

FOR PACIFISTS

BY
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THE LONELY PILGRIM OF PEACE

FOR PACIFISTS

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PUBLISHERS' NOTE

The pacifists had proposed to meet in India to be able to have Gandhiji's personal guidance in their work. But God willed otherwise. The pacifists however have very properly declined to change their original plan. They must have thought : If Gandhiji himself is not available to us in his person at least his spirit would be witnessing and guiding our deliberations. Besides, he has worked for peace and goodwill between two powerful contending forces—representing nationalist India and imperialist Britain—in India for over thirty years. To us pacifists who earnestly desire an end of all war and establishment of permanent peace in the world a contact with the men and women who worked with this Man of Peace and with the tradition of *satyagraha* i.e. fight minus ill-will he has left behind him would not only be an inspiration but a practical guide.

We who have been entrusted with the task of publishing Gandhiji's writings naturally felt it our duty to offer to these friends something from Gandhiji's writings to help them in their deliberations. Hence this booklet.

Shri Bharatan Kumarappa willingly undertook to bring together as much relevant matter as could be collected at short notice. He has also in his editorial note tried to bring out the gist of what Gandhiji had to say to all those who want to end war and all lovers of peace who earnestly want to work for it. We draw special attention of the pacifist friends to what Shri Kumarappa has to say in his note because we feel that he has brought out in a nutshell all that Gandhiji had to say on the problem of ending all war and establishing permanent peace.

We feel sure the pacifist friends visiting India and others interested in the problem will appreciate our small contribution to the work of the Pacifist Conference.

Ahmedabad,
19-11-'49

EDITOR'S NOTE

Pacifists from all over the world are assembling early next month in Santiniketan to consider in conference the implications of Gandhiji's teachings on non-violence. They hoped originally to obtain the benefit of Gandhiji's own personal guidance in their deliberations. But unfortunately this could not be, and the conference meets without him.

Under the circumstances it was thought it might be useful to put into their hands in a concise form, extracts from his writings and speeches bearing on non-violence, more especially in relation to problems in which pacifists are interested. Accordingly this booklet has been hurriedly brought together.

A war-worn world, terror-stricken by the prospect of humanity being wiped out *en masse* by the atom bomb, is looking anxiously for an alternative to war. Again, some persons believe that killing of human beings, which war inevitably involves, is contrary to religion. So they will have nothing to do with war. In both cases, it is obvious that the underlying motive of pacifism is negative, viz. avoidance of war.

As against this, Gandhiji's conception is fundamentally positive. His non-violence is not a weapon to be used merely to prevent war. It is, on the contrary, to enter into the very fibre of one's being and revolutionize all sides of one's life — individual, domestic, social, political and economic. The individual is to practise non-violence in his everyday life. He is to see, for example, that he is in no way a party to exploitation and injustice as he is, for instance, when he consumes articles manufactured by capitalists who exploit labour or colonial peoples, or when he supports by his taxes an imperialist government. The

truly non-violent man simplifies his life and reduces his wants so that he does not take for himself more than the humblest of his neighbours. Besides, he is a crusader against every form of oppression and injustice, in non-violently fighting which he is prepared to lay down his life.

It is a far cry, therefore, from pacifism to Gandhiji's idea of non-violence. While pacifism hopes to get rid of war, chiefly by refusing to fight and by carrying on propaganda against war, Gandhiji goes much deeper and sees that war cannot be avoided, so long as the seeds of it remain in man's breast and grow and develop in his social, political and economic life. Gandhiji's cure is therefore very radical and far-reaching. It demands nothing less than rooting out violence from oneself and from one's environment.

It remains to be seen whether the world will accept Gandhiji's method. It involves much self-restraint and renunciation, while the whole tendency under a modern industrialized civilization is towards self-indulgence and multiplication of wants. Western pacifists wish, as a rule, to maintain their standard of living and are not prepared to lower it in any way. All they seek is some way of doing away with war, without changing in the slightest their mode of life. They want both God and mammon. It is hoped that this booklet will reveal to lovers of peace the folly of this position.

To many pacifists, Gandhiji's participation in war at various times in his life has seemed an enigma and a mystery. An attempt has therefore been made here to let him explain himself in this regard as fully as possible.

It must not be thought that this booklet gives a complete picture of Gandhiji's teachings in regard to non-violence. For this, one must turn to the two volumes of *Non-violence in Peace and War*. All that could be done here was to present in as small a space as possible the gist of his teachings in so far as they are relevant

to the problems of interest to pacifists. Accordingly, emphasis is here laid chiefly on general principles and on international problems rather than problems of Indian origin and setting.

The chapter headings are our own, as well as, of course, the arrangement of the material.

Bombay,
November, 1949

Bharatan Kumarappa

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