake of these millions and produce an atmosphere of honest industry, honest work and self-reliance and hope for all on God’s earth?”

That is the cultural message the spinning wheel addresses to all people of the earth, no matter to what country, religion or race they belong.

I assure you that slowly but surely this cultural appeal of the spinning wheel is finding a lodgment in the remotest corners of the earth. I know Englishmen, Austrians, Germans, Poles, who have already accepted this appeal of the spinning wheel. And I assure well to do men and women of Ceylon that if they will accept the cultural message of the spinning wheel and try to make at least some part of their own clothing they will find themselves, at the end of the task much taller than they are to-day.

The spinning wheel has a third message which is metaphorical. It stands for simple life and high thinking. It is a standing protest against the modern mad rush for adding material comfort upon comfort and making life so complicated as to make one totally unfit for knowing one’s self or one’s God. It says appealingly every minute of our life to you and to me:—

"Use me and you will find that if all of you unitedly make use of me, small and insignificant though I may appear, I shall be an irresistible force against the mad, indiscriminate worship of the curse called machinery."

It is a standing rebuke to the men and women of Ceylon who go in for all kinds of fashions and styles and it tells them.

*'Do not for the sake of your country ape the manners and customs of others which can only do harm to you and for heaven's sake do not wish to be what every one of the people of Ceylon cannot be.'*

I must now place before you one or two other subjects which I wish to dwell upon, and I want to tell you about the drink evil.

I know that many of you, labourers, are given to the drink habit. The drink habit is worse than a snake bite. A snake bite may poison a body to death, but the drink habit poisons and corrupts the soul. I would therefore urge you to fly from that curse as you would fly from a hissing snake.

I would respectfully urge the employers of labour in this district to regard themselves as trustees for the welfare of their employees and try to wean them from the drink habit. It is their bounden duty, in my humble opinion, to close every canteen in their neighbourhood and take away every such temptation from their men. I can tell them from personal experience that if they will open for their men decent refreshment rooms and provide them with all kinds of innocent games, they will find that the men will no longer require this intoxicating liquid.

As I was passing to-day from Kandy to this place, I passed through some of the finest bits of scenery that I have ever witnessed in my life. Where nature has been so beneficent and where nature provides for you eternal and innocent intoxication in the grand scenery about you, surely it is criminal for men or women to seek intoxication from that sparkling but deadly

liquor. I suggest to the followers of the Enlightened One that it is totally against the spirit of his teaching to consider that drink can possibly be taken by those who adore the Buddha.

I was deeply pained to hear that even many of you who are Buddhists observe the curse of untouchability. I understood from a very high officer that some of you Buddhists consider it an insult for an untouchable woman to wear upper garments. I have no hesitation in saying without fear of contradiction that if you believe in untouchability, you deny totally the teaching of the Buddha. He who regarded the lowest animal life as dear as his own would never tolerate this cursed distinction between man and man and regard a single human being as an untouchable.

I was equally sorry to hear that you, Hindus, had not left this curse in India itself, but had taken it with you even on entering Ceylon. I so wish that both the Buddhists and Hindus living in Ceylon would set about working and remove this curse from their midst.

I must devote a sentence or two to one very important thing which I had almost forgotten.

While I was in Colombo I received a letter which told me that the life of the men and women in the estates and in all huge workshops was not as pure as it ought to be. The letter went on to say that the relations between men and women, were not what they should be.

What chiefly distinguishes man from the beast is that man from his age of discretion begins to practise a life of continual self-restraint. God has enabled man to distinguish between the sister, his mother, his daughter and his wife. Do not for one moment imagine that because you are labourers you are absolved from having to observe these necessary distinctions and restrictions. If your huts are not so constructed as to enable you

to observe the laws of decency and necessary privacy, I would request your employers to provide you with facilities to enable you to do so.

May God help you to understand the significance of these last words of mine!

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AT NEWARA ELIYA \*

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen :—I thank you for your address and your purse. Everywhere my speeches have been interpreted both into Singalese and Tamil but here as I see the majority of you are Tamils I suggested to the Chairman of the Reception Committee to dispense with Singalese in order to save your time and my time and I hope that you will accept this arrangement. You, Sir, have apologised for the simplicity of your address. There was not only no necessity for an apology, on the contrary you deserve my hearty congratulations for saving money. Claiming as I do to represent the famished and famishing millions of India, I cannot be too strict, nor can you be too strict about every farthing that you collect in saying anything else for the starving millions. I grudge every rupee that is spent on flowers and in ornamentation whatsoever. You will remember that every rupee that you so save means sixteen starving women getting their meals and it is on their behalf that I have come to your Island to ask for your support. It has been a matter of great joy to me to find the people here liberally responding to my appeal. I understand that this purse represents the voluntary collections made by labourers and kanganies and the like. I can make no return save empty thanks for this generosity, but I do know this that God will bless every one of you who has voluntarily contributed to this purse. Every cent, every rupee that you may spend on

\* Speech delivered at Newara Eliya on 20-11-27.

your pleasures, scents, toys, ornamentation and flimsy fineries is only so much waste, but you may depend upon it that every rupee, every guinea given to this cause will return to you tenfold and if there are in this assembly any people who have not yet contributed to this purse or not been approached by anybody I would ask them to silently send in their gift to me while I am speaking to you. I am emboldened to make this appeal, because of the very generous response the meeting at Badulla made to me and the appeal at the meeting itself. You know that every home in the numerous villages of India has become at the present moment dilapidated because the poor people have been deprived of the only industry they had to supplement their resources from agriculture. I hope that whilst the friends are making their collections no noise will be made, but please preserve silence while I speak, for I want to make a personal appeal to labourers whom I see in front and behind me from neighbouring estates surrounding this beautiful hill.

#### ADVICE TO LABOURERS

I want you, the labourers, to understand that I am but one of you and have been casting my lot with you ever since my visit to South Africa nearly 30 years ago. I want you to realise and recognise your own dignity as men and women. Do not despise yourselves or allow others to despise you, because you are labourers. There never was and never is shame in honest labour. Without the existence of labour around these hills, their present condition would have been utterly impossible, but there are some well-defined conditions attached to your dignity, if you will preserve it. The first and foremost is that you must not go near the liquor shops. Drink is a devil in whose net you must not find yourselves. A man who comes under the influence of drink forgets the distinction between his wife and

sisters. You should therefore, if you have not already given up, make a sacred resolve that you will not pollute your lips by the touch of that cursed water, but if after having fed and clothed yourselves and your families, you have got some money to lay by, keep it for a better purpose, keep it for educating your children, keep it for a rainy day when your hands and your feet can no longer work and the time comes for you to rest. All these savings would come in useful to you and I would ask you to use a portion of the same for people much poorer than yourselves in the name of God.

I know also that many of you are not leading pure lives. It is wrong to live an impure life. God has made man so that he of all beings on earth can distinguish between women who are his sisters, daughters, mother and wife. Refuse to live under conditions which will make it impossible for you to live a life of discipline, purity and restraint. I wish that my voice will be heard by your employers, as I know that they will see to it that they take a personal interest in your daily life. I know that many of you use your idle hours, your spare hours in gambling your time and money away. You must not use your idle hours in this criminal fashion. Since you have sufficient open air life in your plantations, I would advise you to employ your leisure hours to cultivate your minds and if you have leisure spend your time in spinning for yourself and for your family.

I understood when you come to this Island you bring with you the curse of Untouchability. I tell you that there is no warrant in Hinduism for Untouchability. It is wrong to consider a single human being as untouchable, and if you will bear in mind all the things I told you, you will find yourselves better men and better women for having practised these things.

#### DUTY OF PLANTERS

I am reminded by a letter received from Colombo that

hookworm is prevalent in many of the estates in Ceylon. It is a disease wholly avoidable and it surprises me to find that your own employers have not been able to give you lessons to avoid this wretched disease. I know positively that this disease is due only to filth. The letter that I have received says that there are some remedies which are quite good and if there are such, you can certainly resort to them, but the better thing is to prevent the disease, seeing that it is so easily preventible and the chief thing is to regulate your sanitary life. Your methods of sanitation are not of the best kind, I am sorry to confess. I know that if planters will take proper measures to teach you sanitation, they will be doing their duty to themselves, to you and to humanity. That disease comes from polluting the water and using that water for all sorts of purposes. If you will only understand and learn the elementary lessons in sanitation and if you do not pollute the water which you drink by washing or dirtying it, you will never get hookworm. I thank you again for your address and generous purse.

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#### ADVICE TO STUDENTS \*

It has indeed given me great pleasure to be able to visit this College.

You have reminded me of the happy days I spent in South Africa. Those were days when my life was almost wholly cast in the midst of my Mussalman countrymen and it was early in 1893 that I found myself in the company of some of the finest Mussalmans it has been my good fortune to meet, as also to influence. It therefore does not surprise me that you have invited me to meet you in this hall.

Moulana Shaukat Ali when he returned from Ceylon gave

\* Speech at the Zahira College, Colombo on 22-11-27.

me what he said was a message from the Mussalmans of Ceylon to hasten to Ceylon as soon as possible. But the work in which both he and I were engaged made it impossible for me to come here at that time.

Those of you who are in the habit of reading Indian newspapers will know that just before I embarked for Colombo I had the pleasure of meeting the Professors and boys of the Jamia College at Delhi. I have not got the time to give you a set speech, because there are other appointments waiting for me, but I would summarise the speech I gave to the boys in Delhi.

All the education that you are receiving in this Great College will be reduced to nothing if it is not built on the foundation of a pure character.

As I was reading your magazines I could not help admiring the zeal with which the work was done here and the marvellous progress that has been made in a few years. But as I was reading the report that was read before the Governor on the occasion of the foundation laying ceremony, I could not help feeling how nice it would be if we could raise a foundation of good character so that stones on stones might be raised thereon and we might look back with joy and pride upon that edifice. But character cannot be built with mortar and stone. It cannot be built by other hands than your own. The Principal and the Professors cannot give you character from the pages of books. Character building comes from their very lives and really speaking, it must come from within yourselves.

As I was studying Christianity, Hinduism and other great faiths of the world, I saw that there was a fundamental unity moving amidst the endless variety that we see in all religions viz. Truth and Innocence. You must take the word 'Innocence' literally that is to mean non-killing and non-violence, and if you boys will take your stand defiantly always on Truth and

Innocence, you will feel that you have built on solid foundation.

I am grateful for the generous purse you have presented to me. It is meant for finding work for the starving millions of India. These consist of Hindus, Mussalmans and Christians. Therefore you have, by giving me this donation, established a link between these starving millions and yourselves, and in doing so you have done a thing which is pleasing to God. It will be a very feeble link if you do not know the purpose for which this is going to be used. These monies are utilised for finding work among men and women for the production of cloth like that you find on my person. But all this money will be useless if you cannot find the people to wear khadi so manufactured.

It is possible now for us to satisfy every taste and fashion. If you will forge a lasting and continuing link with the masses of India you will henceforth clothe yourselves in khadi.

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#### MESSAGE TO CEYLON CONGRESS \*

I thank you for the words that you have spoken about myself, and I thank you also for the pleasant reminder that you have given me of the ancient times when the connection between India and Ceylon was established. I do not propose however to take up your time by giving my own views upon what that connection means to India, means to you, and shall I say to the world.

But I will say this: that in my opinion the teaching of Gautama Buddha was not a new religion. In so far as I have been able to study those lofty teachings, I have come to the conclusion—and that conclusion I arrived long before now—

\* Speech in reply to the welcome given by the President of the Ceylon National Congress.—22-11-27.

that Gautama was one of the greatest of Hindu reformers, and that he left upon the people of his own time and upon the future generations an indelible impress of that reformation. But it would be wrong on my part to take up your time and my own, limited as it is, to consider that very fascinating subject. I therefore come to mundane matters relating to the Congress.

In India the Congress is a word to conjure with. It is an association with an unbroken record of over 40 years. And it enjoys to-day a reputation which no other political association in India enjoys, and that is in spite of the many ups and downs which the Congress in common with all worldly institutions and associations has gone through. I therefore take it for granted that in adopting this name you are also, as far as may be, and is necessary, following the traditions of the parent body if I may call the National Congress of India by that name. And on that assumption I venture this afternoon to place before you my views of what a Congress should be, or how the National Congress in India has been able to build up its reputation.

I know that, after all, my connection with the Congress in India does not stretch over a period longer than 10 years—or I may now say, more accurately speaking, 12 years. But as you are aware that 12 years' association is so close, and I have been so much identified with the Congress that probably what I may say might be taken with some degree of authority. But in one way my association with the parent body is nearly 30 years old now.

It was in South Africa in the year 1893 when I went there that I dreamt about the Congress. I knew something about its activities, though I had never attended a single one of the annual sessions of that great institution. Just like you, as a youngster, I took my proper share in founding an association called the Natal Indian Congress after the fashion of the Indian National Congress, making such changes as were necessary to

suit the local conditions. I shall therefore be able to give you the results of my experience of public life in connection with such institutions dating back from 1893. And what I learnt even so early as 1894 was that any such association, to be really serviceable, to deserve the name of being called 'national,' requires a fair measure—I was going to say a great measure—of self-sacrifice on the part of the principal workers. I have no hesitation in confessing to you, that that ideal I found to be very difficult to put into practice even in that little community, because we were after all a very small body of men and women in Natal, which is the smallest province of South Africa, where we had a population of nearly 60 thousand Indians of whom the vast majority had no vote in the deliberations of the Congress.

The Congress however was a representative institution and fully representative of things that interested the people, because it constituted itself the trustee of the welfare of those men. But I must not linger over the history of that institution.

Even in that small body we found bickerings and a desire more for power than for service, a desire more for self-aggrandisement than for self-effacement, and I have found during my 12 years' association with the parent body also, that there is a continual desire for self-seeking and self-aggrandisement; and for you as for us who are still striving to find our feet, who have still to make good the claims for self-expression and self-government, self-sacrifice, self-effacement, and self-suppression are really absolutely necessary and indispensable for our existence and for our progress.

#### MEANING OF SELF-GOVERNMENT

I do not profess to have studied your politics during the brief stay that I have made here, I do not know the internal working of this organisation, I do not know how strong it is, and

how popular it is. I only hope it is strong and is popular. I hope you are free from the blemishes that I have just mentioned. It is I know, a pleasurable pastime (and I have indulged in it sufficiently as you know), to strive against the powers that be, and to wrestle with the Government of the day, especially when that Government happens to be a foreign Government and a Government under which we rightly feel we have not that scope which we should have, and which we desire, for expansion and fullest self-expression.

I have also come to the conclusion that self-expression and self-government are not things which may be either taken from us by anybody or which can be given us by anybody. It is quite true that if those who happen to hold our destinies, or seem to hold our destinies in their hands, are favourably disposed, are sympathetic, and understand our aspirations, no doubt it is then easier for us to expand. But after all self-government depends entirely upon our own internal strength, upon our ability to fight against the heaviest odds. Indeed, self-government which does not require that continuous striving to attain it and to sustain it is not worth the name. I have therefore endeavoured to show both in word and in deed, that political self-government—that is self-government for a large number of men and women,—is no better than individual self-government, and therefore it is to be attained by precisely the same means that are required for individual self-government or self-rule, and so as you know also, I have striven in India to place this ideal before the people in season and out of season, very often much to the disgust of those who are politically minded merely.

I belong to that body of political thought which was dominated by Gokhale. I have called him my political Guru: not that everything that he said or did I accepted or accept today but just because the moving force of his life (as I who came in

closest touch with him came to understand) was his intense desire to 'spiritualise politics.' This was his own expression in the preamble to the prospectus of the Servants of India Society, of which he was the founder and the first president. He makes the deliberate statement that he founded that Society in order to introduce spirituality into politics. He had studied the politics not only around him in his own country but had been a close and careful student of history. He had studied the politics of all the countries of the world and having been keenly disappointed to see a complete divorce between politics and spirituality, he endeavoured to the best of his ability, and not without some success—I was almost going to say not without considerable success—to introduce that element into politics. And so it was that he adopted the name of the Servants of India for his Society, which is now serving India in a variety of ways.

I do not know whether what I am saying commends itself to you or not, but if I am to show my gratitude for all the kindness that you have lavishly showered upon me during my brief visit to this beautiful country, if I am to show it in truth, I can only tell you what I feel and not what will probably please you or tickle you. You know that this particular thing—truth—is an integral part of our Congress creed. And we have therefore in the creed the attainment of Swaraj by legitimate and non-violent means.

You will find that I have not been tired of insisting upon truth at any cost, and non-violence at any cost. Given these two conditions in my humble opinion, you can hurl defiance at the mightiest power on earth—and still come away not only yourselves unscathed but you will leave your 'so-called adversary also uninjured and unhurt. For the time being he may misunderstand the non-violent blows that you deal, he may misrepresent you also, but you don't need to consult his feelings

or his opinions so long as you are fulfilling these two absolute conditions. Then it is well with you, and you, can march forward with greater speed than otherwise. The way may appear to be long, but if you take my experience extending over a period of 30 years uninterruptedly, without exception, I give you my assurance that it is the shortest cut to success. I have known no shorter road. I know that it very often requires great faith and immense patience, but if this one thing is fixed on our minds, then there is no other way open to a politician, if he is to serve not himself, but the whole nation. If once that determination is made, then comes faith and with that faith comes also patience, because you know that there is no better or shorter road.

I am afraid as we are in India, so are you cut up into groups and communities. I read casually only to-day something in praise of communalism. In India also we have this blight—we call it a blight we don't praise it. Even those who believe in communalism say frankly that it is a necessary evil to be got rid of at the earliest possible moment,

In India we have to deal with 300 million people. But you have to deal with such a small mass of men and women that it is a matter for pain and surprise for me to find a defence—an energetic defence—of this communalism. But I know that it is totally opposed to nationalism. And you want, as you must want, Swaraj. It is not the birthright of one country only; Swaraj is the birthright of all countries.—I feel constrained to say, the birthright even of the savage as of the most civilized man,— how much more of people who have got a culture second to none in the world, a people who have got all that Nature can give you, have got resources in men and money and in natural gifts, who have everything that goes to make you a powerful nation on this globe of ours, yet at the present moment you seem to be far away from it.

I don't suppose that any of you flatters himself or herself with the belief that you have at the present moment anything like what I should consider self-government. And that self-government you will not have—I was going to say you cannot have—unless you speak with the voice of one nation and not with the voice of Christians, Musalmans, Buddhists, Hindus, Europeans, Sinhalese, Tamils and Malays. I can't understand that.

As you, sir, said in your remarks that you represent all races and religions, I congratulate you upon that, and if you are really capable of vindicating that claim, all honour to you, and not only the Congress but you then deserve to be copied by us. We an older institution are not able to vindicate that claim. We are striving; we are groping in the dark; we are trying to suppress provincialism; we are trying to suppress racialism; we are trying to suppress religionism, if I may coin a word; we are trying to express nationalism in its fullest form but I am ashamed to confess to you that we are still far from it. But it is given to you to outstrip us and set us an example. It is easy for you, much easier for you than for us, but a condition indispensable for that is, that some of you at least will have to give your whole time to this and not only your whole time but your whole selves and you will have to suppress yourselves.

As Gokhale said, politics had degenerated into a sort of game for leisure hours, whereas he desired that for some at least politics should be a wholtime occupation, it should engross the attention of some of the ablest men of the country. It is only when truth, fearlessness and non-violence are dominant factors that a person can think it worth his while to devote himself unselfishly and exclusively to the service of the nation.

I hope that in your Congress you have such a body of men and women, because woman must play her part side by side with man.

As I said in India, our one limb is paralysed. Women have

got to come up to the level of man. As I remarked to the ladies at a meeting to-day, they may not copy man in all the wildness of his nature, but they must come to the level of man in all that is best in him. Then in this Island you will have a beautiful blend, then you will be worthy of what nature has so profusely showered on you.

As I travelled from Kandy to Colombo this morning, I asked myself what was the Congress going to do in order to save Ceylon, whom God had blessed with enough natural intoxication, from the intoxication of that fiery liquid. I make a humble suggestion to you.

If the Congress is to be fully national, it cannot leave this fundamental social question. In this temperate climate, where no artificial stimulant is necessary, it is a shame that a substantial part of your income should be derived from liquor. You may not know what is happening to the labourers whose trustees you are, whose will is only once expressed when they cast their votes in your favour. I saw thousands upon thousands of them at Hatton. I have lost all sense of smell, but a friend told me that some of them were stinking with liquor. They had gone mad over the fact that one of their own was going in their midst, and had broken the bounds of restraint.

Well, I know what you will say. You will say it was the result of excess and that it is not bad to drink in moderation. I tell you, I have found so many making that claim and ultimately proving dismal failures. I have come from cities of South Africa where I have seen Africans, Europeans, Indians rolling in gutters under the influence of drink, I have seen proctors, advocates and barristers rolling in gutters and then the policemen taking them away in order to hide their shame. I have seen captains mad with drink leaving their cabin to the chief officer, or defiling the cabin where they were supposed to keep guard over the safety of their passengers.

Claiming, as you do, allegiance to India and endorsing, as you do, your connection with the story of Ramayana, you should be satisfied with nothing but Rama Raj which includes Swaraj. When the evil stalks from corner to corner of this enchanting fairy land, you must take up the question in right earnest and save the nation from ruin.

Then there is the other thing, untouchability. You consider the Rodyias as untouchables and their women are not allowed to cover their upper parts.

It is high time for the Congress to take up the question of the Rodyias, make them their own and enrol them as volunteers in their work. Democracy is an impossible thing until the power is shared by all, but let not democracy degenerate into mobocracy. Even a pariah, a labourer, who makes it possible for you to earn your living, will have his share in self-government. But you will have to touch their lives, go to them, see their hovels where they live packed like sardines. It is up to you to look after this part of humanity. It is possible for you to make their lives or mar their lives.

The Indian National Congress deals with both of these questions. They are living planks in our programme. I urge upon you, if you want to make your Congress truly national and truly representative of the poorest and meanest people of Ceylon, you will add these items to your programme, if you will add these items to your programme, if you have not already added them, and introduce a full measure of spirituality into your politics, then everything else will follow; self-government which is your birthright will drop in your hand like a fully ripe fruit from a laden tree.

May this message produce its due effect and penetrate your hearts.

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## CONTINUE YOUR TRADITION.\*

You have apologised for your inability to present me with a proper address. Your address is written on your hearts which you have laid bare before me.

A strange relationship binds me to the Parsis. The affection they have showered on me, a Hindu, wherever I have come in contact with them is something inexplicable and impregnable.

Wherever I have gone Parsis have not failed to find me out. When scarcely any one knew me, when the burden of Mahatmaship had not yet been imposed on me, a Parsi befriended me and made me his own. I refer to the late Parsi Rustomji of South African fame.

When the South African Europeans mobbed and lynched me on my landing at Durban in 1896 Parsi Rustomji harboured me and my family at grave risk to his person and property. The mob threatened to burn his house, but nothing daunted Rustomji gave us shelter under his roof. Ever since throughout his lifelong friendship with me he helped me and my movements and in 1921 his was the biggest donation to the Tilak Swaraj Fund from an Indian abroad.

Mr. (afterwards Sir) Ratan Tata sent me a cheque for Rs. 25,000 when I most needed it during the Satyagraha in South Africa. And Dadabhai Naoroji. How can I describe my debt to him? He took me to his bosom when I was an unknown and unbefriended youth in England, and today his granddaughters are a tower of strength to me in my Khadi work.

I ask you to continue the tradition of your fore-fathers, I ask you not to forget their simplicity and their frugal ways by aping the showy fashion of the West. Your community

\* Reply to the Parsis Address in Colombo on 22-11-27.

has been known throughout the world for its charity, and luxury loving ease and extravagance go ill together with charity. I am glad to find that you here have retained some of your simplicity and your Indian ways. You are known for your business capacity and your people have made fortunes wherever they have gone. But remember that it is not their riches but their large-hearted charity that made them famous.

May God help you to keep up that tradition unbroken.

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#### AT THE TAMIL UNION\*

I am deeply grateful to you for the address that you have given me, and also for the purse for my mission.

I know that everywhere I have gone in this fair island, Tamil friends have surrounded me with overwhelming kindness and given me of their best for the cause which has brought me here. It therefore gives me no surprise that you, the members of this union, decided to give me a separate purse on your own behalf but I know this also that you are well able to pay what you have paid, and it is possible for you, if you understood the full significance of my message, to pay even much more than you have done.†

#### APPLICATION OF FUNDS

You, Sir, have conferred on me a favour by asking me to tell this meeting how the funds, that I am now collecting are being utilised and what I expect from the distribution of these funds.

There is in India an association called The All-India Spinners' Association. It has got its own constitution and its affairs

\*Speech delivered at the Tamil Union, Colombo on 22-11-27.

† Sir P. Ramnathan who presided at the meeting.

are administered by a council of nine, of which I am the President for the first five years of its existence. One of the millionaire merchants of India is the Treasurer of this Association. His name is Seth Jamnalal Bajaj. At the present moment he acts also on my behalf as Chairman of the Council. Its Secretary is a monied man's son named Sanker Lal Banker. The other members of the council are equally well-known and known also for their self-sacrifice. This council operates through its branches all over India. All accounts are periodically audited by Chartered Accountants.

Through this Agency over 1500 villages all over India are being served to-day, and in these villages at least 50,000\* spinners who are Hindus, Mussalmans and in some cases, even Christians and others, are being given work through the spinning wheel. Whereas before the advent of the spinning wheel, they had no work whatsoever to do for four months in the year, now since the advent of the spinning wheel, they get anything between one and two annas per day whilst they are working the wheel. Of the funds the largest amount is spent in Tamil Nadu, because the largest number of spinners are to be found in those Districts where there is almost chronic famine. Often women walk several miles to receive cotton or slivers and to deliver yarn and receive the money earned.

Besides these spinners several thousand weavers have been reclaimed, as also dhobies, whose special function is to wash such khadi, and dyers, printers, and others.

Of this distribution over this vast area 1,900 miles long and 1,500 miles broad nearly 1,000 workers of the clerical class are employed, earning anything between 20 to 30 or even 40 rupees per month. There are some who get even as much as Rs. 75 or even Rs. 250 per month, but these are very few. On the top of these, there is an army of honorary workers who

\* The latest figure are 2000 and 75000 respectively.

get nothing whatsoever but who give their work for the love of this service. All the provincial offices and sub-provincial offices are also under supervision and are required to keep regular accounts which have to be periodically audited.

Through this agency over 20 lakhs rupees worth of khaddar was manufactured and sold last year. This work is capable of indefinite extensions, provided we get men first and money next. Experience extending now over 5 or 6 years has shown us that if we get sufficient monetary assistance from people, if we get willing customers and if we get a number of qualified workers, it is merely a question of time when we should be able to serve all the 700000 villages in India. I have therefore not hesitated to call it the largest co-operative effort in the world.

Satisfactory though the results that I have described to you are they are by no means brilliant or at all enough for the work or the end that I have in view, but it merely awaits conversion of all those who feel for India like yourselves. It may flatter my pride, but I know that it is not a satisfactory state of affairs so long as I have got to travel about in order to convert people to the creed, as it were, of khadi and to induce them to part with their superfluous cash. If you took this simple work of collecting funds and of finding customers for khadi from off my shoulder I assure you that I could utilise my talent as an expert spinner for organising these villages and giving you the best and the cheapest khadi.

I know that you cannot be all spinning experts in a moment but you can all become khadi experts in the sense of becoming khadi buyers and donors and collectors of money. I am painfully aware that the country is making an uneconomical use of my abilities by compelling me to wander about from place to place in search of money and in search of custom for khadi.

I speak thus heart to heart to you for the simple reason that during my tour in Tamil Nadu from which I have come

here and from which you are drawn I have been so overwhelmed with kindness and generosity specially in Chettinad that you have created in me a passion for more.

You are, I understand, a sporting club and it is a good thing. But I want you to become sportsmen also of the higher order. I want you to become sportsmanlike enough to share your riches with those who are famishing in India, not by flinging a handful of rice at them, but by finding work in the manner that I am doing and paying them for the work.

I would like you also to be sportsman like enough to share your abilities and your capacity for service with those who are labourers in this Island. That is a social service which requires the abilities of many young men whom I see in front of me. I must not take up your time in order to relate my experiences of thousands of labourers I saw between Badulla and Hatton. On the one hand, I was glad to see them and on the other, it showed me how much there was for you, youngmen, to do on behalf of these labourers who are slowing away but do not know how to live a proper pure life.

You have heard my message. If there are any who have not yet paid or not paid enough, please send your donation on to me and if you will establish a living tie between these poor millions and yourselves, you will follow up your donation by making a resolve henceforth not to buy any cloth which is not khadi.

I thank you once more for your generosity.

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#### AT GALLE\*

"Mr. Chairman and friends, I am deeply grateful to you for the addresses and the collections presented to me just now.

Ever since my landing on the hospitable shores of this

\* Speech delivered at the public meeting in Galle on 23-11-27.

beautiful Island of yours, I have been the recipient of great blessings and not the least among them is the benediction just recited by a number of boys and girls. A few minutes ago I received an address from your Municipal Council too and to the best of my ability I propose to give a combined reply, but I know you will thank me if I be as brief as possible as I don't wish you to be in the sun.

I have nothing different to say to Municipal Councillors from what I have to tell you, the citizens of this town.

I propose to repeat the hope I have been repeating day after day since I arrived in this Island.

I hope that you will do your utmost to rid yourselves the curse of drink and caste distinctions from this Island. Gauthama Buddha, whose life was one of continuous renunciation, has preached that his followers should not foul their mouth and poison their body by the use of liquor. Islam denounced drink in unmistakable terms. So far as I have seen of Christianity there is no warrant in the Christian Doctrine for the use of liquor and I can give you my personal testimony as a Hindu that my religion considers it as a sin to take liquor.

Even in this Island you have imported from your Motherland the bane of Communalism, but I hope that in our life of work for God and humanity we shall work shoulder to shoulder, as children of one common soil for the good of your country. Side by side with the sublime teachings of the Enlightened One you have imported from India caste distinctions. Your adoption of the teachings of Buddha will remain incomplete, so long as you observe these distinctions. The spirit of democracy, that now prevades the world demands that one should not be considered superior to another. All are sons and daughters of one divine essence.

Lastly may I expect you to give a finishing touch to your donations and manifestations of regard to me by following the

example of the Tiranagama Women's Association, who while giving me a reception at Hikkaduwa, intimated to me that they were going to organise a campaign to popularise Khaddar among ladies.

It gives me great joy to see that Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims and Christians have united to help me to ameliorate the condition of the famishing millions of India. I pray to God that even as you have worked in unison on this occasion that you may work in unison for the good of your common Motherland.

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AT MAHINDA COLLEGE \*

It has given me the greatest pleasure to be able to be present at this very pleasant function. You have paid me indeed a very great compliment and conferred on me a great honour by allowing me to witness your proceedings and making the acquaintance of so many boys.

I hope that this institution will progressively expand, as, I have no doubt, it deserves. I have come to know enough of this beautiful Island and its people to understand that there are Buddhists enough in this country, not merely to support one such institution, but many such institutions. I hope, therefore, that this institution will never have to pine for want of material support, but having known something of the educational institutions both in South Africa and India, let me tell you that scholastic education is not merely brick and mortar. It is true boys and true girls who build such institutions from day to day. I know some huge architecturally perfect buildings going under the name of scholastic institutions, but they are nothing but whited sepulchres. Conversely, I know also some institutions

\* Speech delivered on the occasion of the *prize* Distribution in Mahinda College at Galle on 24-11-27

which have to struggle from day to day for their material existence, but which because of this very want, are spiritually making advance from day to day. One of the greatest teachers that mankind has ever seen and one whom you have enthroned as the only Royal Monarch in your hearts delivered his living message not from a man-made building, but under the shadow of a magnificent tree. May I also venture to suggest that the aim of a great institution like this should be to impart such instruction and in such ways that it may be open to any boy or girl in Ceylon.

I notice already that, as in India, so in this country, you are making education daily more and more expensive so as to be beyond the reach of the poorest children. Let us all beware of making that serious blunder and incurring the deserved reproach of posterity. To that end let me put the greatest stress upon the desirability of giving these boys instruction from A to Z through the Sinhalese language. I am certain that the children of the nation that receive instruction in a tongue other than their own commit suicide. It robs them of their birth-right. A foreign medium means an undue strain upon the youngsters, it robs them of all originality. It stunts their growth and isolates them from their home. I regard therefore such a thing as a national tragedy of first importance, and I would like also to suggest that since I have known Sanskrit in India as the mother language, and since you have received all religious instruction from the teachings of one who was himself an Indian amongst Indians and who had derived his inspiration from Sanskrit writings that it would be but right on your part to introduce Sanskrit as one of the languages that should be diligently studied. I should expect an institution of this kind to supply the whole of the Buddhist community in Ceylon with text books written in Sinhalese and giving all the best from the treasures of old.

I hope that you will not consider that I have placed before you an unattainable ideal. Instances occur to me from history where teachers have made herculean efforts in order to restore the dignity of the mother-tongue and to restore the dignity of the old treasures which were about to be forgotten.

I am glad indeed that you are giving due attention to athletics and I congratulate you upon acquitting yourselves with distinction in games. I do not know whether you had any indigenous games or not. I should, however, be exceedingly surprised and even painfully surprised, if I were told that before cricket and football descended upon your sacred soil, your boys were devoid of all games. If you have national games, I would urge upon you that yours is an institution that should lead in reviving old games. I know that we have in India many noble indigenous games just as interesting and exciting as cricket or football, also as much attended with risks as football is, but with the added advantage that they are inexpensive, because the cost is practically next to nothing.

I am no indiscriminate superstitious worshipper of all that goes under the name of 'ancient'. I never hesitated to endeavour to demolish all that is evil or immoral, no matter how ancient it may be, but with that reservation. I must confess to you that I am an adorer of ancient institutions and it hurts me to think that a people in their rush for everything modern despise all their ancient traditions and ignore them in their lives.

We of the East very often hastily consider that all that our ancestors laid down for us was nothing but a bundle of superstitions, but my own experience, extending now over a fairly long period of the inestimable treasures of the East has led me to the conclusion that, whilst there may be much that was superstitious, there is infinitely more which is not only not superstitious, but if we understand it correctly and reduce it to

practice, gives life and ennobles one. Let us not therefore be blinded by the hypnotic dazzle of the West.

Again I wish to utter a word or caution against your believing that I am an indiscriminate despiser of everything that comes from the West. There are many things which I have myself assimilated from the West.\* There is a very great and effective Sanskrit word for that particular faculty which enables a man always to distinguish between what is desirable and what is undesirable, what is right and what is wrong, that word is known as "Viveka". Translated into English, the nearest approach is discrimination. I do hope that you will incorporate this word into Pali and Sinhalese.

There is one thing more which I would like to say in connection with your syllabus. I had hoped that I should see some mention made of handicrafts, and if you are not seriously teaching the boys under your care some handicrafts, I would urge you, if it is not too late, to introduce the necessary handicrafts known to this Island. Surely, all the boys who go out from this institution will not expect or will not desire to be clerks or employees of the Government. If they would add to the national strength, they must learn with great skill all the indigenous crafts, and as cultural training and as the symbol of identification with the poorest among the poor, I know nothing so ennobling as hand spinning. Simple as it is, it is easily learnt. When you combine with handspinning the idea that you are learning it not for your own individual self, but for the poorest among the nation, it becomes an ennobling sacrament. There must be added to this sacrament some occupation, some handicraft which a boy may consider will enable him to earn his living in after life.

You have rightly found place for religious instruction. I have experimented with quite a number of boys in order to understand how best to impart religious instruction and whilst

I found that book instruction was somewhat of an aid, by itself it was useless. Religious instruction, I discovered, was imparted by teachers living the religion themselves. I have found that boys imbibe more from the teachers' own lives than they do from the books that they read to them, or the lectures that they deliver to them with their lips. I have discovered to my great joy that boys and girls have unconsciously a faculty of penetration whereby they read the thoughts of their teachers. Woe to the teacher who teaches one thing with his lips, and carries another in his breast.

Now, just one or two sentences to boys only and I have done.

As father of, you might say, many boys and girls, you might almost say of thousands of boys and girls, I want to tell you, boys, that after all you hold your destiny in your own hands. I do not care what you learn or what you do not learn in your school, if you will observe two conditions. One condition is that you must be fearlessly truthful against the heaviest odds under every circumstance imaginable. A truthful boy, a brave boy will never think of hurting even a fly. He will defend all the weak boys in his own school and help, whether inside school or outside the school, all those who need his help. A boy who does not observe personal purity of mind and body and action is a boy who should be driven out of any school. A chivalrous boy would always keep his mind pure, his eyes straight and his hands unpolluted. You do not need to go to any school to learn these fundamental maxims of life, and if you will have this triple character with you, you will build on a solid foundation.

May then true Ahimsa and purity be your shield for ever in your life May God help you to realise all your noble ambition. I thank you once more for inviting me to take part in this function.

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## PLEA FOR BUDDHISTIC REVIVAL\*

At the outset Gandhiji pleaded for toleration. He did not claim to be a scholar in any sense of the term. His first introduction to any religious study was through a single book, viz. Sir Edwin Arnold's *Light of Asia*, which fascinated and engrossed him. Ever since, the spirit of Buddha had haunted him, so much so that he had been accused of being a Buddhist in disguise. And as he had said on a previous occasion he accepted the accusation as a compliment though he knew that if he made any such claim it would be summarily rejected by orthodox Buddhists. As one however who had imbibed the spirit of Buddhism he would reassert in all humility, but unhesitatingly, if in a different language, what he said on the previous occasion.

"There are some conditions," he said, "laid down in Hinduism for a proper prayerful study of religions. They are of a universal character. Remember also that Gautama was a Hindu of Hindus. He was saturated with the spirit of Hinduism, with the Vedic spirit, he was born and bred up in those exhilarating surroundings,—exhilarating, for the spirit,—and so far as I am aware, he never rejected Hinduism, or the message of the Vedas. What he did was therefore to introduce a living reformation in the petrified faith that surrounded him.

"I venture to suggest to you that *your study of Buddhism will be incomplete unless you study the original sources from which the Master derived his inspiration*, that is, unless you study Sanskrit and the Sanskrit scriptures. But your duty, if you are to understand the spirit of the Buddha, and not the letter of Buddhism, does not end there. That study has those conditions which I am about to describe to you. Those conditions are that a man or a woman who approaches a study of religion has first of all

\* Speech at the Buddhists Young Men's Association.

to observe what are called the five *yamas*. They are the five rules of self-restraint and I will repeat them before you. Firstly, *Brahamacharya*, celibacy; the second is *Satya*, truth; the third is *Ahimsa*, absolute innocence, not even hurting a fly: the next condition is *Asteya*, non-stealing, not merely not stealing in the ordinary sense in which the word is understood, but if you appropriate or even cast your greedy eyes on anything that is not your own, it becomes stealing. Lastly, *Aparigraha*—a man, who wants to possess worldly riches or other things, won't be fit really to understand the spirit of the Buddha. These are the indispensable conditions. There are other conditions, but I am going into these, because these are the fundamental ones, and Gautama before he attained his knowledge had conformed to all these rules, and conformed, as few of his contemporaries had ever done, to the spirit of those rules. I humbly suggest to you that you will not understand the spirit of the Buddha unless you have also yourselves conformed to these rules and then prayerfully tried to ascertain what the Master meant. It makes no difference that you know of him through all the books that have been written, but even these very books, I make bold to assure you, you will understand and you will interpret with a new light, immediately you have gone, first of all, through these preliminary observances.

Look what many critics of Islam have done—how they have torn the very book, that millions of Musalmans swear by, to pieces and held up the teachings of Islam to scorn. They were not dishonest men who wrote this criticism, they were honest men, they were not men who were not trying to search the truth, but they did not know the conditions that they had to fulfil before they could make any religious study.

Again look at what the critics of Hinduism have done. I read many of those criticisms, trying to enter into the spirit of the critics but came to the conclusion that they did not know

the A. B. C. of Hinduism and that they were grossly misinterpreting Hinduism.

Take Christianity itself. Many Hindus have misinterpreted Christianity. They approach the Bible, the Old Testament and the New Testament in a carping spirit, with preconceived notions. But why talk of the Hindus? Have I not read books written by Englishmen who, pretending to consider themselves atheists, have turned the Bible upside down and put all the fiery writings into the hands of innocent men and women and thereby done grave injury to the simple people who read them?

I have laid these points before the young men of this association, because I am anxious that *you should be the pioneers of presenting Ceylon, and through Ceylon the world, with a real Buddhist revival, that you should be the pioneers in presenting a living faith to the world, and not the dead bones of a traditional faith which the world will not grasp.*

The priests, whom I have seen by deputy said they could not argue but that they could only say what the Master taught. It is all right, but to-day the spirit of enquiry is abroad. We have got to deal with that spirit. The world is trying to seek the truth, and thirsting for peace in the midst of this terrible strife. There is also the desire for knowing the truth, but as I have ventured to suggest to you, those, who made a scientific study of religion and those who gave their lives for arriving at the truth and those with whose bones the snows of the Himalayas are whitened, have left these treasures not merely for 300 millions of India, but they have left those treasures for every one who cares to understand them, and they have said.

We cannot deliver the truth to you. It is incapable of being delivered through writings, it is incapable of being delivered with the lips, it is capable of being delivered only through life. It transcends reason. But it is not past experience. So they said, 'We tell you that such and such is the fact, but you

will have to test it for yourselves. You will apply your reason, we do not want you to deaden your reason, but you yourselves, even as we, will come to the conclusion that reason which God has given is after all a limited thing, and that which is a a limited thing will not be able to reach the limitless. Therefore, go through these preliminary conditions, even as when you want to study geometry or algebra, you have to go through preliminary processes, however trying and tiresome. Observe them and then you will find that what we tell you with our own experience will be also yours.

I want to take you through only one illustration as to how the teaching of Buddha is now not being observed. I have deferred this part of my talk up to almost the very last moment except that I hinted at it in my speech at the Vidyodaya College.

You believe that Gautama taught the world to treat even the lowest creatures as equal to himself. He held the life of even the crawling things of the earth to be as precious as his own. It is an arrogant assumption to say that human beings are lords and masters of the lower creation. On the contrary, being endowed with greater things in life, they are trustees of the lower animal kingdom. And the great sage lived that truth in his own life. I read as a mere youngster the passage in the *Light of Asia* describing how the Master took the lamb on his shoulders in face of the arrogant and ignorant Brahmans who thought that by offering the blood of these innocent lambs they were pleasing God, and he dared them to sacrifice a single one of them. His very presence softened the stony hearts of the Brahmans. They looked up to the Master, they threw away their deadly knives and every one of those animals was saved.

Was this message given to the world in order to falsify it, as it is being falsified here? I feel that you who are the repositories of this great faith are not true to the spirit of the

Master's teachings so long as you do not regard all animal creation as sacred, and you cannot do so, so long as you do not abstain from meat and delude yourselves into the belief that you are not guilty of the crime of that slaughter because some one else killed the animals for you. You entrench yourselves behind the wall of traditions. You say that the Master never prohibited meat-eating. I do not think so. If you would approach the teachings of the Master in the spirit indicated by me, and rub in the spirit of tradition, you would have a different vision and a different meaning. You will find that when the Master said, 'I do not prohibit you from meat-eating,' he was preaching to a people who were in Christian parlance hard of heart. It was because he wanted to make allowance for their weakness that he allowed them to eat it, and not because he did not know the logic of his own teaching. If animals could not be sacrificed to the gods above, how could they be sacrificed to the epicure in us? When he prohibited sacrifice he knew what he was saying. Did he not know that the animals were sacrificed to be ultimately eaten? Why do they sacrifice thousands of sheep and goats to the Goddess Kali in Calcutta, be it said to their discredit and the discredit of Hinduism in spite of having received this message from the Hindu of Hindus—Gautama? Do they throw the carcasses away in the Hooghly? No, they eat every bit of the meat with the greatest delight, thinking that it has been sanctified because of the presentation to Kali. So the Buddha said, if you want to do any sacrifice, sacrifice yourself, your lust, all your material ambition, all worldly ambition. That will be an ennobling sacrifice.

.. May the spirit of the Buddha brood over this meeting and enable you to measure and assimilate the meaning of the words that I have spoken to you."

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## LIVE AS SUGAR IN MILK \*

I thank you for all these numerous addresses and equally numerous purses.

I see that as the time for my leaving Ceylon is drawing near, your hearts are extending and with your hearts, the frames of your addresses are also expanding. But you the Reddiar friends and others who really should have known me better, might also have understood that if you gave me big framed addresses, you would also have to find me a place in which to keep these addresses in my Ashram at Sabarmati. If you, out of your generosity, offer to give me a few thousand rupees ear-marked for the purpose of building such a house in which all your great and big addresses might be accommodated, I would have been obliged to say to you,—if you have so much money to spare in order to enable me to build a house for these things,—“Give me all this money and it will provide more food for the poor starving sisters in this world.” You should also have known that for years past I have declined to accept any costly gifts for my own personal use. As you at least should be aware, I have not hesitated at the very meetings where these addresses have been presented to sell them at auction without laying myself open to the charge of discourtesy. But in this beautiful Island where I might be mistaken for a stranger, I have out of delicate consideration for the feelings of the Sinhalese refrained from offering their addresses for auction. But here I know that you cannot possibly misunderstand me. Therefore I propose with your permission, which I anticipate to convert them into money which will swell the amount of your purses and will go to feed so many hungry mouths. I regard your addresses really as a temptation for me to do this

\* Speech delivered at the Reddiar Sangam Colombo on 25-11-27.

thing, and therefore I shall not take up more of your time on my time by making any elaborate speech.

I would leave one or two thoughts with you before I leave Colombo. Since you are earning your bread in this beautiful Island, I would ask you to live as sugar lives in milk. Even a cup of milk which is full up to the brim does not overflow when sugar is gently added to it, the sugar accommodating itself in the milk and enriches its taste, in the same way I would like you to live in this Island so as not to become interlopers and so as to enrich the life of the people in whose midst you may be living.

Take care that none of the vices we have in India are brought with you in this land in order to poison the life. Let us not bring with us to these shores the curse of untouchability. In the Kingdom of Great God there cannot be any superiority and inferiority. Let us make this world therefore the Kingdom of God instead of making it the kingdom of the devil, as sometimes it appears to become. Let our lives be absolutely pure, our eyes straight, our hands unpolluted and since you have so generously given me all these gifts, may I not ask you to make all your cloth purchases in khadi.

Friends, I would beseech you to join the great struggle against the curse of drink that is going on in this Island. Not only will you refrain from drinking yourselves, but help the movement and the communities themselves to deliver them and establish complete prohibition in this land.

I thank you once more for all the kindness that you have showered on me which I shall never forget.

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## FAREWELL \*

Mr. Chairman and friends:—I thank you for the words that you have spoken about me and your good wishes on your own behalf and on behalf of the citizens of Colombo. I thank you also for this generous purse. Good as the purse is, as it is announced here, I know and you ought to know that it is not the only purse that the citizens of Colombo have gladly given to me. Throughout my stay in Colombo little by little various associations and individuals have not only given me in public but have also been coming to my residence and giving me their own purses. I count all these handsome donations also as part of this purse.

In one way my visit to Ceylon draws to a close to-day though technically speaking I will be leaving your hospitable shores on the evening of the 29th from Jaffna. Somehow or other I feel that I am going to a different place in going to Jaffna. I am carrying away with me very pleasant recollections of your extraordinarily beautiful climate and equally pleasant recollections of the people of Ceylon. I assure you that I am leaving Colombo not without a heavy heart and if I could at all have managed it, I would certainly have stayed here longer. But I have in front of me a tour in Orissa, one of the most, or rather the most, afflicted parts of India. It is now suffering from a visitation of very heavy floods. I dare not therefore postpone that visit.

From H. E. the Governor down to the pettiest official, from the great merchant class and other capitalists down to the poorest labourer I have experienced nothing but the warmest kindness and you, Sir, have truly stated that all the people without distinction of caste, colour or creed have united in showering their affection unstintedly upon me and so far as the object

\* Farewell speech in Colombo (25-11-27).

of my mission was concerned you have certainly realised fully the expectations that were raised by you.

I assure you that it would not require much pressure to bring me out again to Ceylon and as you have put it, for a leisurely stay if God spares that time for me and spares me for the purpose. But whether I am able to return to this fair island again or not you may be sure that my spirit will be always with you and I shall be watching your career with a great deal of personal interest.

When I decided to visit your country, I had imposed upon myself a strenuous limit that I would not express myself upon your political problems nor do I desire at the present moment to do so. But I know that an important Commission is just now enquiring into your political condition. So far as time has permitted it, I have been endeavouring to follow its proceedings and I may be permitted to hope that its proceedings and its findings may be so wise and so good as to be an unmixed blessing to this one of the fairest spots on the earth.

Without dwelling upon the political questions I may be also permitted to express the hope that even as you have united in offering this welcome to a humble individual like me, you will unite for realising your political ambition, sink all your differences, think not in water-tight compartments as Hindus, Buddhists, Christians, Mussalmans and what not, but think as one people of this great land and realise the highest of your political ambition. Personally, I have never been able to understand why a numerical minority should ever consider that it will not have its claim properly examined and given to it, if it is not separately represented. It has always seemed to me that an attitude of that character betrays want of national consciousness.

I have this morning in addressing my own countrymen given expression to the view which I wish to repeat again that it is the duty of those who have made Ceylon the land of their

adoption and where they make more than their livelihood, to subordinate their own interest to the general interest of the indigenous population, the Sinhalese. But I know that I must not go deeper into this subject.

I would like now to devote a sentence or two to the subject of which I have been ceaselessly speaking at all meetings viz., the question of caste in connection with its concentrated evil untouchability.

Everybody with whom I have discussed this subject has assured me that there is no warrant whatsoever for caste distinctions, let alone untouchability in Buddhism and yet, strange as it may appear, even among the Buddhists of this country, you have water-tight compartments, you have superiority and inferiority even bordering on untouchability as in the case of the Rodiyas who, I was glad to be told this morning, were now no more than 600. I know that if India may take pride in having sent you Mahinda and the message of Buddha to this land, it has also to accept the humiliation of having sent you the curse of caste distinctions. How I wish you could take more and more of the spirit of the Buddha if it is still to be found in India, and do away with the curse that you have inherited from that great land.

Nor is there the slightest warrant so far as I have been able to study Buddhism and conferred with the leaders of public opinion here, for the drink evil in your midst. It has delighted me to find that you have the right of local option in your midst and that you are taking advantage of that right, but I know from painful experience that this blighting curse is not one to be trifled with nor does it admit of any patience. I would therefore respectfully urge you to hasten the pace and rid this country of this great evil which is sapping the vitality (as also the morality of at least the labouring population. I do hope that you are not going to let the mistake of giving favoured

treatment to foreign liquors. I have known them to produce the same mischief that indigenous liquors do. So far as I have been able to observe conditions and discuss this question with many medical friends with experience of temperance questions, I have no doubt whatsoever that we who live in the temperate zone have no excuse for indulging in this untemperate habit.

I would now devote a sentence or two to the message of the spinning wheel, in so far as it may be applicable to you. I know, and I am happy to know, that you in this land are strangers to the gnawing pauperism that we have in India and which starves millions of people from day to day. The spinning wheel therefore has perhaps no economic importance for you but I have no doubt it has a great cultural value for this fair land. Its living message of simplicity is applicable to all lands and you will admit that if your boys and girls and even grown up men and women devoted an hour every day to self-spinning and if you become self-reliant and self-contained regarding your clothing requirements it would do not only no harm to you but would add dignity and self-confidence to this nation.

I have been watching not without considerable anxiety the craze for fashion which I see has seized your young men and women belonging to the higher classes. Little do they know how by becoming slaves to this hypnotic dazzle from the West they are isolating themselves from the poor of the country who can never aspire after such fashion. I cannot help thinking that it would be a great national catastrophe, a great tragedy, if you were to barter away your simplicity for this tinsel splendour.

But whether you appreciate this cultural side of the spinning wheel or not, you have from many a platform voluntarily declared your allegiance to India by affectionately calling her the motherland. You have by your generous purses given tangible

evidence of that allegiance. May I appeal to you to forge this link stronger and make it a living thing by finding in your wardrobe ample room for khaddar which will be produced as a result of your donations.

I have no power in me to make any the slightest return for the lavish kindness that you have showered upon me, but I have no doubt that the dumb and starving millions on whose behalf you have opened your purses will certainly bless you for the help that you have rendered to them, and as a self-appointed humble representative of those millions I can pray to the Almighty that He may bless you and endow you the people of this fair Island with all the blessings that you may deserve. I also thank the volunteers and the members of the Reception Committee for all the kindnesses shown to me and my companions during our stay here.

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#### JAFFNA PUBLIC MEETING \*

I am deeply obliged to you for all these addresses and various purses.

I appreciate the spirit with which you have refrained from insisting on reading all your addresses, but the Reception Committee had courteously and considerately provided me with copies of all the addresses in advance. I have carefully read all the addresses before coming to this meeting and one of them very correctly remarked that it was the young men of Jaffna who brought me to Ceylon.

In having come to Ceylon and having enjoyed the lavish hospitality of the Ceylonese, I am able to tell you that I have

\* Speech delivered at the public meeting in Jaffna on the 26th November 27.

nothing but the pleasantest recollections of my visit to your fair Island.

Having come to Jaffna, I do not feel that I am in Ceylon, but I feel that I am in a bit of India. Neither your faces nor your language are foreign to me. Though I cannot identify every one of you by your features I know that I have met many of you in India itself.

So I suppose that was why you considered that you need not be satisfied with merely extending your lavish hospitality to me but that you might also exact some work from me. Whilst I was in the South and Central parts of Ceylon, I was not over-whelmed, with conundrums sent to me by correspondents, as I have been over-whelmed even from Colombo with correspondence from Jaffna presenting me with all kinds of conundrums.

I do not mention this to complain about it, but I mention this in order to tell you that I appreciate the motive that lies behind all this correspondence. It is, I know, a token of your confidence in my ability to assist you in arriving at a solution of some of your problems. It is also a demonstration of the friendship that I enjoy, because it is a special privilege of a friend, not merely to extend his hospitality, but to take his friend into his confidence.

You will, I know, forgive me if I do not straightway present you with a solution of the questions that have been propounded by the correspondents in their letters, but bearing in mind all that correspondence, I propose to imbibe from the atmosphere around me during the four days I am in your midst as much as I can of the inwardness of the many questions that have been presented to me. If I did otherwise, I feel sure that I should be unjust to you and unjust myself for having arrived at hasty decisions on questions on which I am not sufficiently enlightened.

## VILLAGE COMMUNITIES

I congratulate you upon your village communities. I have gone through the paper that was very kindly prepared for my edification on the progress and working of the several village organisations in your midst. I agree with the writers of that note that the successful working of these village organisations is undoubtedly a key to the attainment of final Swaraj. Let me tell you from my own experience that a successful village organisation does not depend upon good legislation, but it depends upon good men to work it. There will have to be a number of young men and even old men taking a deep and personal interest in their villages just as much as they do in their own families. After all, the truest test of nationalism consists in a person thinking not only of half a dozen men of his own family or of a hundred men of his own clan, but considering as his very own the interest of that group which he calls his nation.

From the book that was sent to me whilst I was in Colombo and the literature that I have since received, I have learnt enough of your activities to know that you have got all the material that will go to make for very successful village organisation. You are a small well-built organisation, containing people speaking the same language and possessing apparently very well managed educational institutions. Apparently, you have not yet lost a love for all that was noble and good in ancient civilisation. You have not yet evidently become giddy with the onrush of splendour from the West. It is therefore quite easy for you to become the architects of your own fortune.

It has given me the greatest joy to discover that you are nearly on the point of becoming perfectly dry. Your closing of the pestilential taverns and liquor dens is a great step in the right direction. You deserve the heartiest congratulations of not only the people of this place, not only the people of Ceylon,

but of the motherland. It gives me additional joy to have your promise that you are determined to see that in the very near future you will have attained total prohibition, but I have discovered that you have internal difficulties in your way.

A correspondent has sent me a communication enclosing a pamphlet which is evidently designed to counteract the activities of those who are working for total prohibition. That pamphlet I must confess, is ably written, and on the face of it seems to claim to my painful surprise the support of some religious divines. In his eagerness to be witty and smart, the author of the pamphlet has not, I am sorry to say, hesitated to wound the susceptibilities of those whose mission he has set about opposing. He does not hesitate to laugh at the very artistic plantain leaf on which rice and curds are beautifully and simply served, nor does he hesitate to laugh at the simple life of those who are satisfied with a mere dhoti to cover themselves and call them half nude. In spite of my attempt to be fair and just to him, I have not been able to discover the slightest connection between the serious subject of prohibition and his light-hearted laugh at the simplicity of his own countrymen, if the author of the pamphlet is an Indian.

But whether you have difficulties internal or external I hope that you will persist in your effort to secure total prohibition.

As I always believe in giving the critics their due and in learning from them what is worth learning, I would like to make two suggestions which have been derived from this pamphlet. The first thing is to avoid the slightest shadow of compulsion or untruth. No reform worth the name has yet been achieved by compulsion, for whilst compulsion may lead to seeming success, it gives rise to so many other evils which are worse than the original evil itself. But I must not be misunderstood. I do not regard legislation declaring total prohibi-

tion as in any shape or form compulsion. When there is honestly and clearly expressed public opinion in favour of total prohibition, it is not only the right of the people but it is the sacred duty of the people to declare that total prohibition by legislation and take all effective steps to enforce that legislation.

Of instances of untruth cited by the author of this pamphlet are examples, as he suggests, of people taking part in prohibition meetings, themselves being given to the drink habit. If there are any such hypocritical people who are working this prohibition campaign, I have no doubt that the movement is doomed to fail. In a cause so eminently just, noble and humane I hope that you will take special precautions to rid yourselves of hypocrites.

The second suggestion which I shall place before you is that having obtained legislation you may not, you dare not sit still.

The writer of that pamphlet insinuates that prohibition in America has been a failure. I happen to know better from Americans themselves. Difficult, almost impossible, as prohibition for a big country like America may appear to us, it is not a failure, but it is gradually succeeding. Compared to the difficulties that the brave reformers in America have to face, you have absolutely no difficulty to face in this land, but I would like you to take a leaf out of the book of those great reformers. They are not only not sleeping over the legislation which they have obtained after an incessant struggle stretching over a long period, but they are doing great, gigantic constructive work. For when the drink evil takes possession of a man, it is the most difficult thing to wean him. Americans are therefore devising all kinds of means to deal with this class of people.

With the drunkard, the drink craze is a disease, and you

will have to take him in hand, as you will an ailing brother or sister of yours who may be diseased. In the place of taverns you will have to give them refreshment rooms, and all kinds of innocent recreations in order to keep the drunkards busy at something in which they may be interested. If you, who have got all the facilities for achieving this reform are entirely successful, you will set a noble example to all India.

Lastly, you will not be impatient or angry with the opponent who may be working against you. I do not know whether the same condition prevails in Jaffna as it prevails in India and other parts of the world, but I do know that in India, in England, in America, the anti-prohibitionists have not only on their side able unprincipled writers to help them but they have also brewer's money.

But you will follow the prescription that I have ventured to place before our own country which you call the mother country, viz. of truth and non-violence, you will disarm all these clever writers in spite of the money at their backs.

Now, I come to the depressed or rather the suppressed classes. I was delighted to receive two addresses from them. I must confess to you that I was not prepared to find this evil existing in your midst to any extent at all. I had thought that you left this evil in the mother country and that in this Island you had turned over a new leaf. Living in a country over which the spirit of the Buddha is brooding, I had felt you would be free from this taint of untouchability. After all Gautama was a Hindu. He was no more than one of the greatest among Hindu reformers. Let no Hindu then be ashamed of learning from him the secret of human love. Let us realise that it is a sin to consider a single human being as inferior to ourselves or untouchable. If you believe in an all-wise, and all-loving God, as you must believe; you will immediately fling

the doors of your temples open to receive the suppressed brethren.

To the suppressed brethren I would like to say one thing. I do not know how you stand over the drink question. I know that many of the suppressed brethren in India are given to the drink habit. If there are any amongst you who are given to it I hope you will give it up and if there are any who are given to eating carrion or beef, they would in order to be true to the Hindu faith give these up.

I have copious correspondence before me about a little storm in a tea cup, as I call the differences that have arisen between Christians and Hindus. This correspondence has given me a painful shock. I have not yet been able to understand the cause of these differences. I therefore do not propose to say much upon them. I would like to be told before I leave Jaffna that you have yourselves settled all your differences. Surely, you are after all numerically a small enough community to be able to handle these little differences in a satisfactory manner. So far as I have been able to understand from the correspondence, there is really very little reason even for a split between the two, but I shall hope to have to say more on a future occasion on this point. I can only here say that I invite everybody who is interested in this question to write to me freely, briefly and intelligently. It will give me very great pleasure and joy to be of any service to you in this matter.

Lastly, since you have been so generous in giving me your purses, and I know that many more purses are still to come I beseech you to continue your love for the motherland and your sympathy for the starving millions of India by finding a place in your ward robe for khadi. It will be a living bond between yourselves and the famishing millions. I know that our women are greatest offenders in this respect, and I individually appeal to them to moderate their taste for fine and silken sarees and be

satisfied with what their famishing sisters can produce for them. Then and then only will they be somewhat representative of Sita whose sacred feet hallowed this land as the legend has it. I give them my assurance that they will not look any the less handsome, because of their khadi saree.

I would like to give them a warning too that I expect a lot of jewellery from them before I have left these shores.

I must not forget one thing. You have overloaded me with heavy things. I thought that you who claim close kinship and intimacy with me knew that if you gave me heavily framed addresses, they would be returned to you and you would be made to pay for them. You have not only spent upon heavy frames, but you have had your addresses illuminated. Unless you had all these things done with a mental reservation that you will be called upon to pay high price for these addresses, you have deprived the famishing sisters of so many rupees.

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#### JAFFNA STUDENTS' CONGRESS\*.

I thank you for the beautiful address that you have presented to me this evening.

You have taken upon yourselves and very rightly, the credit of bringing me to this fair Island, but you must remember also that those who take credit for anything have also to take discredit if any mishap occurs.

It is very difficult for me this evening to give you a message for the simple reason that I do not know your Congress sufficiently, nor do I know sufficiently the composition of my audience, but your worthy Chairman has informed me of the

\* Gandhiji addressed as follows the Jaffna Student's Congress on the evening of November 26th, 1927.

objects of your Congress. I shall try to give you some thoughts that occur to me on some of those objects.

If I understood him rightly, your first object is to revive ancient culture. You have then to understand what that ancient culture is and it must be necessarily culture which all students, whether they be Hindus, Christians, Buddhists or of any other faith, would be interested in reviving, because I take it that by ancient culture you do not want to confine yourselves purely to Hindu students.

I take it that this Students' Congress includes all students, Hindus, Christians, Moslems and Buddhists. Though to-day it has on its rolls no Muslim student or Buddhist student, it does not much matter for my argument, for the simple reason that your ultimate object is attainment of Swaraj, not merely for the Hindus and Christians of Jaffna, but for all the inhabitants of this Island of which Jaffna is but a part. What I have said with reference to the inclusion of students belonging to these religions must hold good. That being so, we hark back to the question, what ancient culture it is we want to revive. It must, therefore, be such as to be common to all these elements and such as to be acceptable to all these elements. Therefore, whilst that culture will undoubtedly be predominantly Hindu culture, it can never be exclusively Hindu. The reason why I say that it must be predominantly Hindu is because you who are seeking to revive ancient culture, are predominantly Hindu, and are all the while thinking of that country which you rightly and proudly delight to call your motherland.

In Hindu culture I venture to submit Buddhistic culture is necessarily included for the simple reason that Buddha himself was an Indian not only an Indian, but a Hindu amongst Hindus. I have never seen anything in the life of Gautama to warrant the belief that he renounced Hinduism and adopted a new faith. My task becomes easy when I consider also that Jesus himself was

an Asiatic, and therefore it becomes a question really to consider what Asiatic or ancient Asiatic culture is. For that matter then, Mahomed was also an Asiatic.

Since you can only wish to revive all that is noble, and all that is permanent in ancient culture your revival, necessarily must not be antagonistic to any of these faiths. The question then is to find out the common factor, the greatest common measure belonging to all these great faiths. And thus you will come according to my own estimate of things noble and great to this very simple factor, viz, that you want to be truthful and non-violent, for truth and non-violence are common to all these great faiths.

You cannot possibly wish to revive many of the customs that you and I might have even forgotten, that may have at one time formed part of Hinduism.

I recall one great thought that the late Justice Ranade expressed when he was speaking of the revival of ancient culture and he told his audience that it would be difficult for any single person in the audience to say exactly what ancient culture was and when that culture ceased to be ancient and began to be modern. He also said that a prudent man would not swear by anything, because it was ancient, but he told the audience that any culture, ancient or modern, must be submitted to the test of reason and experience.

I am obliged to utter this warning to this Congress of students who are to be the makers of the destinies of this land, because of so many reactionary forces gathering round us not only here, but throughout the world. I see from my own experience in India that many who are professing to revive ancient culture do not hesitate under the name of that revival to revive old superstitions and prejudices.

Ancient tradition and ancient lore have been dragged almost out of the tomb to justify the hideous doctrine of untouchability

A similar attempt, some of you may know, is now being made to justify the institution of *Devadasis*.

You will not therefore consider that I have given you a laboured statement in warning you against being misled into wrong doing under the name of revival of ancient culture. Perhaps you will understand the significance of this warning coming as it does from a man who is himself not only a lover of ancient culture but has been endeavouring to reproduce in his own life, to the best of his ability, all that is noble, that is permanent in ancient culture.

In trying to explore the hidden treasures of ancient culture, I have come upon this inestimable boon that all that is permanent in ancient Hindu culture is also to be found in the teachings of Jesus, Buddha, Mahomed and Zoraster. So I have come to this workable arrangement for myself. If I find anything in Hinduism which is ancient but repugnant to my Christian brother or my Mussalman brother, I immediately begin to fidget and doubt the ancientness of that claim. So I came by a process of examination to this irresistible conclusion that there was nothing so very ancient in this world as these two good old things—truth and non-violence. And working along these lines of truth and non-violence, I also discovered that I must not attempt to revive ancient practices if they were inconsistent with, call it if you will, modern life as it must be lived. Ancient practices may have been perfectly good and perhaps absolutely necessary at the time when those practices were adopted, but they might be entirely out of date with modern needs and still not be contrary to truth or non-violence.

Then you can see how safe the road becomes in front of you and me when we summarily and mercilessly reject untouchability, Devadasi institution, drunkenness, sacrifice of animals in the very name of God whom we call Compassionate, All-merciful, Forgiving. We can unhesitatingly and summarily

reject all these things, because they do not appeal to our moral sense. So much with reference to the negative side of it, but there is a positive side to it which is just as important as the negative.

In putting before you the positive side let me draw for you one very necessary corollary to the doctrine of non-violence. I put it before my very dear friends, the reformers, a very small body of staunch workers in Chettinad. The corollary or the deduction is this: that if we are to be non-violent we must then not wish for anything on this earth which the meanest or the lowest of human beings cannot have. If that is a sound proposition—and I claim that it is a direct corollary from the doctrine of non-violence, then if you accept it, then it follows that we may not barter away our ancient simplicity for anything on this earth. Now, you will perhaps understand my determined opposition to the modern rush, the hypnotic dazzle that seems almost to overcome us and overtake us; and that is coming to us with such violent force from the West.

I have taken great pains in my writings as also in my speeches to distinguish between the modern methods adopted in the West, the multiplicity of wants and material comforts, and the essential teaching of the Sermon on the Mount. So, in the opening sentences of my speech I threw out the hint of what was to come when I told you that after all Jesus was an Asiatic, Mahomed was an Asiatic, but drawing that sharp distinction between the teachings and message of Jesus and what is to-day going on in America, in England and other parts of the West, I have been able to live at peace with thousands upon thousands of my Christian friends in South Africa and now, because the circle is growing ever larger throughout the world.

So you Hindus and Buddhists here—if there is even a handful of Buddhists—if you will be true to your ancient culture,

you will refuse to have anything whatsoever to do with this hypnotic dazzle, even though it may come to you in the so-called Christian garb.

If you have an immovable faith in yourselves, if you will also cultivate inexhaustible patience, you will find that the christian friends even though they may come to you with the Western dazzle behind them, will shed all that dazzle and be converted to the doctrine of simplicity which alone can satisfy the test of the corollary that I have ventured to draw before this audience.

If you have closely followed my reasoning, you will at once understand the message, the imperishable message of the spinning wheel. It is because I see in the spinning wheel the hand of God working ; it is because I see in the spinning wheel the satisfaction of the needs of the meanest of human beings, that in season and out of season, I think about it, work at it, pray about it and speak about it. If there is any other thing which can bring you nearer to the famishing people of the earth, (let alone India for the time being) that can put you at once on a level with the scavenger, I will withdraw the spinning wheel and hug that other thing in a moment. Now you will perhaps also understand why I go about from door to door shamelessly and ceaselessly with the begging bowl and beg of every one to put something into it if they will do so with a willing heart.

I have now overstayed my time, I must not exhaust your patience and I must now therefore leave you to dot the is and cross the ts of the speech that I have given you. I have to talk to the student world about several other things, because I have the honour of enjoying their confidence, but to-night I must not go any further with my remarks.

I thank you from the bottom of my heart for all that you have done and are doing and if you will act in accordance with

the paper that some of you sent to me, when I was in Colombo, you will certainly have done a great thing.

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#### A GLORIFIED EDITION OF INDIA \*

Ever since I have come to Lanka the conviction has been growing upon me that I am not in Lanka but in India glorified. A glorified edition of India Lanka certainly is from a scenic point of view. Though I was prepared for the scenery in Lanka, the scenery I have actually witnessed has surpassed all my expectations and so I could not help saying at a recent meeting that Ceylon seemed to be a fragrant beautiful pearl dropped from the nasal ring of India. If the people of Lanka are really, as they should be, inheritors of the culture of India, they also should represent in their lives a glorious edition of mother India.

After all was not Gautama Buddha one of the greatest of Hindu reformers? And why should not the people of Lanka who have inherited and adopted the teachings of the great Master do better than the children of the motherland? Alas! today the source from which the strength of Lanka was derived in the days of yore seems almost to have dried up. We of India seem at the present moment to have fallen on evil days. We are ourselves struggling for our very existence, so much so that according to English historians at least one-tenth of the population of India is living in a state of perpetual starvation.

It is in order to remove the sting of this growing, grinding pauperism that I have been ceaselessly wandering from place to place, exciting the sympathy of monied people on behalf of these men and women who do not know what a full meal can be. And it has been a matter of the greatest consolation,

\* Speech delivered at the Jaffna Indian's meeting on 27-11-27.

indeed, a sense that sustains me inspite of darkness surrounding us on all sides, that wherever I go I receive a ready response from our countrymen.

It causes me, therefore, no surprise that you have brought me here to meet you and given me your tangible sympathy. But you do not need to be told by me that the sympathy that you have given me in the shape of money is by no means enough. I can only take it as a token of your desire to render still more help, and therefore I must repeat for the thousandth time what I have been saying to every audience, that you will not have done your elementary duty by these famishing brothers and sisters of ours unless you follow up your donations by a fixed determination never more to make your cloth purchases in anything but Khadi.

And the sisters who are also to be found in this hall, must really help and respond to the dumb appeal of the famishing millions. Neither they nor the men may contemptuously tell me that Khadi is too dear, that Khadi is not fine enough that it does not satisfy their taste. I have not yet heard a single mother to complain of the want of beauty of her children nor have I ever heard a mother complain that her children were a burden upon her purse. If you really feel for these famishing millions, if you really believe that they are famishing and that they are your own blood-brothers and blood-sisters, how can you complain of the price or quality of Khadi? What right have you to think of fashion or of prices when you find that there are millions of people hungry for food and can be fed by you if only you will wear Khadi which is manufactured by their sacred but shaking hands.

Will you not take a leaf out of the book of Englishmen and Germans who taxed themselves, suffered untold privations and suffered all kinds of difficulties, including death, under circumstances too terrible to relate, and all for what they

believed to be the honour of their country? How much more then should you deprive yourselves of your manufactured tastes and notions about fashionable dress and pay a little higher price for Khadi when it is not merely the honour of your sisters which is at stake but when it is their very existence which is in danger.

I wish therefore that it was possible for you to besiege Sjt. Rajagopalachariar with your orders for Khadi and even for fine embroidered sarees if you must have fashionable sarees. But I must pass on to another subject.

Whenever I have gone to countries outside India and even to the different provinces in India, I have advised the people from other parts who have settled in those regions to subordinate their interests to the interests of the land to which they have migrated. Whether you are Hindus or Mussalmans or Parsis no matter to which province you belong, I feel it to be your bounden duty to live amongst the people of the land where you go, not as thorns in their sides, but like sugar in milk. You must be in the midst of such people as trustees of your own culture, and you should make common cause with those people alike in their joys as well as their sorrows.

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#### DUTY OF CEYLON HINDUS \*

This is the last of a series of many meetings, whose number even I cannot now remember, that I have been addressing today. Precious as all of them have been, this is to me the most precious, because you have convened a meeting of Hindus specially to be addressed by me. This I take to mean

\*Gandhiji's speech at a meeting of the Hindus of Jaffna on 27.11.27.

that I must speak to you Hindus as a Hindu. And it gives me the greatest pleasure to have been invited to do so.

As you know, though my claim has not been accepted by those who call themselves orthodox Hindus I persist in calling myself an orthodox Hindu. But by making that claim I, a votary of Truth, must not mislead you in any way whatsoever. If orthodox Hinduism consists in dining or not dining with this man or that man, and touching this man and not touching that man, or in quarrelling with Mussalmans and Christians, then I am certainly not an orthodox Hindu. But if orthodox Hinduism can mean an incessant search after what Hinduism possibly can be, if orthodox Hinduism can mean an incessant striving to live Hinduism to the best of one's lights, then I do claim to be an orthodox Hindu. I am also an orthodox Hindu in the sense in which the author of the Mahabharata, the great Vyasa, would have it. He has said somewhere in the Mahabharata to this effect : Put Truth in one scale and all sacrifices whatever in the other ; that scale which contains Truth will outweigh the one that contains all the sacrifices put together not excluding *Rajasuya* and *Ashvamedha* Yajna. And if the Mahabharata may be accepted as the fifth Veda, then I can claim to be an orthodox Hindu, because every moment of the twenty-four hours of my life I am endeavouring to follow truth counting no cost as too great.

Having thus registered my claim in the presence of this audience, I now wish to tell you as an orthodox Hindu what in my humble opinion your duty is in Jaffna, and in Ceylon.

First of all I want to speak to you about your duty towards the predominant population in this Island. And I wish to suggest to you that they are your co-religionists. They will, if they choose to, repudiate the claim. For they will say that Buddhism is not Hinduism and they will be partly right. Many Hindus certainly repudiate the claim of Buddhism to be part

and parcel of Hinduism. On the contrary they delight in saying that they successfully drove Buddhism out of India. But I tell you that they did nothing of the kind. Buddha himself was a Hindu. He endeavoured to reform Hinduism. And he succeeded in his attempt to a very great extent and what Hinduism did at that time was to assimilate and absorb all that was good and best in the teachings of the Buddha. And on that account I venture to say that Hinduism became broadened, and having assimilated the best of Buddhism, it is true that Hinduism drove out from India what might be termed the excrescences that had gathered round the teachings of Gautama. The way in which you can demonstrate this to the Buddhists of Ceylon is by living the broadened Hinduism in their midst. The one thing that the Buddha showed India was that God was not a God who can be appeased by sacrificing innocent animals. On the contrary, he held that those who sacrificed animals in the hope of pleasing God were guilty of a double sin. So if you will be true to Hinduism, you will take care that you will not defile a single temple of yours by indulging in animal sacrifice. I am prepared to declare against the whole of Hindu India that it is wrong, sinful, and criminal to sacrifice a single animal for the purpose of gaining any end whatsoever, or for the purpose of propitiating God.

The second thing that Gautama taught was that all that caste means today—as it meant in his time also—was wholly wrong. That is to say, he abolished every distinction of superiority and inferiority that was even in his time eating into the vitals of Hinduism. But he did not abolish *varnashrama dharma*. *Varna dharma* is not caste. As I have said in so many speeches in South India, and as I have written fairly exhaustively on *varna dharma* in *Young India*, I hold that there is nothing in common between caste and *varna*. Whilst *varna* gives life, caste kills it, and untouchability is the hatefulest

expression of caste. You will therefore banish untouchability from your midst. I make bold to say that there is no warrant whatsoever in Hinduism for untouchability as it is practised today. If therefore you want to live your Hinduism in its purity in the midst of Buddhist countrymen, you will take care that you will not consider a single human being as an untouchable. Unfortunately the Buddhists in Ceylon have themselves borrowed this curse from Hindus. They who should never have had this institution of caste have caste in their midst. For heaven's sake forget that some are high but others are low, remember that you are all Hindus—brothers in arms.

I have a letter from a Jaffna Hindu telling me that there are some temples in this place where on certain occasions you have dances by women of ill fame. If that information is correct, then let me tell you that you are converting temples of God into dens of prostitution. A temple, to be a house of worship, to be a temple of God, has got to conform to certain well-defined limitations. A prostitute has as much right to go to a house of worship as a saint. But she exercises that right when she enters the temple to purify herself. When the trustees of a temple admit a prostitute under cover of religion or under cover of embellishing the worship of God, then they convert a house of God into one of prostitution. And if anybody no matter how high he may be comes to you and seeks to justify the admission of women of ill fame into your temples for lancing or any such purpose, reject him and agree to the proposal that I have made to you. If you want to be good Hindus, if you want to worship God, and if you are wise, you will fling the doors of all your temples open to the so-called untouchables. God makes no distinction between his worshippers. He accepts the worship of these untouchables just as well and as much as that of the so-called touchables, provided it comes from the bottom of the heart.

There are still certain things that demand your attention. You have to live at the present moment in a world which has Christians and Mussalmans, great communities owning great faiths. In Jaffna you have a very small Mussalman population hardly two or three per cent. The Christian population is 10 per cent. But you have to live your life in the midst of these whether they are two per cent. or twenty per cent. And if I know Hinduism aright, Hinduism is nothing if it is not tolerant and generous to every other faith. Since they are also as much inhabitants of this peninsula and this Island as you, it is your duty to regard them as your brothers. Unless you do so, you will never evolve the truly national spirit that is necessary, and therefore you will not evolve the necessary Hindu and humanitarian spirit.

You have a right to control the education of your own children, and I am glad that you have got your own board of education. I would like you to strengthen that board in the right spirit as much as you can, but that should mean no jar whatsoever with the rival institutions of the Christian missionaries. If you have got an ably manned staff of educationists and provide the necessary facilities for the Hindu children, naturally all the Hindu children will come to your institutions. I can see no reason whatsoever for the mutual jealousies in matters of education of which I have heard something. I was delighted to find that only up to recent times, Hindus, Christians, and Mussalmans were living in absolute friendship. A jar has been created only recently as between the Christians and yourselves. Seeing that you are in a vast majority, it is up to you to make advances and settle all your disputes. And if you will get rid of the wretched caste-spirit which has crept into Hinduism, you will find that all the difficulties will disappear.

Remember that since you are in a vast majority, the

responsibility rests on your shoulders to make Jaffna, and through Jaffna, Ceylon also, perfectly dry. Hinduism does not permit you to drink. If the board of education will do its duty, you will encourage Sanskrit study in your schools. I regard the education of any Hindu child as incomplete unless he has some knowledge of Sanskrit. So far as I have been able to see we have in Hinduism no book so compact and so acceptable all round as the Bhagavad Gita. If you will therefore saturate your children and yourselves with the spirit of Hinduism, you will endeavour to understand the spirit of the teachings of the Gita. You should also cultivate a common knowledge of the Mahabharata and Ramayana.

Lastly I know no solution of the many difficulties that face the whole of the human family except the two things that I am saying everywhere. Speak the truth and remain non-violent also at any cost. I know as certainly as I know that I am sitting in front of you and speaking to you, that if I could but persuade you to understand the spirit of these two things and act up to them, every one of our difficulties would disappear like straws before wind, and God would descend from His Great White Throne and live in your midst and He would say 'You Hindus have done well.'

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#### WITH STUDENTS IN JAFFNA \*

Object lesson in charity.—If you had been looking forward to meeting me under this roof, I can say that I was no less looking forward to meeting you. Though I receive, and receive with thankfulness, money from millionaires, it is a source of much greater pleasure to me to receive small gifts no matter how

\*Speech at St John's College 29-11-27.

small they may be, from boys and girls who are still making their lives. It gives me greater pleasure for two reasons. One is, the gift, springs from innocent boys and girls, fructifies much more than gifts of those who may be considered worldly wise men. The second reason is that gifts such as yours give me a keener sense of responsibility than perhaps I should otherwise have.

You may know that each rupee that is to be found in this purse will go to find work for 16 semi-starving women in the remote villages of India, and give them one anna per day for the work that they may do. Remember that they and their children do not get anything like two full meals per day and that is what I can tell you from my own experience of hundreds of Indian villages. Your gift, therefore, is really an object lesson in true charity. What can be better or nobler than that from your youth whilst you are shouldering no responsibility, you become accustomed to thinking not merely of yourselves, but of those who are much poorer and much more unfortunately placed than you are.

It is undoubtedly a great thing that in your school there are no distinctions and no one is considered to be an untouchable. What you have done in giving me this generous purse is really following along the lines that you are going for these children and these women on whose behalf you have given this purse are more unfortunately placed than even the so-called untouchables I have not the power to make any return for your kindness and your generosity. I can only pray to God that He may bless you for all the good things that you may do in life, for, I know, that mere mental training is nothing, if it is not accompanied by a true training of the heart, and may your hearts extend in the manner that your minds may.

I thank you once more.

## THE PLACE OF JESUS \*

I am deeply grateful to you for the generous purse that you have given me on behalf of the semi-starving millions of India.

You, Sir, sent me due notice yesterday of the very important question that you have repeated this morning viz. the place of Christ among the great teachers of the world. I have many engagements between now and 10-30; therefore, and also for other reasons into which I do not want to enter, I would fain have avoided this questions. But on the principle that has guided my life that I must take things as they come to me, unless I find it utterly impossible for me to cope with them, I propose to devote the very few minutes that I have at my disposal to answering that question.

I say in one sentence that for many many years I have regarded Jesus of Nazareth as one amongst the mighty teachers that the world has had, and I say this in all humility. I claim humility for this expression for the simple reason that this is exactly what I feel. Of course Christians claim a higher place for Jesus of Nazaraeth than as a Non-Christian and as a Hindu I have been able to feel. I purposely use the word 'feel' instead of 'give,' because I consider that neither I, nor anybody else can possibly arrogate to himself the claim of giving place to a great man. The great teachers of mankind have had the places not given to them, but the place has belonged to them as a matter of right, as a matter of service that they have rendered, but it is given to the lowest and humblest amongst us to feel certain things about certain people. The relation between great teachers and ourselves is somewhat after the style of relation between a husband and wife. It would be a most terrible thing, a tragic thing, if I was to argue out intellectually for myself what place I was to give to my wife in my heart. It is not in

\*Speech at Jaffna Central College (29-11-27.)

my giving, but she takes the place that belongs to her as a matter of right in my heart. It is a matter purely for feeling. Then I can say the Jesus occupies in my heart the place of one of the great teachers who have made a considerable influence on my life. Leave the Christians alone for the present. I shall say to the 75 per cent Hindus receiving instruction in this college that your lives will be incomplete unless you reverently study the teaching of Jesus. I have come to the conclusion, in my own experience, that those, who no matter to what faith they belong, reverently study the teaching of other faiths, broaden their own instead of narrowing their hearts. Personally, I do not regard any of the great religions of the world as false. All have served in enriching mankind and are now even serving their purpose. A liberal education to all should include, as I have put it, a reverent study of other faiths, but I do not want to labour this point, nor have I the time to do so.

There is one thing which, as I am speaking to you, occurs to me, which came to me in my early studies of the Bible, It seized me immediately I read the passage "Make this World, the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and everything will be added unto." I tell you that if you will understand, appreciate and act up to the spirit of this passage, you won't even need to know what place Jesus or any other teacher occupies in your heart. If you will do the proper scavenger's work, clean and purify your hearts and get them ready, you will find that all these mighty teachers will take their places without invitation from us. That to my mind, is the basis of all sound education. Culture of the mind must be subservient to the culture of the heart. May God help you to become pure!

#### AT THE UDIVIL GIRLS' COLLEGE

It has given me very great pleasure indeed to meet you this morning.

I do not at all appreciate the idea of your little gifts which have come right from the bottom of your hearts having been merged in the general purse, but I am going to put the best construction possible upon the fact of your purse having been merged in the general purse; you being more modest than boys, do not want me to know that you had given anything at all, but having met thousands or tens of thousands of girls throughout India, it is difficult for girls nowadays to hide from me any good things that they may do.

Now, there are some girls who do not mind even telling me the bad things that they do. Let me hope that of all these girls before me, there is not one single girl who does a bad thing. Not having the time to cross-examine you, I am not going to weary you with questions, but if there are any girls in our midst who do bad things I would fain let them know that if that is the case their education is useless.

Your parents do not send you to school to become dolls, on the contrary you are expected to become Sisters of Mercy. Do not make the mistake of thinking that only those may be called Sisters of Mercy who wear a particular dress. She becomes a Sister of Mercy immediately she thinks less of herself and more of those who are poorer and more unfortunate than herself, and you have done the work of Sisters of Mercy in giving your mite to the purse that has been presented to me, because that purse has been presented for those who are unfortunately poorer than yourselves.

To give a little bit of money is easy enough to do a little thing one's self is more difficult. If you really feel for the people for whom you are giving money, you must go a step further and wear khadi that these people manufacture. If, when khadi is brought before you you say "Khadi is a bit coarse, we cannot wear it," then I know you have not the spirit of self-sacrifice in you.

It is such a very nice thing that here there is no distinction between high class and low class, touchables and untouchables and if your hearts are also working in that direction, and you do not consider yourselves superior to some other girls, it is a very good thing indeed.

May God bless you !

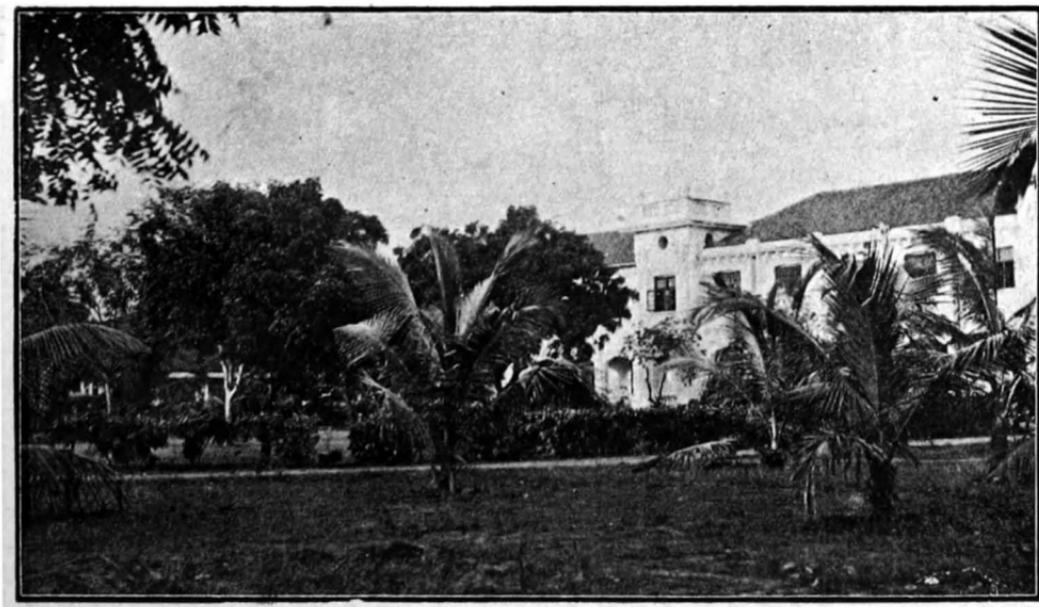
#### RAMANATHAN GIRL'S COLLEGE

It has indeed given me great joy to be able to come here this morning as if to put a finishing touch to the whole round of visits to different scholastic institutions in Jaffna.

The exquisite taste and simplicity with which, the whole of this ceremony has been arranged this morning, I assure you, has not escaped my observation. I appreciate also the generous purse of Rs. 1,111 which too unlike most purses is given in a khadi bag. To crown all, Lady Ramanathan has placed in my hands a kind telegram from Sir P. Ramanathan who himself is unable to attend this function.

I should have always regretted it if I had not been able to visit this institution, the monument of Sir Ramanathan's generosity and thoughtfulness. Lady Ramanathan has very considerately furnished me with an advance copy of your address together with the report of this institution and two copies of your magazine.

Your promise in your address that you are going to observe this day as an annual function and devote it to collections for khadi work has touched me to the core. I know that this is no idle promise on your part, but that you are going to fulfil that promise religiously. If the famishing millions, on whose behalf I am touring, could possibly understand this determination on the part of their sisters, I know it would gladden their hearts but you will be pained to be informed by me that these dumb millions in whose behalf you have given me this purse—and so



Ramanathan College for (Girls) Chunnakam, Ceylon.

many purses have been given in Ceylon—would not even understand such things, if I attempted to tell them. No description that I can give you of their miserable life can possibly give you a proper perspective of what that position means.

This immediately brings me to the question—what are you to do for these and such other people? It is easy enough to suggest a little more simplicity, a little more hardness in life, but that would be merely playing with the question. Thoughts and thoughts like these brought me to the spinning wheel. I said to myself, as I say to you now, that if you could but establish a living link between those famishing millions and yourselves, there is some hope for you, for them and for the world.

Religious instruction you have, and very properly in this institution. You have got also a beautiful temple. I see from your time-table that you begin the day by offering worship, all of which is good and elevating, but it may easily amount to a beautiful ceremonial and nothing else, if that worship is not translated day after day into some practical work. So, I say, in order to follow out that act of worship, take up the spinning wheel, sit at it for half an hour and think of these millions that I have described to you and say in the name of God, "I spin for the sake of them." If you do it with your heart, with the knowledge that you are the humbler and the richer for that real act of devotion, if you will dress not for show, but for covering your limbs, you will certainly not have any hesitation in wearing khadi and establish that bond between yourselves and the millions.

This is not all that I want to say to the girls of this institution.

If you will be deserving of the care and attention that Sir Ramanathan has bestowed upon you and that is being bestowed on you by Lady Ramanathan and the staff working under her up

care, you will have to do many more things. I saw in your magazines mention made with some degree of pardonable pride of what some of the old school girls had been doing. I saw notices after this style. So and 'so married so and so—4 or 5 notices. There is, I know, nothing wrong in a girl who has come of age, about 25 or even 22 years old, in getting married. But I miss in these notices a single mention of a girl who had dedicated herself to service only. So, I propose to tell you what I told the girls of H. H. the Maharajah's College for girls in Bangalore; that we get a poor return for the great efforts that are being made by educationists and by lavish charities, if you all become mere dolls and disappear from life, as soon as you are discharged from such institutions.

A vast majority of girls disappear from public life as soon as they are discharged from schools and colleges. You of this institution have no such business. You have the example of Miss Emery and the example of others who have been, Superintending, and who have been, if I am not speaking incorrectly maidens.

Every girl, every Indian girl, is not born to marry. I can show many girls who are to-day dedicating themselves to service instead of serving one man. It is high time that Hindu girls produce or reproduce an edition, and if possible a glorified edition of Parvati and Sita.

You claim to be Saivites. You know what Parvati did. She did not spend money for a husband, nor would she allow herself to be bought, and she to-day adorns the Hindu firmament by being classed with one of the Seven Satis—not because of the degrees in an educational institution that she received, but because of her unheard of Tapasya (penance.)

Here, I understand that there is the hateful system of dowry, whereby it becomes most difficult for young women to get suitable matches. The grown up girls—some of you are

grown up—are expected to resist all such temptations. If you will resist these evil customs, you will some of you have to begin by remaining maidens either for life, or at least for a number of years. Then, when it is time for you to marry, and you feel that you must have a partner in life, you will not be in thirst of one who has money, or fame, or beauty of person, but you will be in search of one—even as Parvati was—who has got all the matchless qualities which go to make good character. You know how Naradjee described Siva to Parvati—a mere pauper smeared with ashes, no handsomeness about him and a Brahmachari, and Parvati said, 'yes, he will be my husband.' You won't have several editions of Siva unless some of you will be content to offer tapasya not for thousands of years, as Parvati did. We, frail human beings cannot afford to do it, but you can do so at least during your life-time.

If you will accept these conditions, you will refuse to disappear into the kingdom of dolls, but will aspire to be Satis like Parvati, Damayanti, Sita and Savitri. Then and not till then, in my humble opinion, will you have deserved an institution of this character.

May God fire you with this ambition, and if you are inspired, may He help you to realise this ambition.

#### AT THE JAFFNA COLLEGE

It has given me the greatest pleasure to visit so many educational institutions here. Amongst not the least is this the oldest educational institution in this Peninsula. Moreover I am given to understand that many old boys of this institution are to day distinguished servants of the country. Lastly, I had the pleasure of meeting your Vice-Principal in Bangalore and the two Secretaries of the Reception Committee are also old boys of this school.

It always gladdens me to see the smiling faces of boys and girls.

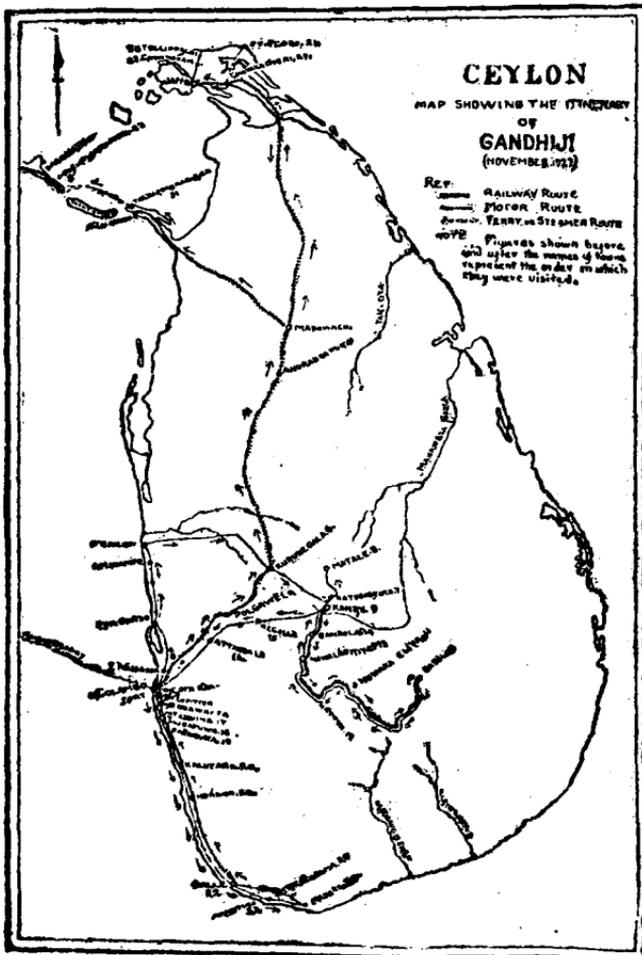
I know also that the work that I have the privilege of doing is to-day being done by so many grown-up boys who have given their all to the service of the motherland. Your purse therefore is very precious to me. I know that all the monies—and by no means a small sum that I have received from boys and girls—will bear greater fruit than the monies received from old and wise men. Your money comes with the stamp of innocence upon it, and it goes also to millions or some of the millions of men and women who are innocent, not deliberately perhaps, but because they cannot be otherwise.

I should like you to take a further step and consolidate the bond that you have established between these starving millions and yourselves by adopting the Khadi that will be manufactured out of these monies. It will be a perpetual object-lesson for you in charity to be able to think first thing each day when you put on your khadi that you are wearing it for the sake of the millions of paupers in India.

I have no doubt that your teachers repeatedly tell you that all this mental and literary training that you receive will be of no avail to you unless it is broad based on truth and love. Truth will make you brave and fearless men, able to give a good account of yourselves, wherever you go. Love will make life bearable for you, because love has a special quality of attracting abundance of love in return.

May God help you day after day to develop these qualities within yourselves.

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## **PART III: APPENDIX**

## KHADI COLLECTIONS IN CEYLON \*

*Colombo*: Sea Street Chettiars, Rs. 4,001.00; Sea Street Clerks, Rs. 2,335.50; Sea Street Cooks, Rs. 103.25; Indian Youths' Sangha, Rs. 10100; Vivekananda Society, Rs. 2,050.00; Nalanda Vidyalaya, Rs. 400.00; Ananda College, Rs. 400.00; Kaili Merchants, Rs. 205.00; Maruthuvakula Sangha, Rs. 401.00; Hewavitarana Weaving School, Rs. 330.50; Sindhi Merchants, Rs. 1,754.50; Ceylon Labour Union, Rs. 2,726.71; Nadar Sangham, Rs. 201.00; Sea Street Lodge, Rs. 102.00; Zahiria College, Rs. 400.00; Tamil Ladies' Union, Rs. 1,445.00; Sinhalese Ladies, Rs. 1,000.00; Young Men's Hindu Association, Rs. 101.00; Colombo Tamil Union, Rs. 1,251.50; Parsis, Rs. 1,001.00; Vidya Vinoda Sabha, Rs. 629.20; Reddiyar Mahajana Sangham, Rs. 3,001.00; Gandhi Sangam, Rs. 75.00; Slave Island General, Rs. 1,101.00; Young Bharatars' League, Rs. 110.11; Marava Community, Rs. 351.00; Ceylon Indian Association, Rs. 1,801.00; Young Lanka League, Rs. 60.00; Young Men's Buddhist Association, Rs. 615.45; Law College, Rs. 320.00; Malayalis, Rs. 260.00; Proprietors of Rice and Curry Shops, Rs. 1,250.00; Clerks of Rice and Curry Shops, Rs. 550.00; Ceylon National Congress, Rs. 600.00; General Reception, Rs. 6,408.00; Auctions, Rs. 350.00.

Sjt. Velliappa Nadar, Rs. 76.00; Sjt. Phillipiah Rs. 50.00; Mrs. H. C. Abeywardne, Rs. 50.00; Mr. and Mrs. W. D. Fernando, Rs. 500.00; Mrs. W. A. DeSilva, Rs. 500.00; Dr. A. T. Kuriyan, Rs. 15.00; Sjt. B. V. Bhimiah Chettiar, Rs. 50.00;

\* This is a consolidated list of Khadi collections in Ceylon during Gandhiji's tour. Donors and contributors are requested to scrutinise the list and draw attention to discrepancies or omissions, if any, to Sjt. C. Rajagopalachariar, Gandhi Ashram, Tiruchengodu.

Mr. Billimoria, Rs. 25.00; Mr. K. S. Narayana Aiyar, Rs. 25.00; Mr. A. E. DeSilva, Rs. 200.00; Mr. H. W. Periera, Rs. 100.00; Mr. Velayutham Pillai, Rs. 51.00; Miss Bandaranayake and others, Rs. 110.00; other miscellaneous collections, Rs. 365.85; Further collections general, Rs. 285.00; Total, Colombo, Rs. 40,195.43.

*Kurunagala*: Chettiars Rs. 1,021.00; General, Rs. 1,500.00; Puttalam and Kalpitiya Clerks, Rs. 35.00; Kandigama and Helligola, Rs. 112.00,

*Negombo*; Rs. 1,812.00; Kochukadawn, Rs. 432.00; Paligoda Notional League, Rs. 30.72

*Chilaw*; Rs. 1,530.82; Nainamadama, Rs. 128.06.

*Matale*: Maruthuwakula Sangham, Rs. 55.00; Buddhist School, Rs. 25.00; General, Rs. 1,093.20; Mr. Ponniah, Rs. 150.00; School foundation, Rs. 251.41; Total, Rs. 1,574.61.

*Kandy*: Dharmaraja College, Rs. 111.00; Shri Rahula School etc., Rs. 91.00; General, Rs. 4,500.00; Indian Youths' Sangham, Rs. 71.16; Maruthuwakula Sangham, Rs. 141.00; Indian Association, Rs. 1,187.50; Mr. P. S. Devadasu Pillai, Rs. 10.00; Miscellaneous, Rs. 38.50; Total (Kandy) Rs. 6,150.16.

*Pandarawela*, Rs. 601.63; *Diyatalawa* Rs. 103.00; *Haputala*, Rs. 351.

*Badulla*: General, Rs. 4,000.00; *Lunugala*, Y. M. C. A., Rs. 215.00; Meeting collections, Rs. 286.37; Miscellaneous, Rs. 35.60; Total, Rs. 4,539.97.

*Dikoya*, Rs. 135.00; *Talawakale*, Rs. 315.00; *Nanuwaya*, Rs. 150.00; *Wellimada*, Rs. 215.25; *Dikavela*, Rs. 500.00.

*Nuwara Eliya*: General, Rs. 4,097.15; Meeting collections, Rs. 555.31; Total Rs. 4,652.46.

*Hatton*: Carfax Labourers etc., Rs. 100.00; Castlereagh Labourers, Rs. 135.00; Kanganis' Association general purse, Rs. 2,500.00; Bazaar, Rs. 558.00; Miscellaneous, Rs. 210.00; Total Rs. 3,503.00.

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Prigatana, Rs. 194.20; Wattavela Rs. 230.50.

*Nawalapitiya* : General, Rs. 1,322.39½; Y.M.M.A., Rs. 39.61; Miscellaneous, Rs. 77.90; Total Rs. 1,439.90½.

Kadugancholai, Rs. 45.00,

*Gampola* : General, Rs. 175.00; School, Rs. 51.00; Cooks, Rs. 41.00; Maruthuvakula Sangam, Rs. 41.00; R. Letchmanan Chettiar, Rs. 250.00; Miscellaneous Rs. 16.34; Total Rs. 2,149.34.

Tekkala Mahajana Sabha, Rs. 364.00; Kadugannawa, Rs. 864.14.

*Kegala* : General, Rs. 762.40; Auction, Rs. 30.00; Meeting collections<sup>†</sup> Rs. 110.17; Total Rs. 902.57.

Attanagalla, Rs. 210.00; Miscellaneous from Kandy to Colombo, Rs. 102.68½.

*Ambalangoïda* : Tamils, Rs. 265.85; Miscellaneous, Rs. 14.73; Total Rs. 280.58.

Balpitiva, Rs. 50.00; Dadunduwa, Rs. 55.65; Tirangama, Rs. 129.21; Telawala School, Rs. 11.30.

Moratuwa, Rs. 588.90; Kalatura, Rs. 1,695.85; Horanna, Rs. 472.93; Panadura, Rs. 1810.00.

*Galle* : Udugama Kanganis, Rs. 200.00; Tamilians, Rs. 58.00; Mahajana Sabha, Rs. 180.45; Chettiars, Rs. 501.00; Kanakupillais, Rs. 351.00; Dramatic performance, Rs. 200.00; Mahinda College, Rs. 465.00; Auction, Rs. 20.00; Miscellaneous Rs. 16.00; Further collections general, Rs. 49.10; Total Rs. 2,040.55.

*Matara* : General, Rs. 899.45; Chauffeurs' Union, Rs. 100.00; School children, Rs. 10.000; Maruthuwakula Sangam, Rs. 60.45; Miscellaneous, Rs. 30.00; Individual gifts: Mrs. Prasad, Rs. 50.00; Mr. N. Gunasekara, Rs. 50.00; Mr. J. B. Cardozo, Rs. 25.00; Mr. Sundaram Pillai, Rs. 25.00; Hon. Mr. Abeyasekhara, Rs. 500.00; Total Rs. 1,839.90.

Godagama, Rs. 150.00; Akmimana, Rs. 250.00; Ambalawatta, Rs. 21.60; London Ceylonese Students by T.

M. O. Rs. 53.00; another by M. O. Rs. 6.00; Ganemulla, Rs. 200.54.

Tricomalee, Rs. 392.00; Auction, Rs. 10.00; Total Rs. 402.00.

Palai, Rs. 20.51; Nathandiya Estate, Rs. 45.50.

Total for mofussil excluding Colombo and Jaffna: Rs. 46,529.54.

*Jaffna*: General, Rs. 1,957.10; Depressed Classes Service League, Rs. 180.00; Village Committees, Rs. 709.75; Meeting Collections, Rs. 32.49; Parameshwara College, Rs. 536.60; Manipari Hindu College, Rs. 501.00; Malayan subscribers through *Hindu Organ*, Rs. 852.50; Chunnakam Rs. 651.46; Auction, Rs. 25.00.

Hindu College, Rs. 707.00; Kandarodai School, Rs. 223.59; Indians in Jaffna, Rs. 1,301.25; Vishvakarma Co-operative Society, Rs. 115.45; Chunnakam depressed class school foundation, Rs. 10.00; Indians' meeting, Rs. 46.06; Anurdhapura individual, Rs. 30.00; Chavalacheri, Rs. 213.50, Koppai, Rs. 144.00; Tondamanuru, Rs. 400.00; Viyamagatunur temple, Rs. 90.81.

Valvettiturai, Rs. 470.25; Auction Rs. 6.00.

Pt. Pedro, Rs. 1,014.49; Through Secretary, Jaffna Urban Council, Rs. 52.42; Chivateru, Rs. 259.57; Jaffna labourers, Rs. 594.98; Meeting, Rs. 48.95½; Chemma Street, Rs. 107.00; St. John's College, Rs. 258.80; Central College, Rs. 276.00; Ramanathan Girls' College, Rs. 1,111.08; Malakan English School, Rs. 101.00; Tellipalai, Rs. 617.20; Chulipuram and Chenkanai, Rs. 309.00; Victoria College, Rs. 280.00; Sithankarai School, Rs. 105.00; Vaddukkodai, Rs. 35.00; Jaffna College, Rs. 600.00; Karainagar, Rs. 538.40; Jaffna Railway Station collections and through Lady Ramanathan, Rs. 129.60; Morlay and Kolapurani, Rs. 280.40; Islands Kayts, Rs. 650.03; Pandateruvur English School, Rs. 31.32; Hospital matron and

## KHADI COLLECTIONS IN CEYLON 159

nurses, Rs. 10.00; Vavuniya, Rs. 125.00; Madavadri, Rs. 106.75; Auction Rs. 1,147.00; Miscellaneous, Rs. 297.25; Total Jaffna collections, Rs. 18,291.05½.

Grand Total	Rs. 1,05,016.02½
Less deficit in value of sovereigns (54) at 7 cents	3.78
Bad coins	12.12½
Net Total	1,05,000.12
	= Rs. 1,05,00-2-0
	Rs. A. P.
Deposited in the Bank (M. C. U. B)	1,04,487 5 4
Cash on hand	148 9 5
Cheques awaiting realisation having been returned as irregular	364 3 3
<b>Total</b>	<u>1,05,000 2 0</u>

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# INDIGENOUS INDIAN BANKING

*A Paper read at the Royal Society of Arts, London*

BY

M. M. S. GUBBAY, C.S.I., C.I.E.

*General Manager, P. & O. Banking Corporation, Ltd.  
Late Controller of Currency and Financial  
Secretary to the Government of India.*

*With a Discussion*

BY

SIR HENRY STRAKOSCH, G.B.E.; E.L. PRICE, C.I.E.; O.B.E.;  
SIR SELWYN FREMANTLE, C.S.I.; A. GOPALJI, M.Sc.;  
SIR CHARLES STUART BAYLEY, G.C.I.E., K.C.S.I.;  
FRANCIS SKRINE, I.C.S. (Retd.); and  
SIR REGINALD A. MANT,  
K.C.I.E., C.S.I.

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1928

## PUBLISHERS' NOTE

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*The Publishers' thanks are due to Mr. M. M. S. Gubbay, and the Royal Society of Arts, for kindly permitting them to reprint the Lecture and the Discussion thereon, from their Journal Vol. LXXVI, No. 3915, dated December 2, 1927.*

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# PROCEEDINGS OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF ARTS

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## INDIAN SECTION

*Friday, November 11th, 1927*

SIR HENRY STRAKOSCH, G.B.E., in the Chair.

THE CHAIRMAN said the subject of the lecture that evening, Indigenous Indian Banking, was one that was both interesting and, in view of its close connection with the question of establishing in India a true Central Bank, very important. He hoped the discussion on the paper would be an exhaustive one and would be of help to those who would be called upon, in accordance with the proposals of the Indian Currency Commission, to study the subject of Indigenous Indian Banking. He thought it would have been quite possible to be without a Chairman at that Meeting, because Mr. Gubbay hardly needed an introduction, being well-known both in this country and in India through his long and distinguished career as a public servant of the Government of India, and latterly as General Manager of the P. and O. Bank. Mr. Gubbay's career in the Public

Service was a very distinguished one. He filled the important posts of Collector of Customs at Bombay, Wheat Commissioner for India, Controller of Currency, and finally Financial Secretary of the Government of India. All those functions had brought him into close contact with the subject on which he was reading the paper.

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## INDIGENOUS INDIAN BANKING

BY

M. M. S. GUBBAY, C.S.I., C.I.E.

*General Manager, P. & O. Banking Corporation, Ltd.*

I propose to discuss in this paper the position, as it presents itself to me under existing conditions, of two important groups in the Indian banking system. The customary description of this system distinguishes, on the one hand, between the organised Banks, that is, Banks working on joint stock principles, and the private Indian banker, that is, the *shroff, chetty, mahajan*, working on private account and outside the provisions of the Companies Act. As to the organised Banks, these again are classified according as their capital is in sterling or in rupees, and their management and control is outside India or in India. Among Banks with rupee capital and local management, the Imperial Bank is differentiated from other joint stock Banks with rupee capital and local management, and these latter, again, are distinct from the Co-operative Banks working under special statutory provisions. The purport of this paper is to attempt an appreciation of the present and future position of the joint stock

Banks with rupee capital and local management, and of the private Indian banker, under the general scheme which is being evolved as the outcome of the Royal Commission's recommendations for the reform of the Indian banking system.

The Government Statistics on Banking recorded the existence in 1925 of 74 joint stock Banks. Their paid-up capital and reserves aggregated Rs. 11.78 crores: their deposits Rs. 57.91 crores. These 74 Banks include 46 Banks whose capital and reserves ranged between 1 lac and 5 lacs, and whose deposits amounted to under Rs. 3½ crores. The balance Rs. 54.49 crores was distributed among 28 Banks: and among these, six Banks between them accounted for no less than Rs. 47.30 crores. Of these six Banks, two, the Bank of Baroda and the Bank of Mysore, are the Bankers of the Indian States in which they operate: they do not fall, therefore, in the same category as the remainder, whose activities are purely commercial, and who have not the advantage of acting as State or Government Bankers. Of these four institutions, which are really the sole important instances in India of purely private enterprise engaged in banking on a joint

stock basis, two are of Bombay origin, the Bank of India, and the Central Bank of India, the Punjab National Bank, as its name implies, originated in the Punjab; and the Allahabad Bank in the United Provinces. This latter Bank enjoys the distinction of being by far the oldest of these joint stock Banks, having been founded in 1865. Having established itself in the United Provinces and the Punjab and Central Provinces and formed a strong and extensive local connection in the mofussil, it has moved its headquarters in recent years to Calcutta. It affords a solitary instance, among Banks of its kind, of the entry of a purely mofussil Bank into the commercial banking of a Presidency town. In all other cases where branch banking has been part of the policy followed, the development has been outwards from the Presidency town. Another feature which is common to these Banks, is the persistence of separate individual organisations: with the exception of the Central Bank of India, which has absorbed the Tata Industrial Bank, there has been no case of fusion or amalgamation.

The chief business of these joint stock Banks is concentrated in the Presidency towns, the large sea-ports, and the more important

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commercial centres up-country. It is here alone that opportunities offer, on a large scale, for the suitable investment of banking funds. The branches act as feeders, the funds that they can attract being mostly remitted to the Banks offices at the chief commercial cities. Suitable local investments are not, as a rule, available to these branches. The borrowing propositions which come before a branch Agent, rarely conform to the requisite standards of security of maturity. In most cases, personal security, or a personal guarantee of another party is offered : where house or landed property is tendered as cover for accommodation, the advance is usually required as a continuing loan, liquidation to be spread over an extended period. This lack of suitable banking investments available to branches has a twofold effect. In the first place, it results in the rates which branch Banks can offer for deposits being determined, not by the measure of the local demand for accommodation, but by the rates at which these deposits can be invested in well-secured short term commitments at the commercial centres. In the second place, it forces the branch Bank to leave to other agencies, generally to the private banker, the function of supplying the local needs for accommodation.

We have here one important factor to account for the slow development of branch banking in India. High rates of interest prevail in the Indian bazaar, and very notably in the mofussil bazaars. Some evidence of bazaar rates for money is available in the Controller of Currency's Reports. The Report for 1927 gives the bazaar bill rate in Calcutta as between  $10\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. and 11 per cent. : these are the rates at which the bills of smaller traders are discounted by *shroffs*. The Imperial Bank *hundi* rate in 1926-1927 did not exceed 7 per cent., and was as low as 3 per cent. in the slack months : the *hundi* rate of the Imperial Bank is, of course, the rate at which that institution will discount or rediscount first class three months bills ; and, in practice, this rate has reference to bills which bear the endorsement of a *shroff* whose signature is acceptable to the Bank. Of mofussil rates there is no regular official record, some line can be drawn from the rates prevalent in Bombay and Calcutta : and from the rates at which *chetties*, who are largely engaged in financing internal trade transactions in Madras and Burma and Ceylon, borrow from organised Banks. Advances to *chetties* are generally on the basis of 2 per cent. above Imperial Bank rate with a

minimum of 7 per cent. Bank advances on grain, seeds and produce are generally on the basis of 8 to 9 per cent. Looking to the margin between the rates which Banks pay for deposits and these rates, it might seem that there should be a large scope for the remunerative employment of funds in the mofussil. But, in point of fact, the position is quite the opposite. The high rates which can be earned in the mofussil are, to a large extent, caused by the fact that banking funds can only, to a very limited extent, be employed in the mofussil ; the security which is offered to cover an advance is not suitable ; in a general way it is known that the funds are required to finance the movement or purchase of produce, or of imported goods : the drawer of the *hundi* or the borrower may be known generally to be engaged in the marketing of produce or imported goods ; the bill or the advance purports to be based on goods purchased or about to be purchased : but there is, as yet, under conditions as they exist in India, no means available to the Bank to connect the bill or advance with any particular lot of goods or produce : sale contracts, invoices, documents of title are usually not tendered in support of the bill or advance. It rests really on the general

security of the assets of the parties to the bill or the borrower. There will, of course, be cases in which it is possible to secure the segregation, from among the borrower's general assets, of the particular goods which are to represent the security on which the Bank can rely for its advance, but such cases are not the general rule. In the vast majority of instances the business offering is on the basis of the borrower's general credit position—without hypothecation of any particular assets as cover for the accommodation desired.

Branch Banking has, for these reasons, very largely left this business to the private Indian banker to handle, and has, in the main, directed its activity in the mofussil to the purpose of securing deposits for use at the Presidency towns and the larger commercial centres. Naturally there must, in the circumstances, be a great disparity between the rates which Banks can offer for funds, and the rates which the bazaar can afford to pay, and can expect to earn in bazaar operations; and this disparity has affected the power of Banks to tap local funds in competition with the bazaar. Much has been said and written about the urgent necessity of developing banking habits in India. There is

no manner of doubt whatever that the wider use of the cheque, in place of the currency note and the silver rupee, is an essential requirement from all points of view, and I am in entire agreement with the policy which has resulted in the exemption of the cheque from stamp duty. I do not doubt, also, that the recent expansion of the branch system of the Imperial Bank will have a great effect in the direction of stimulating the use of the cheque. But progress in this direction will not, by itself, put before branch Banking in India a clearer prospect of greater development. I imagine that the experience of the branches of the Imperial Bank is not sensibly different from that of the branches of other Banks. It is, perhaps, possible that, because the Imperial Bank has the use free of interest of Government balances, and has also the means, through the Government account, of cheapening to the trader the cost of transfer of funds between one inland point and another, its branches can offer to traders facilities on terms more favourable than those which other Banks can afford; and will, thereby, show a degree of development which, statistically, will give cause for satisfactory comment. But if this development, as is claimed by the other

joint stock Banks, does not represent, substantially, that organised Banking is taking a larger share in the financing of internal trade transactions, it must be conceded that it is premature to express gratification at the numerical increase of offices where Banking facilities are available in the mofussil.

This difficulty which faces organised Banking in its penetration in the mofussil may be considered from another aspect. In a general way, it is known that the part played by organised Banking in the financial life of the people of India is inconsiderable when contrasted with that which is played by the private Indian banker. There are no precise data available as to the extent of the operations of the latter. He is to be found everywhere, in every village, town and city in the country. The type ranges from the small village capitalist to the wealthy, well-established private partnership, generally a family partnership of merchant bankers which has agencies in and outside India. A special type is that of the *chetty* community in Madras, where there exists something approaching to joint responsibility of the community as a whole for the liabilities of individual mem-

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many cases accounts can be maintained with these Indian bankers on which operations by cheque are permissible, and I have been informed on good authority of one case at least in which on such current accounts as high a rate as 6 per cent. is allowed. It is also known that funds lie with these Indian bankers on time deposit, at rates much above those which are available from the Banks. Occasionally, when disaster overtakes one of these private bankers, figures are mentioned of their liabilities to private persons, which point to their ability to attract considerable sums. I see no reason to doubt the commonly accepted view that both because these private bankers can afford to pay attractive rates of interest, as well as because their requirements as to security are less rigid, their participation in the financial life of the community, as a whole, must be on a very extensive scale. Further, they are in intimate daily touch with those with whom they transact business, and can follow the doings of their clients with a closeness which is denied to the Banks. There must be accumulated with these private bankers a store of knowledge and experience of the standing, moral as well as financial, and capacity of individual Indian traders

and Indian trading firms, their business connections and relations on which, if fully organised and systematised, might possibly quite suitably rest an expansion of credit facilities from the Banks.

As things are, however, at present, the only link which we find between the Indian banker and the Banks is supplied by the endorsing *shroff* to whom I have already referred. It is the signature of the *shroff*, who is on the Bank's list of approved *shroffs*, which renders acceptable to the Banks the bill which traders draw. For each *shroff* the Banks have specific limits up to which they will accept paper bearing his endorsement. As to what is behind the paper so made, nothing definite or precise is known. A differentiation is professedly made between paper drawn to finance commercial transactions, and "hand *hundies*," which are pure finance paper : but as in neither case are any documents tendered to the Banks in support of the paper, the differentiation can only rest on general assumptions. In practice the real basis is the personal standing of the *shroff*, supplemented by such knowledge of his general transactions and procedure as can be ascertained by investigation. Some scrutiny is applied by the Banks

to the names of the makers of the paper which the *shroff* endorses : the frequency of the same names may, and does, cause Banks to reject paper made by such parties, even though it may bear the endorsing *shroff's* signature. The functions of the endorsing *shroff*, it should be noted, do not resemble those which, according to European banking practice, are associated with the accepting merchant banker. The business of the endorsing *shroff* is the investment of funds, whether his own, or deposited with him by other parties, in *hundies*. So long as he can carry these *hundies* unaided by Bank funds, he will do so. He looks for his profit to the difference he can secure between the rates at which he can borrow funds, and the rates at which he can employ them in *hundies*. As Banks do not compete with him for the purchase of traders' *hundies*, the *hundi* rate in the bazaar has little relation to Bank rate, and is determined by the *shroffs* themselves. When seasonal movements of produce, or of imported goods, occur so as to cause the supply of *hundies* to increase to a point beyond the capacity of the *shroffs* to finance them, resort is had to the Banks : and endorsing *shroff's* limits are then fully utilised.

The operations of the *shroffs* lie outside the influence of the organised Banking system of the country, and are on the whole, very little affected by the credit policy of the Banks. Only a fractional portion of the demands which the *shroffs* supply being derived from Banking funds, and then only at times of temporary stringency or pressure, it follows that the Banks cannot interfere to moderate the suddenness of the transition between excess and shortage, or *vice versa*. This cause may explain the variations which we find, from experience, to be common in India in the demand for money at different periods of the year. This aspect of the problem will assume an increasing importance when and if a Central Banking authority is called into existence whose function is to be to control credit as well as currency policy. Hitherto, as the Royal Commission has quite rightly observed, there has been no real effective control of the credit situation by any authority, within or outside the Government. Such control, as has been possible at all, has been through the fact that bazaar operations and the general transactions of the country have had to be conducted with silver or note currency, and credit requirements have had to some extent to

follow the supply of currency available. But if we are to assume that an expansion of operations by cheque is to set in in India, and payment by cheque displaces in the bazaar and in the mofussil payment in silver or note currency, what means are available to secure for the Central authority an effective control over the credit operations of the bazaar ?

This question appears to me to be of primary importance, and its solution does not appear to me to be simple. I quite appreciate and understand that a new and increasingly important role will fall to be played by the approved commercial bill in the new equipment which is under construction for the Indian banking system : I can also see that means can be adopted both by the State and the Central authority to encourage the practice of financing by means of bills. Quite possibly, under the effect of these means of encouragement, the cash credit system may, in course of years, give way to the bill, though I personally anticipate that the process will be slow and gradual. But, even assuming that the change comes about rapidly, we shall still be left with the position that there will be lying beyond the influence and reach of the Central authority a very considerable, perhaps

a preponderatingly large amount of financial and commercial transactions which, in the hands of bazaar dealers in credit, will be only indirectly responsive to Bank rate policy. The regulation of the credit policy of the organised Indian joint stock Bank presents no difficulty: these institutions are already in sufficient contact with those charged with Bank rate policy to be sensitive to its effects. But neither they nor the Imperial Bank have so close an association with the bazaar as to be in a position to moderate or govern the operations of the bazaar dealers in credit. If the Central authority is to rely on its own open market operations to make its policy effective in the bazaar, it will only be able to do so by directly assuming commitments which the experience of other Institutions has taught them to avoid, and I do not doubt that this experience will be severely respected. The question then turns on the possibility of bringing about a modification of the basis on which the bazaar *hundi* is now grounded, so that the latter will conform, in those essentials, to the requirements which will make it acceptable as a suitable investment for Banking funds. This change will, at best, be slow in coming, and an essential preliminary is an

investigation of the conditions which now obtain. An extensive and scientific survey of banking conditions formed one of the recommendations of the Royal Commission, and such a survey must necessarily include the study of the means for broadening the channel between the bazaar and the Banks, of enlarging and quickening the contact between these two elements in the Indian banking system, and of securing that credit operations throughout the whole system will respond to the policy of the Central Banking authority.

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## DISCUSSION.

MR. E. L. PRICE, C.I.E., O.B.E.

MR. E. L. PRICE, C.I.E., O.B.E., said he hoped he would not be censured for any irrelevancy, but the subject was rather difficult, especially from the point of view which the lecturer had taken. He had extended the definition of indigenous banking to joint stock Banks modelled on severely British lines, and he would put it to the lecturer that when a Madras gentleman came to London and took his M.D. and returned to Madras and practised Western medicine, would he be inclined to call that indigenous medicine? It was Western medicine practised by an Indian, not empirically, but based on Western methods and training. Indigenous banking should be confined to the operations of the *mahajans*, Marwari bankers, *shroffs*, and so forth. The ordinary man was not worrying about any of those names; he had one word for all of them, *bania*. For that there was a very good and substantial reason. All that so-called "banking" was largely usury, and it was mixed up with dealing in the necessities of life, seed and so forth, and the rates charged, an anna in the rupee per month, ~~were on the basis of 75 per cent per annum~~

*plus* compound interest reckoned monthly, which must actually come to 100 per cent. That was a very common affair. His own feeling was that the lecturer had given rather greater credit to those institutions than they deserved. They were essentially the money-lending fraternity, usurious; and the bulk of the money they lent consisted of their own family funds, not deposits collected in the ordinary banking way. He should like to go back to the essential basis of Banking. In the case of Insurance, everybody would recognise at once that however it might be organised it was essentially a co-operative business. Some people formed themselves into mutual societies, but in other cases the company was really only the manager for the accumulated risks and liabilities. It was the same with banking. He had read the Report of the National Provincial Bank, and he noticed that the amount due to the shareholders for the capital they put up was just under  $7\frac{1}{2}$  millions and the amount due to the depositors for what they had put up was 260 millions. That meant that in banking proper the shareholders put up enough money to make the expert organisation but practically the whole trading capital of

the Bank was put up by the depositors. It must be much the same in India. The shareholders' returns might seem very handsome from a dividend point of view, but from the point of view of the balance sheet they were a very small item, and from the point of view of the turnover they were absolutely insignificant. If that essential fact had only got into the minds of those who opposed the original Government proposals for an Indian Reserve Bank, he could not think they would have taken the course they did. They exaggerated the importance of the share capital and the dividends payable thereon; from the very start it was going to be limited and the profits over a certain amount were to go back to Government. That Reserve Bank was held up and all that it implied, and he was shocked to see it suggested in the *Statist*, the other day, that the Imperial Bank of India might be patched up and carried on as a Reserve Bank. The man who wrote that could not be aware of the facts. The Imperial Bank of India as a Bankers' Bank had failed wholly and irretrievably. He was not saying it was its own fault. As soon as the Imperial Bank was constituted out of the old Presidency Banks, the Government forced upon it the

multiplication of branches, and there were now one hundred branches. The net result was bad. It was forced into a sort of commercial Banking, and as a natural result it had to desert its previous province of Bankers' Banking. He believed branches were established by the National Bank of Australia, but had seldom heard of them being found anywhere else. It was certainly not the practice of the Bank of England, but was partly the practice of the Bank of France. The Imperial Bank was not in the purview of the Royal Currency Commission, and he did not see, at the present time, in the present position of the Imperial Bank with all its hundred commercial branches, that it could possibly retrace its steps and become a Bankers' Bank. The position of the Imperial Bank to his mind was a very serious one from the point of view of Banking in India. The Imperial Bank not only had free money from Government on which it paid no interest at all but was supposed to render certain services, but had obtained large public funds from other bodies. Municipalities, Port Trusts, and a number of old established Companies were all bound by their Articles of Association to lodge money with the Imperial Bank, which was the only one in India

that paid no interest at all on current accounts. It had no need to, because the money came to it for nothing. It offered no interest as a rule on short period deposits. When he left India at the end of August, it was offering  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. for twelve month deposits, and if nobody wanted to deposit for twelve months it would not take the money, but it had a Savings Bank Department for petty sums. The Imperial Bank, endowed with free capital funds, handicapped Banking generally not so endowed. The lecturer had said that the deposits in the seventy-four Indian Banks were a shade under 58 crores, roughly  $43\frac{1}{2}$  million pounds. The population—and he thought the lecturer must have taken All-Indian figures—was 320 millions. Dividing the one into the other it did not come to 3/- per head. There were also the Post Offices, the Exchange Banks and the Co-operative Banks and lumping them all in and so multiplying the known figures of the 74 known Banks by 3, it was not possible to get the bank deposits up to a miserable 10/- per head. When bank deposits from people did not average 10/- a head, Banking could be hardly said to exist. People were spending their time trying to differentiate the species when they had not established the

existence of the genus ! There was a meeting of the London Institute of Bankers the other day, and he noticed that the Chairman, Mr. Frederick Hyde, was extremely indignant ; he said that a number of people were carrying more money about with them and the Bank funds were not so full as they should be, and he wanted to know how the Banks were going to finance industry if people ceased to put money into them. How were the Banks in India going to finance anything if Indians would not put their money in ? If it was said that the deposits were small because the people were poor, what about hoarding ? A number of estimates of the hoarding in India had been made, and that hoarding had been going on from time immemorial. In the crucial year, 1924-25, when gold was most required to enable this and other countries in Europe to stabilise currency, India added a good fifty millions to her hoard of gold. The Americans appeared to know something about hoarding in these days, and he felt inclined to take the figures given by the American Trade Commissioner, who put the value of gold and silver hoarded at 1,000 millions sterling. Comparing that with the Bank deposits, 43½ millions, it meant that for every £1 banked in India £11 was hoarded. He should

like to describe how that hoarding ran from top to bottom of the social scale. He was at an arbitration not so many years ago and ultimately the parties came to terms, and cash had to be paid—a very large sum of over a quarter of a lakh of rupees. The paying party rose from his chair and produced a neatly-folded, very cheap, probably gaol-made, towel, opened it, and in it there was over a lakh of rupees in currency notes. That man said he always carried his money in that way. There was an Indian he knew quite well who had buried 300 sovereigns for seventeen years, and then dug them up and sold them for 20 rupees each, making a profit, but that profit was nothing to the steady income he had lost during the seventeen years, and he was a poor man. There was a rich man who died, and his sons were in great grief because the old man had bought 5,000 sovereigns and they could not find them; he had hidden them, and they suspected it was in the garden of his country-house, but they never found them. They were lost, not merely to the family, but to civilisation! There was a dealer in Bombay, an educated man, who had several banking accounts and large investments, and in course of speculation came into the hands of the

Official Receiver. He honestly returned his assets as including over 3 lakhs of silver, which had remained undisturbed in his house for thirty years, and on an estimate he must have lost in interest three times the value of the hoard. The position seemed to him to be pretty desperate. The English banker said that the people must bank their money, and with that money everybody who was producing, should be scientifically equipped. Without that money the Indian producer was struggling as best he could with his bare hands, and his efforts of production were low and inefficient. Remembering that £11 was hoarded in India for £1 invested, was it to be wondered that Indian labour was inefficient and that people were ill-educated and ill-equipped in every way? Personally he had great faith in Co-operative Banks, but ways must be devised to induce people to bank their money and not hoard it, because, while they hoarded, their bad monetary habits were making things much worse both for themselves and the rest of the world.

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**SIR SELWYN FREMANTLE, C.S.I.**

SIR SELWYN FREMANTLE, C.S.I., said he had been very much encouraged by what Mr. Price had said with regard to the branch of Banking in which he was interested, and had been interested for the last twenty years, from the time he was Registrar of Co-operative Societies in India. He thought the idea underlying the paper was that in the interest of industry and trade it is highly desirable to extend banking facilities over a wider area. The Industrial Commission in their Report, which was published towards the end of the war, said that there were many small towns in India without any banking facilities at all, and that the volume of business which went on in those towns would be quite sufficient in Europe and America to warrant the establishment of a branch Bank, even if it only opened two or three times a week. The lecturer had explained the reasons why even the extension of branches of joint stock Banks would not be likely to fill that void; the fact was that they did not cater for the small traders or industrialists or agriculturists. The security which the people could give was not such as the Bank could accept. Moreover joint stock Banking in India had received somewhat of a

set-back owing to the failure of the Banks which were founded in great numbers two decades ago, and which mostly collapsed before the beginning of the war. The failure of the Alliance Bank had been a considerable shock to confidence in Upper India to people who might have been expected to avail themselves of joint stock Banks for deposits. The branches of joint stock Banks, which had been and were being established, besides keeping current accounts for officials and professional men, had as their function to accept deposits and send them to the commercial centres because they could not be utilised locally. It seemed to him that urban Co-operative Societies, known as People's Banks, could, to a great extent, fill up the gap which admittedly existed in the system at present. Mr. Price had made a most interesting speech, and the instances he had given of the amount of money lying idle in hoards all over the country were very striking. He had had experience of it. If in some small agriculturist family 100 or 200 rupees was required to pay a man's fine or cost for a law-suit, the money always appeared. No one knew the extent of the hoarding of India, but it was very great. It might be said that there were at present a

very considerable number of urban Co-operative Societies in India, but they were mainly in Bombay and Madras, small societies formed amongst employees of a particular firm or small artisans, and they did not as a rule take up the functions of commercial banking. In Germany the popular Co-operative Banks were very different. There they attempted—and to a great extent succeeded—to perform all the functions of joint stock Banks. Ever since they had started they had been in direct competition with branches of joint stock Banks, but they had increased and multiplied until now there were over 2,000 of them. He believed they generally advanced money on cash credit accounts, the amount of which was secured by bond, but they also discounted bills and so on. The popular banks in Italy were not so numerous, but they were much larger and generally more important. They advanced money against cash credits and also against goods, securities and valuables. Those institutions had done a very great deal for their countries, and the French Government was so impressed by what they had done that in 1917, while the war was going on, they passed a law to establish such banks and for providing a credit for

them to the extent of 12 million francs, raised afterwards to 50 million francs. In the course of three years, eighty such banks were established. There seemed no reason why Banks of Co-operative character should not succeed in meeting the wants of the people if joint stock Banks failed to do so. There was a very great difference between the two, although to some extent, they did the same kind of business. In the first place the shares were kept as low as possible ; he believed 100 lire was the largest share in any popular Italian bank, some being as low as 5 or 6 lire, and they could be paid by instalments. The dividend was limited sometimes by law and sometimes by custom, and that, of course, made a very great difference. They took a special interest in the savings of the poor man by giving him special terms, and also by issuing money boxes in order that smaller sums might be collected. The rate of interest charged was very low, 7 or 8 per cent. being the highest rate, and in some cases it was even as low as  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. The *castalietto* was a kind of normal credit allowed for each person, and in the case of small people who had nothing except their personal credit, they had officers who went carefully into the objects of loans, and only

allowed them when they were convinced of their utility. If such Banks were established in India in large numbers they would have the benefit of the advice and help of the Registrar of Co-operative Societies in each Province, which would ensure that their business was conducted in a more or less businesslike way. There would be difficulties in connection with such Banks, but certainly not difficulties that could not be overcome, and he thought there was a very great scope for them in India. Another point at which Co-operative Banking came into touch with joint stock Banking, was in the arrangement by which each major Province, except one, had a Provincial Co-operative Bank, which in several cases had got into touch with the Imperial Bank, and had a cash credit account with them. The arrangements had not been long in existence, and were capable of almost unlimited expansion. The matter was of the very first importance, because the time of year when the money was required for agricultural operations, which the Co-operative Credit Societies chiefly financed, was the time of year, July to October, when he understood there was a glut of money in the Presidency towns. With regard to Land Mortgage Banks,

it had been recognised for a long time that they were of value in India in order to enable the landowners to raise capital for liquidation of their debts, and for the improvement of their land, the purchase of agricultural machinery, and so on. Another matter which was quite clear to those who were acquainted with the history of the Agricultural Bank of Egypt, was that too easy credit was not a thing that should be given to agriculturists, and that Mortgage Banks should be established on co-operative principles as in Germany and elsewhere. Recently, there had been a move in several Provinces towards the formation of such Banks, and in the previous week the Bombay Government had developed a scheme by which they would establish a Co-operative Bank for each area and assist the Banks in raising funds. Such Banks could be only financed by long term money raised by debentures, and for this the assistance of Government working through the money market was necessary.

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## MR. A. GOPALJI, M.Sc.

MR. A. GOPALJI, M.Sc., said that Mr. Price had expressed himself with great enthusiasm, and if enthusiasm were an argument he had certainly won his case. He appeared to think that Indians could claim nothing to their credit, but he should like him to read some authoritative history of civilisation, and would call his attention to the opinion of Professor A. H. L. Heeren, a great authority from that point of view, who said that the whole civilisation of Europe and of the West had been derived from India. There was also a book entitled "Hindu Superiority," dealing with the subject, by Pandit Haryilas Sarda, a member of the Legislative Assembly, which he would recommend Mr. Price to read. The people of India wished to adapt European institutions to suit their own needs and their own genius, not to imitate them. They wanted all the best. Many European institutions, which had been grafted on India perforce, though with goodwill, by foreign rulers, Indians were now striving to get rid of, because they did not suit their conditions. Indians should not take everything that they saw—all was not gold that glittered. With regard to the question of usury, there was a celebrated classic entitled

“ ‘ Prosperous ’ British India,” by Mr. William Digby, which showed that the poor people under the stress of Government taxes were driven to the despised *bania*, who enjoyed the protection of the British Government.

SIR CHARLES STUART BAYLEY, G.C.I.E., K.C.S.I., suggested that the *bania* and usury were also to be found in Native States.

MR. GOPALJI said he quite realised that point. Usury was a universal thing and was practised by the people who wanted to make money. The situation had to be realised from all points of view. As the Minority Report of Mr. Thakur-das indicated, the Banking system in India was regulated more in the interests of London than India. The Report was thoroughly documented and deserved consideration by those who wished to criticise. With regard to the hoarding habits of the people, he thought that was a saving factor of the situation, because, were it not for the hoarding habit, India would have been wiped out of existence long ago. Indians were in existence to-day because of their habits of parsimony. If they were not educated and taught to invest their money, why blame them because they did not do so? The paper was a

very instructive one, and he asked everyone interested to read the Minority Report which thoroughly threshed out the question of Indian conditions.

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## MR. FRANCIS SKRINE, I.C.S. (RETD.)

MR. FRANCIS SKRINE, I.C.S. (Retd.), said he could give some idea of the state of things in Bengal in connection with Indigenous Banking. The title of the lecture he thought was somewhat of a misnomer, because three-fourths of it was taken up by the subject of joint stock Banks, which were not indigenous, but purely exotic, and the growth of the last few years. Mr. Price had said that the *bantias* were usurers, which was rather a hard word. The *bania* in Bengal, *mahajans*, as they were called in the mofussil, performed a very useful, indeed indispensable, function as long as the people were so ignorant as they were. The *mahajan's* clientèle was mainly composed of cultivators or small traders, to whom he advanced certain sums in cash every year, taking the whole of the crops from the agriculturists, storing them up and disposing of them. He was supposed to credit the cultivators with the profit, and advanced them the necessary seed at the proper time, as well as loans for ceremonies, on which an enormous amount of money was wasted. Without the *mahajan*, the cultivation of Bengal could not go on at all. The problem was very difficult; it was to graft on the system of private enterprise a system of Agricultural Banks where everyone

was responsible—jointly and severally responsible—for advances made to individuals. That was the case in Germany and in Italy, where the People's Banks did a vast amount of good. In India a large amount of Hughli water must run under the Howrah bridge before anything of the kind could be attempted. In Ireland, Sir Horace Plunkett had told him that while he was engaged in preaching the gospel of People's Banks, he was addressing an audience, mainly agricultural, in the South and explaining the system; an old peasant got up and said, "Shure, what your honour wants is that I shall guarantee £100 for my neighbour, and I will do so if he guarantees the same amount for me." It was a process analogous to kite flying, which was only too common in the towns of Europe. The hoarding habit was universal in India. There were 50 millions of gold absorbed by India in the most critical years through which Europe was passing, when stabilisation was being attempted. India had undergone in the past centuries many invasions, and the general fear of the future made people believe that there was nothing so safe as burying their gold or silver or turning it into women's ornaments. Some Native Princes set a very bad example in that respect. He knew of an Indian Prince

who had hoarded 16 million English sovereigns. Mr. Price had estimated the hoards of India at 1,000 million, but he would put it considerably higher. With regard to the lecturer's opinion that the cheque should be more used in India, that was a thing of the very remote future. The idea of the cheque was not common outside Great Britain and America. In France, where he spent the winter of last year, he had the greatest difficulty in getting a cheque for £20 cashed ; it took him three weeks to do it in the place he was staying, a remote corner of Province. The bank opened once a week, on market day, and the manager said he had no advice from Avignon, and that went on for three weeks. If such was the case in France, how very remote must be the contingency in India ! The use of a cheque book implied considerable education ; a man must at least be able to write his name, and only about 10 per cent. of the Indian population could do that. The difficulty of grafting a co-operative and cheque system on Indian methods, and inducing people to invest their money instead of hoarding it, would be simply enormous. At present their hidden hoards were a great delight to burglars.

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## SIR HENRY STRAKOSCH, G.B.E.

SIR HENRY STRAKOSCH, the Chairman, said that before concluding the discussion on Mr. Gubbay's very interesting paper, on which he wished to congratulate him, he should like to make a few comments on it. His knowledge of local banking conditions and practices in India was very limited, and if he ventured to offer some comments—with great diffidence—it was because of the very clear exposition of these conditions and practices in Mr. Gubbay's paper. His comments were based on these and on the little knowledge he acquired during a brief stay in India two years ago. Mr. Gubbay appeared to be doubtful as to how a Central Banking System, such as was recommended by the Royal Commission, could be superimposed on the existing Indigenous Banking System in India. His doubts seemed to be based mainly on two considerations :—

First, the absence in native banking of securities of a character acceptable to an ordinary joint stock Bank or to the contemplated Reserve Bank of India ; and secondly, the difficulty of establishing that touch between the joint stock Banks and the native traders which was necessary if the business of the latter was to be brought within the ambit of the general banking machinery of the country working under the control of a Central Bank.

On the first point, the absence of a security suitable to a joint stock or central Bank, he thought Mr. Gubbay was labouring under a misapprehension. He seemed to be under the impression that, for a bill of exchange to become eligible for discount as a true commercial bill, it was indispensable that it should be supported by documentary evidence in the form of sale contracts, invoices, or documents of title of the goods in respect of which the bill had been drawn. It was true that, in the case of overseas bills drawn on London, invoices and shipping documents were attached, but those documents were released as soon as the bill had been accepted. From then onwards the bill circulated without any of those documents to support it. As far as domestic bills in this country, America, and the Continent were concerned, they were usually unaccompanied by any such supporting documents. They were, nevertheless, accepted as true commercial bills fit for discount in the Money Market and at the joint stock Banks, and for rediscount at the Central Bank, if the relations between the drawer and acceptor were such as to satisfy them of the legitimacy of the document as a true commercial bill. The bill of

a well-established hide merchant and accepted by a well-established tannery firm, for instance, would, in all probability, pass muster without question, even though no documents were tendered. A great many bills in this country, especially those connected with overseas trade, furnished on the face of them quite full particulars of the commodities on which they were based, but there were also bills in this country, but particularly on the Continent of Europe, which were regarded as true commercial bills, even though there was no specific reference in the body of the bill to the transaction on which they were based. A common form on the Continent, for instance, was to simply say, in the body of the bill, that it was drawn in respect of goods. The words usually employed were—"Value in goods." Yet those bills were freely taken by the Banks and rediscounted by the Central Banks, where they were satisfied, from their general knowledge of the drawer's and acceptor's business, that the bills represented genuine commercial transactions. In the United States, the regulations of the Federal Reserve Board required that a bill tendered to a Federal Reserve Bank should "be drawn so as to evidence the character of

the underlying transaction, but if it is not so drawn, evidence of eligibility may consist of a stamp or certificate affixed by the acceptor or drawer in a form satisfactory to the Federal Reserve Bank." In the case of bills which made no reference to the nature of the specific transaction to which they referred, and on which doubts arose in the minds of the discount broker, or banker, who was asked to discount the bill, it was customary for them to make enquiries regarding the circumstances in which the bill had come into being. That information was hardly ever refused, for the good reason that it did not pay to do so. Unless satisfactory information was furnished in those circumstances, the bill was either not taken or, if taken, only at substantially less favourable rates than would be obtainable for a good commercial bill. When once the trader learned to appreciate that a bill representing an exchange of goods commanded a readier market and a better price, he would probably be most anxious to conform to the requirements of the banker to satisfy him that the bill did truly represent such an exchange of goods. Self-interest would drive him to do so.

That was the experience of other countries, and he did not think that the Indian trader,

native banker, or *shroff*, would be less astute in taking full advantage of such a situation.

The second point was Mr. Gubbay's doubt whether it would be possible to establish that close touch between the joint stock Banks and the native banker and trader which was necessary if the business of the latter was to be brought within the ambit of the general banking machinery of the country under the control of a Central Bank. He understood Mr. Gubbay to say that the business of the Indian community rested almost entirely in the hands of the private native bankers, *shroffs*, and others, owing to two facts, *viz.*, that—

“ They are able to give high rates for deposits because they are able to obtain high rates for accommodation granted,” and—

“ They are in intimate daily touch with their clients, whose doings they can follow with a closeness which is denied to the Banks.”

In so far as high rates for accommodation were justified by the speculative nature of the transaction, they were not likely to appeal to the Banks. If the business of the native banker and *shroff* were confined to transactions

of a highly speculative character, the losses which they would unavoidably make from time to time would be sufficient to depress the rates which they could afford to allow to their depositors—if, indeed, the depositors were not frightened away altogether. The assumption seemed to be legitimate, therefore, that a good portion of the business which the native bankers and *shroffs* do was not really speculative, and needed merely to be cast into a form which would justify more favourable terms and render the business acceptable to the joint stock Banks. He saw no good reason why it should not be possible to cast it into such form. When once there was a clearer understanding that certain classes of credit operations were welcomed by the Banker, and that they could be carried through on more advantageous terms, the native trading and banking community would not be slow in complying with the requirements of the big joint stock Banks. To illustrate this; before the Federal Reserve System was established in the United States in 1914, a bill of exchange was practically an unknown thing in America. Promissory notes (that is, one name paper) were the order of the day. Yet within a

comparatively short period of time the community adjusted itself to the new conditions, which was strikingly illustrated by the following figures :—

MILLIONS.			
VOLUME DURING MONTH.			
BILLS DISCOUNTED DURING (Bills discounted for Mem- ber Banks) .. .. .	Sept. 1915	Sept. 1916	Sept. 1917
BILLS BOUGHT IN OPEN MAR- KET (Bankers' and trade accep- tances) .. .. .	14	14	548
	5	37	109
	19	51	657

America entered the war in 1917, and that might have a good deal to do with the sudden increase of bills discounted, bought in that year.

With regard to the channels through which a Central Bank reached the wider public, and through which it was enabled to exercise its influence in regard to its credit policy, it was clearly what was generally called the Money Market which constituted that link. A very important element of the Money Market in

London was, of course, the money and discount broker. He employed his own capital and the funds which were placed at his disposal, usually by way of call money, to acquire bills of exchange largely from the trading community. To the extent to which his resources permitted he ran the bills, but, if for one reason or another the funds at his disposal were curtailed, he disposed of the bills either by discounting them at a joint stock Bank, or, if for reasons of stringency they were not prepared to discount them, he took them to the Bank of England, knowing that the Bank of England was always prepared to discount good bills, which were clearly the result of a true commercial transaction.<sup>6</sup> That knowledge was one of the strongest pillars on which our modern credit organisation rested. The bill broker's business, therefore, was a pretty safe one, provided he conformed to these rules, and the profits he earned depended very largely on his turnover. He constituted one of the most important links between the Central Bank and the wide public. From the description which Mr. Gubbay gave, the *shroff* was already performing—it was true, only to a minor extent—those very functions, and therefore was a most valuable nucleus for the establishment

of a real Money Market in India. If he were certain that the joint stock Banks were always ready to lend on, or discount, true commercial bills by reason of the fact that the Reserve Bank of India was always prepared to discount them, there did not seem to be any reason to doubt that the *shroff* whose profit, like that of the bill broker in London, depended on turnover—would seek to acquire such bills wherever they could be obtained. The same remarks, of course, also applied to the small native banker. It would be through these that the influence of the Reserve Bank would reach the bazaars, for it was clearly to the advantage of the *shroff* and of the small banker to borrow money on the security of good bills, at the more favourable rates of the joint stock Banks, rather than to pay high rates for deposit money in the bazaars. That did not, of course, necessarily imply that bazaar rates for business not fit to be undertaken by the joint stock Banks would not remain high, but that was a state of things which obtained in every other country. London also had high "bazaar" rates for business that was not eligible for the Money Market or the Banks—money-lenders' rates. Mr. Gubbay's paper had made him, if anything, even more optimistic

than he was with regard to the possibility of establishing a broad Money Market in India, and, through it, of establishing a strong link with the joint stock Banks and the Reserve Bank of India. He realised that it would take thought, goodwill on the part of the joint stock Banks, labour and time, to establish it on a sufficiently broad basis to enable the Central Bank to make its policy felt widely and rapidly. But even if India were less fortunate—as many other countries had been which had established the Central Banking System—in not possessing so valuable a nucleus for a Money Market, every effort would have to be made to establish one. He was optimistic enough to think that, if a thing was worth attaining, human ingenuity usually conquered the difficulties and attained it. It would be attained when the ethics of sound modern banking had penetrated into the bazaars. Self-interest would make that penetration an easy one. If India was to expand her Banking organisation—and there was a clear consensus of opinion that she must do so if her vast resources were to be adequately exploited—two things were essential: the establishment of a true Central Bank and of a Money Market. To attempt to expand the Banking organisation

without those would be positively dangerous. The growth of the credit organisation must not be the unco-ordinated growth of the jungle, but an ordered growth—a growth which naturally followed from the growth of confidence in the stability of the organisation. Experience had clearly shown that no credit system could be regarded as safe which did not rest on the centralisation of banking reserves and on the mobility of credit through the bill of exchange. No other system had proved adequate in times of crisis. There was a typical experience in the case of the United States, of which it might truly be said that the credit organisation until 1914 had grown up in jungle fashion, unco-ordinated and unorganised. The violent crisis which had shaken the United States at almost regularly recurring intervals had unquestionably retarded the economic progress of that rich continent by decades. If India were unfortunately to be visited by a violent credit crisis, the loss of confidence might set back the clock of banking expansion by a decade or more—not to speak of the stupendous loss it would inflict on her internal economy. The potential wealth of India was immense, and he believed that nothing would help to develop it—and with

it to raise the standard of living of the people of India—so rapidly as the establishment of a sound credit system under the protecting wing of a true Central Bank of issue of the orthodox pattern; but that Bank must be organised on lines which would assure its performing its functions without fear or favour, and free from political or sectional influence, in the sole interest of monetary stability, which implied safe and sound credit conditions. He held strong views on this last point, but it was perhaps better not to enlarge on it lest it should add fuel to the fire of controversy in India of recent months. He confessed himself to be an incorrigible optimist both as regards the possibility of India adapting herself to a modern Central Banking System, and as to the immense benefit the system, if established on orthodox lines, would confer on her. In conclusion he proposed a hearty vote of thanks to Mr. Gubbay for his very instructive paper, and for having thus given an opportunity for an interesting, and fruitful discussion of a very important subject.

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SIR REGINALD A. MANT, K.C.I.E., C.S.I.

SIR REGINALD A. MANT, K.C.I.E., C.S.I. (Chairman of the Indian Section), in moving a hearty vote of thanks to the lecturer and to the Chairman, said the Financial Department of India suffered a great loss when Mr. Gubbay resigned prematurely from the Civil Service, in which he had already made his mark as Controller of Currency and Financial Secretary and had done his bit in the early part of the war as Wheat Commissioner in mobilising the grain resources of India for the benefit of the Allies. When he (the speaker) was in charge of the Department of Revenue and Agriculture, problems were continually arising, but it was found that all that had to be done was to carry on on the lines Mr. Gubbay had initiated. He noticed a little note of pessimism at times in the paper, and he could only hope Mr. Gubbay would be inspired with some of the Chairman's optimism, because Sir Henry Strakosch was one of the leading authorities on Central Banking—the leading authority it might be said. He thought India was very fortunate in securing his services on the Currency Commission.

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The motion was carried unanimously.

MR. GUBBAY, in returning thanks, said it was a great pleasure to him to read the paper. He was afraid that there was a tinge of pessimism in it, and there was still a tinge of it in himself in spite of the Chairman's breezy optimism. He would be prepared to maintain his pessimism against the Chairman's optimism, but he did not wish to detain the audience any longer.

THE CHAIRMAN, having briefly returned thanks, the Meeting then terminated.

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