Hind Swaraj

M. K. GANDHI

1869–1948

Hind Swaraj

હિંદ સ્વરાજ

Translated from the Gujarati with AI (Claude) and edited



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Hind Swaraj · M. K. Gandhi (1869–1948)

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INTRODUCTION

In November 1909 Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (1869–1948), then a forty-year-old lawyer leading the Indian community's campaign of civil resistance in South Africa, was sailing home from London on the *Kildonan Castle*. In London he had argued with young Indian nationalists who believed that India would be freed by bombs and assassination. On the voyage he wrote his answer in ten days, in Gujarati, and published it in his weekly *Indian Opinion*. The book was banned in British India in 1910; Gandhi's own English version followed the same year.

Hind Swaraj ("Indian Self-Rule") is a dialogue between an impatient Reader, who wants the English out, and the Editor, who asks what the Reader actually wants. Driving out the English while keeping their railways, lawyers, doctors, parliaments and factories, he says, would be to want the tiger's nature without the tiger. The real enemy is modern civilization itself, which measures progress by bodily comfort and makes people its slaves; India's old civilization, which taught people to limit their wants, is better.

True swaraj, then, is rule over oneself, and it can be won only by means that match the end: not by brute force but by soul-force, *satyagraha*, the willingness to suffer rather than to inflict suffering. Gandhi held to the book for the rest of his life, saying in 1938 that he would change only its language, not its ideas. It is the seed of everything he later did in India.

1. The Congress and Its Officials

કૉંગ્રેસ અને તેના કારભારીઓ

Is India ready for self-rule? The Editor defends the National Congress and its founders against the Reader's impatience.

PREFACE

P.1 I have written twenty chapters on this subject, and I venture to place them before the reader.

I wrote only when I could no longer hold back. I have read a great deal and thought a great deal. Besides, during the four months I spent in England with the Transvaal deputation, I talked these ideas over with as many Indians as I could, and I met as many Englishmen as I could. I took it to be my duty to place before the reader the views that seemed to me final.[1]

P.3 *Indian Opinion* has about eight hundred Gujarati subscribers. I have found that for every subscriber at least ten people read the paper with interest. Those who do not know Gujarati get others to read it to them. These friends have asked me many questions about the condition of India. I was asked the same questions in England. So it seemed to me that it would not be wrong to make public the views I had been sharing like this in private.[2]

P.4 The views I have set out are mine, and they are not mine. They are mine because I hope to live by them; they have become, as it were, part of my soul. They are not mine because I

1 In 1909 Gandhi spent July to November in London with a deputation on behalf of the Indians of the Transvaal, who were protesting against discriminatory laws.
2 *Indian Opinion*: the weekly Gandhi founded in Natal in 1903, published in English and Gujarati. *Hind Swaraj* first appeared in its Gujarati columns in December 1909.

did not think them up on my own; they took shape after I had read certain books. What I had been glimpsing deep down in my mind, those books confirmed.

P.5 That the views I am putting before the reader are held by many Indians in India who have not been carried away by the craze for civilization hardly needs proving. But I want to impress on the reader's mind, with evidence of my own, that the same views are held by thousands of people in Europe. Anyone who wants to look into this, and has the leisure, can look at those books. When I have the leisure myself, I hope to put some passages from them before the reader.[3]

P.6 I shall be grateful if readers of *Indian Opinion*, or anyone else, will tell me what thoughts my writing raises in their minds.

My only aim is to serve my country, to seek the truth and to act on it. So if my views prove wrong, I have no wish to cling to them. If they prove right, I shall naturally hope, for the country's good, that others will act on them too.

For simplicity's sake I have put the writing in the form of a dialogue between a Reader and an Editor.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi
Kildonan Castle,
22-11-1909[4]

1. THE CONGRESS AND ITS OFFICIALS

READER 1.1 A wind of *swaraj* is blowing through India just now. All Indians seem to long to be free. The same kind of fervor is at work in South Africa too. Indians seem to have found great courage to win their rights. Will you tell me what you think about this?[5]

EDITOR 1.2 Your question is a fair one, but it is not easy to answer. One task of a newspaper is to learn what people feel and

3 "Civilization" renders *sudharo*, which also means "reform, improvement"; Gandhi plays on both senses throughout.

4 The *Kildonan Castle* was the ship on which Gandhi sailed back from England to South Africa; he wrote the book on board in November 1909.

give it expression; a second is to arouse in people certain feelings that are needed; and a third is to point out their faults fearlessly, however much trouble that brings. Answering your question brings in all three tasks at once. I shall have to state public feeling to some extent; I shall have to try to arouse what is not there; and I shall have to condemn what is lacking. Still, since you have asked the question, I feel it is my duty to answer it.

READER 1.3 Do you really see a desire for *swaraj* arising in India?

EDITOR 1.4 That has been visible ever since the National Congress was founded. The very meaning of the word "National" expresses that idea.[6]

READER 1.5 I don't think you're right about that. Young Indians today don't take the Congress seriously at all; they regard it as a tool for keeping English rule going.

EDITOR 1.6 The young men are wrong to think so. If Dadabhai, India's grand old man, had not prepared the ground, the young men could not even talk as they do today. How can we forget what Mr. Hume wrote, the lashes he gave us, the fervor with which he roused us? Sir William Wedderburn gave body, mind and money to further the aims of the Congress. What he wrote about English rule is worth reading even today. Professor Gokhale gave twenty years of his life, living like a beggar, to prepare the people. Even now he lives in poverty. The late Justice Badruddin, too, helped sow the seed of *swaraj* through the Congress. In the same way, in Bengal, Madras, the Punjab and elsewhere, there have been Indians and white men alike who had the good of the Congress and of India at heart. That is something to remember.[7]

READER 1.7 Wait, wait! You've gone much too far. My question is one thing and your answer is another. I'm talking about *swaraj*,

5 *Swaraj*: self-rule, home rule; for Gandhi, above all rule over oneself.
6 The Indian National Congress was founded in Bombay in 1885.

and you're talking about foreign rule. I don't want so much as the name of an Englishman, and you start reeling off the names of Englishmen. At this rate I don't see our cart ever getting on the track. I'd like it if you talked only about *swaraj*; other wise talk won't satisfy me.

EDITOR 1.8 You are impatient. I cannot put up with impatience. If you will keep quiet a little, you will get exactly what you want. Remember the proverb: "Mangoes don't ripen in a hurry." That you stopped me, and that you don't like hearing about India's benefactors, shows that for you, at any rate, *swaraj* is still a long way off. If there were many Indians like you, we would go a long way forward only to fall back. That is worth a little thought.

READER 1.9 It seems to me you want to dodge my question by talking in circles like this. The people you count as India's benefactors I don't count as such; so whose good works am I supposed to listen to? What good did the man you call India's grand old man ever do? All he says is that the English rulers will give us justice and that we should live in harmony with them.

EDITOR 1.10 I must tell you, with all courtesy, that for you to speak disrespectfully of that man ought to make us ashamed. Look at his work. He has dedicated his life to India. We learned from him. It was the honored Dadabhai who taught us that the English have sucked India's blood. What if he trusts the English today? If, in the ardor of youth, we take one step further, is Dadabhai any less worthy of reverence? Does that make us any wiser? It is wisdom not to kick away the step we have climbed by; remember that if we pull that step out, the whole ladder will fall. When we grow from childhood into youth, we do not despise our childhood; we recall those days with affection. If someone teaches me over many years of study, and on that foundation I come to know a little more, that will not make me

7 Dadabhai Naoroji (1825–1917), Parsi economist and Congress leader; A. O. Hume (1829–1912) and Sir William Wedderburn (1838–1918), retired British officials among the Congress's founders; G. K. Gokhale (1866–1915), Moderate leader; Badruddin Tyabji (1844–1906), Bombay judge and Congress president in 1887.

wiser than my teacher; I must still give my teacher honor. That is how we ought to think of India's grand old man. We have to admit that the Indian people stand behind him.

READER [1.11] That's fair enough. Honoring Dadabhai is understandable. It seems right that without the work of men like him we would not have the fervor we have today. But how can the same be said of Professor Gokhale? He has set himself up as a great friend of the English; he says we have a lot to learn from them, and that only once we are versed in their statecraft can we talk of *swaraj*. I am sick of the gentleman's speeches.

EDITOR [1.12] That you are sick of them shows how hasty your nature is. We consider that young people who are bored by their parents' calm temper, and get angry when their parents will not run along with them, are being disrespectful to their parents; and that is how we must think about Professor Gokhale. What if Professor Gokhale will not run along with us? A people that wants to enjoy *swaraj* cannot despise its elders. Once we lose the habit of respect, we shall be good for nothing. *Swaraj* is for mature people to enjoy, not for the unruly. And look: when Professor Gokhale sacrificed himself for Indian education, how many Indians were there like him? I firmly believe that whatever Professor Gokhale does, he does with pure motives and in the belief that it is good for India. His devotion to India is such that if he had to give his life for it, he would. What he says, he says not to flatter anyone but because he believes it to be true. So we ought to hold him in reverence.

READER [1.13] Then are we to do as he says, too?

EDITOR [1.14] I say nothing of the kind. If in good conscience we hold a different view, the Professor himself will advise us to act on it. Our main task is not to run down his work, and to recognize that he is greater than we are. We should be sure that, compared with him, we have done nothing at all for India; we should condemn the rude things certain newspapers write about him; and we should regard men like Professor Gokhale as pillars of *swaraj*. To take it for granted that his views are wrong

and ours alone are right, and that whoever does not act on our views is an enemy of the country, is a bad frame of mind.

READER [1.15] I begin to see something of what you're saying. Still, I shall have to think it over. But what you said about Mr. Hume, Sir William Wedderburn and the rest really is the limit.

THE ENGLISH AS ALLIES

The Editor says not every Englishman is bad and that justice toward the English brings swaraj nearer.

EDITOR [1.16] The rule that applies to Indians applies to the English too. I will not believe that every Englishman is bad; many English people want India to have *swaraj*. It is true that that people is excessively selfish, but that does not prove that every Englishman is bad. Those who ask for their rights—for justice—must be just to everyone. It is enough for us that Sir William does not wish India ill. As we go on, you will see that if we act in a spirit of justice, India will be free all the sooner. You will also see that if we hate all Englishmen, *swaraj* will move further off; but if we are just to them as well, we shall have their help in winning *swaraj*.

READER [1.17] All this sounds like nonsense to me just now. Getting the help of the English and getting *swaraj*—that's a contradiction. What have *swaraj* and the English to do with each other? Still, I don't need that question settled right now. It would be a waste of time to spend time on it. When you show me how *swaraj* is to be won, I may perhaps understand your views; well and good. For now, your talk of English help has filled me with suspicion and set me against your views. So I'd rather you didn't drag the point out.

EDITOR [1.18] I have no wish to drag out the subject of the English. Never mind your suspicion. It is right for me to say at the very start whatever I have to say that will be hard to take. It is my duty to remove your suspicion patiently.

READER 1.19 I like what you've just said. It gives me the courage to say whatever seems right to me. I still have one doubt left. The foundation of *swaraj* laid with the beginning of the Congress —how so?

EDITOR 1.20 Look: the Congress brought together Indians from different parts of the country and filled them with the feeling, "We are one nation." The government kept a stern eye on the Congress. The Congress has always demanded that the people should have rights in matters of revenue. It has always wanted the kind of *swaraj* Canada has. Whether we get it or not, whether we ought to want it or not, whether there is something better than it—that is a separate question. All I have to show is that the Congress gave India a taste of *swaraj*. For anyone else[8]

1.21 to claim the credit for it would be improper, and if we ourselves thought so, we would be ingrates. Not only that: it puts difficulties in the way of achieving our aim. If we treat the Congress as something apart, as opposed to *swaraj*, we cannot make use of it.

8 Canada had governed itself as a dominion within the British Empire since 1867.

2. The Partition of Bengal

બંગાળાના ભાગલા

The partition of Bengal in 1905 woke India up; the boycott that followed showed what the people could do.

READER [2.1] Thinking it over as you put it, it does seem right that the Congress laid the foundation of *swaraj*. Still, you must admit that it can't be called a real awakening. When and how did the real awakening come?

EDITOR [2.2] We never see the seed. The seed does its work under the soil, and it is when the seed itself perishes that the tree appears above ground. Think of the Congress in the same way. What you call the real awakening came with the Partition of Bengal. For that we have to thank Lord Curzon. At the time of the Partition the Bengalis pleaded with Lord Curzon again and again, but in the pride of his power he paid no heed. He assumed that the Indians would only talk and would never do anything. He used insulting language and twisted and wrenched Bengal into pieces. From that day, one may say, English rule itself began to be divided. No other act has dealt English power such a blow as the Partition of Bengal.[1] This does not mean that the other injustices done to us were any less than the Partition. The salt tax is no small injustice. We shall see many more such things as we go on. But the people were ready to resist the Partition of Bengal. Public feeling at the time ran high. Many leaders in Bengal were then ready to give up everything. They knew

1 Lord Curzon, Viceroy of India 1899–1905, divided the province of Bengal in October 1905, provoking mass protest.

their own power, and so the fire blazed up at once. It is not going to die down now, and there is no need to put it out either. The Partition will be undone, Bengal will be joined again, but the crack in the English ship will remain. It will grow wider day by day. An India that has woken up is not going to fall asleep again. To demand that the Partition be canceled is as good as demanding *swaraj*. The leaders in Bengal understand this well. The English authorities understand it too.[2] That is exactly why the Partition has not been undone. As the days go by, a nation is being formed. A nation is not made in a day; it takes years.

READER 2.3 What results of the Partition have you seen?

EDITOR 2.4 Until now we have believed that we should petition the Emperor, and if petitioning brought no redress, put up with it—though we were to go on petitioning all the same. After the Partition people saw that a petition needs force behind it, that people must be able to endure suffering. This new spirit may be counted the chief result of the Partition. It showed in what the newspapers wrote. Their writing grew harsh. What people used to say in fear or in secret began to be said and written in public. The *swadeshi* movement began. People great and small, who used to run at the sight of an Englishman, stopped being afraid; they did not fear even blows; they saw nothing wrong in going to jail; and some of India's finest sons now dwell in exile, deported. These things are of a different kind from petitions. So there is an uproar among the people.[3] The wind from Bengal has swept north as far as the Punjab, and through the Madras Presidency as far as Cape Comorin.

READER 2.5 Can you think of any other result worth knowing?

EDITOR 2.6 Just as the Partition of Bengal has split the English ship, it has split us as well. Great events bring great con-

2 The salt tax: a government duty on salt, an everyday necessity, which fell hardest on the poor.

3 *Swadeshi*: "of one's own country"; here the movement, launched in 1905, to boycott British goods and use Indian-made ones. In 1907–08 several leaders were deported without trial.

sequences like that. Our leaders have broken into two camps: the Moderates and the Extremists. We might call them the "slow" and the "hasty." Some call the Moderates the timid party and the Extremists the bold party. Each person reads the two words according to his own views. This much is true: now that these parties have formed, poison has grown up between them. Each distrusts the other, and they taunt each other. At the Surat Congress it nearly came to blows. To me the existence of these two parties seems a bad sign for the country.[4] But I also believe that such parties will not last long. How long the split lasts depends on the leaders.

4 The Moderates (Gokhale and others) sought reform by constitutional means; the Extremists (Tilak and others) pressed for more militant action. The Surat session of the Congress in December 1907 broke up in uproar, and the two wings split.

3. Unrest and Discontent

અશાન્તિ અને અસંતોષ

Discontent is useful: unrest is the first stage of an awakening, like the turmoil of a sick body before it heals.

READER 3.1 So you take the Partition of Bengal to be the cause of the awakening. Is the unrest it has spread a good thing or a bad one?

EDITOR 3.2 When a man wakes from sleep he stretches, moves about and is restless. It takes him time to come fully to his senses. In the same way, though the Partition of Bengal has brought an awakening, the stupor has not yet gone. We are still at the stretching stage. The situation is still one of unrest. Just as the state between sleep and waking must be considered necessary, and may therefore be called good, so the unrest in Bengal, and so in India, may also be called good. Because we know there is unrest, a time of calm is likely to come. On waking we do not stay forever at the stretching stage; sooner or later, according to our strength, we wake fully. In the same way we shall certainly come out of this unrest. Nobody likes unrest.

READER 3.3 What is the other form of unrest?

EDITOR 3.4 Unrest is really discontent. Nowadays we call it "unrest"; in the early days of the Congress it was called "discontent." Mr. Hume always used to say that discontent needed to be spread in India. Discontent is a very useful thing. So long as a man is content with his present state, it is hard to persuade him to get out of it. So every reform must be preceded by discontent. Only when we come to dislike a thing we have do we want to

throw it away. We have acquired that discontent by reading the books of great Indians and of Englishmen. That discontent led to unrest, and in that unrest some have died, some have come to grief, some have gone to jail, some have been deported. There will be more of this; there must be. All these may be counted good signs. But they can also lead to bad results.

4. What Is Swaraj?

સ્વરાજ તે શું?

Driving out the English while keeping their ways would be wanting the tiger's nature without the tiger.

READER 4.1 We have learned what the Congress did to make India one nation, how the Partition of Bengal brought an awakening, and how unrest and discontent spread. Now I want to know what your views on *swaraj* are. I'm afraid our understanding of it may differ.

EDITOR 4.2 It may well differ. You and I and everyone are growing impatient for *swaraj*, but we have not arrived at any clear idea of what it is. You hear most people say that we must drive out the English, but it does not seem that anyone has properly thought out why. Let me ask you a question. Suppose the English were to give us everything we ask for—would you still think it necessary to drive them out?

READER 4.3 I would ask them for just one thing: please leave our country. If they agree to that, and then someone twists the meaning so that they have left India and yet stayed, I have no objection. Then we shall simply take it that someone reads the Gujarati word "left" as meaning "stayed."

EDITOR 4.4 Very well. Let us suppose the English have left, as we asked. What will you do then?

READER 4.5 That question can't be answered at this stage. What happens afterwards will depend on the way they leave. If, as you say, we suppose they have left, then I think we should keep the system they set up and carry on the government. If they simply

go, we shall have the army and so on all ready, so we shall have no difficulty running the government.

EDITOR 4.6 You may think so; I don't. Still, I don't want to discuss that further just now. What I have to do is answer your question. I can do that best by asking you a number of questions myself, and that is the only reason I am asking them. Why do we want to drive the English out?

READER 4.7 Because their government is impoverishing the country. Every year they carry money out of the country. They give the high posts to men of their own color. They keep us in nothing but slavery, they treat us with arrogance, and they don't care about us in the least.

EDITOR 4.8 If they did not carry money out of the country, became courteous and gave us high posts, would you see any harm in their staying?

READER 4.9 That's a pointless question. If a tiger changed its form, would there be any harm in being friends with it? You've asked that sort of question just to waste time. If the tiger changes its nature, the English will change their ways. To believe that what cannot happen will happen is not how a sensible person thinks.

EDITOR 4.10 And if we got the same power of government that Canada has been given, that the Boers have been given?[1]

READER 4.11 That's a pointless question too. It might happen if we had gunpowder as they do. But once they give us as much power as those peoples have, we shall fly our own flag. India will be like Japan: our own fleet, our own army, our own splendor—and only then will India's name resound through the whole world.

EDITOR 4.12 That's a fine picture you've painted. What it means is that we want English rule but not the English. You want the

1 The Transvaal and the Orange River Colony, the former Boer republics conquered in the war of 1899–1902, were granted responsible government in 1906–07.

tiger's nature but not the tiger. In other words, you want to make India English. And when India becomes English it will no longer be called India; it will truly be called England. This is not the *swaraj* I have in mind.

READER 4.13 I have described *swaraj* as I see it. If the education we receive is of any use, if our reading of great writers like Spencer and Mill is of any use, if the English Parliament is the mother of parliaments, then I have no doubt we ought to imitate those people—so far that, just as they do not let others into their country, we too should not let others in. Besides, what they have done in their own country has not been seen anywhere else yet. So we certainly ought to bring that in. But now tell me your views.[2]

EDITOR 4.14 Not yet. My views will come out of their own accord in the course of our talk. Understanding *swaraj* seems to me just as hard as it seems easy to you. So for now I shall only try to make you see that what you call *swaraj* is not really *swaraj*.

2 Herbert Spencer (1820–1903) and John Stuart Mill (1806–73), English thinkers widely read by educated Indians.

5. The Condition of England

ઇંગ્લંડની સ્થિતિ

The "mother of parliaments" is sterile and a prostitute; the press is dishonest; the English are not to be imitated.

READER 5.1 Then from what you say, I infer that the condition England enjoys is not right, and is not fit for us.

EDITOR 5.2 You have inferred correctly. The state England is in at present is truly pitiable, and I pray to God that India may never come to such a state. The Parliament you call the mother of parliaments is sterile, and a prostitute. Both these words are harsh, yet they fit exactly. I called it sterile because so far Parliament has not done a single good thing of its own accord. If there were no one to put pressure on it, it would do nothing at all; that is its natural condition. And it is a prostitute because it stays with whatever ministry keeps it. Today its keeper is Asquith, tomorrow Balfour, and the day after someone else.[1]

READER 5.3 You're speaking with a touch of irony. You haven't made the word "sterile" stick yet. Parliament is made up of the people, so of course it works under the people's hand. That is its very virtue; that is the check on it.

EDITOR 5.4 That is a great mistake. If Parliament were not sterile, this is how things would be: the people choose their very best men and send them there. Members go without pay, so they must go for the public good. The people themselves are considered educated, so we should assume they make no mistakes.

1 H. H. Asquith, Liberal Prime Minister from 1908; A. J. Balfour, Conservative Prime Minister 1902–05 and then leader of the Opposition.

Such a Parliament should need no petitions and no pressure. Its work should be so straightforward that its light shines brighter day by day and its influence on the people keeps growing. Instead, this much everyone admits: Members of Parliament are seen to be pompous and selfish. Each pulls his own way. Parliament does anything at all only out of fear. What it does today it has to undo tomorrow. There is not one instance of Parliament ever having settled a single matter. When great questions are being debated in Parliament, its members lie stretched out or sit nodding off. In that Parliament members bellow so loudly that their listeners are worn out. One of its great writers has called it "the world's chatterbox." Members vote with their party without thinking; they are bound to. If someone turns out to be an exception, consider that member done for. If the time and money Parliament wastes were given to a few good men, the nation would be saved. This Parliament is merely the nation's toy, and a toy that costs the nation dear.[2] Don't think these views are just my own. Great and thoughtful Englishmen think so too. One Member actually said that Parliament was no longer a fit place for a religious man. Another said that Parliament is a "baby"—an infant. Have you ever seen a baby that stays a baby forever? If Parliament is still a baby after seven hundred years, when will it grow up?

READER 5.5 You've given me something to think about. Surely you won't ask me to accept all this at once. You're putting entirely new ideas into my head. I shall have to digest them. Very well; now explain the word "prostitute."

EDITOR 5.6 You are right that you cannot accept my views all at once. If you read what you ought to read on the subject, you will get some idea. It is right, too, to call Parliament a prostitute. It has no master. It cannot have a single master. But that is not all I mean. Even when someone does become its master—the Prime Minister, say—its conduct does not stay steady. Parliament is

2 Probably Thomas Carlyle, who mocked Parliament as the "National Palaver" in his *Latter-Day Pamphlets* (1850).

always in the same sorry state as a prostitute. The Prime Minister cares little for Parliament. He revels in the pride of his power. His one obsession is how his party is to win. He gives little thought to how Parliament may do what is right. There are examples in plenty of a Prime Minister getting Parliament to do things just to strengthen his own party. All this is worth thinking about.

READER [5.7] Then you are attacking even the men we have always regarded as patriotic and honest.

EDITOR [5.8] Yes, that's true. I bear the prime ministers no ill will. But experience has shown me that they cannot be called true patriots. They may be considered honest, in that they do not take or give what we commonly call bribes. But influence can reach them. To get others to do their work, they hand out bribes in plenty, in the form of titles and the like. I can say boldly that they have neither pure motives nor real honesty.

THE ENGLISH VOTER AND THE PRESS

The English form their views from partisan newspapers and change their minds constantly.

READER [5.9] Since that is what you think, then tell me something too about the English people, in whose name Parliament rules, so that I can get a full idea of their self-government.

EDITOR [5.10] The English who are "voters" (who elect) have made the newspapers their scripture (their Bible). They form their views from the papers. The papers are dishonest; they give one and the same thing two different shapes. One party's people blow a thing up; the other party's people shrink the same thing down. One newspaperman will call a leading Englishman honest; another will call him dishonest. What must be the plight of the people in a country with newspapers like these?

READER [5.11] You tell me.

EDITOR [5.12] Those people change their views from one moment to the next. They even have a saying that colors change every

seven years. They swing to and fro like the pendulum of a clock; they can never settle in one place. Let a man be a little eloquent and talk big, or give them parties and the like, and they start beating his drum like a hired drummer. Such people have a Parliament to match. There is one thing about them, it is true: they will never let their country go, and if anyone casts eyes on it, they will strike him blind. But that does not mean that this people has every virtue, or that we should imitate them. It is my firm view that if India imitates the English people, India will be ruined.

READER 5.13 What do you think are the reasons the English people have become like this?

EDITOR 5.14 The English are not especially to blame; the fault lies with their—or rather Europe's—modern civilization. That civilization is an uncivilization, and it is ruining the peoples of Europe.[3]

3 Gandhi sets *sudharo*, "improvement, civilization", against *kudharo*, literally "misimprovement": a false civilization. "Uncivilization" keeps the pun.

6. Civilization

સુધારાનું દર્શન

Modern civilization measures progress by bodily comfort; it is a disease, an irreligion, and it will destroy itself.

READER 6.1 Now you'll have to talk about civilization too. By your reckoning, civilization turns out to be uncivilization.

EDITOR 6.2 Not only by my reckoning: by the reckoning of English writers, civilization is uncivilization. Many books have been written about it. Among the English, societies are even being formed to resist civilization. One man has written a book called *Civilisation: Its Cause and Cure*. In it he has shown that civilization is a kind of disease.[1]

READER 6.3 Why don't we get to know about all this?

EDITOR 6.4 The reason is plain enough. People hardly ever speak against themselves. Those infatuated with civilization will not write against it; instead they will hunt out facts and arguments to support it. Nor do they do this deliberately. They believe what they write. A man asleep takes his dream for the truth; only when he wakes does he discover his mistake. That is the state of a man under the spell of civilization. Whatever we read is the writing of civilization's advocates. Among them are very able and very good men. We are dazzled by what they write. One after another, people get caught in it.

1 Edward Carpenter (1844–1929), English socialist writer; the book appeared in 1889.

READER 6.5 You're right there. Now give me an idea of what you have read and thought.

THE MARKS OF MODERN CIVILIZATION

The Editor lists better houses, machines, trains and guns as what Europe calls civilization.

EDITOR 6.6 First, let us consider what condition it is that is given the name of civilization. The real mark of this civilization is that people find the meaning and purpose of life in discoveries about the outer world and in bodily comfort. Let us take examples. People in Europe today live in better houses than they lived in a hundred years ago; this is considered a sign of civilization. Bodily comfort is what is at stake here. Before that, people wore clothes of skins and used spears. Now they wear long trousers and make all sorts of clothes to adorn the body, and instead of spears they use the revolver, with its turning chamber, which can fire five shots one after another; this is a sign of civilization. When the people of some country, who wear no shoes and so on, learn to wear European clothes, they are considered to have passed from a primitive state to a civilized one. Formerly in Europe people plowed as much land as they needed with an ordinary plow, by their own labor; now one man can plow a great deal of land by working the plow with a steam engine, and amass a great deal of money; this is considered a sign of civilization. Formerly people wrote only a few books, and those were held priceless; today anyone writes and prints whatever he pleases and leads people's minds astray; this is a sign of civilization. Formerly people traveled twelve *gau* a day by bullock cart; now they can travel four hundred *gau* by train; this is regarded as the very peak of civilization. As civilization advances further, it is expected that people will travel by airship and reach any part of the world in a few hours. People will not have to use their hands and feet.[2] They will press one button and the clothes they

2 *Gau*: a traditional Gujarati measure of distance, roughly two miles.

are to wear will arrive; press another and their newspapers will come; press a third and their carriage will be ready; they will have new dishes every day; they will have no need of hands or feet at all. Everything will be done by machinery. Formerly, when people wanted to fight, they pitted their bodily force against each other. Now a single cannon-ball can take thousands of lives; this is a sign of civilization. Formerly people worked in the open air, as freely as suited them; now thousands of workers gather together to earn their living and work in big factories or mines, and their condition has sunk lower than that of animals. In lead works and the like they have to work at the cost of their lives. The rich get the benefit of it. Formerly people were made slaves by beating; now they are enslaved by the lure of money and luxury. Diseases have appeared that people never had before, and along with them doctors have set about discovering how to cure them. In this way hospitals have multiplied; that is considered a sign of civilization. Formerly, to send a letter, a special messenger had to go, and it could be done only at great expense. Today, if I want to write someone a letter full of abuse, I can hurl my abuse for a single copper. If I want to send someone my congratulations, I can deliver those too for the same price; this is a sign of civilization. Formerly people ate two or three times a day, and then only bread they had baked themselves and perhaps a few vegetables; now they need to eat every two hours, so much so that they hardly have time for anything but eating. What more need I say? You can find all this in any book you like. These are all the true signs of civilization. And if anyone tells you anything different, you may be sure he is naive. Civilization is just what I have been describing. There is no question of morality or religion in it at all; the advocates of civilization say plainly that it is not their business to teach people religion. Some think religion is mere humbug. Others, again, make a show of religion and talk about morality too; yet I tell you, after twenty years' experience, that immorality is taught in the name of morality. Even a child can see that there can be no morality in the things described above. Civilization seeks only

how bodily comfort may be had; that is all it labors to provide—and yet it cannot provide even that comfort.

6.7 This civilization is irreligion, and it has spread so far in Europe that the people there seem half mad. They have no real strength; they keep up their vigor with intoxicants. They cannot sit alone in quiet. Women, who ought to be the queens of the home, have to wander the streets or go out to work. In England alone four million poor, helpless women slave like donkeys for their bread, and it is because of this that the suffragette movement is now under way.[3]

6.8 Such is this civilization that if we only sit and wait patiently, the people caught in its path will burn to death in the fire they themselves have lit. By the teaching of the Prophet Muhammad, this would be counted the rule of Satan. Hinduism calls it the Dark Age at its blackest. I cannot give you a true-to-life picture of this civilization; that is beyond my powers. But you will understand that this civilization has set a rot in the English people. It is a civilization that intoxicates and is bound to perish. We must keep away from it, and that is why the English Parliament and other parliaments have become useless. It is certain that the Parliament is a sign of that nation's slavery. If you read and think, you will feel the same. You will not hold the English to blame for it. They are rather to be pitied.[4] They are a capable people, so I believe they will find their way out of the net. They are enterprising and hardworking. Their thinking is not immoral at root, so I have only the highest opinion of them; they are not bad to the bone. Civilization is not an incurable disease for them; but we must never forget that for the present they are in its grip.

3 The suffragettes campaigned, often militantly, for women's right to vote in Britain; their protests were at a height in 1909.

4 The Dark Age: the *Kali Yuga*, in Hindu reckoning the last and most degenerate of the four ages of the world.

7. Why Was India Lost?

હિંદુસ્તાન કેમ ગયું?

The English did not take India; we gave it to them, for the sake of trade and profit.

READER 7.1 You have said a great deal about civilization; you've set me thinking. Now I face the dilemma of what to take from the peoples of Europe and what not to take. But one question springs to mind at once. If civilization is uncivilization, if it is a disease, how could the English, caught up in such a civilization, take India? How can they stay there?

EDITOR 7.2 That question of yours can now be answered fairly easily, and before long we shall be able to consider *swaraj* too. I haven't forgotten that I still owe you an answer to your other question. But let us take up your last one. It is not that the English took India; we gave it to them. They have not held on in India by their own strength; we have kept them. How so? Let us see. I remind you that they originally came to our country to trade. Remember your "Company Bahadur," the mighty Company. Who made it mighty? The poor fellows had no intention even of ruling. Who helped the Company's men? Who was dazzled at the sight of them? Who sold their goods for them? History proves that it was we who did all this.[1] We welcomed them in the hope of making money quickly. We helped them. If I am in the habit of taking bhang and a seller sells me bhang, am I to blame the seller or myself? Will blaming the seller cure my

1 "Company Bahadur" ("the valiant Company") was the common Indian name for the East India Company, which governed British India until 1858.

addiction? If we drive that seller away, won't others sell me bhang? A true servant of India will have to look properly and get to the root. If I have indigestion from overeating, I cannot cure it by blaming the water. The true physician is the one who finds the root of the disease. If you want to be physician to the Indian patient, you have no choice but to find the root of the disease.[2]

READER 7.3 You are right. Now you won't need arguments to convince me. I am impatient to know your views. We have come to the most interesting part, so just tell me what you think. When I have a doubt, I will stop you.

EDITOR 7.4 Very well. But I fear that as we go on we will disagree again. Still, I will argue only when you stop me. We have seen that the English merchants got a foothold because we encouraged them. In the same way, when our princes fought among themselves, they asked the Company Bahadur for help. The Company Bahadur was skilled in trade and in war. Questions of right and wrong did not get in its way. Its business was to increase trade and make money. When we offered help, it took it and multiplied its warehouses. To protect the warehouses it kept an army. We made use of that army, and it is pointless to blame the Company for it now. At that time there was also enmity between Hindus and Muslims. That too gave the Company its chance. So in every way we did what was needed to make the Company's hold on India firm. To say that we gave India to the English is therefore truer than to say that India was lost.

READER 7.5 Now tell me how the English manage to keep India.

EDITOR 7.6 Just as we gave India to them, we let them keep it. Some of them say they took India by the sword, and they also say they hold it by the sword. Both claims are false. The sword is of no use at all in keeping India. It is we who let them stay.

7.7 Napoleon called the English a nation of traders, and he was quite right. It is worth knowing that whatever country they hold, they hold for the sake of trade. Their armies and fleets

2 Bhang: an intoxicating drink made from the leaves of the hemp (cannabis) plant.

exist only to protect trade. When there was no trade in the Transvaal, it at once occurred to Mr. Gladstone that the English ought not to hold the Transvaal. When they saw trade in the Transvaal, they went to war with it, and Mr. Chamberlain discovered that the English had sovereignty over the Transvaal. Someone once asked the late President Kruger whether there was gold in the moon. He replied: "There is not likely to be gold in the moon, for if there were, the English would have annexed it." Their god is money. Keep that in mind and everything is explained.[3]

7.8 So we keep the English in India purely for our own ends. We like their trade. They please us with their wiles, and having pleased us they get work out of us. To blame them for this is to help prop up their power. On top of that, we quarrel among ourselves and encourage them all the more.

If you accept what I have said, we have proved that the English came for trade, they stay for trade, and it is we who help keep them here. Their weapons are of no use at all.

7.10 At this point let me remind you: you may take it that the English flag flies in Japan. The English made their treaty with Japan for the sake of their trade, and you will see that they will build up their trade in Japan enormously. The English want to make the whole world a market for their goods. It is true that they will not manage it. But no blame can be laid on them for trying. They will spare no effort.[4]

3 Gladstone restored the Transvaal's self-government after the war of 1880–81. Gold was found on the Witwatersrand in 1886, and Joseph Chamberlain, Colonial Secretary, presided over the war of 1899–1902 against the republic led by Paul Kruger (died 1904).

4 The Anglo-Japanese Alliance was signed in 1902 and renewed in 1905.

8. The Condition of India

હિંદુસ્તાનની દશા

India is ground down not by the English but by modern civilization; religion, not irreligion, is India's strength.

READER [8.1] I can understand how India came to be in English hands. Now I want to hear your views on the condition of India.

EDITOR [8.2] India's condition today is pitiful. As I tell you this my eyes fill with tears and my throat goes dry. I doubt whether I can make it fully clear to you. It is my firm opinion that India is being ground down not by the English but by modern civilization. It has been caught in its grip. There is still a way of escape, but time is running out day by day. Religion is dear to me, and so my first sorrow is that India is losing its religion. By religion I do not mean here Hindu or Muslim or Zoroastrian. I mean that the religion which lies within all these religions is slipping away. We are turning our backs on God.

READER [8.3] How so?

EDITOR [8.4] India stands accused of being lazy, while the whites are said to be hardworking and enterprising. We have accepted this, and so we want to change our condition.

All religions, Hindu, Muslim, Parsi and Christian, teach that we should be slow about worldly things and zealous about religious things. We should set limits to our worldly greed and leave our religious greed free. That is where our zeal belongs.

READER [8.6] You seem to be teaching us to be hypocrites. Swindlers have swindled people with talk like this, and they still do.

EDITOR 8.7 You are wronging religion. There is hypocrisy in every religion. Where there is sun, there is darkness too. Everything casts a shadow. You will find that religious swindlers are better than worldly ones. The hypocrisy I have shown you in civilization I have never seen in religion.

READER 8.8 How can you say that? In the name of religion Hindus and Muslims have fought. In the name of religion Christians have waged great wars. In the name of religion thousands of innocent people have been killed and burned, and terrible sufferings inflicted on them. Surely that is worse than civilization.

EDITOR 8.9 I say that all this is easier to bear than the misery of civilization. Everyone knows that what you describe is hypocrisy. So when the people caught up in it die, it comes to an end. Where there are simple, credulous people, such things will go on, but their effect does not stay evil forever. But there is no counting the people who have been burned to death in the bonfire of civilization. The cunning of it is that people leap into it believing it to be good. They end up belonging neither to faith nor to the world. They forget the real thing altogether. Civilization eats us away the way a rat does, blowing on the spot as it gnaws. When we come to know its effects, the old superstitions will seem sweet by comparison. I am not saying we should keep those superstitions.[1] No, we shall certainly fight them. But that fight will not be won by forgetting religion. It will be won by truly making religion our own.

THE PEACE OF ENGLISH RULE

The Editor says English peace has made Indians cowardly and dependent on others for protection.

READER 8.10 Then you will also say that the blessing of peace the English have given India is worthless.

1 A common belief held that a rat blows on the skin to numb it while it nibbles, so that the sleeper feels nothing.

EDITOR 8.11 You may see peace, if you like. I see no blessing of peace.

READER 8.12 So the terror spread by the Thugs, the Pindaris, the Bhils and the rest was nothing to worry about, by your reckoning![2]

EDITOR 8.13 If you think about it a little, you will see that their terror was trifling. If it had really been terror, the people would have been wiped out root and branch long ago. Besides, today's peace is peace in name only. What I mean is that this peace has made us cowardly, spineless and timid. Don't suppose the English have changed the nature of the Bhils and Pindaris. If we have to suffer that kind of trouble, it is worth bearing. But to be saved from it by someone else is utterly degrading. I would rather die by a Bhil's bow and arrow than become helpless. The India of those days had quite a different spirit. Macaulay's thinking Indians cowardly shows only his own abject ignorance. Indians were never spineless.[3] Understand this: in a country inhabited by hill peoples, a country where tigers and wolves live, people who were truly fearful would simply perish. Have you ever been out to the fields? I assure you that our farmers still sleep fearlessly in the fields today, while the English and you would think twice about sleeping there. Strength lies in fearlessness, not in having plenty of lumps of flesh on the body. A little thought will show you that.

8.14 And I warn you who want *swaraj*: the Bhils, the Pindaris and the Thugs are our own countrymen. Winning them over is your work and mine. As long as you fear your own brothers, you will never reach the goal.

2 Thugs: gangs of robbers and stranglers suppressed in the 1830s; Pindaris: bands of mounted raiders crushed in 1817–18; Bhils: a tribal people of western and central India, cast by colonial writers as marauders.

3 Thomas Babington Macaulay (1800–1859), historian and member of the Governor-General's council, author of the 1835 Minute on Education, wrote contemptuously of Bengalis as feeble and timid.

9. The Condition of India (continued): The Railways

હિંદુસ્તાનની દશા–રેલવેઓ

Railways spread plague and famine, speed up evil, and did not make India one nation; it was one already.

READER 9.1 You have taken away the fond belief I had in India's peace. Now I can't think of anything you have left me.

EDITOR 9.2 So far I have only given you an idea of the state of religion. But when I tell you my views on why India is poor, you may well come to despise me. For whatever you and I have thought beneficial until now seems harmful to me.

READER 9.3 What could that be?

EDITOR 9.4 India has been impoverished by railways, lawyers and doctors. Things are such that if we do not wake up in time, we will be hemmed in on every side.

READER 9.5 I am afraid our pilgrim band will never reach Dwarka. You have started attacking everything that has been seen and held as good! What is left now?[1]

EDITOR 9.6 You will have to be patient. How much of an uncivilization this civilization really is can be grasped only with difficulty. Doctors will tell you that a consumptive goes on hoping to live right up to death's door. Consumption does no harm you can see on the surface. What is more, it gives a person a false flush.

1 Dwarka, on the coast of Kathiawar, is a great place of pilgrimage. "Will the pilgrim band reach Dwarka?" is a Gujarati way of asking whether an undertaking will ever be completed.

So the patient is carried along by false confidence and in the end goes under. That is how to understand civilization: it is an invisible disease. Beware of it.

READER 9.7 Very well, then. Now tell me the whole epic of the railways.

EDITOR 9.8 It will occur to you that without railways the English could not keep the hold on India that they have. Plague has been spread by the railways. Without them, only a few people would travel from place to place, and so infectious diseases could not spread across the whole country. In the past we used to practice "segregation," what we call *sutak*, as a matter of course. Famines have increased because of the railways, for the convenience of the railways lets people sell off their grain. Grain is drawn away to wherever prices are high, people become careless, and so the misery of famine grows. Railways increase wickedness. Bad people can spread their evil at speed. The holy places of India have become unholy. In the past people reached such places only with great hardship.[2] Such people truly went in devotion to worship God. Now gangs of swindlers go only to swindle.

READER 9.9 That is a one-sided argument. Good people can travel just as bad people can. Why don't they make full use of the railways?

EDITOR 9.10 What is good moves at a snail's pace. It can never get along with the railways. Whoever does good has no selfish motive. He will not hurry. He knows it takes an age for good to leave its mark on people. Only evil can leap. Building a house is hard; pulling it down is easy. So we can be quite sure that the railways will always spread wickedness. Whether they spread famine or not, some expert might for a moment plant a doubt in my mind. But that the railways increase wickedness is carved into my mind and will not go away.

2 *Sutak*: the period of ritual impurity and seclusion that follows a birth or death in a family.

WERE INDIANS ONE NATION BEFORE THE RAILWAYS?

The Editor argues India was one nation long before the English, united by its pilgrimages.

READER 9.11 But the greatest benefit of the railways makes one forget all their disadvantages. It is because of the railways that a spirit of one nation can be seen in India today. So I say: let the railways come.

EDITOR 9.12 That is simply your mistake. The English have taught you that you were not one nation and that it will take centuries to become one. This is completely baseless. When the English were not in India, we were one nation. Our ideas were one and our way of life was one. That is precisely why they were able to set up a single rule. The divisions were made afterwards, by them.

READER 9.13 I need to understand this better.

EDITOR 9.14 I am not saying this without thought. Being one nation does not mean there were no differences among us. But our leading men traveled all over India on foot or by bullock cart. They learned one another's languages, and there was no gulf between them. What do you suppose was in the minds of those far-sighted men who established pilgrimages to Setubandh Rameshwar, Jagannath and Hardwar? You will grant that they were no fools. They knew that God can be worshiped sitting at home. It was they who taught us that whoever's mind is pure has the Ganges at home. But they reasoned that India, which they had made one land, must be the land of one nation. So they established these different holy places and gave the people an idea of unity in a way found nowhere else in the world.[3] We Indians were and are more one than two Englishmen are. Only to you and me, who have become civilized, did it seem

3 Rameshwaram, at India's southern tip near the "bridge" Rama built to Lanka; Jagannath at Puri on the eastern coast; Hardwar, where the Ganges leaves the Himalayas.

that India is made up of different nations. If you want to say that the railways made us think of ourselves as different nations, and that the railways are now bringing back the idea of one nation, I have no objection. An opium addict can say that he has learned the harm opium does, and therefore opium is a good thing. Think all this over carefully. Doubts will still come up. But you will be able to settle them all on your own.

READER 9.15 I will think over what you have said. But one question comes up right away. You spoke of India before the Muslims came. But now there are large numbers of Muslims, Parsis and Christians. They cannot be one nation. Hindus and Muslims are said to have a bone-deep enmity. Our proverb says the same: "Miyan and Mahadev can never agree." The Hindu worships facing east, the Muslim facing west. The Muslim despises the Hindu as a *butparast*, an idol-worshipper. The Hindu worships idols; the Muslim smashes them. The Hindu worships the cow; the Muslim kills it. The Hindu is nonviolent; the Muslim is violent. With conflict at every step like this, how can it ever end, and how can India ever be one?[4]

4 *Miyan*: a Muslim gentleman; *Mahadev*: the god Shiva, standing for the Hindu. *Butparast* is Persian.

10. The Condition of India (continued): Hindus and Muslims

હિંદુસ્તાનની દશા–હિંદુ-મુસલમાન

India is not two nations: Hindus and Muslims can live together as brothers, and their quarrels are fed by outsiders.

EDITOR [10.1] Your last question looks very serious. But on reflection it will seem easy. This question too has arisen because of railways, lawyers and doctors. We have dealt with the railways; we still have to consider lawyers and doctors. I will add only this. Man is so made that he should do his coming and going, and the rest, only as far as his own hands and feet will take him. If we did not rush about by railway and other such means, we would not be faced with so many tangled questions. We bring misery on ourselves with our own hands. God set man's limits by the very shape of his body, and man has found ways to cross them. God gave man intelligence so that he might know God, and man has used his intelligence to forget God. Within my natural limits I can serve the people who live around me. But in my pride I promptly discovered that I must serve the whole world with my body. In trying to do this, people of many religions and many kinds are thrown together. Humankind cannot carry that burden, and so it grows distressed. Following this line of thought, you will see that the railway is a truly mischievous device. By using the railway man has forgotten God.

READER [10.2] But now I am impatient to hear the answer to the question I raised. With the coming of the Muslims, did we remain one nation or not?

EDITOR 10.3 People of any religion can live in India; that does not make it cease to be one nation. Newcomers cannot break up a nation; they merge into it. Only when that happens can a country be called one nation. A country must have the capacity to absorb others. India had it and still has it. In truth, you could say there are as many religions as there are people. People who live as one nation do not interfere with one another's religion. If they do, it means they are not fit to be one nation. If Hindus think that all India should be filled with Hindus alone, that is a dream. If Muslims think that only Muslims should live in it, that too is a dream. Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Christians, all who have made that country their own and live in it, belong to one country, one land. They are brothers of the same land, and they will have to live as one, if only for one another's sake.

10.4 Nowhere in the world has one nation meant one religion. In India it never did.

READER 10.5 But what about the bone-deep enmity?

EDITOR 10.6 "Bone-deep enmity" is a phrase picked up from the enemy of both. When Hindus and Muslims fought, they talked like that too. We stopped fighting long ago. So why the enmity? And remember, it is not as if we stopped fighting only after the English came. Hindus have long lived under Muslim kings, and Muslims under Hindu kings. Both found out in time that fighting profits no one, that fighting will not make either give up its religion, nor will either give up its obstinacy. So both resolved to live in harmony. It was the English who set the quarrels going again.

10.7 The proverb "Miyan and Mahadev can never agree" should be understood in the same way. Some proverbs linger on and go on doing harm. Caught up in proverbs, we forget even that many Hindus and Muslims had the same forefathers; the same blood runs in us. Does changing one's religion make one an enemy? Is the God of the one different from the God of the other? Religions are different roads to the same place. What does it matter if we take different paths? Where is the harm in that?

10.8 Besides, there are such proverbs among Shaivites and Vaishnavites too, yet no one says they are not one nation. The followers of the Vedic religion and the Jains are thought to differ greatly, yet that does not make them two separate nations. It is only because we have become slaves that we take our quarrels to a third party.[1]

10.9 Just as Muslims are breakers of idols, so there is a sect among Hindus too that does the same. As true knowledge grows, we will understand that even if the other person follows a religion we do not like, we ought not to bear him ill will. We must not use force against him.

PROTECTING THE COW

The Editor says the cow cannot be protected by fighting Muslims, only by persuasion and self-sacrifice.

READER 10.10 Now tell me your views on cow-protection.

EDITOR 10.11 I myself worship the cow, that is, I honor it. The cow is India's protector, for India, an agricultural country, depends on its offspring. The cow is useful in a hundred ways. Our Muslim brothers too will admit that it is a useful animal.

10.12 But just as I worship the cow, I worship human beings too. Just as the cow is useful, so is a human being, whether Muslim or Hindu. Then shall I fight a Muslim to save a cow? Shall I kill him? In doing so I would become the enemy of the Muslim and of the cow alike. So my view is that there is only one way to protect the cow. I should fold my hands before my Muslim brother and persuade him to spare the cow for the country's sake. If he will not listen, I must let the cow go, for that is beyond my power. If I feel deep compassion for the cow, I should give up my own life, but never take the life of a Muslim. That, I believe, is the law of religion.

10.13 "Yes" and "No" are forever at war. If I argue, the Muslim will argue too. If I turn awkward, so will he. If I bend a hand's

1 Shaivites and Vaishnavites: worshippers of Shiva and of Vishnu, the two great devotional traditions of Hinduism.

span, he will bend an arm's length; and even if he does not, no one can say I was wrong to bend. When we went to extremes, cow-slaughter increased. In my opinion the cow-protection societies should be counted as cow-slaughter societies. That such societies exist is a disgrace to us. It must have been when we forgot how to protect the cow that we came to need them.[2]

10.14 If my own brother rushes to kill a cow, what am I to do with him? Kill him, or fall at his feet? If you say I should fall at his feet, then I should fall at my Muslim brother's feet too.

Hindus torment cows and kill them that way; who rescues the cow from them? Hindus beat the cow's offspring with goads; who reasons with those Hindus? Yet none of this has stopped us from being one nation.

10.16 Finally, if it is true that the Hindu is nonviolent and the Muslim violent, what is the duty of the nonviolent? Nowhere is it written that the nonviolent should do violence to a human being. The nonviolent has a straight road. He must never do violence to one to save another. All he has to do is bow down and plead. That is where his valor lies.

10.17 But is every Hindu nonviolent? Strictly speaking, no one is nonviolent, for we all destroy life. But we want to be free of it, and so we are called nonviolent. Taking the ordinary view, we see that many Hindus eat meat, so they cannot be counted nonviolent. If anyone wants to twist the word into some other meaning, I have nothing to say. That being so, the claim that the two cannot get along because one is violent and the other nonviolent is utterly false.

10.18 Such ideas were put about by selfish religious teachers, by shastris and mullahs. What they left unfinished, the English have finished. They are in the habit of writing histories. They make a show of knowing the customs and usages of every community. God made the human mind small, yet they go on claiming the knowledge of God and trying all kinds of experiments.

2 Cow-protection societies spread across northern India from the 1880s; their agitation fed the Hindu–Muslim riots of 1893.

They beat their own drum and drive the belief into our minds, and in our simplicity we believe it all.[3]

10.19 Those who do not want to look away can see that the holy Quran contains hundreds of sayings a Hindu would accept, and the *Bhagavad Gita* says things to which a Muslim could have no objection at all. If there are parts of the holy Quran I do not understand or do not like, must I despise those who believe in it? It takes two to quarrel. If I am determined not to quarrel, what can the Muslim do? And if the Muslim will not quarrel, what could I do? Whoever swings his arm at the empty air finds it drops of itself. If each of us understands the true nature of his own religion and holds fast to it, and does not let shastris and mullahs come between us, quarreling will be left with a blackened face.

READER 10.20 But will the English really let the two communities get along?

EDITOR 10.21 That is a coward's question. It shows how low we have sunk. If two brothers want to get along, who can break them apart? If a third person can make them quarrel, we would call those brothers weak of heart. In the same way, if we, Hindus and Muslims, are weak of heart, there will be no blaming the English. An unfired pot will crack on one pebble if not on another. The way to save it is not to keep it away from pebbles, but to fire it hard, so that there is no fear of pebbles at all. In the same way, we have to make our hearts firm. And if even one of the two of us is firm of heart, no third party can succeed. This is something the Hindus can do with ease. They are more numerous, and they consider themselves the more educated. Then surely they can keep their hearts firm.

10.22 There is mistrust between the two communities. That is why the Muslims ask Lord Morley for certain rights. Why should the Hindus oppose this? If the Hindus did not oppose it, the English would be taken aback, the Muslims would slowly come to trust, and brotherhood would grow. We ought to be ashamed to

3 Shastris: learned Hindu scholars of scripture; mullahs: Muslim clerics.

take our quarrels to them. The Hindus will lose nothing by this; you can work that out for yourself. No one who has won another's trust has ever lost anything by it.[4]

10.23 I do not mean that Hindus and Muslims will never fight. When two brothers live together, they quarrel. Sometimes heads will be broken. That need not happen, but not everyone can be of the same mind. When people get worked up, they often do rash things. We will have to put up with that. But we will not stir up a lot of lawyering and drag even such quarrels into the English courts. Two men fought; both or one of them got a broken head. What justice could a third man do after that? Those who fight will get hurt. When body clashes with body, it is bound to leave its marks. What justice can there be in that?

4 John Morley, Secretary of State for India 1905–10. The Muslim League's demand for separate electorates was granted in the Morley–Minto reforms of 1909.

11. The Condition of India (continued): Lawyers

હિંદુસ્તાનની દશા–વકીલ

Lawyers have enslaved India, sharpened Hindu–Muslim quarrels and strengthened English rule.

READER [11.1] So you say that when two people fight, we should not even have the case judged. That is a strange thing to say.

EDITOR [11.2] Call it strange, or call it what you like, but it is true. And your doubt brings us to lawyers and doctors. My view is that lawyers have brought slavery upon India. They have aggravated the quarrels between Hindus and Muslims, and they have strengthened the power of the English.

READER [11.3] It is easy to make such accusations, but hard to prove them. Without lawyers, who would have shown us the way to freedom? Without them, who would have defended the poor? Without them, who would have got us redress? Look at how many people the late Manmohan Ghose saved, without taking so much as a penny for himself. The Congress, which you yourself have praised, is kept going by lawyers, and it is their labor that gets its work done. To condemn this class is an injustice to justice itself. It looks as if, just because you have a newspaper in your hands, you have taken the liberty of saying whatever you please.[1]

EDITOR [11.4] I used to think as you do. I do not want to show you that lawyers have never done any good at all. I respect Mr. Man-

mohan Ghose. It is true that he helped the poor. One may also grant that lawyers have done something in the Congress. Lawyers are human too, and there is some good in all humankind. But most of the instances of lawyers' decency one comes across happened when they forgot that they were lawyers. All I want to show you is that their profession teaches them immorality. They fall into evil temptations, and few escape.

11.5 Suppose Hindus and Muslims have fought. An outsider would tell them: forget it now; both of you were probably at fault; live together in harmony. Instead they go to a lawyer. The lawyer's duty is to take his client's side. It is his job to find arguments in his client's favor that the client himself never thought of. If he does not, he is held to have disgraced his profession. So the lawyer will usually advise carrying the fight further.

11.6 Besides, people do not become lawyers to relieve the sufferings of others, but to make money. It is a way of earning a living. So the lawyer's interest lies in multiplying quarrels. I know for a fact that lawyers are glad when quarrels break out. Court agents belong to the lawyers' tribe too. Where there are no quarrels, they will invent them. They have their touts, who cling to the poor like leeches and suck their blood. The very nature of the profession is such that it cannot help encouraging strife. Lawyers are people with time on their hands. Lazy men become lawyers in order to live in ease and luxury. That is the plain truth. The other reasons given are excuses. It was lawyers themselves who discovered that law is a highly honorable profession. They make the laws, and they are the ones who praise them. They are the ones who fix what fees to take from people, and to overawe people they put on such airs that you would think they were divine beings come down from heaven!

11.7 Why do they ask for higher daily wages than a laborer? Why are their needs greater than a laborer's? What more good have they done the country than a laborer has? Does anyone who does good have a right to take more money for it? If they

1 Manmohan Ghose (1844–1896), the first Indian barrister to practice at the Calcutta High Court, known for defending poor clients free of charge.

did it for money, how can it be counted as good? This is the character of the profession that I have already described; but that is a matter apart.

11.8 Anyone with experience will know that some of the riots between Hindus and Muslims have been the work of lawyers. Some families have been ruined by them. Through them poison has entered between brothers. Some princely states have fallen into lawyers' nets and sunk into debt. Many small landholders have been fleeced by lawyers' schemes. Many such examples could be given.

11.9 But the greatest harm done at their hands is that the English yoke has been fastened tight around our necks. Think about it. Do you suppose the English could carry on their rule without English courts? Courts do not exist for the people's benefit. Whoever wants to maintain his power brings the people under his control by way of the courts. When people settle their own fights, no third party can impose his authority. Indeed, when people fought it out with their own hands, or appointed their relatives as arbitrators and settled matters that way, they were brave. When the courts came, they grew spineless. It used to be thought barbarous for people to fight one another to the death. Is it any less barbarous now that a third man settles my quarrel? Can anyone say that the third man's verdict is always right? Both parties know who is in the right. In our simplicity we imagine that the third man who takes our money is doing us justice.

11.10 Let us leave that aside. All I need to show is that the English have tightened their grip on us by means of the courts, and that those courts could not run at all unless we became lawyers. If the English were the only judges, the only lawyers and the only soldiers, they would rule only over the English. It simply could not have worked without Indian judges and Indian lawyers. If you understood how lawyers came to be and what havoc they have wrought, you would come to loathe that profession as much as I do. One of the master keys of English power is their courts, and the key to the courts is lawyers. If lawyers gave up practicing law, and the profession came to be thought as low as

prostitution, English rule would collapse in a single day. Lawyers have brought upon the Indian people the charge that we love quarrels and are fish that live in the water of the courts.

11.11 The words I use about lawyers apply equally to judges. The two are cousins, and each lends the other strength.

12. The Condition of India (continued): Doctors

હિંદુસ્તાનની દશા–દાક્તર

Doctors cure the body only to let us indulge it again; their profession makes us weak and dependent.

READER [12.1] About lawyers I see your point. I am convinced that whatever good they have done was only by accident. Otherwise, judging by their profession, it is the lowest of the low. But you drag in doctors as well. Why would that be?

EDITOR [12.2] The views I am setting before you are my own now, but I am not the only one to have formed them. Western reformers themselves have written in harsher words than mine. They have strongly condemned lawyers and doctors. One of these writers has drawn a poisonous tree. Its branches are the useless professions, lawyers, doctors and the like, and over its trunk he has raised the axe of morality and religion. Immorality he has made the root of all these professions. So you will understand that I am not setting before you new ideas pulled out of my own pocket, but presenting the experience of others as well as my own.

[12.3] I was once as infatuated with doctors as you still are. There was a time when I myself meant to become a doctor and thought I would serve the community as one. Now the infatuation is gone. I now understand why the healer's trade was never counted among the respectable callings in our country, and I can see the worth of that view.

12.4 The English have also used medical science to tighten their hold on us. Nor are doctors lacking in humbug. It was an English physician who beguiled the Mughal emperor. He cured some illness in the emperor's household and was rewarded with a robe of honor. It is a doctor, too, who has found his way to the Amir.

Doctors have shaken us to the core. I am tempted to say that quacks are better than doctors. Let us think it over.[1]

12.6 A doctor's business is only to look after the body. In fact, it is not even to look after the body. His business is to remove the diseases that arise in it. How do diseases arise? Through our own carelessness. I overeat, I get indigestion, I go to the doctor, he gives me a pill. I get better, I overeat again, and I take another pill. Here is what has happened. If I had not taken the pill, I would have suffered the punishment of indigestion and would not have overeaten again. The doctor stepped in and helped me to overeat. My body got relief, but my mind grew weaker. If this goes on, I end up unable to keep any control at all over my mind.

12.7 I indulged my lusts. I fell ill, the doctor gave me medicine, and I recovered. Will I not indulge again? Of course I will. If the doctor had not stepped in, nature would have done its work, my mind would have grown firm, and in the end I would have been free of desire and happy.

Hospitals are the root of sin. Because of them people take less care of their bodies and indulge more in immorality.

12.9 European doctors go beyond all bounds. Merely for the sake of a false care of the body, they kill hundreds of thousands of creatures every year and experiment on living animals. No religion approves of this. Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Parsis, all say that there is no need to kill so many creatures for the sake of the human body.

12.10 Doctors make us betray our religion. Most of their medicines contain animal fat or alcohol. Neither of these is permitted

to Hindus or Muslims. We may put on airs of being civilized, write everyone else off as superstitious, and do whatever we like; that is another matter. But that doctors do what I have described is a plain and simple fact.

12.11 The result is that we are becoming feeble and spineless. In this condition we are no longer fit to serve the people, and we are losing our strength of body and of mind. To learn English or European medicine is only to tighten the knot of slavery.

12.12 We must also consider why we become doctors. The real reason is to have a respectable, money-making profession. Serving others has nothing to do with it. I have already shown that there is no service to others in that profession. So people are harmed by it. Doctors take large fees from people by mere show, and for medicine worth a pie they charge rupees. So people are cheated through their trust and their hope of getting well. That being so, out-and-out quacks are better than doctors who put on a show of doing good.[2]

1 The story is told of Gabriel Boughton, an East India Company surgeon who treated the emperor Shah Jahan's family in the 1630s and won trading privileges for the English. The Amir is the ruler of Afghanistan, whose court employed English physicians from the 1890s.

2 The pie was the smallest Indian coin, one-twelfth of an anna, or 1/192 of a rupee.

13. What Is True Civilization?

ખરો સુધારો શું?

Civilization is the conduct that shows a person the path of duty: India's old civilization, which limited wants, is the best.

READER 13.1 You have thrown out the railways, condemned the lawyers and crushed the doctors. I can see that you will count all machinery as harmful. Then what is to be called civilization?

EDITOR 13.2 That question is not hard to answer. I believe that nothing in the world can match the civilization India has shown. Nothing has been seen that can equal the seeds our forefathers sowed. Rome has been ground to dust, Greece is only a name, the empire of the Pharaohs (of Egypt) is gone, and Japan has fallen into the clutches of the West. Of China nothing can be said. But India, for all its stumbling and falling, is still sound at its foundations.

13.3 The peoples of Europe learn from the books of Rome and Greece, which have fallen. They flatter themselves that they will not repeat their mistakes. Such is their sorry state, while India stands unmoved. That is her glory. India is accused of being so barbarous, so ignorant, that she cannot be made to change. This charge is our virtue, not our fault. Why should we change what experience has shown us to be right? Many givers of advice come and go, but India stands firm. That is her beauty; that is her anchor.

CIVILIZATION DEFINED

True civilization is conduct that shows the path of duty, through mastery of mind and senses.

EDITOR 13.4 Civilization is the conduct that shows a person the path of duty. To do one's duty is to observe morality. To observe morality is to keep our mind and our senses under control. In doing so we come to know ourselves. This is *sudharo*: *su*, that is, a good *dharo*, a good way of conduct. Whatever runs against it is *kudharo*, a bad way: uncivilization.[1]

13.5 Many English writers have written that, by the definition above, India has nothing left to learn. That is right. We have seen that human desires are restless. The mind keeps flailing about. The more we give the body, the more it asks for. Even with more, it is not happy. The more we indulge, the more we want to indulge. So our ancestors set a limit. After much thought they saw that happiness and misery come from the mind. The rich are not happy because of their riches, and the poor are not miserable because of their poverty. The rich are often seen to be miserable, and the poor to be happy. Millions will always remain poor. Seeing this, our ancestors weaned us from the craving for indulgence. We went on with the plow we had thousands of years ago. We kept the huts we had thousands of years ago. Our education went on as it had been thousands of years ago. We had no ruinous competition. Each person kept to their own trade and took the customary wage for it. It was not that we did not know how to invent machines and the like. But our ancestors saw that if people got caught in the tangle of machinery they would become slaves and abandon their morality. After careful thought they said that we should do only what can be done with our hands and feet. True happiness lies in using our hands and feet, and so does health.

13.6 They thought that founding great cities was a useless bother. People would not be happy in them. Gilded gangs and

white lanes would spring up there, and the poor would be robbed by the rich. So they were content with small villages.

They saw that moral force is stronger than kings and their swords. So they ranked kings below men of moral strength, the sages and fakirs.

A nation with such a constitution is fit to teach others. It has no need to learn from others.[2]

13.9 This nation had courts, lawyers and physicians, but they were all kept within proper bounds. Everyone knew these were not grand professions. Besides, lawyers, physicians and the like did not plunder the people. They depended on the people and did not set themselves up as their masters. Justice was done fairly enough. The people made it their aim to stay out of court. There were no self-seeking men to lead them astray. Even this much rot was found only around kings and their courts. The common people lived apart from it and were masters of their own fields. True *swaraj* was theirs.

13.10 That India still exists wherever this accursed civilization has not reached. Talk to it about your new fads and it will laugh at you. The English do not rule over it, and you never will.

We do not know the people in whose name we speak, and they do not know us. My advice to you, and to all who burn with love of country, is this. Travel for six months through the land, in the parts the railway has not yet overrun. Then let your love of country burn. Then talk of *swaraj*.

13.12 Now you have seen what I call true civilization. Wherever India is as I have pictured it, anyone who changes it should be regarded as an enemy. Such a man is a sinner.

READER 13.13 If India were just as you say, well and good. But this too is India: a country with thousands of child widows, where two-year-old girls are married, where boys and girls of twelve run households, where women take more than one husband,

1 Gandhi reads *sudharo* as *su*, good, plus *dharo*, rule or custom; *kudharo*, with *ku*, bad, is its opposite.

2 The wording "gilded gangs and white lanes" follows the transcription. Printed editions here speak of gangs of thieves and rogues and of streets of prostitutes.

where the custom of *niyoga* prevails, where girls become prostitutes in the name of religion, and where buffaloes and goats are slaughtered in the name of religion. Is all that, too, a mark of the civilization you describe?[3]

EDITOR 13.14 You are mistaken. The defects you point to are defects. No one calls them civilization. They persist in spite of civilization. Efforts have always been made to remove them and always will be. We can use the new zeal that has come over us to remove them.

The marks of modern civilization I described to you are the ones its own champions point to. And the Indian civilization I have described is the one its own champions describe.

13.16 In no country, under no civilization, have all people reached perfection. The tendency of Indian civilization is to strengthen morality; that is why I called the other uncivilization. Western civilization is godless. Indian civilization is God-centered.

Understanding this and keeping faith, those who wish India well should cling to Indian civilization as a child clings to its mother.[4]

3 *Niyoga*: an old custom by which a widow, or the wife of a childless man, could bear a child by a kinsman.

4 The transcription omits the clause found in the printed text that Western civilization tends to strengthen immorality.

14. How Can India Become Free?

હિંદ કેમ છૂટે?

Swaraj is the rule of ourselves: it is in our own hands, and begins when each of us experiences it.

READER 14.1 I understand your views on civilization. I shall have to think over what you say. You will not expect everything to be taken in at once, and I suppose you do not even hope for it. Given these views of yours, how do you think India can be freed?

EDITOR 14.2 I do not expect everyone to accept my views at once. My duty is only to share them with people like you who want to know them. Whether such people come to like them, only time will tell.

In truth we have already looked at the ways India can be freed, but we looked at them in another form. Now let us examine them in their own form.

14.4 Everyone knows that when the cause of a patient's illness is removed, the patient recovers. In the same way, if the cause of India's slavery is removed, India will be free of its bonds.

READER 14.5 If Indian civilization is the best of all, as you consider it, then why did India fall into slavery?

EDITOR 14.6 The civilization is just as I have said. But we see that every civilization is struck by one calamity after another. A civilization that stands firm drives off the calamity in the end. India's children were immature, and so that civilization was besieged. But it has the strength to break out of the siege, and that shows its greatness.

SWARAJ AS RULE OVER OURSELVES

India's slavery is the slavery of the Westernized few; swaraj is learning to rule ourselves.

EDITOR 14.7 Besides, the whole of India is not besieged. Only those who have received a Western education and fallen into its noose are caught in slavery. We measure the world by our own penny. Because we are in a wretched state, we suppose all of India is. In fact it is nothing of the kind. Still, it is fair to think of our slavery as the country's. But if we bear in mind what I have just said, we shall see that once our own slavery is gone, India's slavery may be counted gone. Here you now have the definition of *swaraj*. It is *swaraj* when we learn to rule ourselves, and that *swaraj* is in the palm of our hand.

14.8 Do not think of this *swaraj* as a dream. It is not a *swaraj* to imagine in your mind while you sit idle. Once you have tasted it, you will strive all your life to give others the taste of it. But the main thing is that each one of us should enjoy *swaraj*. A drowning man cannot save another; a swimmer can. If we are slaves ourselves and talk of freeing others, that cannot be.

But this is not enough. We still have to think further.

By now you will at least have seen that

we need not make it our aim to drive the English

out. If the English stay on as Indians,

14.13 we can make room for them.

If the English want to stay on with their

civilization, there is no place for them in India. To bring about such

a state of affairs lies in our hands.

READER 14.17 What you say about the English becoming Indian is something that can never happen.

EDITOR 14.18 For us to say so is the same as saying the English are not human. Whether they become like us or not need not even concern us. Let us clean our own house. Then only those fit to

live in it will stay, and the rest will leave of their own accord. Everyone must have had that experience.

READER 14.19 I have never read of such a thing happening in history.

EDITOR 14.20 To believe that what we have not seen in history cannot happen is to belittle ourselves. Whatever our reason can grasp, we ought at least to try in the end.

No two countries are in the same condition. India's condition is unusual. India's strength is beyond measure. So other histories have little bearing on us. I have shown you that when other civilizations were trampled in the dust, Indian civilization came to no harm.

READER 14.22 None of this seems right to me. We shall have to fight the English to drive them out; I have little doubt of that. As long as they are in the country we shall have no peace. *Paradhin sapne sukh nahin* [the dependent know no happiness even in dreams]. That is what we see. Because they are here, we grow weaker and weaker. Our spirit has gone, and our people look frightened. They are death itself hanging over our country. We have no way out but to drive that death away, whatever effort it takes.[1]

EDITOR 14.23 In your excitement you have forgotten everything I said. We brought the English here, and they stay because of us. Why do you forget that they can stay because we have adopted their civilization? The contempt you feel for them you ought to feel for their civilization. Still, suppose now that we fight and drive them out. How is that to be done?

READER 14.24 As Italy did. What Mazzini and Garibaldi did, we can do too. Can you deny that they were great heroes?[2]

1 A line from the *Ramcharitmanas* of Tulsidas (c. 1532–1623), the Hindi poet whose retelling of the *Ramayana* is widely loved in North India.
2 Giuseppe Mazzini (1805–72) and Giuseppe Garibaldi (1807–82) were leaders of Italian unification and independence from Austria.

15. Italy and India

ઈટાલી અને હિંદ

Mazzini, Cavour and Garibaldi: Italy's unification by arms did not bring self-rule to the Italian people.

EDITOR 15.1 Italy is a good example to give. Mazzini was a great soul. Garibaldi was a mighty warrior. Both deserve reverence, and we can learn much from them. Yet Italy's condition and India's are different.

15.2 In the first place, the difference between Mazzini and Garibaldi is worth knowing. Mazzini's aspiration was different. What Mazzini hoped for has not come about in Italy. Writing on the duties of man, Mazzini showed that every individual must come to enjoy *swaraj*. For him that remained a dream. Remember that Garibaldi and Mazzini disagreed. Moreover, Garibaldi gave arms to every Italian, and every Italian took up arms.[1]

15.3 Between Italy and Austria there was no difference of civilization. They were cousins, as the saying goes. Italy's was a case of *jaise ko taisa* [like for like]. Garibaldi's passion was to free Italy from the yoke of the foreigner, Austria. The intrigues he pursued through Cavour to that end tarnish his bravery.[2]

15.4 And what came of it in the end? If you believe the Italian people are happy because Italians rule Italy, I must tell you that you are groping in the dark. Mazzini showed clearly that Italy was not freed at all. Victor Emmanuel took Italy to mean one thing, and Mazzini another. For Emmanuel, Cavour and

1 Mazzini's *The Duties of Man* (1860).

2 Camillo Cavour (1810–61), prime minister of Piedmont-Sardinia and chief architect of Italian unification.

Garibaldi, Italy meant Emmanuel, the King of Italy, and his henchmen. For Mazzini, Italy was its people, its peasants, and Emmanuel and the rest were their servants. Mazzini's Italy is still enslaved. It was a game of chess between two kings. The Italian people were only the pawns, and they still are. Italy's workers are still miserable.[3] No one hears the grievances of Italy's workers. So they commit murders, rise up and break heads, and the fear of revolt never goes away. What has Italy gained by Austria's departure? A gain in name only. The reforms for which the war was fought have not come. The people's condition has not improved.

15.5 You surely do not intend to bring India to such a state. I believe your aim is to make India's millions happy, not to have you and me seize the power of government. If so, we must think of one thing only: how the people can become free.

You will admit that under some of the Indian princely states the people are crushed. The princes oppress them basely. Their tyranny is worse than that of the English. If you want that kind of tyranny in India, then you and I will never be on the same track.

15.7 My patriotism does not teach me to let the subjects of an Indian prince be crushed however he pleases. If I have the strength, I shall fight the tyranny of Indian princes as well as English tyranny.

By patriotism I mean the good of the country. If any Englishman says that India must be freed, that tyranny must be resisted and the people served, I shall welcome that Englishman as an Indian.

15.9 Then again, you do not seem to have considered the colossal task of India fighting once it gets arms, as Italy did. The English are well stocked with gunpowder. That does not frighten me. But it is clear that if we are to fight them with their own weapons, India will have to be armed. If that can be done at all, how many years will it take? And to arm every Indian would be

3 Victor Emmanuel II (1820–78), King of Piedmont-Sardinia and from 1861 first King of Italy.

to make India like Europe. If that happens, India will share Europe's sorry plight. In short, India would have to adopt European civilization. If that is how things are to go, the better course is to let those who are skilled in that civilization stay. We could fight them a little here and there, win some rights or not, and get through our days.

15.10 But the fact is that the people of India will never take up arms, and it is just as well that they do not.

FREEDOM THROUGH MURDER?

The Reader proposes assassination and guerrilla war; the Editor condemns murder, Dhingra's included.

READER 15.11 You go too far. Not everyone needs to be armed. First we shall commit a few murders and spread terror. Then the few who have been armed and made ready will fight in the open. At first two to two and a half million Indians may die. But in the end we shall win the country. We shall wage a guerrilla war, as outlaws do, and defeat the English.

EDITOR 15.12 You seem bent on making a land of demons out of India's holy soil. Why do you not shudder at the thought of freeing India by murder? If anyone is to be murdered, it should be ourselves. It is because we have become cowardly that we think of murder. Whom will you free by such deeds? The Indian people never want such a thing. Only people like us, who have drunk the bhang of a debased civilization, think such thoughts in our intoxication. Those who rule by murder will not make the people happy. Anyone who thinks that the murder Dhingra committed, or the murders committed in India, have done any good is making a great mistake. I count Dhingra a patriot, but his love was crazed. He sacrificed his body on the wrong path. In the end it can only do harm.[4]

4 Madanlal Dhingra, an Indian student, shot dead Sir William Curzon Wyllie, an official of the India Office, in London on 1 July 1909, and was hanged that August.

READER 15.13 But you must at least admit that these murders have frightened the English, and that what Lord Morley has given was given out of that fear.[5]

EDITOR 15.14 The English are a timid people as well as a brave one. I believe gunpowder has an immediate effect on them. It is possible that what Lord Morley has given was given out of fear. But what is obtained through fear lasts only as long as the fear lasts.

5 The Morley–Minto reforms of 1909 enlarged the legislative councils and gave Indians a limited elected share in them.

16. Brute Force

દારૂગોળો

Bombs and assassination cannot win swaraj: the means are to the end as the seed is to the tree.

READER 16.1 What is given out of fear lasts only as long as the fear lasts? Now that is a strange thing to say. What is given is given. How can that change?

EDITOR 16.2 Not so. The proclamation of 1857 was issued at the end of the revolt, to keep the people at peace. Once peace returned and people became trusting again, its meaning changed. If I refrain from stealing for fear of punishment, then when that fear is gone I shall want to steal again, and I shall steal. This is a very common experience; no one can deny it. We have assumed that people can be made to work by intimidation, and so we have gone on doing it.[1]

READER 16.3 Do you not see that what you are saying goes against you? You will have to admit that whatever the English gained, they gained by fighting. I remember you said that what they gained is worthless. That does not touch my argument. They set out to gain something worthless and they gained it. The point is that they achieved their aim. Why worry about what the means were? If our aim is good, why should we not achieve it by any means at all, even by fighting? When a thief breaks into my house, am I to stop and think about means? My duty is to drive him out, one way or another.

1 Queen Victoria's Proclamation of 1858, issued after the revolt of 1857, promised Indians equal treatment under the Crown.

16.4 You seem to admit that we have got nothing by petitioning and never will. Then why not take it by force? If need be, we shall keep the fear of that force alive for good. If a child puts its foot in the fire and we hold it back to save it, even you will see nothing wrong in that. One way or another, we have to get the job done.

EDITOR 16.5 You have argued well. It is the kind of argument that has fooled many people. I used to argue that way myself. But now my eyes have been opened and I can see my mistake. I shall try to show it to you.

First, take the idea that the English got what they got by fighting, so we should get it that way too. It is quite true that the English fought and that we can fight too. But then we can get only the same kind of thing they got. You will admit that we do not want that at all.

MEANS AND ENDS

The Editor argues that the means are the seed and the end the tree.

EDITOR 16.7 You believe there is no connection between the means and the end, the aim. That is a very great mistake. Through this mistake, men regarded as religious have committed terrible deeds. It is like planting a bitter-gourd vine and expecting jasmine flowers. To cross the sea, my means can only be a ship. If I plunge into the water with a cart, the cart and I both go to the bottom. "As the god, so the worship" is a saying well worth pondering. People have misread it and gone astray. The means are the seed, and the end, what is to be obtained, is the tree. The connection between the means and the end is as close as that between the seed and the tree. I cannot get the fruit of worshiping God by worshiping Satan. So to say, "We only want to worship God, never mind if the means is Satan," is sheer ignorance. As the deed, so the crossing. In 1833 the English fought and won additional voting rights. Did fighting teach them their duty? Their aim was to get rights, and they got them by fighting. True rights are the fruit of duty, and those they did not

get. The result is that everyone strives for rights and duty has gone to sleep. Where everyone talks of rights, who is to give to whom? I do not mean that they perform no duties at all. But they have not performed the duties that come with the rights they wanted. They did not make themselves fit for them. So their rights have become a yoke round their necks.[2] So what they have got is simply the result of their means. They used means suited to what they wanted.

16.8 If I want to snatch your watch from you, I shall certainly have to fight you for it. But if I want to buy your watch, I shall have to pay you. If I want it as a gift, I shall have to plead for it. Depending on the means I used to get the watch, it became stolen property, my own property, or a gift. Three means, three different results. Now how can you say that means do not matter?

Now take the example of driving out a thief. I do not agree with you that any means at all may be used to drive out a thief.

16.10 If my father comes to my house to steal, I shall use one means. I shall not use that same means if some acquaintance of mine comes to steal. And if a stranger comes, I shall use a third. You might even say I would use one means if he were white and another if he were Indian. If some puny boy comes to steal, I shall use a quite different means again. If he is my equal, something else again. And if he is an armed strongman, I shall lie quietly in bed. So between the father and the strongman, different means will be used. Even if it is my father, I think I shall lie quietly in bed, and if it is that armed strongman, I shall lie quietly in bed too. My father has strength, and the armed man has strength too. I shall give way to both kinds of strength and let my things go. My father's strength will move me to tears of pity. The strength of arms will rouse anger in me, and we shall become bitter enemies. What an awkward position! From these examples the two of us cannot settle on the means. I myself can see what to do about this thief. But that remedy might alarm

2 Gandhi apparently means the Reform Act of 1832, passed amid mass agitation and riots, which widened the vote in Britain.

you, so I shall not put it before you. Work it out for yourself. If you do not, you will have to adopt a different means every time. But you have seen at least this much: not just any means will serve to drive out a thief, and whatever means you adopt, the result will match it. It is certainly not your duty to drive out the thief by any means whatever.

16.11 Let us go a little further. That armed strongman has carried off your things. You remember it. You are angry. You want to punish the rascal, not for your own sake but for the public good. You gather some men. You march on his house. He gets wind of it and runs away. He gathers other robbers. He is enraged too. Now he has sent word that he will rob your house in broad daylight. You are strong and you are not afraid. You make your preparations. Meanwhile the robbers harass your neighbors. They complain to you. You say: "It is for you that I am doing all this. What I lost was nothing worth counting." The people say: "Before, he never robbed us at all. He started this when you started your war with him." You are trapped. You feel for the poor, and what they say is true. Now what? Let the robber go? That would cost you your honor, and everyone holds their honor dear. You tell the poor: "Never mind. Come, my wealth is yours. I shall give you arms and teach you to use them. Strike the scoundrels down; do not spare them." So the conflict grows. The robbers multiply. The people have rubbed their own eyes red. The outcome of taking revenge on the thief is that they have sold their sleep and bought sleeplessness. Where there was peace there is unrest. Before, people died when death came. Now every day is a day for dying. They were brave once and have become fearful. If you look patiently, you will see that this picture is not overdrawn. That is one means.

THE THIEF AND THE FORCE OF COMPASSION

Meeting a thief with compassion rather than force turns him into a friend.

EDITOR 16.12 Now let us examine the second means. You consider the thief ignorant, and you resolve to reason with him if ever you get the chance. You think: he too is a human being. How can you know why he stole? Your best course is to pluck out the very seed of thieving in him when the time comes. While you are thinking this over, our good gentleman comes back to steal. You do not get angry. You take pity on him. You feel that the man is sick. You leave the doors and windows open. You change where you sleep. You leave your valuables where they can easily be taken. The thief comes. He is bewildered; this is something new to him. He takes the goods all the same, but his mind is on a merry-go-round. He makes inquiries in the village and learns of your compassion. He repents and asks your forgiveness. He brings back your belongings. He gives up thieving and becomes your servant. You set him up in a trade. That is the second means.

16.13 You see that different means bring different results. I do not mean to prove from this that every thief will behave this way, or that everyone has compassion like yours. I only want to show that good results require good means. And that the force of compassion is mightier than the force of arms, if not always, then in most cases. In arms there is harm. In compassion there never is.

PETITIONS AND THE FORCE BEHIND THEM

A petition backed by refusal to cooperate, not by threats, carries soul-force.

EDITOR 16.14 Now take petitions. A petition with no force behind it is useless; there is no doubt about that. Yet the late Justice Ranade used to say that petitions are a means of educating the people. Through them the people can be made aware of their

condition, and the rulers can be warned. Seen this way, a petition is not useless. When an equal petitions, it will be counted a sign of his courtesy. When a slave petitions, it is a sign of his slavery. A petition with force behind it is an equal's petition, and if he chooses to make his demand in the form of a petition, that shows his nobility.[3]

16.15 Two kinds of force can stand behind a petition. One says: "If you do not give, we shall strike you." That is the force of gunpowder, and we have seen its evil results. The other force says: "If you do not give, we shall not remain your petitioners. As long as we are petitioners, you remain the king. We shall not play along with you any more." Call this force the force of compassion, call it soul-force, or call it *satyagraha*. This force cannot be destroyed, and whoever uses it understands his own position correctly. Our elders summed it up in the saying "one 'no' cures thirty-six ills." Against one who has this force, the force of arms simply cannot work.[4]

16.16 Examine the example of holding back a child who puts its foot in the fire, and you will lose your case. What do you do to the child? Suppose the child could summon such strength against you that it struck you down and went into the fire, and nothing would stop it. Then you would have this choice. Either you take its life to keep it from the fire, or, since you cannot bear to see it go into the fire, you give your life for it. You will not take the child's life. And if your compassion is not complete, you may well not give your own. Then you will helplessly let the child go into the fire. So you do not use force of arms on the child. If you can hold the child back some other way, well and good. But do not imagine that this is force of arms. That force is of a quite different kind, and that is what remains to be understood.

16.17 Again, in stopping the child you think only of the child's own good. You restrain the one you restrain for his own sake.

3 Mahadev Govind Ranade (1842–1901), judge of the Bombay High Court, social reformer and an early leader of the Indian National Congress.

4 *Satyagraha*: "truth-force", literally "holding fast to truth", the word Gandhi coined in South Africa (1906–08) for resistance through self-suffering.

This example does not apply to the English at all. In wanting to use force of arms against the English, you think of your own good, that is, the nation's. There is not a trace of compassion in it. You may say that the base deeds of the English are the fire, that they go into it out of ignorance, and that you want, out of compassion, to save the ignorant one, the child. Then to try that experiment you will have to go wherever anyone is doing base deeds. And wherever you go, instead of taking the other's life, the child's, you will have to offer up your own. If you mean to attempt that much, you are free to do so. The thing is impossible.

17. Satyagraha: Soul-Force

સત્યાગ્રહ–આત્મબળ

History records only the world's uproar; the force of compassion, soul-force, is what keeps the world alive.

READER 17.1 Is there any historical evidence for this *satyagraha*, or soul-force, you talk about? Not a single nation has ever been seen to rise by such force. The conviction remains that the wicked will never behave without violence.

EDITOR 17.2 The poet Tulsidas has sung:

"Daya dharam ko mul hai, deh mul abhiman; / Tulsi daya na chhodiye, jab lag ghat mein pran." [Compassion is the root of religion, and pride the root of the body; Tulsi, do not give up compassion as long as there is breath in you.]

To me these lines are like the word of scripture. I trust them as surely as I trust that two and two make four. The force of compassion is soul-force; it is *satyagraha*. And evidence of this force is to be seen at every step. Without it the earth would long since have sunk to the depths.

But you want historical evidence. So let us see what we call history.[1]

17.6 The literal meaning of *itihasa* is "thus it happened." Take that meaning, and I can give you plenty of evidence for *satyagraha*. But *itihasa* also translates an English word that means the chronicle of kings, and in that sense there can be no evidence for *satyagraha*. If you look for silver in a tin mine, how will you find it? In "history" you will find only the story of the

1 A couplet (doha) traditionally attributed to Tulsidas.

world's uproar. That is why the white people have a saying that a nation which has no "history" (uproar) is happy. How kings played their games, how they murdered, how they made enemies: all that is found in "history". If that were history, if that were all that had happened, the world would have sunk long ago. If the story of the world had begun with war, not a single person would be alive today. That is just what has become of the peoples who have fallen victim to war. The Aboriginal people of Australia have been all but wiped out. The whites of Australia have let hardly any of them live. Those who have been uprooted were not *satyagrahis*. Those who live long enough will see the whites of Australia meet the same fate. "They that take the sword shall perish by the sword." We too have a saying: "The swimmer's death is in the water."[2]

17.7 The fact that there are still so many people in the world shows that the world rests not on force of arms but on truth, compassion, or soul-force. So the greatest historical evidence of all is that the world has survived in spite of the turmoil of war. It is held up by some force other than the force of war.

17.8 Thousands, indeed millions, of people live their lives bound by love. The quarrels of tens of millions of families dissolve in love. "History" does not record that hundreds of nations live in harmony, and it could not record it. Only when this stream of compassion, love or truth is blocked, when it breaks its banks, does it get into the chronicles. Two brothers in a family quarreled. One of them used *satyagraha* against the other, and the two brothers went back to living in harmony. Who records that? Suppose that, with the help of lawyers or for some such reason, the enmity between them had grown, and they had fought with weapons or in the courts (a court is a kind of weapon too, a form of bodily force). Then their names would have got into the papers, the neighbors would have known, and perhaps it would have been recorded in history. What is true of families, of communities and of associations is true of nations as

2 "They that take the sword shall perish with the sword": Jesus' words in Matthew 26:52.

well. There is no reason at all to suppose there is one law for families and another for nations. "History" records what is unnatural. *Satyagraha* is natural, so there is no call to record it.

READER [17.9] From what you say, I gather that examples of *satyagraha* simply cannot get into history. This *satyagraha* needs to be understood better. It would help if you explained more clearly what you mean.

WHAT PASSIVE RESISTANCE IS

Satyagraha means refusing to obey an unjust law and accepting the punishment.

EDITOR [17.10] In English, *satyagraha*, or soul-force, is called "passive resistance". The term has been applied to the method by which people have won their rights by suffering themselves. Its aim is the opposite of the force of war. When I disapprove of something and do not do it, I am using *satyagraha*, or soul-force.

[17.11] For example, the government passes a law that applies to me. I do not like it. If I then attack the government and force it to repeal the law, I have used bodily force. If I simply refuse to accept the law and take the punishment that follows, I have used soul-force, or *satyagraha*. In *satyagraha* I sacrifice myself.

[17.12] Everyone will say that sacrificing oneself is better than sacrificing others. Moreover, when one fights by *satyagraha* and the cause is wrong, only the one who fights suffers. He bears the punishment for his own mistake. There have been many cases of people resisting by mistake. No one can say flatly that a given act is bad. But when it seems bad to him, then for him it is bad. If so, he should not do it, and should suffer for refusing. This is the key to *satyagraha*.

READER [17.13] So you set yourself against the law! That would be called disloyalty. We have always been regarded as a law-abiding nation. You seem to go even beyond the Extremists. The Extremists say that laws once made must be obeyed, but since the laws are bad, strike down the lawmakers and throw them out.

EDITOR 17.14 Whether I go beyond them or stay behind need not concern you or me. We want to find out what is good and act on it.

The true meaning of our being a law-abiding nation is that we are a nation of *satyagrahis*. When we do not like laws, we do not break the lawmakers' heads. We fast to have the laws repealed.

17.16 The idea that we accept laws good or bad is a recent one. In the old days there was nothing of the kind. People broke whatever laws they chose and took the punishment.

The teaching that we should obey laws even when we disapprove of them is contrary to courage, contrary to religion, and the very height of slavery.

17.18 The government may tell us to strip naked and dance before it. Shall we dance, then? If I were a *satyagrahi*, I would tell the government: "Keep that law in your own house. I am not going to strip naked before you, and I am not going to dance." Yet we have so far abandoned *satyagraha* that at the government's high-handed orders we do things more degrading than stripping naked and dancing.

17.19 A man who keeps his humanity, who fears God, will fear no one else. Laws made by others do not bind him. Even the government, poor thing, does not say, "You must do this." It too says, "If you do not do this, you will be punished." In our degraded state we assume that "doing this" is our duty, our religion.

17.20 Once people learn that it is cowardice to obey a law they think unjust, no one's tyranny can touch them. That is the key to *swaraj*.

17.21 The idea that the few must accept what the many say is a godless notion. It is a superstition. Thousands of cases can be found where what the many said was wrong and what the few said was right. All reforms have been brought in by a few people standing against the many. In a village of swindlers, the many will say that everyone must learn the art of swindling. Will the one holy man among them become a swindler too? No, no. Until the superstition that unjust laws must be obeyed is gone, our

slavery will not go. And only a *satyagrahi* can dispel that superstition.

17.22 Using bodily force, resorting to gunpowder, violates the principle I have just stated. It means we want to make the other person do what we like. If that is right, then the other person is entitled to fire gunpowder at us to make us do what he says. That way we shall never reach port. Like the oil-presser's blindfolded bullock, we may suppose we are going forward, if we like. But in truth, like that bullock, we keep going round the same circle. Those who believe that no one is bound to obey laws he disapproves of must regard *satyagraha* as the only true means. Otherwise the results will be terrible.

READER 17.23 From what you say, I gather that *satyagraha* is quite useful to the weak. Once they become strong, of course, they will fire cannon.

EDITOR 17.24 Now that is very ignorant talk. *Satyagraha* is supreme. It achieves more than the force of cannon. How then can it be called the weapon of the weak? The man who relies on cannon cannot possibly have the courage and valor *satyagraha* demands. Do you think a spineless man can break a law he disapproves of? The Extremists rely on cannon-force. That is why they talk of obeying the law. I do not blame them; they can say nothing else. When they have killed off the English and rule themselves, they will want you and me to obey the law. That fits their standard. But the *satyagrahi* will say that he will not accept a law he does not approve of, even if they tie him to the mouth of a cannon![3]

17.25 What do you think? Does it take courage to fire a cannon and kill hundreds, or to be tied smiling to the mouth of a cannon? Who is the true warrior: the man who goes about with death on his head, or the man who holds the death of others in his hands?

3 Rebels of 1857 were executed by being tied to the mouth of a cannon and blown away.

Take it as certain that a coward cannot remain a *satyagrahi* for a single moment.

17.27 Yes, this much is true: even someone frail in body can become a *satyagrahi*. One person can, and so can millions. A man can, and so can a woman. No armies need to be raised, and no one needs to be taught wrestling. Once a person has mastered their own mind, they can roar like the lion, king of the forest, and at that roar the hearts of those who have set themselves up as enemies are torn apart.

17.28 *Satyagraha* is a sword with an edge on every side. It can be used however you choose. Both the one who wields it and the one it is used on are the happier for it. It draws no blood, yet it can bring results weightier even than bloodshed. It cannot rust. No one can carry it off. If a *satyagrahi* enters a contest, he never tires. The *satyagrahi*'s sword needs no scabbard. No one can snatch it from him. And yet if you count *satyagraha* a weapon of the weak, that is nothing but a topsy-turvy state of affairs.

THE PEASANTS AND THE SWORD

India's millions of peasants have always used satyagraha against their rulers' tyranny.

READER 17.29 You said it is India's special weapon. Then has the force of cannon never prevailed in India?

EDITOR 17.30 For you, India means its princes, no bigger than a cupped handful. For me, India is its tens of millions of peasants, on whom the princes and all of us depend for our living.

17.31 Princes will use weapons, of course. That is the way they have come to be. They want to give orders. But those who carry out orders have no need of cannon-force. Most of the world is made up of those who carry out orders. They must be taught either cannon-force or soul-force. Where they learn cannon-force, ruler and ruled alike become something like madmen. Where those who obey have learned *satyagraha,* the ruler's tyranny has not reached beyond the three yards of his sword, and those who obey have paid no heed to unjust orders. The

peasants have never bowed to anyone's sword, and they never will. They do not know how to use the sword, and they are not afraid of anyone else's. They are a great people who always lie down to sleep with death for a pillow. They have given up the fear of death, and so they have given up every fear. I admit I am painting a somewhat exaggerated picture. But for those of us who have been dazzled by the power of the sword, the picture is not exaggerated.

17.32 The fact is that the peasants, the people at large, have used *satyagraha* both in their own affairs and in the affairs of government. When the ruler is tyrannical, the subjects take offense and withdraw: that is *satyagraha*.

I remember that in one princely state the subjects did not like a certain order, so they began to leave their villages. The prince took fright, apologized to his subjects and withdrew the order. Many such examples can be found, but chiefly they are the crop of India's soil. Where there are such subjects, there is *swaraj*. *Swaraj* without that is misrule.

READER 17.34 Then you will tell us that we need not train our bodies at all.

EDITOR 17.35 Where did you get that idea? Without toughening the body it is hard to become a *satyagrahi*. As a rule, the mind that lives in a body pampered into weakness is weak too. And where there is no strength of mind, how can there be soul-force? We shall certainly have to make our bodies fit by getting rid of the bad customs of child marriage and the like, and of soft, coddled living. If I told some feeble weakling to step suddenly before the mouth of a cannon, I would only make myself a laughing-stock.

READER 17.36 From what you say, it seems once again that becoming a *satyagrahi* is no small matter. And if so, you need to explain how one becomes one.

WHAT A SATYAGRAHI NEEDS

The satyagrahi must practice chastity, accept poverty, hold to truth and be fearless.

EDITOR 17.37 Becoming a *satyagrahi* is easy. But it is as hard as it is easy. I have known a fourteen-year-old boy become a *satyagrahi*. I have seen a sick man become one too. And I have also seen men strong in body and comfortable in every other way who could not.

Experience shows me that whoever wants to become a *satyagrahi* for the good of the country must observe *brahmacharya* and take up poverty. He must, of course, follow truth, and he must become fearless.[4]

17.39 *Brahmacharya* is a great vow, and without it the mind's knot will never be tied fast. Without *brahmacharya* a man loses his vigor and becomes spineless and abject. One whose mind wanders among sensual pleasures will get nowhere. Countless examples can show this. Then the question arises: what is a married man to do? But there is no need for the question to arise. No one can claim that a married man's union with his wife is not sensual indulgence. Union with one's own wife has been sanctioned only for the sake of having children. A *satyagrahi* ought to have no desire to beget children. So he can observe *brahmacharya* even though he is married. This is not a thing to write about more plainly. What does the wife think? How is all this to be done? Such questions arise. Still, whoever wants to take part in a great work has no choice but to settle this question.

17.40 Just as *brahmacharya* is needed, so is taking up poverty. Greed for money and the practice of *satyagraha* cannot go together. I do not mean here that whoever has money must throw it away. But one must be indifferent to money. If one's money goes in the practice of *satyagraha*, one should not worry about it.

17.41 How can someone who does not follow truth show the power of truth? So truth will be needed in full measure. However much loss it may bring, truth cannot be given up. Truth has nothing to hide. So a *satyagrahi* can have no secret army. In this connection, do not let such questions as whether to lie to save one's life even enter your mind. Only someone who wants to defend lying raises such questions, and to no purpose. One who means to take the path of truth alone never meets such moral dilemmas. And even if he does land in a tight spot of that kind, the truthful man comes through.

17.42 Without fearlessness the *satyagrahi*'s cart cannot move a single step. Fearlessness will be needed in every way and about everything. Only when one has no fear for one's property, for false honor, for one's relatives, for the government, for wounds or for death can one practice *satyagraha*.

We are not to give all this up because we think it difficult. Nature has put into every human being the strength to bear whatever falls on him. These qualities are worth cultivating even for someone who has no wish to serve the country.

17.44 Besides, it is easy to see that whoever wants to acquire the force of arms will need these very things. Becoming a hero of the battlefield is not something anyone gets the moment he wishes it. The warrior will have to observe *brahmacharya* and become a beggar. A man without fearlessness on the battlefield —that is the end of his fighting. Some may perhaps think he does not need the vow of truth so much; but where there is fearlessness, truthfulness naturally lives too. When a man gives up truth, it is only out of fear of some kind that he does so.

17.45 So there is no reason to be frightened of these four qualities. Moreover, the swordsman has to make many other useless efforts that the *satyagrahi* is spared. The reason the swordsman must make all those other efforts is fear. If he became entirely fearless, his sword would drop from his hand that very moment. He would no longer need that prop. Who has no enmity has no sword. When a man came face to face with a lion, his stick rose

4 *Brahmacharya*: chastity, self-restraint in sexual life.

of its own accord. He saw that he had only learned his lesson in fearlessness by heart. That day he let go of his stick and became fearless.

18. Education

કેળવણી

Literacy alone is not education; English education has enslaved us; character comes first, and the mother tongue.

READER 18.1 In all you have said, you have nowhere shown any need for education. We are always complaining about the lack of education. We see a movement for compulsory education all over India. The Maharaja Gaekwad has introduced compulsory education. Everyone's eyes have been drawn to it. We congratulate him. Is all this effort to be thought useless?[1]

EDITOR 18.2 If we believe our own civilization to be the best, I must say with regret that the effort is largely useless. The Maharaja and our other leading figures are striving to give education to all. Their intention is pure, and so they deserve only praise. But we cannot cover up the result that their intention is likely to bring.

18.3 What is education? If it means only knowledge of letters, then it is a tool. It can be put to good use, and it can be misused. With one instrument you can operate on a patient and cure him; the same instrument can be used to take a life. So it is with literacy: we see that people misuse it too. Comparatively few make good use of it. If this is right, it follows that literacy has done the world more harm than good.

18.4 The ordinary meaning of education is simply literacy. Teaching people to read, write and do sums is called elementary

1 Sayajirao Gaekwad III (r. 1875–1939), ruler of Baroda, made primary education compulsory, first in one district (1893) and then throughout his state (1906).

or primary education. A peasant earns his bread by farming honestly. He has an ordinary knowledge of the world. He knows well enough how to behave toward his parents, how to treat his children, how to conduct himself in the village where he lives. He understands the rules of morality and keeps them. But he cannot sign his name. What do you mean to do by giving this man literacy? What will you add to his happiness? Do you want to make him discontented with his hut or his lot? Even if you want that, you need not give him literacy to do it. Weighed down by the prestige of the West, we have run off with the idea that the people must be educated. But we do not think it through.

18.5 Now take higher education. I learned geography, I learned astronomy, I mastered algebra, I acquired geometry, I polished off geology. So what? What credit have I brought myself by it? What light have I brought to those around me? Why did I acquire that knowledge? What good did it do me? An English scholar, Huxley, has said this about education: "That man has had a true education whose body has been so trained that it stays under his control, and does the work given it with ease and readiness. That man has had a true education whose intellect is pure, calm and fair-seeing. That man has received a true education whose mind is filled with the laws of Nature and whose senses are under his command.[2] Whose inner feelings are pure, who loathes base deeds and regards others as his equals—such a man may be counted truly educated, for he lives by the laws of Nature. Nature will make good use of him, and he will make good use of Nature." If this is true education, I must declare on oath that I have not had to use the sciences I listed above in mastering my body or my senses. So take primary education or take higher education: it is no use in the main thing. It does not make us human beings—it does not teach us our duty.

2 Thomas Henry Huxley (1825–95), English biologist; the passage paraphrases his lecture "A Liberal Education" (1868).

READER [18.6] If that is so, I must ask you a question. What enables you to say all this? If you had not had literacy and higher education, how could you have explained it?

EDITOR [18.7] That is a fair blow, but my answer is straightforward. I do not believe that I would have been useless if I had had no education, higher or lower. Now I want to be useful by speaking. In doing so I put what I have learned to work; and its use, if it is any use, I cannot give to my tens of millions of brothers, only to educated people like you. That too supports my view. You and I were both caught in the clutches of a false education. I believe I have freed myself from it. Now I am passing that experience on to you, and in doing so I use the education I received to show you its rot.

[18.8] Besides, you were wrong to strike at me, because I have not condemned literacy in every situation. I have only shown that we must not make an idol of that knowledge. It is not our wish-granting cow. In its own place it can be an ornament. And that place is this: when you and I have mastered our senses, when we have laid a firm foundation of morality, then, if we want literacy, we can acquire it and put it to good use. As an ornament it may well look fine. But if that is the use of literacy, there is no longer any need to make such education compulsory. Our old schools are enough. They put moral education first. That is primary education. Whatever we build on it will stand.

ENGLISH EDUCATION AND SWARAJ

English education has enslaved India; it should be used only where truly needed.

READER [18.9] Then you do not consider English education of any use for *swaraj*. Have I understood you rightly?

EDITOR [18.10] My answer is yes and no. To give English education to tens of millions is to put them into slavery. The foundation of education that Macaulay laid was, in truth, the foundation of slavery. I do not suggest that he drafted his minute with that in

mind. But that is exactly the result his work has had. How pitiful it is that we talk of *swaraj* in a foreign tongue!

18.11 It is worth noticing that an education the English have discarded becomes our adornment. Their own scholars keep saying that this is not good and that is not good. The standards of education keep changing. We, in our ignorance, cling even to what they have all but forgotten. Among them, each people works to develop its own language. Wales is a province of England. Its language was counted worthless as dust. Now it is being revived.

18.12 There is an effort to have Welsh children speak Welsh. England's Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lloyd George, takes a leading part in it. And what is our state? We write to one another in faulty English. Even the ordinary M.A. is not free of such defective English. The vehicle for our very best thoughts is English; our Congress is conducted in English; our best newspapers are in English. If this goes on for long, I believe that the generations after us will despise us, and their curse will fall on our souls.[3]

18.13 You should understand that by taking English education we have enslaved the nation. English education has increased hypocrisy, passion, oppression and the like. Those who learned English have spared no effort in cheating the people and tormenting them. If we now do anything at all for the people, we are only paying back a fraction of the debt we have run up.

18.14 Is it a small tyranny that if I want justice in my own country I must use the English language! That when I become a barrister I may not speak my own language! That someone else must translate for me! Is that a small hypocrisy! If this is not the height of slavery, what is? Am I to blame the English for it, or myself? It is we who know English who have enslaved India. The people's curse will not fall on the English; it will fall on us.

18.15 But I told you my answer was yes and no. I have explained why it is yes.

3 David Lloyd George (1863–1945), Welsh Liberal politician, Chancellor of the Exchequer 1908–15.

18.16 Now I will tell you why it is no. We are so beset by the disease that we can no longer do entirely without English education. Those who have had it should put it to good use. Let them use it where they find it necessary: in dealing with the English; with other Indians whose language we do not understand; and to learn how sick the English themselves are becoming of their own civilization. Those who have learned English should first teach their children morality, teach them their own language, and teach them one other Indian language. When the children reach maturity, let them take English education if they like—and then only with the aim of rooting it out, not with the aim of making money from it. Even then we shall have to consider what to learn in English and what not to learn. We shall have to consider which sciences to study. A little thought will show that if we stop taking English degrees and the like, our English rulers will sit up with a start.

WHAT EDUCATION INDIA NEEDS

Moral education first, Indian languages, and Hindi as the common language of India.

READER 18.17 Then what kind of education should we give?

EDITOR 18.18 Part of the answer has already come above. Still, let us think further. I feel we ought to make all our languages shine. This is not the place to go into what receiving our education in our own languages would mean. We shall have to translate the English books that are useful. We should give up the empty pretense of, and the superstition about, learning a great many sciences. Religious education, or moral education, must come first. Every educated Indian should know his own language; a Hindu should know Sanskrit, a Muslim Arabic, a Parsi Persian, and everyone Hindi. Some Hindus should learn Arabic, and some Muslims and Parsis Sanskrit. Indians of northern and western India should learn Tamil. What all India needs is Hindi. One should be free to write it in either the Urdu or the Nagari script. So that Hindus and Muslims stay on good terms, many Indians

need to learn both scripts. Once that happens, we shall be able to drive English out of our dealings with one another.

18.19 And who is all this for? It is for us who have become slaves. Through our slavery the nation has been enslaved. If we are free, the nation is free already.

READER 18.20 What you said about religious education is a tall order.

EDITOR 18.21 Yet there is no way round it. India will never become atheist. Atheism is a crop India's soil does not take to. The task is hard. The very thought of religious education makes one's head spin. Religious teachers are seen to be hypocritical and selfish. We shall have to appeal to them. The key lies in the hands of the mullah, the Parsi dastur and the Brahmin. But if they do not come to their senses, we can use the zeal that English education has given us to give the people moral education. This is not very difficult. It is only the shore of the Indian sea that has been soiled. Those of us who have been smeared with that dirt need to be cleaned, and for the most part we can clean ourselves on our own. My criticism is not meant for the tens of millions. To bring India back to its true course, we ourselves must come back to it. As for the tens of millions, they are on the true course already. Reforms, lapses and additions will keep coming among them in the course of time. The one effort we must make is to drive out Western civilization. The rest will follow of itself.

19. Machinery

સંચાકામ

Machinery has impoverished India and is the chief symbol of modern civilization: a great sin.

READER 19.1 When you talk of driving out Western civilization, then you will surely also say that we want no machinery of any kind.

EDITOR 19.2 By asking this you have reopened a wound I once received. When I read Mr. Romesh Chunder Dutt's book *The Economic History of India*, I felt it. When I think of it again, my heart grows full. It was when machinery struck its blow that India was ruined. There is no measuring the harm Manchester has done us. That India's handicrafts have all but vanished is Manchester's work alone.[1]

19.4 But I am wrong. How can Manchester be blamed? It was because we wore its cloth that Manchester wove it. When I read the account of Bengal's courage, I was delighted. Bengal has no cloth mills, so the people took up their old occupation again. Bengal does right to encourage the Bombay mills; but if Bengal had shunned all machinery as untouchable (a boycott), that would have been better still.

1 Romesh Chunder Dutt (1848–1909), Bengali civil servant and historian, whose *Economic History of India* (1902–04) indicted British economic policy. Manchester was the center of the Lancashire cotton industry.

Machinery has begun to lay Europe waste, and its wind is blowing in India. Machinery is the chief sign of modern civilization, and I can see plainly that it is a great sin.[2]

19.6 The workers in the Bombay mills have become slaves. Anyone would shudder to see the condition of the women who work in them. Before the rain of mills fell, those women were not starving. If this wind of machinery grows, India will be in a very wretched state. What I say may seem exaggerated, but I must say that rather than build mills in India, it would be better to go on sending money to Manchester and using its rotten cloth; for if we use its cloth, only our money goes. If we set up a Manchester in India, our money will stay in India, but that money will take our blood, because it will take away our morality. Ask those who work in the mills what their morality is like. Those of them who have amassed money are not likely to be any better morally than other rich men. To think that an Indian Rockefeller would be any less a Rockefeller than an American one is sheer ignorance. Poor India can win its freedom, but an India grown rich through immorality never will.[3]

19.7 I feel we shall have to admit that it is the moneyed men who keep English rule going. Their self-interest lies in things staying as they are. Money makes a man helpless. The one other thing like it in the world is sensual pleasure. Both these objects of desire are full of poison. Their sting is worse than a snake's. When a snake bites, it takes the body and is done. When money or lust bites, it takes body, life, mind, everything, and even then there is no escape. So there is no particular cause for rejoicing that mills are being built in our country.

READER 19.8 Then should the mills be shut down?

EDITOR 19.9 That is hard. To remove a thing once established is a heavy task. That is why not starting a thing at all has been counted the first wisdom. We cannot look on the mill-owners with

2 The *swadeshi* and boycott movement that followed the Partition of Bengal (1905), when Bengalis renounced foreign cloth.

3 John D. Rockefeller (1839–1937), American oil magnate, then the world's richest man.

contempt. Let us pity them. They cannot give up their mills all at once, but we can plead with them not to expand their ventures. If they want to do good, they themselves can gradually cut back their business. They themselves can set up the old, time-honored, holy spinning-wheel in people's homes, and buy and sell the cloth the people weave.

19.10 Even if they do not, the people themselves can stop using machine-made goods.

READER 19.11 That is cloth. But there are countless machine-made things. Either we must get them from abroad, or we must bring in such machines ourselves.

EDITOR 19.12 Indeed, even our gods come to us shaped by machines in Germany. So why speak of matches or pins, let alone glass chandeliers? My answer is just one. What did India do before all these things were made by machine? It will do the same today. Until we make pins by hand, we shall do without pins. We shall put away the lamps and chandeliers. We shall pour oil into clay lamps and twist wicks from cotton grown in our own fields. That way we shall save our eyes, save our money, stay *swadeshi* and become *swadeshi*, and keep the sacred fire of *swaraj* burning.

19.13 Not that everyone will do all this at once, or that some people will give up all machine-made things at once. That will not happen. But if the idea is right, we shall always keep searching, always keep dropping one thing after another, little by little; and as we do, others will do it too. First the idea needs to take hold; then the action will follow. First one man will do it; then ten; then a hundred. So it will keep growing, as in the tale of the coconut. What the great do, the small do and will do. If we understand it, the game is very short and simple. You and I need not wait until others do it. As soon as we understand, we must start at once. Whoever does not will be the loser. Whoever understands and still does not will simply be counted a hypocrite.

READER 19.14 And what about tramcars and electric light?

EDITOR [19.15] You have asked that question too late. There is no life left in it now. If the railways have destroyed us, will the trams do any less? Machinery is a snake's nest. In it there is not one snake but hundreds, one after another. Where there are machines, there are big cities. Where there are big cities, there are tramcars and railways. Only there is electric light needed. You probably know that even in England the villages have no electric light or trams. Honest physicians, Indian and Western, will tell you that wherever railways, tramcars and such conveniences have multiplied, people's health has suffered. I remember that in one city, when money grew scarce, the earnings of the trams, the lawyers and the doctors fell, and the people grew healthier.

[19.16] I cannot recall a single merit of machinery; I could fill a whole ledger with its faults.

READER [19.17] All this that has been written will be printed with the help of machinery and distributed with its help. Is that a merit of machinery or a fault?

EDITOR [19.18] This is a case of poison destroying poison. It is no merit of machinery. Machinery, as it is dying, says as it goes: listen and beware—you will get no good from me. And even the little useful effort that machinery can be said to have made holds good only for those already caught in its net.

[19.19] But do not forget the main point. Get it firmly into your head that machinery is a bad thing. Then we shall gradually cut it out. Nature has made no easy road on which whatever we desire is ours the moment we desire it. If we look on machinery with a poisoned eye instead of a fond one, it will go in the end.

20. Conclusion

છુટકારો

What the English should be told, and what each Indian who wants swaraj must do, beginning now.

READER [20.1] From your views I see that you want to found a third party. You are neither an Extremist nor a Moderate.

EDITOR [20.2] That is a mistake. I have no thought of a third party. Not everyone thinks alike. You must not suppose that the Moderates all hold one and the same view. What parties can there be for one who only wants to do his service? I would serve the Moderates, and the Extremists too. Where my opinion differs from theirs, I would tell them so politely and go on with my work.

READER [20.3] Then if you had something to say to both, what would you say?

EDITOR [20.4] I would say to the Extremists: your aim is to win *swaraj* for India. *Swaraj* is not something you can win for others. Each must take it—make it—for himself. What others win for us is not self-government but foreign rule. So if you think that by driving out the English you have won *swaraj*, you are wrong. The true *swaraj* you are asking for must be what I described earlier. You will never win it with gunpowder. Gunpowder is not a thing that suits India. So rely on *satyagraha* alone. Do not even harbor the superstition that we need gunpowder to win *swaraj*.

[20.5] I would say to the Moderates: wanting merely to petition is a degradation. In it we admit our own inferiority. To say that we need the English connection is as good as making ourselves thieves in the sight of God. We ought not to say that we need

anyone but God. Moreover, even on ordinary reflection, to say that for now we simply cannot do without the English is to make the English proud.

20.6 We need not suppose that if the English pack their bundles and leave, India will be widowed. It is possible that those who have been kept down by pressure will then fight. There is no good in pressing down a boil full of pus. It must burst. So if we are fated to fight among ourselves, we shall fight and die. No one else need step in on the pretext of protecting the weak. That is exactly what has ruined us. To protect the weak in that way is to make them weaker still. The Moderates should think this through properly. Without it there can be no *swaraj*. I would remind them of the words of an English clergyman: "The disorder we may have under self-government is worth bearing; but the tidiness of foreign rule is poverty." Only, that clergyman's *swaraj* and India's *swaraj* mean different things. We want no one's tyranny or pressure, white or Indian; all of us must learn to swim, and teach others to swim.

20.7 If that happens, the Extremists and the Moderates will come together—can come together—must come together; there is no need for them to fear or distrust each other.

WHAT TO SAY TO THE ENGLISH

The Editor tells the English they may stay only as servants of India, on India's terms.

READER 20.8 That much you would say to the two parties. What will you say to the English?

EDITOR 20.9 I would tell them politely: you are indeed my rulers. Whether you rule by your sword or by my consent is a question I need not discuss. Nor do I resent your living in my country. But though you are rulers, you will have to live as servants. It will not be for us to do as you say, but for you to do as we say. Until now the wealth you have taken out of this country has agreed with you. From now on, if you go on doing so, it will not go well with you. If you wish to serve as India's soldiers, you may stay.

You must give up the lure of trade with us. The civilization you champion we know to be uncivilization. We hold our civilization to be far superior to yours. If you come to see it so, it is to your advantage. Even if you do not see it so, then, by your own proverb, you must live in our country as natives of it. Nothing you do should stand in the way of our religion. It is your duty, as rulers, to give up eating beef out of respect for the Hindus, and to give up eating the animal they abhor out of respect for the Muslims. We were held down, so we could not speak; but you must not think our feelings were not hurt. We could not tell you, out of self-interest or some other fear, but now it is our duty to tell you. We believe the schools and courts you have set up are of no use. In their place we shall want our own old courts and schools.

20.10 The language of India is not English but Hindi. You will have to learn it, and we for our part shall deal with you in our own language only.

20.11 We cannot bear to see you spend endless money on railways and soldiers; we see no need for them. You may be afraid of Russia; we are not. When she comes, we shall deal with her; if you are here, we shall deal with her together. We want no English or European cloth. We shall make do with what is produced in this country. You cannot keep one eye on Manchester and the other on us. We can go together when you act as though your interest and ours are one.

20.12 I have not said this to you rudely. You have the force of arms and a mighty navy. We cannot fight you with the same kind of force. But if you will not accept what I have said, we will not play with you. If you please, and if you can, cut us down; if you please, blow us from the mouths of cannon. We will not help you do what we do not like, and without our help you cannot take a single step.

20.13 You may well laugh this off, drunk with your power. Perhaps we cannot show you right away that your laughter is hollow; but if we have any mettle, you will see that your intoxica-

tion is useless and that your laughter was the sign of a mind turned against itself.

We believe that at heart you belong to a religious people. We ourselves live in the very home of religion. It is idle to ask how you and we came together. But we can both make good use of our relationship.

20.15 You English who come to India are not true samples of the English people. Nor can we half-anglicized Indians be called true samples of the Indian people. If the English people understood everything, they would oppose what you are doing. The Indian people have had very little to do with you. If you give up your civilization, which is uncivilization, and search your own religion, you will see that our demand is just. Only so can you live in India. If you live here so, we shall learn the little we have to learn from you, and you will learn the great deal you have to learn from us. In doing so we shall benefit ourselves and benefit the world. But that can happen only when the root of our relationship is planted in the field of religion.

READER 20.16 What will you say to the nation?

EDITOR 20.17 And who is the nation?

READER 20.18 For now, the nation in the sense you have been using the word: those who have been tainted by European civilization, who are raising the cry of *swaraj*.

EDITOR 20.19 To this nation I would say: only the Indian who has the true intoxication in him will be able to speak to the English as I have done, and will not be cowed by their authority.

The true intoxication comes only to one who believes, with full understanding, that Indian civilization is supreme and European civilization a three days' show. Many such civilizations have come and been trampled into the dust; many more will come and be trampled.

The true intoxication will stay only with the Indian who is utterly sick of our present pitiable state and who has already drunk the cup of poison.

WHO HAS THE STRENGTH TO TAKE SWARAJ

A numbered list of what lawyers, doctors, the rich and all Indians must do.

EDITOR [20.22] If there is even one such Indian, he will speak to the English as above, and the English will have to listen.

What I have set out above is not a demand; it shows the state of mind of the Indian. It will not be had by asking; it will be had by taking. It will take strength to take it. And that strength will belong only to one who—

(1) uses English only when there is no other way.

(2) being a lawyer, gives up his practice, takes up the spinning-wheel at home and makes his own cloth.

(3) being a lawyer, spends his knowledge only in explaining things to the people and opening the eyes of the English.

[20.27] (4) being a lawyer, does not meddle in the quarrels of plaintiffs and defendants, but abandons the courts and, from his own experience, persuades the people to leave them.

(5) being a lawyer, gives up the bench just as he gives up the bar.

(6) being a doctor, abandons his profession and understands that, rather than rummaging in people's hides, he should probe their souls, purify them and so make them whole.

[20.30] (7) being a doctor, understands that, whatever his religion, it is better for the body to stay ill than to be cured through the cruelty practiced on living creatures in the English medical schools.

[20.31] (8) though a doctor, takes up the spinning-wheel himself, shows the sick the cause of their illness and tells them to remove it, but does not coddle them with useless medicines. He will understand that if, for want of useless medicine, the body of such a sick person perishes, the world will not be widowed, and that this will be true compassion toward that person.

(9) though wealthy, says exactly what is in his mind without a thought for his money, and does not care a straw for the mightiest grandee.

20.33 (10) being wealthy, spends his money on setting up spinning-wheels, and encourages others by wearing and using only *swadeshi* goods himself.

(11) All Indians will understand that this is a time of repentance, of atonement, of mourning.

(12) All will understand that it is useless to blame the English. They came through our fault, they stay through our fault, and when our fault is removed they will go or they will change.

(13) All will understand that in a time of mourning there can be no luxury; that as long as we have no peace, it is right that we should be in jail or in exile.

20.37 (14) All Indians will understand that to take care to stay out of jail so that we can go on enlightening the people is pure delusion.

(15) All will understand that doing has a far more wonderful effect than saying; that we must say fearlessly what is in our minds and bear whatever comes of saying it; only then can our words make their mark.

(16) All Indians will understand that only by suffering can we free ourselves from bondage.

20.40 (17) All Indians will understand that, to atone for the sin we have committed by encouraging the English in their civilization, it would not be in the least too much if we were to stay in the Andamans till we die.

(18) All Indians will understand that no nation has ever risen without suffering. Even on the battlefield the test is suffering, not killing others. So it is with *satyagraha*.[1]

20.42 (19) All Indians will understand that "we shall do it when others do" is an excuse for not doing it. We should do it because we think it right; others will do it when they see it so; that is the way to do it. When I see a delicious meal, I do not wait for others

1 The Andaman Islands, in the Bay of Bengal, held the penal settlement to which the British transported convicts, including political prisoners, for life.

before I eat. Making the effort described above and bearing suffering—that is a delicious meal. To do it grudgingly, to bear suffering under protest, is mere forced labor.

READER 20.43 When will everyone do all this, and when shall we reach the shore?

THE ARGUMENT IN BRIEF

Swaraj is rule over our own minds; its key is satyagraha, and it needs swadeshi.

EDITOR 20.44 You are mistaken again. You and I need not worry about everyone. "*Ap apki phodiyo, main meri samalta hun*" [You see to your own; I look after mine] is counted a selfish saying. But it is a saying of the highest good. Only when I make my own life shine shall I do anything for others. In doing my own duty lies the accomplishment of everything.

Before I leave you, I take my leave once more with a few words—

(1) *Swaraj* is the rule of our own minds.

(2) Its key is *satyagraha*, soul-force or the force of compassion.

(3) To exercise that force we must hold fast to *swadeshi* in every way.

20.49 (4) What we mean to do, we do not do out of hatred for the English, nor to punish them, but because it is our duty to do it. So even if the English abolish the salt tax, return the wealth they have taken, give all Indians high posts and withdraw their army, it does not follow that we shall wear their machine-made cloth, use the English language or make use of their industrial arts. We must understand that we are not going to do all that because it is, in fact, not worth doing.

Whatever I have said, I have said not out of hatred for the English but out of hatred for their civilization.

20.51 I feel that we have taken up the name of *swaraj* but have not understood what it is. I have tried to explain it as I have understood it. My conscience bears witness that this body is offered up to win such *swaraj*.