

ENGLAND AND INDIA

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BY

R. GORDON MILBURN



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APPENDIX I

I

SERMON TO SOLDIERS, PREACHED AT DUM DUM

WHEN a clergyman, who ordinarily has nothing to do with troops, comes to address soldiers, I believe he usually begins to talk about military things and to employ military metaphors, and merely shows that he understands nothing whatever about such matters.

Sometimes there is this amount of excuse for us—that the unusual occasion rouses ideas in us which we then want to express and talk about. Soldiers, just because they are soldiers, stand for ideas and principles, and so preach us sermons without words, which we clergy then try to express in words.

This morning I will try to tell you the sermon which you are preaching me. The main gist of it is this—that the ideal of chivalry is not nearly enough emphasized from the pulpit. You stand as the type of Christian chivalry, and thereby remind us that it is a great ideal which you represent, just as the old Rajput chivalry and the chivalry of Japan were great ideals.

Now what is Christian chivalry? Let us try to analyse the meaning of it and see what are the main ideas which it involves.

The first element in Chivalry, I suppose, is Courage. There must be readiness to face anything rather than be false to all that a man ought to be loyal to. There must be instinctive, unreasoning, uncalculating courage, like the heroism of the officers and men of the *Kinchu Maru*. As you know, there is heroism in the East and in the West also, and heroes

recognise one another and honour one another, to whatever land or people they may belong. There is a brotherhood of chivalry, and they who have part in it are raised above the narrowness of race and nationality. There is a comradeship of the brave, whether friends or foes, which is realized, perhaps, only among those who live in daily readiness to lay down their lives. Such things are beyond the sphere of our horizon—the moral horizon of those who only know what it is to live in peace and security—and perhaps we have no right to talk of them. But we can see that chivalry does to some extent raise men above the narrowness of racial feeling.¹

Then comes the second element in chivalry—and that, I think, is Indignation against all wrong—against meanness, against injustice, against brutality. Such indignation shows itself in zeal to right the wrong, to break every yoke, to let the oppressed go free. Where the weak and helpless are trodden underfoot, where monstrous wrong is wrought upon the earth, the knight, the true soldier—for every true soldier is a knight at heart—burns to go forth to overthrow the evil-doer. He will face hardships and privation, wounds and death, in order that righteousness and justice may again be established in the earth. He will make the sacrifice gladly and cheerfully, nay more, with a deep mysterious happiness, for his own heart will bid him do these things, and he will feel that in doing them and in suffering through so doing he becomes, for the first time, his own true self.

The third element in chivalry to which I want to call your attention is Courtesy. There is knightly speech as well as knightly deed. And knightly speech is gentle and considerate towards all, and especially towards the weak. To speak and behave in a bearish way towards those whom we

¹ A chivalrous respect for a brave and honourable enemy is common in time of war. It was of such cases that I was thinking. But the principle of esteem for the brave, irrespective of nationality, could be extended to that of respect for a people, even though they might be an unwarlike people, who can produce such calmly heroic men as the Bengali police inspectors—men like Nripendra Ghose or Haripada Deb and many others—or the young Bengali apothecary, Nafar Chandra Kundu.

may, often very wrongly, regard as our inferiors we feel at once to be a sign of ill-breeding. For to be gentle in our demeanour, even towards those whose own manners are defective, is one of the marks of a gentleman, and it is a far more effective way of dealing with men than the vulgar method of meeting ill-manners with worse.

These, then, are the main outlines of the ideal of chivalry we are considering. There are other elements which we cannot now touch upon, but I think that Courage, Zeal in righting the wrong, and Knightly Courtesy and consideration towards all men, but especially towards those whose right to courteous treatment is not enforced by social etiquette, and Loyalty to all that to which a man ought to be loyal to—these things at least are parts of chivalry.

Now we must remember that chivalry does not come of itself. We must first recognise its beauty, then we must deliberately cultivate it, in spite of all inclinations to the contrary. For there is a bit of the churl in all of us, and the churl is just the opposite of the true knight. He is a coward; he cares nothing about righting the wrong; in fact, he is often the cause of abominable injustice and oppression himself. In speech and conduct he is abject towards those in high estate, but bearish towards those who have no social protection.

And, as I said, there is a bit of the churl in all of us—a bit of the coward, the brute, and the boor. You can be brave when the enemy to be faced is a fabulous monster, or a battery of artillery. But suppose the enemy were your own friends and suppose they should sneer at you. Should you still be brave? It is not so very hard to right the wrongs of a beautiful damsel and to speak courteously to her. There is not much chivalry required under such circumstances as those. But suppose the wrongs to be righted were a babu's; suppose the person to be courteously addressed were an Indian manifesting some national habit or peculiarity that irritated us—should we still be courteous? Should we still wish to right the wrong?

And this brings me to my appeal. I appeal to your chivalry. Be chivalrous towards the people of this land. Be courteous and considerate in your speech towards them. They are a very sensitive people. They feel the humiliation of being

lorded over by foreigners. What should we feel like if foreigners ruled in London and flaunted it day and night before our eyes that we were a conquered people to be treated with contempt? And when it is we who are ruling, is it chivalrous that we should behave as boors? You know the abominable things that sometimes happen in railway carriages in India. Oh, the shame, the shame, the shame and disgrace of it to us!

I appeal to your chivalry. Be courteous to gentlemen in misfortune. - And not only be courteous. Be right glad when they show anything of manly independence themselves, even though it be to our cost. Surely we cannot wish the people of this country to be abject--we cannot wish others to be what we ourselves despise?

(MS. apparently incomplete.)

II

SERMON PREACHED AT DARJEELING, 1906

We often speak of following Christ's example, of becoming like Him, of His dwelling in us, and so forth. And as Christians it is quite right that we should so speak. Only we must remember that we cannot be like Him in general without being like Him in particular points. We cannot have the Spirit of Christ in a vague, mysterious way if the actual spirit of our lives, which comes out in all the daily details of work and pleasure and social intercourse, is fundamentally opposed to His. A living, practical religion is one that makes a real difference to our actual thought and speech. It is with regard to one practical detail of conduct that I wish, trying to be practical, to speak this morning. For what is the good of discussing Christian principles if we are not going to try to apply them? My practical point is simply this—that as Christians and as gentlemen we ought to make a greater point of consideration and courtesy towards our Indian fellow-citizens. There are not a few Englishmen in this country who behave in other respects as an English gentleman should behave, but who are occasionally most abominably rude towards Indians. They speak to them, if they have occasion to do so, with a marked brusqueness and almost snappish curtness that they would never think of employing towards another Englishman; they use, and take no trouble to conceal the fact that they use, rude and offensive words when speaking of them, such as "nigger."

I mention this in order that I may beseech you, by the gentleness and kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, just to

¹ This term has fortunately to a large extent fallen into disuse during the last ten years.

make a practical point of avoiding terms and modes of address such as I have referred to which give far more pain than you imagine. Indians—I mean those who belong to the upper and middle strata of Indian society, in fact all except menial servants, coolies and so forth—are an extremely sensitive, in fact almost hypersensitive, people. Any mode of speaking to them or of them or of treating them which might be interpreted as implying their inferiority, or as implying contempt for them, hurts their feelings to an extent that would surprise us, and the unkind word rankles within them for years, probably for the rest of their life. Let me give you an example. A friend of mine, a high-caste Brahmin, but completely anglicized, had spent some time in England and speaks still with the warmest gratitude of the kindness he met with there. But on his return to India he found things were different. One day he got into a first-class railway carriage in which there was one other traveller, an Englishman holding a high position under Government. This Englishman was standing on the platform near the carriage, and called out to a friend who had come to see him off, "Hullo! I am travelling with a nigger," and my friend overheard him. That was some years ago, but that cruel word "nigger" still rankles in him and hurts him. He has had other humiliating experiences too. I feel we ought to think more of the way in which Indians look upon their relations with us. Let us try to look at things from their point of view. They are conscious that they are an ancient race with much to be proud of. Yet in their own country they are treated as inferiors by a race that has somehow come and planted itself over them as their superiors and everything that they *can* interpret as contempt for them they do so interpret, although in the majority of cases it is mere thoughtlessness and inconsiderateness on our part. Yet, as I said, they feel it very much indeed. As a well-known Indian gentleman, referring to this rudeness, once expressed himself to me, "Oh! but it hurts—it hurts." There is something in the thought that this cultured race is so dependent upon us as a nation that ought to appeal to any better feelings that we may

• The late Mr. Gokhale.

have. We ought not to lump them together with Zulus and Hottentots and "natives" and treat them in an off-hand way, any more than you would so treat an old nobleman in misfortune. But somehow or other when Indian gentlemen are present railway carriages in India seem to have the peculiar property of eliciting all the most unmannerly elements in our nature. Yet we are proud of the fact that the word "gentleman" is an untranslatable English word. Cannot we make just a little more point of being gentlemen inside railway carriages as well as outside them; when we have to do with Indians, as well as when we have to do with one another? It is all very well to entertain benevolent sentiments towards naked villagers or to admire the flowing robes and picturesque turbans which, in accordance with the general fitness of things, we think that Orientals ought to wear. But the real test of courtesy and goodwill comes in when we find ourselves in the presence of the ordinary babus whom we meet in our offices and in trains and trams.

And I would ask you to avoid the word "nigger" or "black" as applied to Indians, not only when they can overhear or otherwise come to know of it, but even when this is not the case. For the frame of mind which the use of these words will tend to give rise to is just that frame of mind which we want to get rid of, whereas if we make a point of speaking politely about Indians we shall find it easy to speak politely to them.

I should also like to add a word to Christian ladies on this subject, not so much on account of any evil directly done by them as on account of good so often left undone. Indians feel that they are not recognised by English society as they have a right to be recognised, and it is the ladies who legislate for society. It is the ladies who extend or refuse social recognition. It is, from the nature of the case, impossible for them to have nothing to do with these racial questions one way or another. By doing nothing you do a wrong. What must often, I think, happen is this: Mrs. Smith would gladly ask the Banerjeis or the Roys to dinner, but she is afraid she would mortally offend the Jones's who are coming that day. Mrs. Jones for her part would be quite willing to meet the Banerjeis or the Roys, but could never take the

initiative in asking them for fear of what Mrs. Smith would think.¹

We sometimes say that Indians are tied and bound by their traditions. But is it not the same with us? Surely our social customs, etiquette and traditions, ought to be consciously regulated by moral principles and Christian ideas. Why should not Mrs. Smith say: "My principle is that when I give a dinner I always ask some Indians. I am prepared to meet with adverse criticism, but I know that my Lord would not criticize me adversely. He Himself greatly scandalized His respectable friends by dining with tax-gatherers, who were not considered proper people to dine with in those days. I am prepared to meet with a good deal of unsuccess at first, but one can't expect to be successful all at once."

Let me give an actual example. Some years ago an Indian gentleman, holding at one time a very high position under Government, and his wife (who was known not to be *pardah nashin*) were in Calcutta. Two Calcutta gentlemen called on him. After they had gone an Indian called. He found that his host was by no means flattered by this visit of the two gentlemen of Calcutta. He knew perfectly well how calls ought to be paid. His comment simply was, "Have they not wives?" There was nothing whatever in the Indian's character or circumstances to excuse the wives of these two gentlemen from fulfilling their duty of calling upon his wife. They never considered. They never thought for themselves, perhaps, about the responsibilities of their position or their duty towards the inhabitants of this country. I suppose they had never been taught.

Schoolmistresses will know whether English girls are or are not taught to take an interest in the social and moral problems of the land in which they live; whether they are or are not taught to sympathize with all sorts and conditions of men and to have the wish to do their whole duty in the world. If not, and they grow up as the women that were at ease in Zion of whom the prophet speaks, I do not know that we can blame them so much. At any rate, from a

¹ Most unfortunately there was, unknown to me, a real Mrs. Jones that day in church.

Christian standpoint, it is far more important for them, as for the rest of us, to be alive to the great moral issues that are at stake around us and to love justice and mercy, than it is to be well informed about much that passes under the name of "religious teaching."

On the other hand, when we find ladies in high social positions who do make a point of trying to do their part as peacemakers to heal the ill-will and estrangement of the races, whether by availing themselves for Christ's sake of opportunities of inviting Indians to their dinners or dances or social gatherings of any kind, they are doing as good and Christian a work as if they were nursing the sick or clothing the poor or teaching the ignorant.¹

Surely this ministry of reconciliation is one which well befits their sex and their Christian profession. It is the work of turning to one another the hearts of those who are now estranged.

¹ Of course I mean "invite Indians to *the same* gatherings as those to which she invites her European acquaintances." To hold a special gathering for Indians with a few tame Europeans, who do not socially much matter, thrown in would not be felt by Indians to be the real thing. -I was speaking with reference to Bengal. During the last ten years mixed social intercourse has considerably increased, and perhaps chiefly through the influence of ladies like Mrs. (now Lady) H.

APPENDIX II

FOR INDIANS TO CONSIDER

INDIA is about to sell her soul. Exasperated by a sense of her wrongs, she is about to surrender herself to that which she most condemns. She derides the materialism and commercialism, the bustle and hurry of the West; she declares that it rests upon a false conception of life, and contrasts with it (I am quoting Mr. Ramanathan) her own "ideal of living in the world, not for the pampering of the senses, but for the purification of the spirit and for its development in love and true knowledge"; the West "disowns the spirit," the East lives for it. Yet she is now about to plunge after the West in all those respects which she has been so ready to condemn. In order to be a great and prosperous nation like the nations of the West, she will have to immerse herself in commercialism like the nations of the West. India cannot expect to win for herself the position of a great trading community, and at the same time to wear the diadem of spiritual knowledge which she looks upon as her inheritance. If India attained to greatness in that respect long centuries ago it was not as the inevitable consequence of Indians being Indians, but of the fact that so many of her ablest men, age after age, devoted themselves to an unworldly ideal. The fruits of renunciation do not automatically present themselves, even to Indians, when the national mind is focused upon material prosperity. It may be that in gaining a place in the world India will lose her own soul, and therewith her power to serve the world in accordance with her own special function in it. But the question is hardly one with which Europeans can deal. It is for India herself, and that in this case means principally the more gifted of her young men at the moment

of their choosing their walk in life, to decide whether or not to make of the *ghí* with which she might wash her steps, a *prātaḥsavanam*. Is it not possible for India to frame a national policy for herself which is not based upon the imitation of the West, but upon her own professed ideals? India's real ideal will be that which finds expression in her political, social, and economic practice. But are Indian politics based upon anything different from those of the West?

This is perhaps the most suitable place to insert a dream which a mad Englishman dreamed. He was, in his dream, in India in the year A.D. 1950. He there learnt that a generation before that date the peoples of England and India had made two extraordinary resolutions and had even carried them out. England had resolved to be just and beneficent instead of talking about her justice and the benefits which she conferred. India had determined to pursue a spiritual ideal instead of talking about her superior spirituality. In 1950 the country was still governed, in the main, by British executive officials, but machinery existed whereby it was possible for the people to impeach these officials before the High Courts when they made themselves obnoxious, and to secure their dismissal. No legislative innovation was possible without the free consent both of Government and people. All that was necessary, however, to reach this consensus was the demonstration that the new proposal would probably promote the moral well-being of the country. India had herself elected to be governed in this way through fear lest the passions and rivalries of her own politicians should do her more harm than good. She had determined to take no part in the world-scramble that was then going on, but to remain a semi-closed country and to live deeply rather than breathlessly. The old land-revenue system which had been in practice at the beginning of the century had disappeared, and therewith the Permanent Settlement as a modification of it. The fiction that land-revenue represented rent paid to Government was no longer current. Government did, indeed, possess extensive farm- and forest-lands of its own, but that was another matter. In place of land-rent-revenue, whether in assessed or commuted form, Government obtained its resources from an income-tax levied upon a sliding scale upon all incomes of, or averaging, over sixty rupees a month,

whether derived from land or not. There was also a substantial poll-tax levied upon foreign residents coming from all countries in which Indians did not share equal rights with native citizens. The people of India had at first strongly objected to this tax, on the ground that it savoured of paltry resentment and tit-for-tattery. But Government had very strongly urged it on the ground that it was impossible for England to be just or truly Imperial unless she did something to redress the balance, and after a protracted discussion the majority of the Registered Associations throughout the country passed resolutions in favour of the tax as a concession to English susceptibilities.

No person, not even a Viceroy or ruling chief, was permitted to retain a private income in excess of 10,000 rupees a month. Anything above this amount belonging to him was credited to his account at the Government Bank instituted for this purpose. He could spend it as he wished upon any approved public object, such as this or that philanthropic institution, or the sanitation of some village, or upon public buildings, such as temples. Architecture was flourishing, and buildings which rivalled the Taj Mahal were rising in many places. No *pucca* building of any kind, however, could be erected without the approval of the District (or Provincial) Architectural Association. It was held that every pair of eyes in the country, including those of unborn generations, had a stake in the beauty of every building and the harmony of every scene. Picturesque *kutcha* structures, resting upon solid plinths or raised the requisite distance from the ground upon poles, were erected where means were not forthcoming for *pucca* buildings of an artistic character.

The alienation of land was prohibited, and no one could be employed as a factory hand, coolie, or servant by any private person or by any company who did not possess, or hold from Government, a certain minimum of land, or a share in a joint-holding. The rest worked upon Government farms or wharves, or in Government factories until they had earned holdings of their own. The effect of this legislation had been to check the influx of a large indigent population into the towns and to preserve the agricultural character of the country. Large factories were not encouraged, and the principle of the maximum exploitation of the resources of

the country, what. APP^{rs} themselves or by foreigners, had been decisively A. It was seen to be incompatible with India's chosen ideal, with the conservation of the leisure necessary even to the moralized coolie, and with the quiet happiness of the population generally. Instead of attempting to compete with foreigners India had chosen to restrict both imports and exports. Only such goods were allowed to be imported as did not compete with native wares and which did not tend to create superfluous wants. Western furniture, for instance—a matter in which Indians had formerly shown a complete lack of taste, and which had helped to introduce that unpleasant mock-Westernism formerly so prevalent—was strictly prohibited. Handlooms were in use all over the country, and where necessary an octroi system had protected them against the competition of the mills. In place of the struggle for a maximum output Government would not permit the production of anything except that which was worth producing, and all inferior goods were confiscated by the Government inspectors without compensation. The aim throughout was to base Indian civilization upon quality rather than upon quantity—quality of work done, quality of goods produced, quality of the life lived, rather than upon the abundance of things made, sold, and squandered. Manufacture was regarded as existing to supply India's own needs, to provide scope for art, and to provide an educative means of livelihood for as many persons as possible. The use of machinery and production for export was regulated by reference to these considerations. It was the primary function of Government so to order all departments of life in the country that the Aryan Way could be followed by the whole community from the raja to the rayat. Or rather it was the function of Government to be continually surveying the whole field and to move the Associations, with its own co-operation, to take such steps to this end as were desirable. But the principal source of continually renewed inspiration was to be found in the renovated order of spiritual gurus. Numerous brahma vidyalays existed in various parts of the country where brahmacharis were trained in the principles of the moral and spiritual life, and where that yoga and tapas were exercised which is the source of spiritual power. When their training was completed these brahmacharis went out

as gurus into towns, villages, and ... guru (I am not using the term in its debased sense, "schoolmaster") was attached to every school. The ... every district were grouped in unions, or colleges, ... asided over by an acharya whose headquarters was the math. It was the duty of these gurus not only to promote the spiritual welfare of individuals, but also to maintain the spirituality of the national ideal. The conviction had come home to the moral consciousness of India that Indian spirituality, if it was to be true and real, must find expression in all departments of life. Though there is still a call, the gurus said, for the absolute vairagyam of the sannyasi in exceptional cases, to maintain its witness to the unreservedness of the demands of the Spirit, there is still greater and more urgent need of the qualified vairagyam of the Aryan trader, the Aryan cultivator, the Aryan lawyer, and all other sons of India. For the whole web of Indian life must be woven upon God, with God for its warp and God for its woof. That is India's vocation. Its realization shall be India's diadem. So said the gurus.

When the mad Englishman awoke he concluded that he had been trying in his sleep to see whether the general notion of Indian spirituality were capable of application in a practical, concrete form. It was not simply a matter of this or that nation's being moral, or not being moral. It was a question as to the possible bearing of India's professed ideal upon the problem of England and India.

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