Section II. The Story Unfolds
a) South Africa

S. Radhakrishnan, Mahatma Gandhi: Reflections on his Life + Work (Bombay, 1956)

than ever like Puvis de Chavannes' Sainte Geneviéve. She promised to wake me just before three o'clock.

I shall never forget that night, the strange mystic beauty of it. Half asleep and wrapped in a fur coat, I followed Mirabai to the Mahatma's cell. It was small and white and cold; he sat on a thin mattress on the floor, enveloped in his "Khaddar," and looked very frail.

We were joined by his Hindu secretary, the lamp was put out, and through the open door came a faint, cold, blue mist. Two Hindus and an English saint chanted the Brahmin hymns. I felt that I was dreaming.

A little before five Mirabai again awakened me; it was the Mahatma's walking hour and reputed the best moment to get him to talk.

It was quite obvious that this life might be beautiful in any other climate, or adapt itself to a less nervously strenuous programme. How the Mahatma was able to sustain his religious asceticism with his London political and business activities can only (I imagine) be explained through spiritual discipline. But I, who had not then attained to any degree of discipline, was completely numbed, mentally, physically and spiritually, through cold, fog and lack of sleep. I was unable to profit by the privilege of pursuing the Mahatma on his early walk. I use the word *pursue* deliberately, for, gathering his Khaddar around him, the Mahatma set forth at such a speed that we had almost to run so as not to lose him in the fog! Behind us, panting and puffing, one heard the two unfortunate detectives whose duty it was to guard or to watch him.

Gandhi knew his way; it skirted a canal. He could have done that walk with his eyes shut. Even though one could not see the canal one could hear the water as it poured through a mill. There was barely room for two abreast and Mirabai pushed me forward: "This is your chance——" I remember vaguely that we talked religion, and he intimated that all those who have a love of truth and sincerity, who have eliminated hatred and bitterness, have an affinity the world over. But it is not necessary really that Gandhi should speak to one in words. Merely to be in his environment raises one consciously on to a higher plane. There would be much to gain from meditating in silence at his side.

I am able to say, in perfect truth, seven years afterwards, when emotion has faded and memory is like a dream, that through knowing Gandhi something was changed in me. Life was just a shade more worth living. Something which, for want of a better word we call inspiration, had entered in.

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GANDHI'S POLITICAL METHOD

by THE RT. HON. J. C. SMUTS,
M.A., LL.D., D.C.L.
(House of Assembly, Cape Town)

It is fitting that I, as an opponent of Gandhi a generation ago, should now salute the veteran as he reaches the scriptural limits of three score years and ten. May the further allotment which the Psalmist grudgingly allows also be his, and may they be years of fruitful service to the world and of a peaceful mind to himself! I join most heartily with the other contributors to this volume in recognition of his great public services and in paying tribute to his high personal qualities. Men like him redeem us all from a sense of commonplaceness and futility, and are an inspiration to us not to be weary in well-doing.

The story of our clash in the early days of the Union of South Africa has been told by Gandhi himself and is well known. It was my fate to be the antagonist of a man for whom even then I had the highest respect. That clash on the small stage of South Africa brought out certain qualities of Gandhi's character which have since become more prominently displayed in his later large-scale operations in India. And they show that while he was prepared to go all out for the causes which he championed, he never forgot the human background of the situation, never lost his temper or succumbed to hate, and preserved his gentle humour even in the most trying situations. His manner and spirit even then, as well as later, contrasted markedly with the ruthless and brutal forcefulness which is the vogue in our day.

I must frankly admit that his activities at that time were very trying to me. Together with other South

African leaders I was then busily engaged on the task of welding the old colonies into a unified State, of consolidating the administration of the new national structure, and of creating, out of what was left after the Boer War, a new nation. It was a colossal work which took up every moment of my time. Suddenly, in the midst of all these engrossing preoccupations, Gandhi raised a most troublesome issue.

We had a skeleton in our cupboard in the form of what is called the Indian question in South Africa. The Transvaal had made an effort to restrict Indian immigration. Natal had an old tax on Indians intended to induce them to return to India after their period of service on the sugar plantations had been completed. Gandhi tackled this problem, and in doing so showed a new technique—one which he afterwards made world-famous in his political campaigns in India. His method was deliberately to break the law, and to organize his followers into a mass movement of passive resistance in disobedience to the law objected to. In both provinces a wild and disconcerting commotion was created, large numbers of Indians had to be imprisoned for lawless behaviour, and Gandhi himself received—what no doubt he desired—a short period of rest and quiet in gaol. For him everything went according to plan. For me—the defender of law and order—there was the usual trying situation, the odium of carrying out a law which had not strong public support, and finally the discomfiture when the law had to be repealed. For him it was a successful coup. Nor was the personal touch wanting, for nothing in Gandhi's procedure is without a peculiar personal touch. In gaol he had prepared for me a very useful pair of sandals which he presented to me when he was set free! I have worn these sandals for many a summer since then, even though I may feel that I am not worthy to stand in the shoes of so great a man! Anyhow it was in that spirit that we fought out our quarrels in South Africa. There was no hatred or personal ill-feeling, the spirit of humanity was never absent, and when the fight was over there was the atmosphere in which a decent peace could be concluded. Gandhi and I made a settlement which Parliament ratified, and which kept the peace between the races for many years. He left South Africa to undertake his

Herculean task in India and to impress his spirit and personality on the masses of that great country to a degree which has no parallel in recent Indian history. And throughout it all, he was but largely carrying out the methods he had learnt in South Africa in our scrappings over the Indian question. South Africa was indeed a great training school for him, as it has been for other notable men who have from time to time shared our life in this strangely attractive and provocative subcontinent.

I say largely, but not quite. In addition to his old method of passive resistance—now renamed non-co-operation—he developed in India a new technical device of a very disconcerting but effective character. That technique of reform was persuasion by self-starvation. Fortunately we had been spared this development in South Africa where people have a horror of any unnecessary loss of life. In India it has worked wonders and carried Gandhi to success and heights of achievement which would probably have been unattainable otherwise.

It may be of interest to give closer attention to this novel technique—novel at any rate in political warfare. I cannot conceive the Leader of the Opposition in Great Britain starving himself to death in order to convince the Government of the day of the error of their ways. We are here in a strange region, remote from the ways of democracy and indeed of Western civilization. I think the phenomenon is deserving of careful study. I can but direct cursory attention to it here.

It is not so entirely novel to Indian ways of thought and practice. In India it appears to be a recognized practice for the creditor to bring pressure to bear on his dilatory debtor by inflicting suffering, not on the debtor but on himself. Civil imprisonment of the debtor is or has been our Western way of forcing the hand of the recalcitrant debtor. Not so in India; there the creditor will himself go to prison or sit and starve on the doorstep of his debtor in order to soften his heart and open his or his friend's purse. Gandhi adopts this Indian technique and only alters its application and scale. He would sit and starve, if need be to death, on the doorstep of the Government or a recalcitrant section of the community whom he wishes to persuade or rather to coerce to better ways.

And like the creditor he succeeds, not by reasoning or persuasion, but by arousing the much deeper-lying emotions of fear, of shame, of repentance, of sympathy, of humanity, and of other feelings below the threshold of conscious thought, which in their mass effect prove much more potent than reasoning or persuasion. The debtor—the opponent Government or community—is morally undermined and finally overwhelmed by this emotional mass effect.

In some ways this technique is not very different from the methods followed by large-scale propaganda in our day. It has the same effect of overwhelming the public mind, not by reason but by play on the emotions, many of them of an irrational character. One might fairly conclude that this technique is dangerous and may be abused, just as propaganda to-day is being abused to debauch and poison public opinion in the Western world. Whether the objects in view are worthy or detestable, the method is a dangerous one, as it undermines reason and personal responsibility, and is an invasion of that inner sanctuary of the personality which is the final citadel of all human nature.

Gandhi's technique of self-starvation differs, however, in a very important respect from that of Western propaganda. The performer (if I may call him so) tries to rouse the community to face the situation by the thought and the spectacle of his own suffering. The technique is based on the principle of suffering and the purifying effect of vicarious suffering on the emotions of others. It has the same purifying and ennobling effect which high tragedy has in accordance with the Aristotelean definition.

We touch here not only the Greek notion of tragedy but the deepest springs of religion. In particular the motif of suffering is central to the Christian religion. The Cross remains the symbol of the most significant tragedy in all human history. The Suffering Servant of Isaiah and the Great Sufferer on the Cross, pouring out his soul for his brothers, stir emotions whose dynamic is incomparably greater than that of all reason or rational persuasion. The argument from suffering is and remains the most effective in the world. In the welter of religions in the early Roman Empire the Christian religion won

through by suffering, by martyrdom, and not by the arguments of the Apologists; nor was its progress impeded by the current philosophies of that enlightened age. And in the same way the large-scale sufferings which in our day a cruel and brutal inhumanity in Europe is inflicting on those who differ in race or religion or conviction may yet become the dynamite to explode the great systems now so proudly being reared.

It is this potent principle of suffering on which Gandhi has based his novel technique or reform. He makes himself a sufferer in order to move the sympathy and gain the support of others for the cause he has at heart. Where ordinary political methods of reasoning and persuasion fail, he falls back on this new technique, based on the ancient practices of India and the East. It is a procedure which, as I have said, deserves the attention of political thinkers. It is Gandhi's distinctive contribution to political method.

Let me conclude with one other thought. Many people, even some who sincerely admire him, will differ from some of his ideas and some of his ways of doing things. His style of doing things is individual, is his own, and, as in the case of other great men, does not conform to the usual standards. But however often we may differ from him, we are conscious all the time of his sincerity, his unselfishness, and above all of his fundamental and universal humanity. He always acts as a great human, with deep sympathy for men of all classes and all races and especially for the under-dog. His outlook has nothing sectional about it, but is distinguished by that universal and eternal human which is the hall-mark of true greatness of spirit.

It is curious how in these days of European confusion and decline Asia is steadily moving to the front. Among the greatest men on the public stage of the world to-day are two Asiatics—Gandhi and Chiang-kai Shek, both moving immense masses of men along noble lines to a destiny which in essence is one with the high Christian ideal which the West has received but no longer seriously practices.

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NONVIOLENCE— THE GREATEST FORCE

M. K. Gandhi

Mohandas K. Gandhi was one of the towering figures, not just of the twentieth century, but of all time. The nonviolent struggle that he led for Indian independence provided peace groups around the world with a practical model for achieving their aims. Others before him had articulated and even used nonviolent tactics in opposition to oppression. But no one had been able to make nonviolence the basis of an ongoing movement and at the same time the basis of a philosophical and spiritual way of living. FOR revered Gandhi, publishing many of his articles and devoting whole issues of its magazine to his cause (The World Tomorrow, *October 1926*).

Nonviolence is the greatest force humanity has been endowed with. Truth is the only goal we have. For God is none other than Truth. But Truth cannot be, never will be reached except through nonviolence.

That which distinguishes us from all other animals is our capacity to be nonviolent. And we fulfill our mission only to the extent that we are nonviolent and no more. We have no doubt many other gifts. But if they do not serve the main purpose—the development of the spirit of nonviolence in us—they but drag us down lower than the brute, a status from which we have only just emerged.

The cry for peace will be a cry in the wilderness, so long as the spirit of nonviolence does not dominate millions of men and women.

An armed conflict between nations horrifies us. But the economic war is no better than an armed conflict. This is like a surgical operation. An economic war is prolonged torture. And its ravages are no less terrible than those depicted in the literature on war properly so called. We think nothing of the other because we are used to its deadly effects.

Many of us in India shudder to see blood spilled. Many of us resent cow slaughter, but we think nothing of the slow torture through which by our greed we put our people and cattle. But because we are used to this lingering death, we think no more about it.

The movement against war is sound. I pray for its success. But I cannot help the gnawing fear that the movement will fail if it does not touch the root of all evil—human greed.

Will America, England, and the other great nations of the West continue to exploit the so-called weaker or uncivilized races and hope to attain peace that the whole world is pining for? Or will Americans continue to prey upon one another, have commercial rivalries, and yet expect to dictate peace to the world?

Not till the spirit is changed can the form be altered. The form is merely an expression of the spirit within. We may succeed in seemingly altering the form, but the alteration will be a mere make-believe if the spirit within remains unalterable. A whited sepulcher still conceals beneath it the rotting flesh and bone.

Far be it from me to discount or underrate the great effort that is being made in the West to kill the war spirit. Mine is merely a word of caution as from a fellow seeker who has been striving in his own humble manner after the same thing, maybe in a different way, no doubt on a much smaller scale. But if the experiment demonstrably succeeds on the smaller field and, if those who are working on the larger field have not overtaken me, it will at least pave the way for a similar experiment on a large field.

I observe, in the limited field in which I find myself, that unless I can reach the hearts of men and women, I am able to do nothing. I observe further that so long as the spirit of hate persists in some shape or other, it is impossible to establish peace or to gain our freedom by peaceful effort. We cannot love one another if we hate Englishmen. We cannot love the Japanese and hate Englishmen. We must either let the law of love rule us through and through or not at all. Love among ourselves based on hatred of others breaks down under the slightest pressure. The fact is, such love is never real love. It is an armed peace. And so it will be in this great movement in the West against war. War will only be stopped when the conscience of humankind has become sufficiently elevated to recognize the undisputed supremacy of the Law of Love in all the walks of life. Some say this will never come to pass. I shall retain the faith till the end of my earthly existence that it shall come to pass.

Short Chronology of Gandhi's Life

Source: The Gandhi Reader, edited by Homer A. Jack

1869	Oct. 2	Born at Porbandar, Kathiawad, son of Karamchand (Kaba) and Putlibai Gandhi.
1876		Attended primary school in Rajkot, where his family moved.
		Betrothed to Kasturbai (later called Kasturba), daughter of Gokuldas Makanji, a merchant.
1881		Entered high school in Rajkot.
1883		Married to Kasturbai.
1885		Father died at age of 63.
1887		Passed matriculation examination at Ahmedabad and entered Samaldas College, Bhavnagar, Kathiawad, but found studies difficult and remained only one term.
1888		First of four sons born.
1891	Sept.	Sailed from Bombay for England to study law.
1899		First reading of the Gita. Impressed.
		Summer. Returned to India on being called to bar. Began practice of law in Bombay and Rajkot.
1893	April	Sailed for South Africa to become lawyer for an Indian firm.
		Found himself subjected to all kinds of color discrimination.
1894		Prepared to return to India after completing law case, but was persuaded by Indian colony to remain in South Africa and do public work and earn a living as a lawyer.
		Drafted first petition sent by the Indians to a South African legislature.
	May	Organised Natal Indian Congress.
1896		Returned to India for six months to bring back his wife and two children to Natal.
	Dec.	Sailed for South Africa with family; mobbed when he disembarked at Durban in January.
1899		Organised Indian Ambulance Corps for British in Boer War.
1901		Embarked with family for India, promising to return if Indian community needs him again.
1901 – 1902		Travelled extensively in India, attended Indian National Congress meeting in Calcutta, and opened law office in Bombay.
1902		Returned to South Africa after urgent request from Indian community.
1903		Summer. Opened law office in Johannesburg.

1904		Established the weekly journal, Indian Opinion.
		Organised Phoenix Settlement near Durban, after reading Ruskin's Unto This Last.
1906	March	Organised Indian Ambulance Corps for Zulu "Rebellion".
		Took vow of continence for life.
	Sept.	First satyagraha campaign began with meeting in Johannesburg in protest against proposed Asiatic ordinance directed against Indian immigrants in Transvaal.
	Oct.	Sailed for England to present Indians' case to Colonial Secretary and started back to South Africa in December.
1907	June	Organised satyagraha against compulsory registration of Asians ("The Black Act").
1908	Jan.	Stood trial for instigating satyagraha and was sentenced to two months' imprisonment in Johannesburg jail (his first imprisonment).
	Jan.	Was summoned to consult General Smuts at Pretoria; compromise reached; was released from jail.
	Feb.	Attacked and wounded by Indian extremist, Mir Alam, for reaching settlement with Smuts.
	Aug.	After Smuts broke agreement, second satyagraha campaign began with bonfire of registration certificates.
	Oct.	Arrested for not having certificate, and sentenced to two months' imprisonment in Volksrust jail.
1909	Feb.	Sentenced to three months' imprisonment in Volksrust and Pretoria jails.
	June	Sailed for England again to present Indians' case.
	Nov.	Returned to South Africa, writing Hind Swaraj en route.
1910	May	Established Tolstoy Farm near Johannesburg.
1913		Began penitential fast (one meal a day for more than four months) because of moral lapse of two members of Phoenix Settlement.
	Sept.	Helped campaign against nullification of non-Christian marriages with Kasturbai and other women being sentenced for crossing the Transvaal border without permits.
	Nov.	Third satyagraha campaign begun by leading "great march" of 2,000 Indian miners from Newcastle across Transvaal border in Natal.
	Nov.	Arrested three times in four days (at Palmford, Standerton, and Teakworth) and sentenced at Dundee to nine months' imprisonment; tried at Volksrust in second trial and sentenced to three months' imprisonment with his European co-workers, Polak and Kallenbach, imprisoned in Volksrust jail for a few days and then taken to Bloemfontein in Orange Free State.
	Dec.	Released unconditionally in expectation of a compromise settlement, C.F. Andrews and W.W. Pearson having been sent by Indians in India to negotiate.
1914	Jan.	Underwent fourteen days' fast for moral lapse of members of Phoenix Settlement.

	Jan	Satyagraha campaign suspended, with pending agreement between Smuts, C.F. Andrews, and Gandhi, and with ultimate passage of Indian Relief Act.
	July	Left South Africa forever, sailing from Capetown for London with Kasturbai and Kallenbach, arriving just at beginning of World War I.
		Organised Indian Ambulance Corps in England, but was obliged to sail for India because of pleurisy.
1915		Secured removal of customs harassment of passengers atViramgam: first incipient satyagraha campaign in India.
	May	Established Satyagraha Ashram at Kochrab, near Ahmedabad, and soon admitted an untouchable family; in 1917 moved ashram to new site on Sabarmati River.
1916	Feb.	Gave speech at opening of Hindu University at Benares.
1917		Helped secure removal of recruiting of South African indenture workers in India.
		Led successful satyagraha campaign for rights of peasants on indigo plantations in Champaran. Defied aorder to leave area in April, was arrest at Motihari and tried, but case was withdrawn. Mahadev Desai joined him at Champaran.
1918	Feb.	Led strike of millworkers at Ahmedabad. Millowner agreed to arbitration after his three-day fast (his first fast in India).
	March	Led satyagraha campaign for peasants in Kheda.
		Attended Viceroy's War Conference at Delhi and agreed that Indians should be recruited.
		Began recruiting campaign, but was taken ill and came near death; agreed to drink goat's milk and learned spinning during convalescence.
1919		Spring. Rowlatt Bills (perpetuating withdrawal of civil liberties for seditious crimes) passed, and first all-India satyagraha campaign conceived.
	April	Organised nation-wide hartal - suspension of activity for a day - against Rowlatt Bills.
	April	Arrested at Kosi near Delhi on way to Punjab and escorted back to Bombay, but never tried.
		Fasted at Sabarmati for three days in penitence for violence and suspended satyagraha campaign, which he called a "Himalayan miscalculation."
		Assumed editorship of English weekly, *Young India*, and Gujarati weekly, *Navajivan*.
	Oct.	After five months' refusal, authorities allowed him to visit scene of April disorders in Punjab. Worked closely with Motilal Nehru. Conducted inquiry into violence in Punjab villages.
1920	April	Elected president of All-India Home Rule League.
	June	Successfully urged resolution for a satyagraha campaign of non-cooperation at Moslem Conference at Allahabad and at Congress sessions at Calcutta (Sept.) and Nagpur (Dec.)
	Aug	Second all-India satyagraha campaign began when he gave up Kaisar-i-Hind medal.

1921		Presided at opening of first shop selling homespun (khadi) in Bombay.
	Aug.	Presided at bonfire of foreign cloth in Bombay.
	Sept.	Gave up wearing shirt and cap and resolved to wear only a loin-cloth.
	Nov.	Fasted at Bombay for five days because of communal rioting following visit of Prince of Wales (later Edward VIII and Duke of Windsor).
	Dec.	Mass civil disobedience, with thousands in jail. Gandhi invested with "sole executive authority" on behalf of Congress.
1922	Feb.	Suspended mass disobedience because of violence at Chauri Chaura and undertook five-day fast of penance at Bardoli.
	March	Arrested at Sabarmati in charge of sedition in Young India. Pleaded guilty in famous statement at the "great trial" in Ahmedabad before Judge Broomfield. Sentenced to six years' imprisonment in Yeravda jail.
1923		Wrote Satyagraha in South Africa and part of his autobiography in prison.
1924	Jan.	Was operated on for appendicitis and unconditionally released from prison in February.
	Sept.	Began 21-day "great fast" at Mohammed Ali's home near Delhi as penance for communal rioting (between Hindus and Moslems), especially at Kohat.
	Dec.	Presided over Congress session at Belgaum as president.
1925	Nov.	Fasted at Sabarmati for seven days because of misbehaviour of members of ashram.
	Dec.	Announced one-year political silence and immobility at Congress session at Cawnpore.
1927		No-tax satyagraha campaign launched at Bardoli, led by Sadar Patel.
1928	Dec.	Moved compromise resolution at Congress session at Calcutta, calling for complete independence (*poorn swaraj*) within one year or new satyagraha.
1929	March	Arrested for burning foreign cloth in Calcutta and fined one rupee.
	Dec.	Congress, at Lahore, declared complete independence and boycott of the legislature and fixed January 26 as National Independence Day. Third all-Indian satyagraha campaign began.
1930	March 12	Set out from Sabarmarti with 79 volunteers on historic salt march 200 miles to sea at Dandi.
	April 6	Broke salt law by picking salt up at seashore as whole world watched.
	May	Arrested by armed policemen at Karadi and imprisoned in Yeravda jail without trial. One hundred thousand persons arrested. There was no Congress in December because all leaders were in jail.
1931	Jan.	Released unconditionally with 30 other Congress leaders.
	March	Gandhi-Irwin (Viceroy) Pact signed, which ended civil disobedience.

	Aug.	Sailed from Bombay accompanied by Desai, Naidu, Mira, etc., for the second Round Table Conference, arriving in London via Marseilles, where he was met by C.F. Andrews.
		Autumn. Resided at Kingsley Hall in London slums, broadcast to America, visited universities, met celebrities, and attended Round Table Conference sessions.
	Dec.	Left England for Switzerland, where he met Romain Rolland, and Italy, where he met Mussolini.
	Dec.	Arrived in India. Was authorised by Congress to renew satyagraha campaign (fourth nation-wide effort).
1932	Jan.	Arrested in Bombay with Sardar Patel and detained without trial at Yeravda prison.
	Sept. 20	Began "perpetual fast unto death" while in prison in protest of British action giving separate electorates to untouchables.
	Sept. 26	Concluded "epic fast" with historic cell scene in presence of Tagore after British accepted "Yeravda Pact".
	Dec.	Joined fast initiated by another prisoner, Appasaheb Patwardhan, against untouchability; but fast ended in two days.
1933		Began weekly publication of Harijan in place of Young India.
	May 8	Began self-purification fast of 21 days against untouchability and was released from prison by government on first day. Fast concluded after 21 days at Poona.
	July	Disbanded Sabarmati ashram, which became centre for removal of untouchability
	Aug.	Arrested and imprisoned at Yeravda for four days with 34 members of his ashram. On refusing to leave Yeravda village for Poona, sentenced to one year's imprisonment at Yeravda.
	Aug. 16	Began fast against refusal of government to grant him permission to work against untouchability while in prison; on day of fast he was removed to Sasscon Hospital: his health was precarious: he was unconditionally released on eighth day.
	Nov.	Began ten-month tour of every province in India to help end untouchability.
	Nov.	Kasturba arrested and imprisoned for sixth time in two years.
1934		Summer. Three separate attempts made on his life.
	July	Fasted at Wardha ashram for seven days in penance against intolerance of opponents of the movement against untouchability.
	Oct.	Launched All-India Village Industries Association.
1935		Health declined: moved to Bombay to recover.
1936		Visited Seagon, a village near Wardha in the Central Provinces, and decided to settle there.. (This was renamed Sevagram in 1940 and eventually became an ashram for his disciples.)
1937	Jan.	Visited Travancore for removal of untouchability.

1938		Autumn. Tour of Northwest Frontier Province with the Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan.
1939	March	Began fast unto death as part of satyagraha campaign in Rajkot: fast ended four days later when Viceroy appointed as arbitrator.
1940	Oct.	Launched limited, individual civil-disobedience campaign against Britain's refusal to allow Indians to express their opinions regarding World War II - 23,000 persons imprisoned within a year.
1942		Harijan resumed publication after being suspended for 15 months.
	March	Met Sir Stafford Cripps in New Delhi but called his proposals "a post-dated cheque": they were ultimately rejected by Congress.
	Aug.	Congress passed "Quit India" resolution - the final nation-wide satyagraha campaign - with Gandhi as leader.
	Aug. 9	Arrested with other Congress leaders and Kasturba and imprisoned in Aga Khan Palace near Poona, with populace revolting in many parts of India. He began correspondence with Viceroy.
	Aug.	Mahadev Desai died in Palace.
1943	Feb. 10	Began 21-day fast at Aga Khan Palace to end deadlock of negotiations with Viceroy.
1944	Feb. 22	Kasturba died in detention at Aga Khan Palace at age of seventy-four.
	May 6	After decline in health, was released unconditionally from detention (this was his last imprisonment; he had spent 2338 days in jail during his life time).
	Sept	Important talks with Jinnah of Moslem League in Bombay on Hindu-Moslem unity.
1946	March	Conferred with British Cabinet Mission in New Delhi.
	Nov.	Began four-month tour of 49 villages in East Bengal to quell communal rioting over Moslem representation in provisional government.
1947		March. Began tour of Bihar to lessen Hindu-Moslem tensions.
	March	Began conferences in New Delhi with Viceroy (Lord Mountbatten) and Jinnah.
	May	Opposed Congress decision to accept division of country into India and Pakistan.
	Aug. 15	Fasted and prayed to combat riots in Calcutta as India was partitioned and granted independence.
	Sept.	Fasted for three days to stop communal violence in Calcutta.
	Sept.	Visited Delhi and environs to stop rioting and to visit camps of refugees (Hindus and Sikhs from the Punjab).
1948	Jan. 13	Fasted for five days in Delhi for communal unity.
	Jan. 20	Bomb exploded in midst of his prayer meeting at Birla House, Delhi.
	Jan. 30	Assassinated in 78th year at Birla House by Nathuram Vinayak Godse.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

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AHMEDABAD 14

PREFACE

The Satyagraha struggle of the Indians in South Africa lasted eight years. The term *Satyagraha* was invented and employed in connection therewith. I had long entertained a desire to write a history of that struggle myself. Some things only I could write. Only the general who conducts a campaign can know the objective of each particular move. And as this was the first attempt to apply the principle of Satyagraha to politics on a large scale, it is necessary any day that the public should have an idea of its development.

But today Satyagraha has had ample scope in India. Here there has been an inevitable series of struggles beginning with the rather local question of the Viramgam customs.

It was through the instrumentality of Bhai Motilal, the public-spirited good tailor of Vadhvan, that I became interested in the Viramgam question. I had just arrived from England and was proceeding to Saurashtra in the year 1915. I was travelling third class. At Vadhvan station Motilal came up to me with a small party. He gave me some account of the hardships inflicted on the people at Viramgam, and said:

"Please do something to end this trouble. It will be doing an immense service to Saurashtra, the land of your birth."

There was an expression of both compassion and firmness in his eyes.

"Are you ready to go to jail?" I asked.

"We are ready to march to the gallows," was the quick reply.

"Jail will do for me," I said. "But see that you do not leave me in the lurch."

"That only time can show," said Motilal.

I reached Rajkot, obtained detailed information and commenced correspondence with Government. In speeches at Bagasra and elsewhere, I dropped a hint that the people should be ready to offer Satyagraha at Viramgam if necessary. The loyal C. I. D. brought these speeches to the notice of Government. In this they served Government and unintentionally, served the people also. Finally, I had a talk with Lord Chelmsford on the matter. He promised abolition of the customs line and was as good as his word. I know others also tried for this. But I am strongly of opinion that the imminent possibility of Satyagraha was the chief factor in obtaining the desired redress.

Then came the Indian Emigration Act. Great efforts were put forth to get indenture repealed. There was a considerable public agitation. The Bombay meeting fixed May 31, 1917 as the date from which onwards indentured labour should be stopped. This is not the place for narrating how that particular date came to be selected. A deputation of ladies first waited upon the Viceroy in connection with this. I cannot help mentioning here the name of the high-souled sister, Mrs Jaiji Petit. It was she who may be said to have organized this deputation. Here, too, success came merely through preparedness for Satyagraha. But it is important to remember the distinction that in this case public agitation was also necessary. The stopping of indentured labour was very much more important than the abolition of the Viramgam customs. Lord Chelmsford committed a series of blunders beginning with the passing of the Rowlatt Act. Still, I think, he was a wise ruler. But what Viceroy can escape for long the influence of the permanent officials of the Civil Service ?

The third in order came the Champaran struggle, of which Rajendra Babu has written a detailed history. Here Satyagraha had actually to be offered. Mere preparedness for it did not suffice, as powerful vested interests were arrayed in opposition. The peace maintained by the people of Champaran deserves to be placed on record. I can bear

witness to the perfect non-violence of the leaders in thought, word and deed. Hence it was that this age-long abuse came to an end in six months.

The fourth struggle was that of the mill-hands of Ahmedabad. Gujarat is perfectly familiar with its history. How peaceful the labourers were! As for the leaders, there can hardly be anything for me to say. Still I hold the victory in this case was not quite pure, as the fast I had to observe in order to sustain the labourers in their determination exercised indirect pressure upon the mill-owners. The fast was bound to influence them, as I enjoyed friendly relations with them. Still the moral of the fight is clear. If the labourers carry on their struggle peacefully, they must succeed and also win the hearts of their masters. They have not won their masters' hearts, as they were not innocent in thought, word and deed. They were non-violent in deed, which is certainly to their credit.

The fifth was the Kheda struggle. I cannot say that in this case all the local leaders of Satyagraha parties adhered to the pure truth. Peace was certainly maintained. The non-violence of the peasantry, however, was only superficial, like that of the mill-hands. So we came out of the struggle with bare honour. However there was a great awakening among the people. But Kheda had not fully grasped the lesson of non-violence; the mill-hands had not understood the true meaning of peace. The people had therefore to suffer. At the time of the Rowlatt Act Satyagraha, I had to confess my Himalayan blunder, to fast myself and invite others to do so.

The sixth was in connection with the Rowlatt Act. Therein our inherent shortcomings came to the surface. But the original foundation was well and truly laid. We admitted all our shortcomings and did penance for them. The Rowlatt Act was a dead letter even when it was promulgated, and that black act was finally even repealed. This struggle taught us a great lesson.

The seventh was the struggle to right the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs and to win Swaraj. It is still going

on. And my confidence is unshaken, that if a single Satyagrahi holds out to the end, victory is absolutely certain.

But the present fight is epic in character. I have already described our course of unconscious preparation for it. When I took up the Viramgam question, little did I know that other fights were in store. And even about Viramgam I knew nothing when I was in South Africa. That is the beauty of Satyagraha. It comes up to oneself; one has not to go out in search for it. This is a virtue inherent in the principle itself. A *dharma-yuddha*, in which there are no secrets to be guarded, no scope for cunning and no place for untruth, comes unsought; and a man of religion is ever ready for it. A struggle which has to be previously planned is not a righteous struggle. In a righteous struggle God Himself plans campaigns and conducts battles. A *dharma-yuddha* can be waged only in the name of God, and it is only when the Satyagrahi feels quite helpless, is apparently on his last legs and finds utter darkness all around him, that God comes to the rescue. God helps when one feels oneself humbler than the very dust under one's feet. Only to the weak and helpless is divine succour vouchsafed.

We are yet to realize this truth, and so I think the history of Satyagraha in South Africa will be helpful to us.

The reader will note South African parallels for all our experiences in the present struggle to date. He will also see from this history that there is so far no ground whatever for despair in the fight that is going on. The only condition of victory is a tenacious adherence to our programme.

I am writing this preface at Juhu. I wrote the first thirty chapters of the history in Yeravda jail. Shri Indulal Yajnik was good enough to write to my dictation. The subsequent chapters I hope to write hereafter. I had no books of reference in jail. Nor do I propose to get them here. I have neither the time nor the inclination to write a regular detailed history. My only object in writing this

book is that it may be helpful in our present struggle, and serve as a guide to any regular historian who may arise in the future. Although I am writing without books of reference at hand, I must ask the reader not to imagine that any single item in this volume is inaccurate or that there is the least exaggeration at any point.

M. K. GANDHI

Juhu
St 1980 Phalgun vadi 13
2nd April, 1924

residents." In my view this remark only added fuel to the fire. Mr Chamberlain spoke out as he had been tutored by the Asiatic Department, which thus tried to import into the Transvaal the atmosphere which pervades India. Every one knows how British officers consider Bombay men as foreigners, in, say, Champaran. At that rate how could I who lived in Durban know anything about the situation in the Transvaal? Thus did the Asiatic Department coach Mr Chamberlain. Little did he know that I had lived in the Transvaal, and that even if I had not, I was fully conversant with the Indian situation there. There was only one pertinent question in the present case: Who possessed the best knowledge of the situation in the Transvaal? The Indians had already answered it for themselves by asking me to go there all the way from India. But it is no new experience to find that arguments based on reason do not always appeal to men in authority. Mr Chamberlain was then so much under the influence of the men on the spot and so anxious was he to humour the Europeans that there was little or no hope of his doing us justice. Still the deputation waited upon him, only in order that no legitimate step for obtaining redress might be omitted whether by oversight or through a sense of wounded self-respect.

I was now confronted by a dilemma even more difficult than the one which faced me in 1894. From one standpoint, it seemed I could return to India as soon as Mr Chamberlain left South Africa. On the other hand I could clearly see that if I returned with the vain fancy of serving on a larger field in India while I was fully aware of the great danger which stared the South African Indians in the face, the spirit of service which I had acquired would be stultified. I thought that even if that meant living in South Africa all my life, I must remain there until the gathering clouds were dispersed or until they broke upon and swept us all away, all our counteracting efforts notwithstanding. This is how I spoke to the Indian leaders. Now, as in 1894, I declared my intention to maintain myself by legal practice. As for the community, this was precisely what they wanted.

I soon applied for admission to practise in the Transvaal. There was some apprehension that the Law Society here too would oppose my application, but it proved groundless. I was enrolled as an attorney of the Supreme Court, and opened an office in Johannesburg. Of all places in the Transvaal, Johannesburg had the largest population of Indians and was therefore well suited for me to settle in, from the standpoint of public work as well as of my own maintenance. I was daily gaining bitter experience of the corruptness of the Asiatic Department, and the best efforts of the Transvaal British Indian Association were directed to finding a remedy for this disease. The repeal of Act 3 of 1885 now receded in the background as a distant objective. The immediate aim was limited to saving ourselves from the on-rushing flood in the shape of this Asiatic Department. Indian deputations waited upon Lord Milner, upon Lord Selborne who had come there, upon Sir Arthur Lawley who was Lieutenant Governor of the Transvaal and who subsequently became Governor of Madras, and upon officers of lesser dignity. I often used to see Government officers. We obtained some slight relief here and there, but it was all patchwork. We used to receive some such satisfaction as is experienced by a man who has been deprived of his all by robbers and who by beseeching the robbers induces them to return something of very small value. It was in consequence of this agitation that the officers whose dismissal I have referred to above were prosecuted. Our misgivings as regards the restrictions on Indian immigration proved correct. Permits were no longer required from Europeans, while they continued to be demanded from Indians. The late Boer Government never strictly enforced their drastic anti-Asiatic legislation, not because they were generous but because their administration was lax. A good officer has not under the British Government as much scope for the exercise of his goodness as he had under the Boer regime. The British Constitution is old and stereotyped, and officers under it have to work like machines. Their liberty of action is restricted by a system of progressive checks. Under the British Constitution, therefore,

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if the policy of the Government is liberal, the subjects receive the utmost advantage of its liberality. On the other hand if their policy is oppressive or niggardly, the subjects feel the maximum weight of their heavy hand. The reverse is the case under constitutions such as that of the late Boer republic. Whether or not the subjects reap full advantage from a liberal law largely depends upon the officers who are charged with its administration. Thus, when British power was established in the Transvaal, all laws adversely affecting the Indians began to be more and more strictly enforced day by day. Loopholes, wherever they existed, were carefully closed. We have already seen that the Asiatic Department was bound to be harsh in its operations. The repeal of the old laws was therefore out of the question. It only remained for the Indians to try and see how their rigours might be mitigated in practice.

One principle must be discussed sooner or later, and if we discuss it at this stage, it will perhaps facilitate an understanding of the Indian point of view and of the situation as it developed hereafter. Soon after the establishment of British rule in the Transvaal and the Free State, Lord Milner appointed a committee whose terms of reference were to prepare a list of such of the old laws of both the republics as placed restrictions on the liberty of the subject or were opposed to the spirit of the British Constitution. The anti-Indian laws could clearly have been included in this description. But Lord Milner's object in appointing the committee was not to redress the grievances of Indians but those of Britishers. He wanted to repeal at the earliest opportunity those laws which indirectly pressed hard upon Britishers. The committee submitted their report in a very short time, and many acts, large and small, which affected Britishers prejudicially, were, it can be said, repealed by a stroke of the pen.

The same committee prepared a list of anti-Indian acts. These were published in the form of a book which served as a handy manual easily used or from our standpoint abused by the Asiatic Department.

Now, if the anti-Indian laws did not mention the Indians by name and were not thus made expressly applicable to them alone but to all subjects, and if their enforcement had been left to the discretion of administrators; or had the laws imposed general restrictions which could have been enforced against Indians in a specially rigorous manner, the object of the legislators would all the same have been achieved by such laws, and yet the laws would have been general laws. None would have felt insulted by their enactment, and when the existing bitterness was softened by time, there would be no need to modify the laws, but only a more liberal administration of the laws would have sufficed to relieve the aggrieved community. Just as I have called laws of the second kind general laws, those of the first kind can be described as particular or racial, and establish what is known as the 'colour bar,' as on the specific ground of colour they impose greater restrictions on members of the dark or brown races than on Europeans.

To take one instance from the laws which were already in force. The reader will remember that the first disfranchising Act which was enacted in Natal but was subsequently disallowed by the Imperial Government provided for the disqualification as voters of all Asiatics as such. Now if such a law were to be altered public opinion should be so far educated that the majority be not only not hostile but actually friendly to Asiatics. The colour bar it set up could only be removed when such cordial feelings were established. This is an illustration of racial or class legislation. The Act referred to was withdrawn and a second Act was enacted in its place which nearly achieved an identical object yet was of a general nature, the sting of racial distinction being removed. The substance of one of its clauses is as follows: 'No person can be placed on the voters' roll in Natal who is a native of countries which have not hitherto possessed elective representative institutions based on the parliamentary franchise.' No reference is made here to Indians or Asiatics. The opinions of counsels could differ as to whether or not India possesses representative institutions based on

the parliamentary franchise. But assuming for the sake of argument that India did not in 1894 and does not even now enjoy the parliamentary franchise, no one can say offhand that the officer in charge of voters' lists in Natal has done an illegal act if he includes the names of Indians in the lists. There is always a general presumption in favour of the right of the subject. So long therefore as the government of the day does not become positively hostile, the names of Indians and others could be included in the electoral roll, the above law notwithstanding. That is to say, if the dislike for Indians became less marked and if the local Government was unwilling to injure the Indians, their names could be entered in the voters' lists without the slightest modification of the law. This is the advantage of a general law. Other instances of the same kind can be cited from among the laws in force in South Africa which have been referred to in previous chapters. The wise policy, therefore, is to enact as little class legislation as possible; and it would be wiser still to avoid it altogether. Once a law is enacted, many difficulties must be encountered before it can be reversed. It is only when public opinion is highly educated that the laws in force in a country can be repealed. A constitution under which laws are modified or repealed every now and then cannot be said to be stable or well organized.

We can now better appreciate the poison which was present in the anti-Asiatic laws in the Transvaal. They were all racial in character. The Asiatics as such could not vote; nor could they own land outside the locations set apart for them by the Government. The administrators could do nothing for the Indians so long as these laws were not removed from the statute-book. Lord Milner's committee could make a separate list of such laws only as were not general in character. Had they been general laws, all laws, enforced only against the Asiatics though not expressly directed against them, would have been repealed along with the rest. The officers in charge could never have argued their helplessness and said that they had no alternative but to enforce the laws so long as the new legislature did not abrogate them.

When these laws passed into the hands of the Asiatic Department it began to enforce them strictly. If the laws were at all worthy of being enforced, Government must arm itself with further powers in order to close the loopholes intentionally kept or left by inadvertence in favour of Asiatics. This looks quite simple and straight. Either the laws are bad in which case they should be repealed, or they are proper in which case their deficiencies should be remedied. The ministers had adopted the policy of enforcing the laws. The Indians had stood shoulder to shoulder with the British and risked their lives during the late war, but that was now a story three or four years old. The British Agent at Pretoria had put up a fight on behalf of the Indians, but that was during the old regime. The grievances of the Indians figured as one of the declared causes of the war, but that declaration was made by short-sighted statesmen who had no knowledge of local conditions. The local officials clearly observed that the anti-Asiatic laws enacted by the late Boer Government were neither adequately severe nor systematic. If the Indians could enter the Transvaal at will and carry on trade wherever they chose, British traders would suffer great loss. All these and similar arguments carried greater weight with the Europeans and their representatives in the ministry. They were all out to amass the maximum of wealth in a minimum of time; how could they stand the Indians becoming co-sharers with them? Hypocrisy pressed political theory into service in order to make out a plausible case. A bare-faced selfish or mercantile argument would not satisfy the intelligent Europeans of South Africa. The human intellect delights in inventing specious arguments in order to support injustice itself, and the South African Europeans were no exception to this general rule. These were the arguments advanced by General Smuts and others:

"South Africa is a representative of Western civilization while India is the centre of Oriental culture. Thinkers of the present generation hold that these two civilizations cannot go together. If nations representing these rival cultures meet even in small groups, the result will only

be an explosion. The West is opposed to simplicity while Orientals consider that virtue to be of primary importance. How can these opposite views be reconciled? It is not the business of statesmen, practical men as they are, to adjudicate upon their relative merits. Western civilization may or may not be good, but Westerners wish to stick to it. They have made tireless endeavours to save that civilization. They have shed rivers of blood for its sake. They have suffered great hardships in its cause. It is therefore too late for them now to chalk out a new path for themselves. Thus considered, the Indian question cannot be resolved into one of trade jealousy or race hatred. The problem is simply one of preserving one's own civilization, that is of enjoying the supreme right of self-preservation and discharging the corresponding duty. Some public speakers may like to inflame the Europeans by finding fault with Indians, but political thinkers believe and say that the very qualities of Indians count for defects in South Africa. The Indians are disliked in South Africa for their simplicity, patience, perseverance, frugality and otherworldliness. Westerners are enterprising, impatient, engrossed in multiplying their material wants and in satisfying them, fond of good cheer, anxious to save physical labour and prodigal in habits. They are therefore afraid that if thousands of Orientals settled in South Africa, the Westerners must go to the wall. Westerners in South Africa are not prepared to commit suicide and their leaders will not permit them to be reduced to such straits."

I believe I have impartially recapitulated the arguments urged by men of the highest character among the Europeans. I have characterized their arguments as pseudo-philosophical, but I do not thereby wish to suggest that they are groundless. From a practical point of view, that is to say, from the standpoint of immediate self-interest they have much force. But from the philosophical point of view, they are hypocrisy pure and simple. In my humble opinion, no impartial person could accept such conclusions and no reformer would place his civilization in the position of helplessness in which those who urge these arguments have placed theirs. So far as I am aware,

no Eastern thinker fears that if Western nations came in free contact with Orientals, Oriental culture would be swept away like sand by the onrushing tide of Western civilization. So far as I have a grasp of Eastern thought it seems to me that Oriental civilization not only does not fear but would positively welcome free contact with Western civilization. If contrary instances can be met with in the East, they do not affect the principle I have laid down, for a number of illustrations can be cited in its support. However that may be, Western thinkers claim that the foundation of Western civilization is the predominance of might over right. Therefore it is that the protagonists of that civilization devote most of their time to the conservation of brute force. These thinkers likewise assert that the nations which do not increase their material wants are doomed to destruction. It is in pursuance of these principles that Western nations have settled in South Africa and subdued the numerically overwhelmingly superior races of South Africa. It is absurd to imagine that they would fear the harmless population of India. The best proof of the statement that the Europeans have nothing to fear from the Asiatics is provided by the fact that had the Indians continued to work in South Africa for all time as mere labourers, no agitation would have been started against Indian immigration.

The only remaining factors are trade and colour. Thousands of Europeans have admitted in their writings that trade by Indians hits petty British traders hard, and that the dislike of the brown races has at present become part and parcel of the mentality of Europeans. Even in the United States of America, where the principle of statutory equality has been established, a man like Booker T. Washington who has received the best Western education, is a Christian of high character and has fully assimilated Western civilization, was not considered fit for admission to the court of President Roosevelt, and probably would not be so considered even today. The Negroes of the United States have accepted Western civilization. They have embraced Christianity. But the black pigment of their skin constitutes their crime, and if in the Northern

States they are socially despised, they are lynched in the Southern States on the slightest suspicion of wrong-doing.

The reader will thus see that there is not much substance in the 'philosophical' arguments discussed above. But he must not therefore conclude that all those who urge them do so in a hypocritical spirit. Many of them honestly hold these views to be sound. It is possible that if we were placed in their position, we too would advance similar arguments. We have a saying in India that as is a man's conduct, such is his understanding. Who is there but has observed that our arguments are but a reflection of our mentality, and that if they do not commend themselves to others, we become dissatisfied, impatient and even indignant?

I have deliberately discussed this question with much minuteness, as I wish the reader to understand different points of view and in order that the reader, who has so far not done so, may acquire the habit of appreciating and respecting varieties of standpoint. Such large-mindedness and such patience are essential to the understanding of Satyagraha and above all to its practice. Satyagraha is impossible in the absence of these qualities. I do not write this book merely for the writing of it. Nor is it my object to place one phase of the history of South Africa before the public. My object in writing the present volume is that the nation might know how Satyagraha, for which I live, for which I desire to live and for which I believe I am equally prepared to die, originated and how it was practised on a large scale; and knowing this, it may understand and carry it out to the extent that it is willing and able to do so.

To resume our narrative. We have seen that the British administrators decided to prevent fresh Indian immigrants from entering the Transvaal, and to render the position of the old Indian settlers so uncomfortable that they would feel compelled to leave the country in sheer disgust, and even if they did not leave it, they would be reduced to a state bordering on serfdom. Some men

looked upon as great statesmen in South Africa had declared more than once that they could afford to keep the Indians only as hewers of wood and drawers of water. On the staff of the Asiatic Department was among others Mr Lionel Curtis who is now known to fame as the missionary for diarchy in India. This young man, as he then was, enjoyed the confidence of Lord Milner. He claimed to do everything according to scientific method, but he was capable of committing serious blunders. The Municipality of Johannesburg had suffered a loss of £14,000 in consequence of one such blunder committed by him. He suggested that if fresh Indian immigration was to be stopped, the first step to be taken to that end was the effective registration of the old Indian residents in South Africa. That done, no one could smuggle himself into the country by practising personation, and if any one did, he could be easily detected. The permits which were issued to Indians after the establishment of British rule in the Transvaal contained the signature of the holder or his thumb-impression if he was illiterate. Later on some one suggested the inclusion besides of a photograph of the holder, and this suggestion was carried out by administrative action, legislation being unnecessary. The Indian leaders therefore did not come to know of this innovation at once. When in course of time these novel features came to their notice, they sent memorials to the authorities, and waited upon them in deputations on behalf of the community. The official argument was that Government could not permit Indians to enter the country without regulation of some sort, and that therefore all Indians should provide themselves with uniform permits containing such details as might render it impossible for any one but the rightful holders to enter the country. It was my opinion that although we were not bound by law to take out such permits, the Government could insist on requiring them so long as the Peace Preservation Ordinance was in force. The Peace Preservation Ordinance in South Africa was something like the Defence of India Act in India. Just as the Defence of India Act was kept on the statute-book in India longer than necessary in order to harass the people,

so was this Ordinance allowed to remain in force long after the necessity for it had passed in order to harass Indians in South Africa. As for the Europeans, it was a dead letter for all practical purposes. Now if permits must be taken out, they should contain some mark of identification. There was nothing wrong therefore that those who were illiterate should allow their thumb-impression to be taken. I did not at all like the inclusion of photographs in the permits. Musalmans again had religious objections to such a course.

The final upshot of the negotiations between the Indian community and the authorities was that the Indians consented to change their permits for new ones and agreed that fresh Indian immigrants should take out permits in the new form. Although the Indians were not bound in law, they voluntarily agreed to re-registration in the hope that new restrictions might not be imposed upon them, it might be clear to all concerned that the Indians did not wish to bring in fresh immigrants by unfair means, and the Peace Preservation Ordinance might no longer be used to harass new-comers. Almost all Indians thus changed their old permits for new ones. This was no small thing. The community completed like one man with the greatest promptitude this re-registration, which they were not legally bound to carry out. This was a proof of their veracity, tact, large-mindedness, commonsense and humility. It also showed that the community had no desire to violate in any way any law in force in the Transvaal. The Indians believed that if they behaved towards the Government with such courtesy, it would treat them well, show regard to them and confer fresh rights upon them. We shall see in the next chapter how the British Government in the Transvaal rewarded them for this great act of courtesy.

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CHAPTER XI

THE REWARD OF GENTLENESS — THE BLACK ACT

The year 1906 was well under way when this re-registration was completed. I had re-entered the Transvaal in 1903 and opened my office in Johannesburg about the middle of that year. Two years had thus passed in merely resisting the inroads of the Asiatic Department. We all expected now that re-registration would satisfy the Government and confidently looked forward to a period of comparative peace for the community. But that was not to be. The reader has been already introduced to Mr Lionel Curtis. This gentleman held, that the Europeans had not attained their objective simply because the Indians changed their old permits for new certificates of registration. It was not enough in his eyes, that great measures were achieved by mutual understanding. He was of opinion that these should have the force of law behind them, and that thus only could the principles underlying them be secured for all time. Mr Curtis wanted some such restrictions to be placed upon Indians as would produce a striking impression all over South Africa and ultimately serve as a model for the other Dominions of the Empire to imitate. He would not consider the Transvaal to be safe so long as even a single point in South Africa was open to Indians. Again, re-registration by mutual consent was calculated to increase the prestige of the Indian community while Mr Curtis was keen upon lowering it. He would not care to carry Indian opinion with him but would frighten us into submission to external restrictions backed up by rigorous legal sanctions. He therefore drafted an Asiatic Bill and advised the Government that so long as his Bill was not passed, there was no provision in the laws already in force to prevent the Indians from surreptitiously entering the Transvaal or to remove unauthorized residents from the country. Mr Curtis'

arguments met with a ready response from the Government, and a draft Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance to be introduced into the Legislative Council was published in the Transvaal Government Gazette.

Before dealing with this Ordinance in detail, it would be well to dispose of an important event in a few words. As I was the author of the Satyagraha movement, it is necessary to enable the reader fully to understand some events of my life. The Zulu 'rebellion' broke out in Natal just while attempts were thus being made to impose further disabilities upon Indians in the Transvaal. I doubted then and doubt even now if the outbreak could be described as a rebellion, but it has always been thus described in Natal. Now as in the Boer War, many European residents of Natal joined the army as volunteers. As I too was considered a resident of Natal, I thought I must do my bit in the war. With the community's permission, therefore, I made an offer to the Government to raise a Stretcher-bearer Corps for service with the troops. The offer was accepted. I therefore broke up my Johannesburg home and sent my family to Phoenix in Natal where my co-workers had settled and from where *Indian Opinion* was published. I did not close the office as I knew I would not be away for long.

I joined the army with a small corps of twenty or twenty-five men. Most of the provinces of India were represented even on this small body of men. The corps was on active service for a month. I have always been thankful to God for the work which then fell to our lot. We found that the wounded Zulus would have been left uncared for, unless we had attended to them. No European would help to dress their wounds. Dr Savage, who was in charge of the ambulance, was himself a very humane person. It was no part of our duty to nurse the wounded after we had taken them to the hospital. But we had joined the war with a desire to do all we could, no matter whether it did or did not fall within the scope of our work. The good Doctor told us that he could not induce Europeans to nurse the Zulus, that it was beyond his power to compel

them and that he would feel obliged if we undertook this mission of mercy. We were only too glad to do this. We had to cleanse the wounds of several Zulus which had not been attended to for as many as five or six days and were therefore stinking horribly. We liked the work. The Zulus could not talk to us, but from their gestures and the expression of their eyes they seemed to feel as if God had sent us to their succour.

The work for which we had enlisted was fairly heavy, for sometimes during the month we had to perform a march of as many as forty miles a day.

The Corps was disbanded in a month. Its work was mentioned in despatches. Each member of the Corps was awarded the medal especially struck for the occasion. The Governor wrote a letter of thanks. The three sergeants of the Corps were Gujaratis, Shris Umiashankar Manchharam Shelat, Surendra Bapubhai Medh, and Harishankar Ishvar Joshi. All the three had a fine physique and worked very hard. I cannot just now recall the names of the other Indians, but I well remember that one of these was a Pathan, who used to express his astonishment on finding us carrying as large a load as, and marching abreast of, himself.

While I was working with the Corps, two ideas which had long been floating in my mind became firmly fixed. First, an aspirant after a life exclusively devoted to service must lead a life of celibacy. Secondly, he must accept poverty as a constant companion through life. He may not take up any occupation which would prevent him or make him shrink from undertaking the lowliest of duties or largest risks.

Letters and telegrams, asking me to proceed to the Transvaal at once, had poured in, even while I was serving with the Corps. On return from the war, therefore, I just met the friends at Phoenix and at once reached Johannesburg. There I read the draft Ordinance referred to above. I took the Transvaal Government Gazette Extraordinary of August 22, 1906 in which the Ordinance was published, home from the office. I went up a hill near the house in the company of a friend and began to translate the draft Ordinance into Gujarati for *Indian Opinion*. I shuddered

as I read the sections of the Ordinance one after another. I saw nothing in it except hatred of Indians. It seemed to me that if the Ordinance was passed and the Indians meekly accepted it, that would spell absolute ruin for the Indians in South Africa. I clearly saw that this was a question of life and death for them. I further saw that even in the case of memorials and representations proving fruitless, the community must not sit with folded hands. Better die than submit to such a law. But how were we to die? What should we dare and do so that there would be nothing before us except a choice of victory or death? An impenetrable wall was before me, as it were, and I could not see my way through it. I must acquaint the reader with the details of the proposed measure, which shocked me so violently. Here is a brief summary of it.

Every Indian, man, woman or child of eight years or upwards, entitled to reside in the Transvaal, must register his or her name with the Registrar of Asiatics and take out a certificate of registration.

The applicants for registration must surrender their old permits to the Registrar, and state in their applications their name, residence, caste, age, etc. The Registrar was to note down important marks of identification upon the applicant's person, and take his finger and thumb impressions. Every Indian who failed thus to apply for registration before a certain date was to forfeit his right of residence in the Transvaal. Failure to appply would be held to be an offence in law for which the defaulter could be fined, sent to prison or even deported within the discretion of the court. Parents must apply on behalf of their minor children and bring them to the Registrar in order to give their finger impressions, etc. In case of parents failing to discharge this responsibility laid upon them, the minor on attaining the age of sixteen years must discharge it himself, and if he defaulted, he made himself liable to the same punishments as could be awarded to his parents. The certificate of registration issued to an applicant must be produced before any police officer whenever and wherever he may be required to do so. Failure thus to produce the certificate would be held to be an offence for which

the defaulter could be fined or sent to prison. Even a person walking on public thoroughfares could be required to produce his certificate. Police officers could enter private houses in order to inspect certificates. Indians entering the Transvaal from some place outside it must produce their certificates before the inspector on duty. Certificates must be produced on demand in courts which the holder attended on business, and in revenue offices which issued to him a trading or bicycle licence. That is to say, if an Indian wanted any Government office to do for him something within its competence, the officer could ask to see his certificate before granting his request. Refusal to produce the certificate or to supply such particulars or means of identification as may be prescribed by regulation would be also held to be an offence for which the person refusing could be fined or sent to prison.

I have never known legislation of this nature being directed against free men in any part of the world. I know that indentured Indians in Natal are subject to a drastic system of passes, but these poor fellows can hardly be classed as free men. However even the laws to which they are subject are mild in comparison to the Ordinance outlined above and the penalties they impose are a mere fleabite when compared with the penalties laid down in the Ordinance. A trader with assets running into *lakhs* could be deported and thus faced with utter ruin in virtue of the Ordinance. And the patient reader will see later on how persons were even deported for breaking some of its provisions. There are some drastic laws directed against criminal tribes in India, with which this Ordinance can be easily compared and will be found not to suffer by the comparison. The giving of finger prints, required by the Ordinance, was quite a novelty in South Africa. With a view to seeing some literature on the subject, I read a volume on finger impressions by Mr Henry, a police officer, from which I gathered that finger prints are required by law only from criminals. I was therefore shocked by this compulsory requirement regarding finger prints. Again, the registration of women and children under sixteen was proposed for the first time by this Ordinance.

The next day there was held a small meeting of the leading Indians to whom I explained the Ordinance word by word. It shocked them as it had shocked me. One of them said in a fit of passion: 'If any one came forward to demand a certificate from my wife, I would shoot him on that spot and take the consequences.' I quieted him, and addressing the meeting said, 'This is a very serious crisis. If the Ordinance were passed and if we acquiesced in it, it would be imitated all over South Africa. As it seems to me, it is designed to strike at the very root of our existence in South Africa. It is not the last step, but the first step with a view to hound us out of the country. We are therefore responsible for the safety, not only of the ten or fifteen thousand Indians in the Transvaal but of the entire Indian community in South Africa. Again, if we fully understand all the implications of this legislation, we shall find that India's honour is in our keeping. For the Ordinance seeks to humiliate not only ourselves but also the motherland. The humiliation consists in the degradation of innocent men. No one will take it upon himself to say that we have done anything to deserve such legislation. We are innocent, and insult offered to a single innocent member of a nation is tantamount to insulting the nation as a whole. It will not, therefore, do to be hasty, impatient or angry. That cannot save us from this onslaught. But God will come to our help, if we calmly think out and carry out in time measures of resistance, presenting a united front and bearing the hardship, which such resistance brings in its train.' All present realized the seriousness of the situation and resolved to hold a public meeting at which a number of resolutions must be proposed and passed. A Jewish theatre was hired for the purpose.

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CHAPTER XII

THE ADVENT OF SATYAGRAHA

The meeting was duly held on September 11, 1906. It was attended by delegates from various places in the Transvaal. But I must confess that even I myself had not then understood all the implications of the resolutions I had helped to frame; nor had I gauged all the possible conclusions to which they might lead. The old Empire Theatre was packed from floor to ceiling. I could read in every face the expectation of something strange to be done or to happen. Mr Abdul Gani, Chairman of the Transvaal British Indian Association, presided. He was one of the oldest Indian residents of the Transvaal, and partner and manager of the Johannesburg branch of the well-known firm of Mamad Kasam Kamrudin. The most important among the resolutions passed by the meeting was the famous Fourth Resolution by which the Indians solemnly determined not to submit to the Ordinance in the event of its becoming law in the teeth of their opposition and to suffer all the penalties attaching to such non-submission.

I fully explained this resolution to the meeting and received a patient hearing. The business of the meeting was conducted in Hindi or Gujarati; it was impossible therefore that any one present should not follow the proceedings. For the Tamils and Telugus who did not know Hindi there were Tamil and Telugu speakers who fully explained everything in their respective languages. The resolution was duly proposed, seconded and supported by several speakers one of whom was Sheth Haji Habib. He too was a very old and experienced resident of South Africa and made an impassioned speech. He was deeply moved and went so far as to say that we must pass this resolution with God as witness and must never yield a cowardly submission to such degrading legislation. He then went on solemnly to declare in the name of God that he would never submit to that law, and advised all present to

do likewise. Others also delivered powerful and angry speeches in supporting the resolution. When in the course of his speech Sheth Haji Habib came to the solemn declaration, I was at once startled and put on my guard. Only then did I fully realize my own responsibility and the responsibility of the community. The community had passed many a resolution before and amended such resolutions in the light of further reflection or fresh experience. There were cases in which resolutions passed had not been observed by all concerned. Amendments in resolutions and failure to observe resolutions on the part of persons agreeing thereto are ordinary experiences of public life all the world over. But no one ever imports the name of God into such resolutions. In the abstract there should not be any distinction between a resolution and an oath taken in the name of God. When an intelligent man makes a resolution deliberately he never swerves from it by a hair's breadth. With him his resolution carries as much weight as a declaration made with God as witness does. But the world takes no note of abstract principles and imagines an ordinary resolution and an oath in the name of God to be poles asunder. A man who makes an ordinary resolution is not ashamed of himself when he deviates from it, but a man who violates an oath administered to him is not only ashamed of himself, but is also looked upon by society as sinner. This imaginary distinction has struck such a deep root in the human mind that a person making a statement on oath before a judge is held to have committed an offence in law if the statement is proved to be false and receives drastic punishment.

Full of these thoughts as I was, possessing as I did much experience of solemn pledges, having profited by them, I was taken aback by Sheth Haji Habib's suggestion of an oath. I thought out the possible consequences of it in a moment. My perplexity gave place to enthusiasm. And although I had no intention of taking an oath or inviting others to do so when I went to the meeting, I warmly approved of the Sheth's suggestion. But at the same time it seemed to me that the people should be told

of all the consequences and should have explained to them clearly the meaning of a pledge. And if even then they were prepared to pledge themselves, they should be encouraged to do so; otherwise I must understand that they were not still ready to stand the final test. I therefore asked the President for permission to explain to the meeting the implications of Sheth Haji Habib's suggestion. The President readily granted it and I rose to address the meeting. I give below a summary of my remarks just as I can recall them now:

"I wish to explain to this meeting that there is a vast difference between this resolution and every other resolution we have passed up to date and that there is a wide divergence also in the manner of making it. It is a very grave resolution we are making, as our existence in South Africa depends upon our fully observing it. The manner of making the resolution suggested by our friend is as much of a novelty as of a solemnity. I did not come to the meeting with a view to getting the resolution passed in that manner, which redounds to the credit of Sheth Haji Habib as well as it lays a burden of responsibility upon him. I tender my congratulations to him. I deeply appreciate his suggestion, but if you adopt it you too will share his responsibility. You must understand what is this reponsibility, and as an adviser and servant of the community, it is my duty fully to explain it to you.

"We all believe in one and the same God, the differrences of nomenclature in Hinduism and Islam notwithstanding. To pledge ourselves or to take an oath in the name of that God or with him as witness is not something to be trifled with. If having taken such an oath we violate our pledge we are guilty before God and man. Personally I hold that a man, who deliberately and intelligently takes a pledge and then breaks it, forfeits his manhood. And just as a copper coin treated with mercury not only becomes valueless when detected but also makes its owner liable to punishment, in the same way a man who lightly pledges his word and then breaks it becomes a man of straw and fits himself for punishment here as well as hereafter. Sheth Haji Habib is proposing to administer an

oath of a very serious character. There is no one in this meeting who can be classed as an infant or as wanting in understanding. You are all well advanced in age and have seen the world; many of you are delegates and have discharged responsibilities in a greater or lesser measure. No one present, therefore, can ever hope to excuse himself by saying that he did not know what he was about when he took the oath.

"I know that pledges and vows are, and should be, taken on rare occasions. A man who takes a vow every now and then is sure to stumble. But if I can imagine a crisis in the history of the Indian community of South Africa when it would be in the fitness of things to take pledges that crisis is surely now. There is wisdom in taking serious steps with great caution and hesitation. But caution and hesitation have their limits, and we have now passed them. The Government has taken leave of all sense of decency. We would only be betraying our unworthiness and cowardice, if we cannot stake our all in the face of the conflagration which envelopes us and sit watching it with folded hands. There is no doubt, therefore, that the present is a proper occasion for taking pledges. But every one of us must think out for himself if he has the will and the ability to pledge himself. Resolutions of this nature cannot be passed by a majority vote. Only those who take a pledge can be bound by it. This pledge must not be taken with a view to produce an effect on outsiders. No one should trouble to consider what impression it might have upon the Local Government, the Imperial Government, or the Government of India. Every one must only search his own heart, and if the inner voice assures him that he has the requisite strength to carry him through, then only should he pledge himself and then only will his pledge bear fruit.

"A few words now as to the consequences. Hoping for the best, we may say that if a majority of the Indians pledge themselves to resistance and if all who take the pledge prove true to themselves, the Ordinance may not be passed and, if passed, may be soon repealed. It may

be that we may not be called upon to suffer at all. But if on the one hand a man who takes a pledge must be a robust optimist, on the other hand he must be prepared for the worst. Therefore I want to give you an idea of the worst that might happen to us in the present struggle. Imagine that all of us present here numbering 3,000 at the most pledge ourselves. Imagine again that the remaining 10,000 Indians take no such pledge. We will only provoke ridicule in the beginning. Again, it is quite possible that in spite of the present warning some or many of those who pledge themselves may weaken at the very first trial. We may have to go to jail, where we may be insulted. We may have to go hungry and suffer extreme heat or cold. Hard labour may be imposed upon us. We may be flogged by rude warders. We may be fined heavily and our property may be attached and held up to auction if there are only a few resisters left. Opulent today we may be reduced to abject poverty tomorrow. We may be deported. Suffering from starvation and similar hardships in jail, some of us may fall ill and even die. In short, therefore, it is not at all impossible that we may have to endure every hardship that we can imagine, and wisdom lies in pledging ourselves on the understanding that we shall have to suffer all that and worse. If some one asks me when and how the struggle may end, I may say that if the entire community manfully stands the test, the end will be near. If many of us fall back under storm and stress, the struggle will be prolonged. But I can boldly declare, and with certainty, that so long as there is even a handful of men true to their pledge, there can only be one end to the struggle, and that is victory.

"A word about my personal responsibility. If I am warning you of the risks attendant upon the pledge, I am at the same time inviting you to pledge yourselves, and I am fully conscious of my responsibility in the matter. It is possible that a majority of those present here may take the pledge in a fit of enthusiasm or indignation but may weaken under the ordeal, and only a handful may be left to face the final test. Even then there is only one course open to some one like me, to die but not to submit to

the law. It is quite unlikely but even if every one else flinched leaving me alone to face the music, I am confident that I would never violate my pledge. Please do not misunderstand me. I am not saying this out of vanity, but I wish to put you, especially the leaders upon the platform, on your guard. I wish respectfully to suggest it to you that if you have not the will or the ability to stand firm even when you are perfectly isolated, you must not only not take the pledge yourselves but you must declare your opposition before the resolution is put to the meeting and before its members begin to take pledges and you must not make yourselves parties to the resolution. Although we are going to take the pledge in a body, no one should imagine that default on the part of one or many can absolve the rest from their obligation. Every one should fully realize his responsibility, then only pledge himself independently of others and understand that he himself must be true to his pledge even unto death, no matter what others do."

I spoke to this effect and resumed my seat. The meeting heard me word by word in perfect quiet. Other leaders too spoke. All dwelt upon their own responsibility and the responsibility of the audience. The President rose. He too made the situation clear, and at last all present, standing with upraised hands, took an oath with God as witness not to submit to the Ordinance if it became law. I can never forget the scene, which is present before my mind's eye as I write. The community's enthusiasm knew no bounds. The very next day there was some accident in the theatre in consequence of which it was wholly destroyed by fire. On the third day friends brought me the news of the fire and congratulated the community upon this good omen, which signified to them that the Ordinance would meet the same fate as the theatre. I have never been influenced by such so-called signs and therefore did not attach any weight to the coincidence. I have taken note of it here only as a demonstration of the community's courage and faith. The reader will find in the subsequent chapters many more proofs of these two high qualities of the people.

The workers did not let the grass grow under their feet after this great meeting. Meetings were held everywhere and pledges of resistance were taken in every place. The principal topic of discussion in *Indian Opinion* now was the Black Ordinance.

At the other end, steps were taken in order to meet the Local Government. A deputation waited upon Mr Duncan, the Colonial Secretary, and told him among other things about the pledges. Sheth Haji Habib, who was a member of the deputation, said, 'I cannot possibly restrain myself if any officer comes and proceeds to take my wife's finger prints. I will kill him there and then and die myself.' The Minister stared at the Sheth's face for a while and said, 'Government is reconsidering the advisability of making the Ordinance applicable to women, and I can assure you at once that the clauses relating to women will be deleted. Government have understood your feeling in the matter and desire to respect it. But as for the other provisions, I am sorry to inform you that Government is and will remain adamant. General Botha wants you to agree to this legislation after due deliberation. Government deem it to be essential to the existence of the Europeans. They will certainly consider any suggestions about details which you may make consistently with the objects of the Ordinance, and my advice to the deputation is that your interest lies in agreeing to the legislation and proposing changes only as regards the details.' I am leaving out here the particulars of the discussion with the Minister, as all those arguments have already been dealt with. The arguments were just the same, there was only a difference in phrasecology as they were set forth before the Minister. The deputation withdrew, after informing him that his advice notwithstanding, acquiescence in the proposed legislation was out of the question, and after thanking Government for its intention of exempting women from its provisions. It is difficult to say whether the exemption of women was the first fruit of the community's agitation, or whether the Government as an afterthought made a concession to practical considerations which Mr Curtis had ruled out of his scientific methods. Government claimed

that it had decided to exempt women independently of the Indian agitation. Be that as it might, the community established to their own satisfaction a cause and effect relation between the agitation and the exemption and their fighting spirit rose accordingly.

None of us knew what name to give to our movement. I then used the term 'passive resistance' in describing it. I did not quite understand the implications of 'passive resistance' as I called it. I only knew that some new principle had come into being. As the struggle advanced, the phrase 'passive resistance' gave rise to confusion and it appeared shameful to permit this great struggle to be known only by an English name. Again, that foreign phrase could hardly pass as current coin among the community. A small prize was therefore announced in *Indian Opinion* to be awarded to the reader who invented the best designation for our struggle. We thus received a number of suggestions. The meaning of the struggle had been then fully discussed in *Indian Opinion* and the competitors for the prize had fairly sufficient material to serve as a basis for their exploration. Shri Maganlal Gandhi was one of the competitors and he suggested the word 'Sadagraha,' meaning 'firmness in a good cause.' I liked the word, but it did not fully represent the whole idea I wished it to connote. I therefore corrected it to 'Satyagraha.' Truth (*Satya*) implies love, and firmness (*agraha*) engenders and therefore serves as a synonym for force. I thus began to call the Indian movement 'Satyagraha,' that is to say, the Force which is born of Truth and Love or non-violence, and gave up the use of the phrase 'passive resistance,' in connection with it, so much so that even in English writing we often avoided it and used instead the word 'Satyagraha' itself or some other equivalent English phrase. This then was the genesis of the movement which came to be known as Satyagraha, and of the word used as a designation for it. Before we proceed any further with our history we shall do well to grasp the differences between passive resistance and Satyagraha, which is the subject of our next chapter.

CHAPTER XIII

SATYAGRAHA *V.* PASSIVE RESISTANCE

As the movement advanced, Englishmen too began to watch it with interest. Although the English newspapers in the Transvaal generally wrote in support of the Europeans and of the Black Act, they willingly published contributions from well-known Indians. They also published Indian representations to Government in full or at least a summary of these, sometimes sent their reporters to important meetings of the Indians, and when such was not the case, made room for the brief reports we sent them.

These amenities were of course very useful to the community, but by and by some leading Europeans came to take interest in the movement as it progressed. One of these was Mr Hosken, one of the magnates of Johannesburg. He had always been free from colour prejudice but his interest in the Indian question deepened after the starting of Satyagraha. The Europeans of Germiston, which is something like a suburb of Johannesburg, expressed a desire to hear me. A meeting was held, and introducing me and the movement I stood for to the audience, Mr Hosken observed, "The Transvaal Indians have had recourse to passive resistance when all other means of securing redress proved to be of no avail. They do not enjoy the franchise. Numerically, they are only a few. They are weak and have no arms. Therefore they have taken to passive resistance which is a weapon of the weak." These observations took me by surprise, and the speech which I was going to make took an altogether different complexion in consequence. In contradicting Mr Hosken, I defined our passive resistance as 'soul force.' I saw at this meeting that a use of the phrase 'passive resistance' was apt to give rise to terrible misunderstanding. I will try to distinguish between passive resistance and soul force by amplifying the argument which I made before that meeting so as to make things clearer.

I have no idea when the phrase 'passive resistance' was first used in English and by whom. But among the English people, whenever a small minority did not approve of some obnoxious piece of legislation, instead of rising in rebellion they took the passive or milder step of not submitting to the law and inviting the penalties of such non-submission upon their heads. When the British Parliament passed the Education Act some years ago, the Non-conformists offered passive resistance under the leadership of Dr Clifford. The great movement of the English women for the vote was also known as passive resistance. It was in view of these two cases that Mr Hosken described passive resistance as a weapon of the weak or the voteless. Dr Clifford and his friends had the vote, but as they were in a minority in the Parliament, they could not prevent the passage of the Education Act. That is to say, they were weak in numbers. Not that they were averse to the use of arms for the attainment of their aims, but they had no hope of succeeding by force of arms. And in a well-regulated state, recourse to arms every now and then in order to secure popular rights would defeat its own purpose. Again some of the Non-conformists would generally object to taking up arms even if it was a practical proposition. The suffragists had no franchise rights. They were weak in numbers as well as in physical force. Thus their case lent colour to Mr Hosken's observations. The suffragist movement did not eschew the use of physical force. Some suffragists fired buildings and even assaulted men. I do not think they ever intended to kill any one. But they did intend to thrash people when an opportunity occurred, and even thus to make things hot for them.

But brute force had absolutely no place in the Indian movement in any circumstance, and the reader will see, as we proceed, that no matter how badly they suffered, the Satyagrahis never used physical force, and that too although there were occasions when they were in a position to use it effectively. Again, although the Indians had no franchise and were weak, these considerations had nothing to do with the organization of Satyagraha. This is not to say, that the Indians would have taken to Satyagraha

even if they had possessed arms or the franchise. Probably there would not have been any scope for Satyagraha if they had the franchise. If they had arms, the opposite party would have thought twice before antagonizing them. One can therefore understand, that people who possess arms would have fewer occasions for offering Satyagraha. My point is that I can definitely assert that in planning the Indian movement there never was the slightest thought given to the possibility or otherwise of offering armed resistance. Satyagraha is sou force pure and simple, and whenever and to whatever extent there is room for the use of arms or physical force or brute force, there and to that extent is there so much less possibility for soul force. These are purely antagonistic forces in my view, and I had full realization of this antagonism even at the time of the advent of Satyagraha.

We will not stop here to consider whether these views are right or wrong. We are only concerned to note the distinction between passive resistance and Satyagraha, and we have seen that there is a great and fundamental difference between the two. If without understanding this, those who call themselves either passive resisters or Satyagrahis believe both to be one and the same thing, there would be injustice to both leading to untoward consequences. The result of our using the phrase 'passive resistance' in South Africa was, not that people admired us by ascribing to us the bravery and the self-sacrifice of the suffragists but we were mistaken to be a danger to person and property which the suffragists were, and even a generous friend like Mr Hosken imagined us to be weak. The power of suggestion is such, that a man at last becomes what he believes himself to be. If we continue to believe ourselves and let others believe, that we are weak and helpless and therefore offer passive resistance, our resistance would never make us strong, and at the earliest opportunity we would give up passive resistance as a weapon of the weak. On the other hand if we are Satyagrahis and offer Satyagraha believing ourselves to be strong, two clear consequences result from it. Fostering the idea of strength, we grow stronger and stronger every day. With the increase in our

strength, our Satyagraha too becomes more effective and we would never be casting about for an opportunity to give it up. Again, while there is no scope for love in passive resistance, on the other hand not only has hatred no place in Satyagraha but is a positive breach of its ruling principle. While in passive resistance there is a scope for the use of arms when a suitable occasion arrives, in Satyagraha physical force is forbidden even in the most favourable circumstances. Passive resistance is often looked upon as a preparation for the use of force while Satyagraha can never be utilized as such. Passive resistance may be offered side by side with the use of arms. Satyagraha and brute force, being each a negation of the other, can never go together. Satyagraha may be offered to one's nearest and dearest; passive resistance can never be offered to them unless of course they have ceased to be dear and become an object of hatred to us. In passive resistance there is always present an idea of harassing the other party and there is a simultaneous readiness to undergo any hardships entailed upon us by such activity; while in Satyagraha there is not the remotest idea of injuring the opponent. Satyagraha postulates the conquest of the adversary by suffering in one's own person.

These are the distinctions between the two forces. But I do not wish to suggest that the merits, or if you like, the defects of passive resistance thus enumerated are to be seen in every movement which passes by that name. But it can be shown that these defects have been noticed in many cases of passive resistance. Jesus Christ indeed has been acclaimed as the prince of passive resisters but I submit in that case passive resistance must mean Satyagraha and Satyagraha alone. There are not many cases in history of passive resistance in that sense. One of these is that of the Doukhobors of Russia cited by Tolstoy. The phrase passive resistance was not employed to denote the patient suffering of oppression by thousands of devout Christians in the early days of Christianity. I would therefore class them as Satyagrahis. And if their conduct be described as passive resistance, passive resistance becomes synonymous with Satyagraha. It has been my object in the

present chapter to show that Satyagraha is essentially different from what people generally mean in English by the phrase 'passive resistance.'

While enumerating the characteristics of passive resistance, I had to sound a note of warning in order to avoid injustice being done to those who had recourse to it. It is also necessary to point out that I do not claim for people calling themselves Satyagrahis all the merits which I have described as being characteristic of Satyagraha. I am not unaware of the fact that many a Satyagrahi so called is an utter stranger to them. Many suppose Satyagraha to be a weapon of the weak. Others have said that it is a preparation for armed resistance. But I must repeat once more that it has not been my object to describe Satyagrahis as they are but to set forth the implications of Satyagraha and the characteristics of Satyagrahis as they ought to be.

In a word, we had to invent a new term clearly to denote the movement of the Indians in the Transvaal and to prevent its being confused with passive resistance generally so called. I have tried to show in the present chapter the various principles which were then held to be a part and parcel of the connotation of that term.

with General Botha, and did her best to commend to the Boers the policy of repealing the Black Act.

The second lady was Miss Olive Schreiner, to whom I have already referred in a previous chapter. The name Schreiner is one to conjure with in South Africa, so much so that when Miss Schreiner married, her husband adopted her name so that (I was told) her relation with the Schreiners might not be forgotten among the Europeans of South Africa. This was not due to any false pride, as Miss Schreiner was as simple in habits and humble in spirit as she was learned. I had the privilege of being familiar with her. She knew no difference between her Negro servants and herself. Authoress of *Dreams* and many other works as she was, she never hesitated to cook, wash the pots or handle the broom. She held that far from affecting it adversely, such useful physical labour stimulated her literary ability and made for a sense of proportion and discrimination in thought and language. This gifted lady lent to the Indian cause the whole weight of her influence over the Europeans of South Africa.

The third lady was Miss Molteno, an aged member of that ancient family of South Africa, who also did her best for the Indians.

The reader may ask what fruit all this sympathy of the Europeans bore. Well, this chapter has not been written to describe the practical consequences of their sympathy. The work detailed above of some of these friends bears witness to a portion of the result. The very nature of Satyagraha is such that the fruit of the movement is contained in the movement itself. Satyagraha is based on self-help, self-sacrifice and faith in God. One of my objects in enumerating the names of European helpers is to mark the Satyagrahis' gratefulness to them. This history would be justly considered incomplete without such mention. I have not tried to make the list exhaustive, but have tendered the Indians' thanks to all in selecting a few for especial mention. Secondly, as a Satyagrahi I hold to the faith, that all activity pursued with a pure heart is bound to bear fruit, whether or not such fruit is visible to us. And last but not the least, I

have tried to show that all truthful movements spontaneously attract to themselves all manner of pure and disinterested help. If it is not clear already, I should like to make it clear that no other effort whatever was made during the struggle to enlist European sympathy beyond the effort, if effort it can be called, involved in adherence to Truth and Truth alone. The European friends were attracted by the inherent power of the movement itself.

CHAPTER XXIV

FURTHER INTERNAL DIFFICULTIES

We have had some idea of our internal difficulties in Chapter XXII. When I was assaulted in Johannesburg, my family lived in Phoenix and were naturally anxious about me. But it was not possible for them to expend money on the journey from Phoenix to Johannesburg. It was therefore necessary for me to see them after my recovery.

I was often on the move between the Transvaal and Natal in connection with my work. From the letters of Natal friends I was aware that in Natal too the settlement had been grossly misunderstood. And I had received a sheaf of correspondence addressed to *Indian Opinion* in which adverse criticism was passed on the settlement. Although the Satyagraha struggle was still confined to the Transvaal Indians, we must seek the support and enlist the sympathies of the Natal Indians also. The Transvaal struggle was not a mere local affair and the Indians in the Transvaal were really fighting the battle on behalf of all the Indians in South Africa. And therefore also I must go to Durban and remove the misunderstandings prevalent there. So I took the first opportunity to run up to Durban.

A public meeting of the Indians was called in Durban. Some friends had warned me beforehand that I would be attacked at this meeting and that I should therefore not attend it at all or at least take steps for defending myself. But neither of the two courses was open to me. If a servant when called by his master fails to respond through

fear, he forfeits his title to the name of servant. Nor does he deserve the name if he is afraid of the master's punishment. Service of the public for service's sake is like walking on the sword's edge. If a servant is ready enough for praise he may not flee in the face of blame. I therefore presented myself at the meeting at the appointed time. I explained to the meeting how the settlement had been effected, and also answered the questions put by the audience. The meeting was held at 8 o'clock in the evening. The proceedings were nearly over when a Pathan rushed to the platform with a big stick. The lights were put out at the same time. I grasped the situation at once. Sheth Daud Muhammad the chairman stood up on the chairman's table and tried to quell the disturbance. Some of those on the platform surrounded me to defend my person. The friends who feared an assault had come to the place prepared for eventualities. One of them had a revolver in his pocket and he fired a blank shot. Meanwhile Parsi Rustomji who had noticed the gathering clouds went with all possible speed to the police station and informed Superintendent Alexander, who sent a police party. The police made a way for me through the crowd and took me to Parsi Rustomji's place.

The next day Parsi Rustomji brought all the Pathans of Durban together in the morning, and asked them to place before me all their complaints against me. I met them and tried to conciliate them, but with little success. They had a preconceived notion that I had betrayed the community, and until this poison was removed, it was useless reasoning with them. The canker of suspicion cannot be cured by arguments or explanations.

I left Durban for Phoenix the same day. The friends who had guarded me the previous night would not let me alone, and informed me that they intended to accompany me to Phoenix. I said, 'I cannot prevent you if you will come in spite of me. But Phoenix is a jungle. And what will you do if we the only dwellers in it do not give you even food?' One of the friends replied, 'That won't frighten us. We are well able to look after ourselves. And so long as we are a-soldiering, who is there to prevent us

from robbing your pantry?' We thus made a merry party for Phoenix.

The leader of this self-appointed guard was Jack Moodaley, a Natal-born Tamilian well known among the Indians as a trained boxer. He and his companions believed that no man in South Africa, whether white or coloured, was a match for him in that branch of sport.

In South Africa I had for many years been in the habit of sleeping in the open at all times except when there was rain. I was not prepared now to change the habit, and the self-constituted guard decided to keep watch all night. Though I had tried to laugh these men out of their purpose, I must confess that I was weak enough to feel safer for their presence. I wonder if I could have slept with the same ease if the guard had not been there. I suppose I should have been startled by some noise or other. I believe that I have an unflinching faith in God. For many years have accorded intellectual assent to the proposition that death is only a big change in life and nothing more, and should be welcome whenever it arrives. I have deliberately made a supreme attempt to cast out from my heart all fear whatsoever including the fear of death. Still I remember occasions in my life when I have not rejoiced at the thought of approaching death as one might rejoice at the prospect of meeting a long lost friend. Thus man often remains weak notwithstanding all his efforts to be strong, and knowledge which stops at the head and does not penetrate into the heart is of but little use in the critical times of living experience. Then again the strength of the spirit within mostly evaporates when a person gets and accepts support from outside. A Satyagrahi must be always on his guard against such temptations.

While in Phoenix I did just one thing. I wrote a great deal with a view to removing misunderstandings about the compromise, including an imaginary dialogue for *Indian Opinion* in which I disposed of in ample detail the objections advanced and criticisms passed against the settlement. I believe that this dialogue produced a good effect. It was found that the Transvaal Indians, whose

misunderstanding of the settlement, if persistent, would have led to really disastrous results, did not long misunderstand it. It was only for the Transvaal Indians to accept or to reject the settlement. They were on their trial as well as myself as their leader and servant. In the end there were hardly any Indians who had not registered themselves voluntarily. There was such a rush of the applicants for registration that the officers concerned were hard pressed with work, and in a very short time the Indians had fulfilled their part of the settlement. Even the Government had to admit this, and I could see that the misunderstanding, though of an acute nature, was quite limited in its extent. There was no doubt a great deal of stir when some Pathans violently took the law into their own hands. But such violent stir, when analysed, often turns out to have no bottom at all and is equally often only temporary. And yet it is a power in the world today as we are apt to be unnerved in the face of violence. If however we calmly think about it, we shall find that there is no reason for nervousness. Just suppose that Mir Alam and his friends, instead of only wounding, had actually destroyed my body. And suppose also that the community had deliberately remained calm and unperturbed, and forgiven the offenders perceiving that according to their lights they could not behave otherwise than they did. Far from injuring the community, such a noble attitude would have greatly benefited them. All misunderstanding would have disappeared, and Mir Alam and party would have had their eyes opened to the error of their ways. As for me, nothing better can happen to a Satyagrahi than meeting death all unsought in the very act of Satyagraha, i.e., pursuing Truth. All these propositions are true only of a struggle like the Satyagraha movement, where there is no room for hatred, where self-reliance is the order of the day, where no one has to look expectantly at another, where there are no leaders and hence no followers, or where all are leaders and all are followers, so that the death of a fighter, however eminent, makes not for slackness but on the other hand intensifies the struggle.

Such is the pure and essential nature of Satyagraha, not realized in practice, because not every one of us has shed hatred. In actual practice the secret of Satyagraha is not understood by all, and the many are apt unintelligently to follow the few. Again as Tolstoy observed, the Transvaal struggle was the first attempt at applying the principle of Satyagraha to masses or bodies of men. I do not know any historical example of pure mass Satyagraha. I cannot however formulate any definite opinion on the point, as my knowledge of history is limited. But as a matter of fact we have nothing to do with historical precedents. Granted the fundamental principles of Satyagraha, it will be seen that the consequences I have described are bound to follow as night the day. It will not do to dismiss such a valuable force with the remark that it is difficult or impossible of application. Brute force has been the ruling factor in the world for thousands of years, and mankind has been reaping its bitter harvest all along, as he who runs may read. There is little hope of anything good coming out of it in the future. If light can come out of darkness, then alone can love emerge from hatred.

CHAPTER XXV

GENERAL SMUTS' BREACH OF FAITH(?)

The reader has seen something of the internal difficulties, in describing which I had to draw largely upon my own life story, but that could not be avoided, as my own difficulties regarding Satyagraha became equally the difficulties of the Satyagrahis. We now return to the external situation.

I am ashamed of writing the caption of this chapter as well as the chapter itself, for it deals with the obliquity of human nature. Already in 1908 General Smuts ranked as the ablest leader in South Africa, and today he takes a high place among the politicians of the British Empire, and even of the world. I have no doubt about his great abilities. General Smuts is as able a general and administrator as he is a lawyer. Many other politicians have come

Empire was ranged against the hundreds of thousands of able Europeans in America, here in South Africa a helpless body of 13,000 Indians had challenged the powerful Government of the Transvaal. The Indians' only weapon was a faith in the righteousness of their own cause and in God. There is no doubt that this weapon is all-sufficient and all-powerful for the devout, but so long as that is not the view of the man in the street, 13,000 unarmed Indians might appear insignificant before the well-armed Europeans of America. As God is the strength of the weak, it is as well that the world despises them.

CHAPTER XXVIII

CHARGE OF FORCING FRESH ISSUE

During the same year in which the Black Act was passed General Smuts carried through the Legislature another bill called the Transvaal Immigrants Restriction Bill (Act 15 of 1907), which was ostensibly of general application but was chiefly aimed at the Indians. This Act generally followed the lines of similar legislation in Natal, but it treated as prohibited immigrants those who could pass education tests but were ineligible for registration under the Asiatic Act, and was thus indirectly made an instrument for preventing the entry of a single Indian newcomer.

It was absolutely essential for the Indians to resist this fresh inroad on their rights, but the question was whether it should be made a plank in the Satyagraha struggle. The community was not bound as to when and regarding what subjects they should offer Satyagraha, in deciding which question they must only not transgress the limits prescribed by wisdom and appreciation of their own capacity. Satyagraha offered on every occasion seasonable or otherwise would be corrupted into Duragraha. And if any one takes to Satyagraha without having measured his own strength and afterwards sustains a defeat, he not only disgraces himself but he also brings the matchless weapon of Satyagraha into disrepute by his folly.

The Satyagraha Committee saw that the Indians' Satyagraha was being offered only against the Black Act, and that if the Black Act was once repealed, the Immigration Restriction Act would lose the sting to which I have referred. Still if the Indians did not take any steps regarding the Immigration Act from an idea that a separate movement against it was unnecessary, their silence might be misconstrued as implying their consent to the total prohibition of Indian immigration in the future. The Immigration Act too must therefore be opposed, and the only question was: Should this also be included in the Satyagraha struggle? The community's view was that it was their duty to include in the Satyagraha any fresh attacks on their rights made while the struggle was in progress. If they did not feel strong enough to do so that was altogether a different matter. The leaders came to the conclusion that their lack or deficiency of strength should not be made a pretext for letting the Immigration Act alone, and that therefore this Act too must be covered by the Satyagraha struggle.

Correspondence was therefore carried on with the Government on this subject. We could not thereby induce General Smuts to agree to a change in the law, but it provided him with a fresh handle for vilifying the community and really speaking myself. General Smuts knew that many more Europeans, besides those who were publicly helping us, were privately sympathetic to our movement, and he naturally wished that their sympathy should be alienated if possible. He therefore charged me with raising a fresh point, and he told as well as wrote to our supporters that they did not know me as he did. If he yielded an inch, I would ask for an ell and therefore it was that he was not repealing the Asiatic Act. When Satyagraha was started, there was no question whatever about fresh immigrants. Now when he was legislating to prevent the fresh entry of any more Indians in the interest of the Transvaal, there too I had threatened Satyagraha. He could not any more put up with this 'cunning.' I might do my worst, and every Indian might be ruined, but he would not repeal the Asiatic Act, nor would the Transvaal

Government give up the policy they had adopted regarding the Indians, and in this just attitude they were entitled to the support of all Europeans.

A little reflection will show how totally unjust and immoral this argument was. When there was nothing like the Immigrants Restriction Act at all in existence, how were the Indians or myself to oppose it? General Smuts talked glibly about his experience of what he called my 'cunning' and yet he could not cite a single case in point in support of his statement. And I do not remember to have ever resorted to cunning during all those years that I lived in South Africa. I may now go even farther and say without the least hesitation that I have never had recourse to cunning in all my life. I believe that cunning is not only morally wrong but also politically inexpedient, and have therefore always discountenanced its use even from the practical standpoint. It is hardly necessary for me to defend myself. I would even be ashamed of defending myself before the class of readers for whom this is written. If even now they have not seen that I am free from cunning, nothing that I could write in self-defence could convince them of that fact. I have penned these few sentences only with a view to give the reader an idea of the difficulties which were encountered during the Satyagraha struggle and of the imminent danger to the movement if the Indians even by a hair's breadth swerved from the strait and narrow path. The rope-dancer, balancing himself upon a rope suspended at a height of twenty feet, must concentrate his attention upon the rope, and the least little error in so doing means death for him, no matter on which side he falls. My eight years' experience of Satyagraha in South Africa has taught me that a Satyagrahi has to be if possible even more single-minded than the rope-dancer. The friends before whom General Smuts levelled this charge at me knew me well, and therefore the charge had an effect over them just the opposite of what General Smuts had desired. They not only did not give me up or the movement but grew even more zealous in supporting us, and the Indians saw later on that they would have come in for no end of trouble if

their Satyagraha had not been extended to the Immigration Act also.

My experience has taught me that a law of progression applies to every righteous struggle. But in the case of Satyagraha the law amounts to an axiom. As the Ganga advances, other streams flow into it, and hence at the mouth it grows so wide that neither bank is to be seen and a person sailing upon the river cannot make out where the river ends and the sea begins. So also as a Satyagraha struggle progresses onward, many another element helps to swell its current, and there is a constant growth in the results to which it leads. This is really inevitable, and is bound up with the first principles of Satyagraha. For in Satyagraha the minimum is also the maximum, and as it is the irreducible minimum, there is no question of retreat, and the only movement possible is an advance. In other struggles, even when they are righteous, the demand is first pitched a little higher so as to admit of future reduction, and hence the law of progression does not apply to all of them without exception. But I must explain how the law of progression comes into play when the minimum is also the maximum as in Satyagraha. The Ganga does not leave its course in search of tributaries. Even so does the Satyagrahi not leave his path which is sharp as the sword's edge. But as the tributaries spontaneously join the Ganga as it advances, so it is with the river that is Satyagraha. Seeing that the Immigration Act was included in the Satyagraha, some Indians ignorant of the principles of Satyagraha insisted upon the whole mass of the anti-Indian legislation in the Transvaal being similarly treated. Others again suggested a mobilization of Indians all over South Africa and the offering of Satyagraha against all anti-Indian legislation in Natal, the Cape Colony, the Orange Free State etc., while the Transvaal struggle was on. Both the suggestions involved a breach of principle. I distinctly said, that it would be dishonest now, having seen the opportunity, to take up a position which was not in view when Satyagraha was started. No matter how strong we were, the present struggle must close when the demands for which it was commenced were accepted.

I am confident, that if we had not adhered to this principle, instead of winning, we would not only have lost all along the line, but also forfeited the sympathy which had been enlisted in our favour. On the other hand if the adversary himself creates new difficulties for us while the struggle is in progress, they become automatically included in it. A Satyagrahi, without being false to his faith, cannot disregard new difficulties which confront him while he is pursuing his own course. The adversary is not a Satyagrahi,—Satyagraha against Satyagraha is impossible,—and is not bound by any limit of maximum or minimum. He can therefore try if he wishes to frighten the Satyagrahi by raising novel issues. But the Satyagrahi has renounced all fear, tackles by Satyagraha the later difficulties as well as the former and trusts that it will help him to hold his own against all odds. Therefore as a Satyagraha struggle is prolonged, that is to say by the adversary, it is the adversary who stands to lose from his own standpoint, and it is the Satyagrahi who stands to gain. We shall come across other illustrations of the working of this law in the later stages of this struggle.

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CHAPTER XXIX

SORABJI SHAPURJI ADAJANIA

Now as Satyagraha was made to embrace the Immigration Act as well, Satyagrahis had to test the right of educated Indians to enter the Transvaal. The Committee decided that the test should not be made through any ordinary Indian. The idea was that some Indian, who did not come within the four corners of the definition of a prohibited immigrant in the new Act in so far as the definition was acceptable to the community, should enter the Transvaal and go to jail. We had thus to show that Satyagraha is a force containing within itself seeds of progressive self-restraint. There was a section in the Act to the effect that any person who was not conversant with a European language should be treated as a prohibited immigrant. The Committee therefore proposed that some Indian who knew English but who had not been to the

Transvaal before should enter the country. Several young Indians volunteered for the purpose, out of whom Sorabji Shapurji Adajania was selected.

Sorabji was a Parsi. There were not perhaps more than a hundred Parsis in the whole of South Africa. I held in South Africa the same views about the Parsis as I have expressed in India. There are not more than a hundred thousand Parsis in the world, and this alone speaks volumes for their high character that such a small community has long preserved its prestige, clung to its religion and proved itself second to none in the world in point of charity. But Sorabji turned out to be pure gold. I was but slightly acquainted with him when he joined the struggle. His letters as regards participation in Satyagraha left a good impression on me. As I am a lover of the great qualities of the Parsis, I was not and I am not unaware of some of their defects as a community. I was therefore doubtful whether Sorabji would be able to stand to his guns in critical times. But it was a rule with me not to attach any weight to my own doubts where the party concerned himself asserted the contrary. I therefore recommended to the Committee that they should take Sorabji at his word, and eventually Sorabji proved himself to be a first class Satyagrahi. He not only was one of the Satyagrahis who suffered the longest terms of imprisonment, but also made such deep study of the struggle that his views commanded respectful hearing from all. His advice always betrayed firmness, wisdom, charity and deliberation. He was slow to form an opinion as well as to change an opinion once formed. He was as much of an Indian as of a Parsi, and was quite free from the ban of narrow communalism. After the struggle was over Doctor Mehta offered a scholarship in order to enable some good Satyagrahi to proceed to England for bar. I was charged with the selection. There were two or three deserving candidates, but all the friends felt that there was none who could approach Sorabji in maturity of judgment and ripeness of wisdom, and he was selected accordingly. The idea was, that on his return to South Africa he should take my place and serve the community. Sorabji went to England with

nothing to be ashamed of in changing your decision even now."

"I have nothing to think about, I am fully determined," she said.

I suggested to the other settlers also that each should take his or her decision independently of all others. Again and again, and in a variety of ways I pressed this condition on their attention that none should fall away whether the struggle was short or long, whether the Phoenix settlement flourished or faded, and whether he or she kept good health or fell ill in jail. All were ready. The only member of the party from outside Phoenix was Rustomji Jivanji Ghorkhodu, from whom these conferences could not be concealed, and Kakaji, as he was affectionately called, was not the man to lag behind on an occasion like the present. He had already been to jail, but he insisted upon paying it another visit. The 'invading' party was composed of the following members:

1. Mrs Kasturbai Gandhi, 2. Mrs Jayakunvar Manilal Doctor, 3. Mrs Kashi Chhaganlal Gandhi, 4. Mrs Santok Maganlal Gandhi, 5. Parsi Rustomji Jivanji Ghorkhodu, 6. Chhaganlal Khushalchand Gandhi, 7. Ravjibhai Manibhai Patel, 8. Maganbhai Haribhai Patel, 9. Solomon Royeppen, 10. Raju Govindu, 11. Ramdas Mohandas Gandhi, 12. Shivpujan Badari, 13. V. Govindarajulu, 14. Kuppuswami Moonlight Mudaliar, 15. Gokuldas Hansraj, and 16. Revashankar Ratansi Sodha.

The sequel must be taken up in a fresh chapter.

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CHAPTER XL

WOMEN IN JAIL

These 'invaders' were to go to jail for crossing the border and entering the Transvaal without permits. The reader who has seen the list of their names will have observed, that if some of them were disclosed beforehand, the police might not perhaps arrest the persons bearing them. Such in fact had been the case with me. I was arrested twice or thrice but after this the police ceased to meddle with me at the border. No one was informed of this party having started and the news was of course withheld from the papers. Moreover the party had been instructed not to give their names even to the police and to state that they would disclose their identity in court.

The police were familiar with cases of this nature. After the Indians got into the habit of courting arrest, they would often not give their names just for the fun of the thing, and the police therefore did not notice anything strange about the behaviour of the Phoenix party, which was arrested accordingly. They were then tried and sentenced to three months' imprisonment with hard labour (September 23, 1913).

The sisters who had been disappointed in the Transvaal now entered Natal but were not arrested for entering the country without permits. They therefore proceeded to Newcastle and set about their work according to the plans previously settled. Their influence spread like wildfire. The pathetic story of the wrongs heaped up by the £ 3 tax touched the labourers to the quick, and they went on strike. I received the news by wire and was as much perplexed as I was pleased. What was I to do? I was not prepared for this marvellous awakening. I had neither men nor the money which would enable me to cope with the work before me. But I visualized my duty very clearly. I must go to Newcastle and do what I could. I left at once to go there.

Government could not now any longer leave the brave Transvaal sisters free to pursue their activities. They too were sentenced to imprisonment for the same term—three months—and were kept in the same prison as the Phoenix party (October 21, 1913).

These events stirred the heart of the Indians not only in South Africa but also in the motherland to its very depths. Sir Pherozeshah had been so far indifferent. In 1901 he had strongly advised me not to go to South Africa. He held that nothing could be done for Indian emigrants beyond the seas so long as India had not achieved her own freedom, and he was little impressed with the Satyagraha movement in its initial stages. But women in jail pleaded with him as nothing else could. As he himself put it in his Bombay Town Hall speech, his blood boiled at the thought of these women lying in jails herded with ordinary criminals and India could not sleep over the matter any longer.

The women's bravery was beyond words. They were all kept in Maritzburg jail, where they were considerably harassed. Their food was of the worst quality and they were given laundry work as their task. No food was permitted to be given them from outside nearly till the end of their term. One sister was under a religious vow to restrict herself to a particular diet. After great difficulty the jail authorities allowed her that diet, but the food supplied was unfit for human consumption. The sister badly needed olive oil. She did not get it at first, and when she got it, it was old and rancid. She offered to get it at her own expense but was told that jail was no hotel, and she must take what food was given her. When this sister was released she was a mere skeleton and her life was saved only by a great effort.

Another returned from jail with a fatal fever to which she succumbed within a few days of her release (February 22, 1914). How can I forget her? Valliamma R. Munuswami Mudaliar was a young girl of Johannesburg only sixteen years of age. She was confined to bed when I saw her. As she was a tall girl, her emaciated body was a terrible thing to behold.

"Valliamma, you do not repent of your having gone to jail?" I asked.

"Repent? I am even now ready to go to jail again if I am arrested," said Valliamma.

"But what if it results in your death?" I pursued.

"I do not mind it. Who would not love to die for one's motherland?" was the reply.

Within a few days after this conversation Valliamma was no more with us in the flesh, but she left us the heritage of an immortal name. Condolence meetings were held at various places, and the Indians resolved to erect 'Valliamma Hall', to commemorate the supreme sacrifice of this daughter of India. Unfortunately the resolution has not still been translated into action. There were many difficulties. The community was torn by internal dissensions; the principal workers left one after another. But whether or not a hall is built in stone and mortar, Valliamma's service is imperishable. She built her temple of service with her own hands, and her glorious image has a niche even now reserved for it in many a heart. And the name of Valliamma will live in the history of South African Satyagraha as long as India lives.

It was an absolutely pure sacrifice that was offered by these sisters, who were innocent of legal technicalities, and many of whom had no idea of country, their patriotism being based only upon faith. Some of them were illiterate and could not read the papers. But they knew that a mortal blow was being aimed at the Indians' honour, and their going to jail was a cry of agony and prayer offered from the bottom of their heart, was in fact the purest of all sacrifices. Such heart prayer is always acceptable to God. Sacrifice is fruitful only to the extent that it is pure. God hungers after devotion in man. He is glad to accept the widow's mite offered with devotion, that is to say, without a selfish motive, and rewards it a hundredfold. The unsophisticated Sudama offered a handful of rice, but the small offering put an end to many years' want and starvation. The imprisonment of many might have been fruitless but the devoted sacrifice of a single pure soul could never go in vain. None can tell whose sacrifice in South

Africa was acceptable to God, and hence bore fruit. But we do know that Valliamma's sacrifice bore fruit and so did the sacrifice of the other sisters.

Souls without number spent themselves in the past, are spending themselves in the present and will spend themselves in the future in the service of country and humanity, and that is in the fitness of things as no one knows who is pure. But Satyagrahis may rest assured, that even if there is only one among them who is pure as crystal, his sacrifice suffices to achieve the end in view. The world rests upon the bedrock of *satya* or truth. *Asatya* meaning untruth also means non-existent, and *satya* or truth also means that which *is*. If untruth does not so much as exist, its victory is out of the question. And truth being that which *is* can never be destroyed. This is the doctrine of Satyagraha in a nutshell.

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CHAPTER XLI

A STREAM OF LABOURERS

The women's imprisonment worked like a charm upon the labourers on the mines near Newcastle who downed their tools and entered the city in succeeding batches. As soon as I received the news, I left Phoenix for Newcastle.

These labourers have no houses of their own. The mine-owners erect houses for them, set up lights upon their roads, and supply them with water, with the result that the labourers are reduced to a state of utter dependence. And as Tulsidas put it, a dependent cannot hope for happiness even in a dream.

The strikers brought quite a host of complaints to me. Some said the mine-owners had stopped their lights or their water, while others stated that they had thrown away the strikers' household chattels from their quarters. Saiyad Ibrahim, a Pathan, showed his back to me and said, "Look here, how severely they have thrashed me. I have let the rascals go for your sake, as such are your orders. I am a Pathan, and Pathans never take but give a beating."

"Well done, brother," I replied. "I look upon such conduct alone as pure bravery. We will win through people of your type."

I thus congratulated him, but thought to myself that the strike could not continue if many received the same treatment as the Pathan did. Leaving the question of flogging aside, there was not much room for complaint if the collieries cut off the lights, the water supply and other amenities enjoyed by the strikers. But whether or not complaint was justified, the strikers could not hold on in the circumstances, and I must find a way out of the difficulty, or else it was very much to be preferred that they should own themselves to be defeated and return to work at once rather than that they should resume work after a period of weary waiting. But defeatist counsel was not in my line. I therefore suggested that the only possible course was for the labourers to leave their masters' quarters, to fare forth in fact like pilgrims.

The labourers were not to be counted by tens but by hundreds. And their number might easily swell into thousands. How was I to house and feed this ever growing multitude? I would not appeal to India for monetary help. The river of gold which later on flowed from the motherland had not yet started on its course. Indian traders were mortally afraid and not at all ready to help me publicly, as they had trading relations with the coal-owners and other Europeans. Whenever I went to Newcastle, I used to stop with them. But this time, as I would place them in an awkward position, I resolved to put up at another place.

As I have already stated, the Transvaal sisters were most of them Tamilians. They had taken up their quarters in Newcastle with Mr D. Lazarus, a middle-class Christian Tamilian, who owned a small plot of land and a house consisting of two or three rooms. I also decided to put up with this family, who received me with open arms. The poor have no fears. My host belonged to a family of indentured labourers, and hence he is or his relations would be liable to pay the £ 3 tax. No wonder he and his people would be familiar with the woes of indentured labourers

recognizance of £ 50 and the case was remanded till the 21st. The Indian traders had kept a carriage ready for me and I rejoined the pilgrims again when they had hardly proceeded three miles further. The pilgrims thought, and I thought too, that we might now perhaps reach Tolstoy Farm. But that was not to be. It was no small thing however that the invaders got accustomed to my being arrested. The five co-workers remained in jail.

CHAPTER XLV

ALL IN PRISON

We were now near Johannesburg. The reader will remember that the whole pilgrimage had been divided into eight stages. Thus far we had accomplished our marches exactly according to programme and we now had four days' march in front of us. But if our spirits rose from day to day, Government too got more and more anxious as to how they should deal with the Indian invasion. They would be charged with weakness and want of tact if they arrested us after we had reached our destination. If we were to be arrested, we must be arrested before we reached the promised land.

Government saw that my arrest did not dishearten or frighten the pilgrims, nor did it lead them to break the peace. If they took to rioting, Government would have an excellent opportunity of converting them into food for gunpowder. Our firmness was very distressing to General Smuts coupled as it was with peacefulness, and he even said as much. How long can you harass a peaceful man? How can you kill the voluntarily dead? There is no zest in killing one who welcomes death and therefore soldiers are keen upon seizing the enemy alive. If the mouse did not flee before the cat, the cat would be driven to seek another prey. If all lambs voluntarily lay with the lion, the lion would be compelled to give up feasting upon lambs. Great hunters would give up lion hunting if the lion took to non-resistance. Our victory was implicit in our combination of the two qualities of non-violence and determination.

Gokhale desired by cable that Polak should go to India and help him in placing the facts of the situation before the Indian and Imperial Governments. Polak's temperament was such that he would make himself useful wherever he went. He would be totally absorbed in whatever task he undertook. We were therefore preparing to send him to India. I wrote to him that he could go. But he would not leave without meeting me in person and taking full instructions from me. He therefore offered to come and see me during our march. I wired to him, saying that he might come if he wished though he would be in so doing running the risk of arrest. Fighters never hesitate to incur necessary risks. It was a cardinal principle of the movement that every one should be ready for arrest if Government extended their attentions to him, and should make all straightforward and moral efforts to get arrested until he overcame the reluctance of Government to lay hands upon him. Polak therefore preferred to come even at the risk of being arrested.

Mr Polak joined us on the 9th at Teakworth between Standerton and Greylingstad. We were in the midst of our consultation and had nearly done with it. It was about 3 o'clock in the afternoon. Polak and I were walking at the head of the whole body of pilgrims. Some of the co-workers were listening to our conversation. Polak was to take the evening train for Durban. But God does not always permit man to carry out his plans. Rama had to retire to the forest on the very day that was fixed for his coronation. While we were thus engaged in talking, a Cape cart came and stopped before us and from it alighted Mr Chamney, the Principal Immigration Officer of the Transvaal and a police officer. They took me somewhat aside and one of them said, 'I arrest you.'

I was thus arrested thrice in four days.

'What about the marchers?' I asked.

'We shall see to that,' was the answer.

I said nothing further. I asked Polak to assume charge of and go with the pilgrims. The police officer permitted me only to inform the marchers of my arrest. As I

proceeded to ask them to keep the peace etc., the officer interrupted me and said,

'You are now a prisoner and cannot make any speeches.'

I understood my position, but it was needless. As soon as he stopped me speaking, the officer ordered the driver to drive the cart away at full speed. In a moment the pilgrims passed out of my sight.

The officer knew that for the time being I was master of the situation, for trusting to our non-violence, he was alone in this desolate veldt confronted by two thousand Indians. He also knew that I would have surrendered to him even if he had sent me a summons in writing. Such being the case, it was hardly necessary to remind me that I was a prisoner. And the advice which I would have given the pilgrims would have served the Government's purpose no less than our own. But how could an officer forego an opportunity of exercising his brief authority? I must say, however, that many officers understood us better than this gentleman. They knew that not only had arrest no terrors for us but on the other hand we hailed it as the gateway of liberty. They therefore allowed us all legitimate freedom and thankfully sought our aid in conveniently and expeditiously effecting arrests. The reader will come across apposite cases of both the kinds in these pages.

I was taken to Greylingstad, and from Greylingstad via Balfour to Heidelberg where I passed the night.

The pilgrims with Polak as leader resumed their march and halted for the night at Greylingstad where they were met by Sheth Ahmad Muhammad Kachhalia and Sheth Amad Bhayat who had come to know that arrangements were complete for arresting the whole body of marchers. Polak therefore thought that when this responsibility ceased in respect of the pilgrims upon their arrest, he could reach Durban even if a day later and take the steamer for India after all. But God had willed otherwise. At about 9 o'clock in the morning on the 10th the pilgrims reached Balfour where three special trains were drawn up at the station to take them and deport them to Natal. The pilgrims were there rather obstinate. They asked for me

to be called and promised to be arrested and to board the trains if I advised them to that effect. This was a wrong attitude. And the whole game must be spoiled and the movement must receive a set-back unless it was given up. Why should the pilgrims want me for going to jail? It would ill become soldiers to claim to elect their commanders or to insist upon their obeying only one of them. Mr Chamney approached Mr Polak and Kachhalia Sheth to help him in arresting them. These friends encountered difficulty in explaining the situation to the marchers. They told them that jail was the pilgrims' goal and they should therefore apperciate the Government's action when they were ready to arrest them. Only thus could the Satyagrahis show their quality and bring their struggle to a triumphant end. They must realize that no other procedure could have my approval. The pilgrims were brought round and all entrained peacefully.

I, on my part, was again hauled up before the Magistrate. I knew nothing of what transpired after I was separated from the pilgrims. I asked for a remand once again. I said that a remand had been granted by two courts, and that we had not now much to go to reach our destination. I therefore requested that either the Government should arrest the pilgrims or else I should be permitted to see them safe in Tolstoy Farm. The Magistrate did not comply with my request, but promised to forward it at once to the Government. This time I was arrested on a warrant from Dundee where I was to be prosecuted on the principal charge of inducing indentured labourers to leave the province of Natal. I was therefore taken to Dundee by rail the same day.

Mr Polak was not only not arrested at Balfour but he was even thanked for the assistance he had rendered to the authorities. Mr Chamney even said that the Government had no intention of arresting him. But these were Mr Chamney's own views or the views of the Government in so far as they were known to that officer. Government in fact would be changing their mind every now and then. And finally they reached the decision that Mr Polak should not be allowed to sail for India and should

be arrested along with Mr Kallenbach who was working most energetically on behalf of the Indians. Mr Polak therefore was arrested in Charlestown whilst waiting for the corridor train. Mr Kallenbach was also arrested and both these friends were confined in Volksrust jail.

I was tried in Dundee on the 11th and sentenced to nine months' imprisonment with hard labour. I had still to take my second trial at Volksrust on the charge of aiding and abetting prohibited persons to enter the Transvaal. From Dundee I was therefore taken on the 13th to Volksrust where I was glad to meet Kallenbach and Polak in the jail.

I appeared before the Volksrust court on the 14th. The beauty of it was that the charge was proved against me only by witnesses furnished by myself at Kromdraai. The police could have secured witnesses but with difficulty. They had therefore sought my aid in the matter. The courts here would not convict a prisoner merely upon his pleading guilty.

This was arranged as regards me, but who would testify against Mr Kallenbach and Mr Polak? It was impossible to convict them in the absence of evidence, and it was also difficult at once to secure witnesses against them. Mr Kallenbach intended to plead guilty as he wished to be with the pilgrims. But Mr Polak was bound for India, and was not deliberately courting jail at this moment. After a joint consultation therefore we three resolved that we should say neither yes nor no in case we were asked whether Mr Polak was guilty of the offence with which he was charged.

I provided the evidence for the Crown against Mr Kallenbach and I appeared as witness against Mr Polak. We did not wish that the cases should be protracted, and we therefore did our best to see that each case was disposed of within a day. The proceedings against me were completed on the 14th, against Kallenbach on the 15th and and against Polak on the 17th, and the Magistrate passed sentences of three months' imprisonment on all three of us. We now thought we could live together in Volksrust jail

for these three months. But the Government could not afford to allow it.

Meanwhile, we passed a few happy days in Volksrust jail, where new prisoners came every day and brought us news of what was happening outside. Among these Satyagrahi prisoners there was one old man named Harbatsinh who was about 75 years of age. Harbatsinh was not working on the mines. He had completed his indenture years ago and he was not therefore a striker. The Indians grew far more enthusiastic after my arrest, and many of them got arrested by crossing over from Natal into the Transvaal. Harbatsinh was one of these enthusiasts.

'Why are you in jail?' I asked Harbatsinh. 'I have not invited old men like yourself to court jail.'

'How could I help it,' replied Harbatsinh, 'when you, your wife and even your boys went to jail for our sake?'

'But you will not be able to endure the hardships of jail life. I would advise you to leave jail. Shall I arrange for your release?'

'No, please. I will never leave jail. I must die one of these days, and how happy should I be to die in jail!'

It was not for me to try to shake such determination which would not have been shaken even if I had tried. My head bent in reverence before this illiterate sage. Harbatsinh had his wish and he died in Durban jail on January 5, 1914. His body was with great honour cremated according to Hindu rites in the presence of hundreds of Indians. There was not one but there were many like Harbatsinh in the Satyagraha struggle. But the great good fortune of dying in jail was reserved for him alone and hence he becomes entitled to honourable mention in the history of Satyagraha in South Africa.

Government would not like that men should thus be attracted to jail, nor did they appreciate the fact that prisoners upon their release should carry my messages outside. They therefore decided to separate Kallenbach, Polak and me, send us away from Volksrust, and take me in particular to a place where no Indian could go and see me. I was sent accordingly to the jail in Bloemfontein,

the capital of Orangia, where there were not more than 50 Indians, all of them serving as waiters in hotels. I was the only Indian prisoner there, the rest being Europeans and Negroes. I was not troubled at this isolation but hailed it as a blessing. There was no need now for me to keep my eyes or ears open, and I was glad that a novel experience was in store for me. Again, I never had had time for study for years together, particularly since 1893, and the prospect of uninterrupted study for a year filled me with joy.

I reached Bloemfontein jail where I had as much solitude as I could wish. There were many discomforts but they were all bearable, and I will not inflict a description of them upon the reader. But I must state that the medical officer of the jail became my friend. The jailer could think only of his own powers while the doctor was anxious to maintain the prisoners in their rights. In those days I was purely a fruitarian. I took neither milk nor *ghi* nor food grains. I lived upon a diet of bananas, tomatoes, raw groundnuts, limes and olive oil. It meant starvation for me if the supply of any one of these things was bad in quality. The doctor was therefore very careful in ordering them out, and he added almonds, walnuts and Brazil nuts to my diet. He inspected everything indented for me in person. There was not sufficient ventilation in the cell which was assigned to me. The doctor tried his best to have the cell doors kept open but in vain. The jailer threatened to resign if the doors were kept open. He was not a bad man, but he had been moving in a single rut from which he could not deviate. He had to deal with refractory prisoners, and if he discriminated in favour of a mild prisoner like myself, he would run the real risk of the turbulent prisoners getting the upper hand of him. I fully understood the jailer's standpoint, and in the disputes between the doctor and the jailer in respect of me, my sympathies were always with the jailer who was an experienced, straightforward man, seeing the way clear before him.

Mr Kallenbach was taken to Pretoria jail and Mr Polak to Germiston jail.

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But the Government might have saved all this trouble. They were like Mrs Partington trying to stem the rising tide of the ocean broom in hand. The Indian labourers of Natal were wide awake, and no power on earth could hold them in check.

CHAPTER XLVI

THE TEST

The jeweller rubs gold on the touchstone. If he is not still satisfied as to its purity, he puts it into the fire and hammers it so that the dross if any is removed and only pure gold remains. The Indians in South Africa passed through a similar test. They were hammered, and passed through fire and had the hall-mark attached to them only when they emerged unscathed through all the stages of examination.

The pilgrims were taken on special trains not for a picnic but for baptism through fire. On the way the Government did not care to arrange even to feed them and when they reached Natal, they were prosecuted and sent to jail straightaway. We expected and even desired as much. But the Government would have to incur additional expenditure and would appear to have played into the Indians' hands if they kept thousands of labourers in prison. And the coal mines would close down in the interval. If such a state of things lasted for any length of time, the Government would be compelled to repeal the £ 3 tax. They therefore struck out a new plan. Surrounding them with wire netting, the Government proclaimed the mine compounds as outstations to the Dundee and Newcastle jails and appointed the mineowners' European staffs as the warders. In this way they forced the labourers underground against their will and the mines began to work once more. There is this difference between the status of a servant and that of a slave, that if a servant leaves his post, only a civil suit can be filed against him, whereas the slave who leaves his master can be brought back to work by

love do not escape the sleepless vigilance of the recording angel.

The Indians of South Africa successfully passed the test to which they were subjected. They entered the fire and emerged out of it unscathed. The beginning of the end of the struggle must be detailed in a separate chapter.

CHAPTER XLVII

THE BEGINNING OF THE END

The reader has seen that the Indians exerted as much quiet strength as they could and more than could be expected of them. He has also seen that the very large majority of these passive resisters were poor downtrodden men of whom no hope could possibly be entertained. He will recall too, that all the responsible workers of the Phoenix settlement with the exception of two or three were now in jail. Of the workers outside Phoenix the late Sheth Ahmad Muhammad Kachhalia was still at large, and so were Mr West, Miss West and Maganlal Gandhi in Phoenix. Kachhalia Sheth exercised general supervision. Miss Schlesin kept all the Transvaal accounts and looked after the Indians who crossed the border. Mr West was in charge of the English section of *Indian Opinion* and of the cable correspondence with Gokhale. At a time like the present, when the situation assumed a new aspect every moment, correspondence by post was out of the question. Cablegrams had to be despatched, no shorter in length than letters, and the delicate responsibility regarding them was shouldered by Mr West.

Like Newcastle in the mine area, Phoenix now became the centre of the strikers on the north coast, and was visited by hundreds of them who came there to seek advice as well as shelter. It therefore naturally attracted the attention of the Government, and the angry looks of the Europeans thereabouts. It became somewhat risky to live in Phoenix, and yet even children there accomplished dangerous tasks with courage. West was arrested in the meanwhile, though as a matter of fact there was no reason for arresting him. Our understanding was, that West

and Maganlal Gandhi should not only not try to be arrested, but on the other hand should, as far as possible, avoid any occasion for arrest. West had not therefore allowed any ground to arise for the Government to arrest him. But the Government could scarcely be expected to consult the convenience of the Satyagrahis, nor did they need to wait for some occasion to arise for arresting any one whose freedom jarred upon their nerves. The authority's very desire to take a step amply suffices as a reason for adopting it. As soon as the news of the arrest of West was cabled to Gokhale, he initiated the policy of sending out able men from India. When a meeting was held in Lahore in support of the Satyagrahis of South Africa, Mr C. F. Andrews gave away in their interest all the money in his possession, and ever since then Gokhale had had his eye upon him. No sooner, therefore, did he hear about West's arrest, than he inquired of Andrews by wire if he was ready to proceed to South Africa at once. Andrews replied in the affirmative. His beloved friend Pearson also got ready to go the same moment, and the two friends left India for South Africa by the first available steamer.

But the struggle was now about to close. The Union Government had not the power to keep thousands of innocent men in jail. The Viceroy would not tolerate it, and all the world was waiting to see what General Smuts would do. The Union Government now did what all governments similarly situated generally do. No inquiry was really needed. The wrong perpetrated was well known on all hands, and every one realized that it must be redressed. General Smuts too saw that there had been injustice which called for remedy, but he was in the same predicament as a snake which has taken a rat in its mouth but can neither gulp it down nor cast it out. He must do justice, but he had lost the power of doing justice, as he had given the Europeans in South Africa to understand, that he would not repeal the £ 3 tax nor carry out any other reform. And now he felt compelled to abolish the tax as well as to undertake other remedial legislation. States amenable to public opinion get out of such awkward positions by appointing a commission which conducts

only a nominal inquiry, as its recommendations are a foregone conclusion. It is a general practice that the recommendations of such a commission should be accepted by the state, and therefore under the guise of carrying out the recommendations, governments give the justice which they have first refused. General Smuts appointed a commission of three members, with which the Indians pledged themselves to have nothing to do so long as certain demands of theirs in respect of the commission were not granted by the Government. One of these demands was, that the Satyagrahi prisoners should be released, and another that the Indians should be represented on the commission by at least one member. To a certain extent the first demand was accepted by the commission itself which recommended to the Government 'with a view to enabling the enquiry to be made as thorough as possible' that Mr Kallenbach, Mr Polak and I should be released unconditionally. The Government accepted this recommendation and released all three of us simultaneously (December 18, 1913) after an imprisonment of hardly six weeks. West who had been arrested was also released as Government had no case against him.

All these events transpired before the arrival of Andrews and Pearson whom I was thus able to welcome as they landed at Durban. They were agreeably surprised to see me, as they knew nothing of the events which happened during their voyage. This was my first meeting with these noble Englishmen.

All three of us were disappointed upon our release. We knew nothing of the events outside. The news of the commission came to us as a surprise, but we saw that we could not co-operate with the commission in any shape or form. We felt that the Indians should be certainly allowed to nominate at least one representative on the commission. We three, therefore, upon reaching Durban, addressed a letter to General Smuts on December 21, 1913 to this effect:

'We welcome the appointment of the commission, but we strongly object to the inclusion in it of Messrs Esselen and Wylie. We have nothing against them personally. They are well-known and able citizens. But as both of

them have often expressed their dislike for the Indians, there is likelihood of their doing injustice without being conscious of it. Man cannot change his temperament all at once. It is against the laws of nature to suppose, that these gentlemen will suddenly become different from what they are. However we do not ask for their removal from the commission. We only suggest that some impartial men should be appointed in addition to them, and in this connection we would mention Sir James Rose Innes and the Hon. Mr W. P. Schreiner, both of them well-known men noted for their sense of justice. Secondly, we request that all the Satyagrahi prisoners should be released. If this is not done, it would be difficult for us to remain outside jail. There is no reason now for keeping the Satyagrahis in jail any longer. Thirdly, if we tender evidence before the commission, we should be allowed to go to the mines and factories where the indentured labourers are at work. If these requests are not complied with, we are sorry that we shall have to explore fresh avenues for going to jail.'

General Smuts declined to appoint any more members on the commission, and stated that the commission was appointed not for the sake of any party but merely for the satisfaction of the Government. Upon receiving this reply on December 24, we had no alternative but to prepare to go to jail. We therefore published a notification to the Indians that a party of Indians courting jail would commence their march from Durban on January 1, 1914.

But there was one sentence in General Smuts' reply, which prompted me to write to him again, and it was this: 'We have appointed an impartial and judicial commission, and if while appointing it, we have not consulted the Indians, neither have we consulted the coal-owners or the sugar-planters.' I wrote privately to the General, requesting to see him and place some facts before him if the Government were out to do justice. General Smuts granted my request for an interview, and the march was postponed for a few days accordingly.

When Gokhale heard that a fresh march was under contemplation, he sent a long cablegram, saying that such

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a step on our part would land Lord Hardinge and himself in an awkward position and strongly advising us to give up the march, and assist the commission by tendering evidence before it.

We were on the horns of a dilemma. The Indians were pledged to a boycott of the commission if its *personnel* was not enlarged to their satisfaction. Lord Hardinge might be displeased, Gokhale might be pained, but how could we go back upon our pledged word? Mr Andrews suggested to us the considerations of Gokhale's feelings, his delicate health and the shock which our decision was calculated to impart to him. But in fact these considerations were never absent from my mind. The leaders held a conference and finally reached the decision that the boycott must stand at any cost if more members were not co-opted to the commission. We therefore sent a long cablegram to Gokhale, at an expense of about a hundred pounds. Andrews too concurred with the gist of our message which was to the following effect:

'We realize how you are pained, and would like to follow your advice at considerable sacrifice. Lord Hardinge has rendered priceless aid, which we wish we would continue to receive till the end. But we are anxious that you should understand our position. It is a question of thousands of men having taken a pledge to which no exception can be taken. Our entire struggle has been built upon a foundation of pledges. Many of us would have fallen back today had it not been for the compelling force of our pledges. All moral bonds would be relaxed at once if thousands of men once proved false to their plighted word. The pledge was taken after full and mature deliberation, and there is nothing immoral about it. The community has an unquestionable right to pledge itself to boycott. We wish that even you should advise that a pledge of this nature should not be broken but be observed inviolate by all, come what might. Please show this cable to Lord Hardinge. We wish you might not be placed in a false position. We have commenced this struggle with God as our witness and His help as our sole support. We desire and bespeak the assistance of elders as well as big men,

and are glad when we get it. But whether or not such assistance is forthcoming, we are humbly of opinion that pledges must ever be scrupulously kept. We desire your support and your blessing in such observance.'

This cable, when it reached Gokhale, had an adverse effect upon his health, but he continued to help us with unabated or even greater zeal than before. He wired to Lord Hardinge on the matter but not only did he not throw us overboard, but he on the other hand defended our standpoint. Lord Hardinge too remained unmoved.

I went to Pretoria with Andrews. Just at this time there was a great strike of the European employees of the Union railways, which made the position of the Government extremely delicate. I was called upon to commence the Indian march at such a fortunate juncture. But I declared that the Indians could not thus assist the railway strikers, as they were not out to harass the Government, their struggle being entirely different and differently conceived. Even if we undertook the march, we would begin it at some other time when the railway trouble had ended. This decision of ours created a deep impression, and was cabled to England by Reuter. Lord Ampthill cabled his congratulations from England. English friends in South Africa too appreciated our decision. One of the secretaries of General Smuts jocularly said: 'I do not like your people, and do not care to assist them at all. But what am I to do? You help us in our days of need. How can we lay hands upon you? I often wish you took to violence like the English strikers, and then we would know at once how to dispose of you. But you will not injure even the enemy. You desire victory by self-suffering alone and never transgress your self-imposed limits of courtesy and chivalry. And that is what reduces us to sheer helplessness.' General Smuts also gave expression to similar sentiments.

I need scarcely suggest to the reader that this was not the first incident of chivalrous consideration for others being shown by the Satyagrahis. When the Indian labourers on the north coast went on strike, the planters at Mount Edgecombe would have been put to great losses if all the cane that had been cut was not brought to the mill and

crushed. Twelve hundred Indians therefore returned to work solely with a view to finish this part of the work, and joined their compatriots only when it was finished. Again when the Indian employees of the Durban Municipality struck work, those who were engaged in the sanitary services of the borough or as attendants upon the patients in hospitals were sent back, and they willingly returned to their duties. If the sanitary services were dislocated, and if there was no one to attend upon the patients in hospitals, there might be an outbreak of disease in the city and the sick would be deprived of medical aid, and no Satyagrahi would wish for such consequences to ensue. Employees of this description were therefore exempted from the strike. In every step that he takes, the Satyagrahi is bound to consider the position of his adversary.

I could see that the numerous cases of such chivalry left their invisible yet potent impress everywhere, enhanced the prestige of the Indians, and prepared a suitable atmosphere for a settlement.

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CHAPTER XLVIII

THE PROVISIONAL SETTLEMENT

The atmosphere was thus becoming favourable for a settlement. Sir Benjamin Robertson, who had been sent by Lord Hardinge in a special steamer, was to arrive about the same time that Mr Andrews and I went to Pretoria. But we did not wait for him and set out as we had to reach Pretoria on the day fixed by General Smuts. There was no reason indeed to await his arrival, as the final result could only be commensurate with our strength.

Mr Andrews and I reached Pretoria. But I alone was to interview General Smuts. The General was preoccupied with the railway strike, which was so serious in nature, that the Union Government had declared martial law. The European workmen not only demanded higher wages, but aimed at taking the reins of government into their hands. My first interview with the General was very short,

but I saw that he today did not ride the same high horse as he did before, when the Great March began. At that time the General would not so much as talk with me. The threat of Satyagraha was the same then as it was now. Yet he had declined to enter into negotiations. But now he was ready to confer with me.

The Indians had demanded that a member should be co-opted to the commission to represent Indian interests. But on this point General Smuts would not give in. 'That cannot be done,' said he, 'as it would be derogatory to the Government's prestige, and I would be unable to carry out the desired reforms. You must understand that Mr Esselen is our man, and would fall in with, not oppose, the Government's wishes as regards reform. Colonel Wylie is a man of position in Natal and might even be considered anti-Indian. If therefore even he agrees to a repeal of the £ 3 tax, the Government will have an easy task before them. Our troubles are manyfold; we have not a moment to spare and therefore wish to set the Indian question at rest. We have decided to grant your demands, but for this we must have a recommendation from the commission. I understand your position too. You have solemnly declared that you will not lead evidence before it so long as there is no representative of the Indians sitting on the commission. I do not mind if you do not tender evidence, but you should not organize any active propaganda to prevent any one who wishes to give evidence from doing so, and should suspend Satyagraha in the interval. I believe that by so doing you will be serving your own interests as well as giving me a respite. As you will not tender evidence, you will not be able to prove your allegations as regards ill-treatment accorded to the Indian strikers. But that is for you to think over.'

Such were the suggestions of General Smuts, which on the whole I was inclined to receive favourably. We had made many complaints about ill-treatment of strikers by soldiers and warders, but the difficulty was that we were precluded by a boycott of the commission from proving our allegations. There was a difference of opinion

CONCLUSION

Thus the great Satyagraha struggle closed after eight years, and it appeared that the Indians in South Africa were now at peace. On July 18, 1914, I sailed for England, to meet Gokhale, on my way back to India, with mixed feelings of pleasure and regret,—pleasure because I was returning home after many years and eagerly looked forward to serving the country under Gokhale's guidance, regret because it was a great wrench for me to leave South Africa, where I had passed twenty-one years of my life sharing to the full in the sweets and bitters of human experience, and where I had realized my vocation in life.

When one considers the painful contrast between the happy ending of the Satyagraha struggle and the present condition of the Indians in South Africa, one feels for a moment as if all this suffering had gone for nothing, or is inclined to question the efficacy of Satyagraha as a solvent of the problems of mankind. Let us here consider this point for a little while. There is a law of nature that a thing can be retained by the same means by which it has been acquired. A thing acquired by violence can be retained by violence alone, while one acquired by truth can be retained only by truth. The Indians in South Africa, therefore, can ensure their safety today if they can wield the weapon of Satyagraha. There are no such miraculous properties in Satyagraha, that a thing acquired by truth could be retained even when truth was given up. It would not be desirable even if it was possible. If therefore the position of Indians in South Africa has now suffered deterioration, that argues the absence of Satyagrahis among them. There is no question here of finding fault with the present generation of South African Indians, but of merely stating the facts of the case. Individuals or bodies of individuals cannot borrow from others qualities which they themselves do not possess. The Satyagrahi veterans passed away one after another. Sorabji, Kachhalia, Thambi Naidoo, Parsi Rustomji and others are no more, and there are very few now

who passed through the fire of Satyagraha. The few that remain are still in the fighting line, and I have not a shadow of a doubt that they will be the saviours of the community on the day of its trial if the light of Satyagraha is burning bright within them.

Finally, the reader of these pages has seen that had it not been for this great struggle and for the untold sufferings which many Indians invited upon their devoted heads, the Indians today would have been hounded out of South Africa. Nay, the victory achieved by Indians in South Africa more or less served as a shield for Indian emigrants in other parts of the British Empire, who, if they are suppressed, will be suppressed thanks to the absence of Satyagraha among themselves, and to India's inability to protect them, and not because of any flaw in the weapon of Satyagraha. I will consider myself amply repaid if I have in these pages demonstrated with some success that Satyagraha is a priceless and matchless weapon, and that those who wield it are strangers to disappointment or defeat.