

INDIA'S

Challenge



CHRISTIANS



CYRIL MODAK

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INDIA'S CHALLENGE' TO CHRISTIANS

By

CYRIL MODAK

The brilliant young author of this book is a Christian Realist and a sturdy Nationalist in politics. His articles published off and on in leading Indian Journals have attracted wide attention. He writes from conviction believing that the failure of organised Christianity is due to the dualism which partitions off material and spiritual, ideal and action, natural and supernatural, individual and social. The redemptive nationalism of India, unlike the aggressive nationalism of Germany and other countries, is truly Christian and must capture the hearts and minds of Christians in India, if Christianity is to survive. India's Challenge to Christians is prophetic in its fearlessness as it is vigorous and lucid in style. It should go a long way in blasting the prejudices and pietism that have obscured the revolutionary religion of Christ. We can say with a clear conscience that this is a book of which any publisher may well feel proud.

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CHALLENGE TO
CHRISTIANS.

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1940

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TO
ALL KRISTAGRAHIS,
INDIAN AND NON-INDIAN,
DEDICATED
TO
THE CAUSE OF FREEDOM,
JUSTICE AND BROTHERHOOD.

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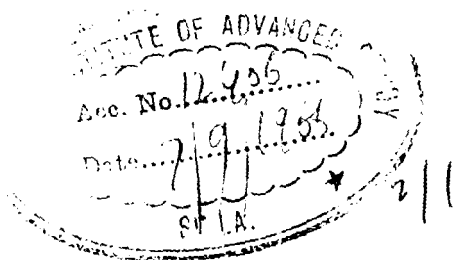
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PREFATORY NOTE

Sixteen years ago, as a lad just out of one of the European High Schools, I was every inch a loyalist. It was then, that in preparation for a debate I chanced on a brochure of some sixty pages—*Indian Independence: The Immediate Need*, by C. F. Andrews. Words can barely describe the stab of disillusionment which that little brochure gave me. I could no longer be a loyalist. Self-respect demanded that I be a nationalist. These intervening years, with some travel and study abroad, a good deal of rigorous thinking and writing, and various contacts with many people of different shades of opinion have only helped my nationalism to be rooted in reason. I realize now that freedom-seeking or redemptive nationalism is an inevitable corollary of Christianity. I am deeply grateful to Dinabandhu C. F. Andrews.

What is said in these pages may annoy some people. May be it will set others thinking. I fondly hope it will inspire some. When something is said which adversely affects the group to which one belongs the usual tendency is to consider it an overstatement. If it is a compliment it is considered wholly deserved. That is human nature. We can smile and let it pass. I have no controversial

ambitions. I write to relieve my heart of its ache. Whose heart would not ache if he could see the plight of my community? If some gentle reader wishes there were more qualifying or complimentary phrases strewn among the following pages, I plead that the seriousness of the malady may have made me lose sight of relatively insignificant or infinitesimal exceptions And one who is above reproach should find it easy to be charitable.

I have none of the adolescent qualms about repetition. The way to convince, I find from radiant evangelists and loquacious insurance agents, is to say the same thing over and over again. If I did not have an ardent desire to convince I should not have tried the patience of the over-worked and underpaid composers. Clive Bell in the Introduction to his admirable essay on "Civilisation" says: "Wherefore any one who may notice that in this essay I say the same thing several times over, will be so kind I hope as to attribute the author's tediousness to a peculiarity of readers in general—a peculiarity I need hardly say not shared by the particular lady or gentleman who happens to be reading these words."

The quotations and references given are not meant to be the paraphernalia of erudite respectability. A book of this sort must run the gauntlet and survive on its own merit—or perish. But

sometimes when I fancied some reader might be tempted to exclaim "Ridiculous!" I have tried to quote a better man and give the reference so as to introduce the judge to a worthy culprit.

One of the essential characteristics of a Christian individual or institution should be transparent integrity. If there is this transparency we shall welcome healthy criticism. We will not, then, suffer from the strange 'negative-complex' which makes so many good Christians, foreign and Indian, fight shy of analytical criticism. If there are errors, defects or evils within the Christian movement they must be faced frankly. They must be resisted. They must be eradicated or corrected. This stand against errors and evils is, indeed, very *positive*. It seeks to negate the negation of truth. It seeks to negate the negation of liberty, justice and brotherhood. As two negatives make an affirmative so the negation of a negation is unquestionably positive in intention, content and effect. How can we fight against evils unless we have set before ourselves Christ's pattern of the paramount good by which alone we can evaluate what is evil? Why should we undertake the unpleasant, arduous and thankless task of resisting evils unless we find that these evils militate against Christ's purposes? The non-violent resistance of evil needs no further *positivizing*! It is essentially positive:

I am convinced, deeply convinced, that if Christianity is to survive in India or in any part of the world, it must make its influence really felt in the thought, life and systems of people. To do this it must reveal the revolutionary spirit of Christ's original Gospel. To this end, Christians must open their hearts to the revolutionizing touch of Christ. We shall, then, see that loyalty to the Master demands that we fight the good fight of freedom, justice and brotherhood; that we serve the nation, with unhesitating self-denial, in its hour of bitter need. When we do that *as a community* we shall give some one a chance to write the book I had intended writing: "The Christian Challenge to India." Meanwhile, India challenges Christians to seek to understand Christ's purposes aright and work towards their realization.

This little book would never have come out without the gracious encouragement of several friends. I must thank the Editors of *The Modern Review*, *The Indian Witness*, *National Herald*, *The Indian Social Reformer* and *The Hindustan Times* for allowing me to reclaim some of the material which I had used in articles published in their respective journals. My thanks are due to Ruth Hyneman and J. Holmes Smith and Ralph Templin for their sympathetic understanding of the problems I faced and for their moral support. Brother William Joseph



of the Ashram, very kindly typed the manuscript, for which I am grateful.

I must apologize for the printer's devils which have defied proof-reading, but the rush in which the book has been published is to blame. I wish to make it clear that I, and only I, am responsible for whatever is said in these pages. I do not write as a member of the Ashram, but in my individual capacity. The credit of inspiration goes to the Ashram and my friends. The blame for 'unorthodox views' and 'harsh criticism' and 'strong language' and such other things is entirely mine !

Lucknow

C. M.

Vasant, 1940.

'Be Free!----Be slaves no more!'

Mahatma Gandhi.

VANDE MATARAM.

Vande Mataram! Vande Mataram!
Mother! famed abroad for ageless hoary hills
Like some royal prophets in a trance,
Sung by alion bards for classic lore that fills,
With the echoes of a high romance,
Flowering forest glades where fearless sages dreamed
Truth-envisioned, death-defying dreams,
And where fluted strains of pleading music streamed
In seductive sense-deluding streams.

Vande Mataram! Mataram!
Thou remembered for thy chiming temple-bells,
Fluttering crimson veils and maiden prayers,
Patriot-vigils, mothers' vows, and chanted spells,
Song triumphant over envious cares!
Mother! Mother of a beauteous star-gemmed sky,
Mother of a suffering race of seers
Who proclaim a beauty that can never die,
And a victory that has no fears!

Vande! Vande Mataram!
Lo! the splendour-crowned immortals kneel and pray,
Mother! Mother India for thee,
God shall touch thine aching limbs today
With resurgent hope and liberty;
So in suffering thou mayest learn to love, forgive,
Seek forever soul-enkindling truth,
Cherish in thy breast thine ancient dreams that live,
Win the sceptre of God's peace, forsooth!

Vande! Vande Mataram!

Cyril Modak.

Vande Mataram means "Hail Mother!" a national salutation for which at one time Indians were sentenced to imprisonment by the British Government in India.

CHAPTER I

THE MESSIANIC PERSPECTIVE

The terrific earthquake of disillusionment that followed the Kaiserean War, shaking the very foundations of men's beliefs and concepts, did at least one good thing. It shattered the superstition that heathenism is geographical. Men came to see that it was the height of absurdity to talk of "Christian" lands and "heathen" lands, because stark paganism stalked in broad daylight in the streets of "Christian" cities and took its heavy toll. India's challenge is a Christian challenge to Christians. We shall understand this better when we have looked at things through the messianic perspective. For that is a perspective of reconstruction. It reveals the need for a reconstructed social order in which alone the redeemed individual can function. It brings into our ken the plan of the universal commonwealth in which inter-racial and inter-national relations are remodelled. It discovers to us that justice, freedom, and brotherhood are the structural principles of reality. This messianic perspective is made clear at the very outset of Christ's public ministry in the Nazareth Manifesto. In this

chapter we shall turn to the historical setting of that Manifesto, the divine law of inheritance that it establishes, its implications, and the glorious consummation it envisions.

In the first quarter of the first century of the Covenant of Reconstruction (anno domini) the world was suffering much as it is to-day with nervous breakdown. Roman imperialism proudly used all the vicious tools of subjugation and exploitation which imperialist powers since have had time to multiply and perfect. The far-flung Roman colonies were drained of their resources, their self-respect, their possibilities of growth, as colonies under foreign domination must expect to be. Other countries, in which the Roman Eagle did not flap its lustful wings, were indulging in reminiscences of past prosperity. New nations were beginning to raise baby cries. It was a period of stagnation for all but Rome. And Rome was defying God.

In China, a usurper had poisoned the emperor of the Han Dynasty then regnant, and had seized the throne. He was defeated and killed by Han princes and the dynasty was restored. The capital was moved from Shensi to Honan. Taoism was degenerating more and more into magic and the quest for the elixir of life and the secret of alchemy. Buddhism and Confucianism consoled the exploited

and thus helped life to go on smoothly as it always has gone on in China. The official and merchant classes enjoyed most of the advantages and means.

India was in a turmoil of military campaigns. Repeated inroads of semi-barbaric clans plundered the north and west and terrified the peaceful peasants. An ambitious Andhra King from the South overthrew the Kanva dynasty and established the Satavahana empire over the Deccan, Central India, and the Ganges valley. Bitter rivalry existed between Buddhist and Brahmanical believers leading to persecution and disunity. Intrigues were rampant. Racial and religious conflicts among the people themselves made the country an easy prey to invaders. There was no peace.

Partha, after a sudden rise to imperial power, had spent its force. It was entirely due to the foreign policy of Augustus Caesar that Partha appeared as a second independent power, side by side with Rome. The independence was only a mask that Roman diplomacy had allowed in order to subdue by demoralizing. Internal dissensions increased the misery of the people. Rebellions failed to mend matters. The past alone remained to comfort the oldest veterans.

In Egypt, which was a Roman province, the framework of Ptolmaic organisation was preserved but

Romans were gradually introduced into the highest offices of state. Egypt had been tamed to the new yoke by military force and was drained of her produce, especially wheat. There was constant fighting during this period. Egypt's foreign trade was harnessed for imperial revenues. No more a great power herself, she allowed herself to be over-run by the evils of all the people who came to her ports.

In Europe about this time the *pax Romana* existed in the form of military domination. The region outside the empire was thinly populated by barbarian tribes. There were occasional battles between these wandering tribes and the Roman garrisons. Hellenism had spread over Europe before the Roman conquest but had not taken root. Now the paganism of Rome was added to the semi-barbaric polytheism of the natives. Only a century or so later Roman civilization tinged with Hellenistic traditions laid the foundation of European civilization.

Britain was a Roman colony. The Celts, being more adaptive than the savages further north, did not seriously object to the presence of the Roman conquerors. Bath (*Aquae Sulis*) was the Simla of Roman Britain, as London was its Calcutta. The Roman coinage was current. Their religion was polytheistic. They apparently believed in some form of transmigration. Their priestly Druids approximated to the

Hindu *Brahmins*. Temperamentally the original Celt had considerable affinity to the Hindu. Some of their clans bleached their hair and painted their skin so that the Romans called them *pict* (painted).

Palestine was under Roman suzerainty. Jewish plutocrats had bartered their independence for the security and trade that Roman imperialism bestowed upon them. The ancient Law was observed only in breaches. The hope of the Promised Age burned like a smouldering flame among the poverty-ridden masses, but they were kept in subjection because there were traitors in their own camp who allied themselves with the foreign invaders for leases of material gain. Like the other great nations of yore once mantled in splendour, China, India, Egypt, Babylon, Greece and Persia, Israel was smitten with paralysis by the evil genius of its past misdeeds. And these misdeeds in the case of every nation then, as now, were transgressions against the rights of the common people,

The voice of history has uttered at least one verdict: the wrongs that the poor and weak and oppressed suffer are wrongs that lead to catastrophe, ruin and the vengeance of God. Whenever the powerful and the wealthy conspire to bleed others to death for their own gratification, reaction sets in and it may take centuries, but the end is disaster.

Whenever the socio-economic structure becomes a menace to the common people, some agent of God's judgment, some blind Samson shorn of strength and fettered, pulls it down. The empires of the past are relics of perverted morality. The crying need of the first century was the same as the clamant need of today. Men everywhere demanded, articulately or not, a just order in which they could function as moral beings, equally privileged inheritors of God's bounty and grace.

And, as Luke tells us, Jesus came from Capernaum to Nazareth to announce his programme and begin his public ministry. Nazareth was a small obscure village lying in a valley between limestone hills. It had no history. It was a despised village. Only hardy people would chose to live there. The rain pouring down the hills would sweep away houses built on an average foundation and leave the streets impassable with mud. Houses had to be built of stone, usually on a deep, rocky foundation. Nazareth was held in bad repute even among Galileans. Nathaniel asked, "Can any good come out of Nazareth?" And Galilee itself, due to its half heathen population and rude dialect, was despised by the people of Judaea. Why, then, should Jesus have decided upon obscure, abject Nazareth as the starting point of the Messianic Revolution?

Was not Nazareth the scene of the Annunciation when Mary discovered the awful yet rapturous fact that she was to be the mother of Messiah? Was it not to Nazareth that Joseph and Mary brought the child, Jesus, on their return from Egypt? Jesus had grown up in this sequestered village, among these hardy, backward, insularly nationalistic people. What place is more trying than one's home-town in which to announce a revolutionary manifesto? People who have known one as a child, among whom one has grown up are the last to be impressed. The women would ask with surprised amusement in their eyes, "Isn't he the carpenter's son?" Some young men would say with haughty tilt of the head, "The impertinence of this common fellow to be talking such pedantic stuff!" And the elderly elders and religious leaders would sneer at him "The idea! an abject Nazarene talking about consecration!" It called for great courage and an indomitable faith in his mission to begin from Nazareth. It would have been comparatively easy to announce his programme at Capernaum where his miracles had staggered the the populace into surrender.

But, surely, it is in keeping with the revolutionary tenor of his public ministry to begin from the most unexpected place. And was there not something revolutionary in the very fact that the one

brutishness. And there is victory at the very heart of the Christ-way.

It was not only in the synagogue that Jesus announced his revolutionary manifesto but he took the very words of a prophecy from the Old Testament to introduce the New Testament. A prophecy in the Jewish Covenant became the preface to the Covenant of Reconstruction. How can a revolution be grounded in such conservatism? But was it conservatism? In the very act of relating his programme to the hopes and aspirations of the Jewish people Jesus challenged their highest to stretch out to meet the divine benevolence which, as he showed, overarches humanity. Was this conservatism? If it was, his audience did not understand it because they were infuriated and took him to the brow of the hill to assassinate him. It was revolutionary conservation which conserved by recasting. Jesus was too cultured to perpetrate any kind of vandalism. His sure grasp of values laid hold on the best in the past, but his clear insight into the moral nature of the universe made him remould these values. Man's sublimest approximations were worth perfecting to be made instruments of revelation. So Jesus revealed God's programme of reconstruction through the prophetic vision of Isaiah but transformed that vision from racial to universal dimensions.

And thus Jesus read from the Messianic Prophecy of Isaiah-61-1-11.

“ The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
 Because the Lord hath anointed me
 To preach good tidings to the poor,
 He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted;
 To proclaim liberty to the captives,
 And the opening of the prison to them that
 are bound;

To proclaim the Year of Jubilee, and”

But he stopped in the middle of the second verse before ‘and’. In effect he cancelled the remaining nine verses of the prophecy from ‘and the day of vengeance of our God.’ It was this part which would have thrilled the Jewish heart. It was this part for which the Jewish nation waited with burning eagerness. It was this part which constituted the messianic hope. What a blow to their long-cherished expectation! All through their chequered history had they not consoled themselves that the Messiah would bring them out of captivity to be the rulers of a world-empire ‘and foreigners shall stand and feed your flocks and the sons of the aliens shall by your ploughmen and vine-dressers’ (61-5.)? How could Jesus be the Messiah? He deliberately scored out this national hope. On the contrary, he went on to tell them,—
 “ Many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias,

when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout the land ; But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarupta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet ; and none of them was cleansed save Naaman, the Syrian " (Luke IV. 25-27.)

With regal impunity Jesus stood in the synagogue, on the sabbath day, and told his Jewish congregation at Nazareth that the Gentile world was not outside the pail of divine benevolence. When in the fever of evangelistic passion we want to claim the sole custody of God's benevolence, should we not remember that His choice may fall on many a Non-Christian, that God may pass by many Christians, as He passed by the Chosen People, and bless some Hindu widow and cleanse some leper of Africa ? " And all they in the synagogue when they heard these things, were filled with wrath " (Luke. IV. 28) How could they help it ? Would Christians behave any better if Jesus stood in a Christian Church, in England or the United States or India or anywhere else, and blasted their religious snobbery and racial pride as he did that sabbath day in the Nazareth Synagogue ?

But let us turn to the Nazareth Manifesto. If Jesus had been speaking in our day and age he would

have said, " I have been deputed to make the divine law of inheritance operative in human society. " This is what he said in effect. His messianic consciousness lay in the realization that he had been consecrated as God's ambassador to man and man's advocate with God. As God's ambassador he came to reveal God's immeasurable, impartial, matchless, self-giving love, which tolerates no inequalities, no distinctions of race, class, creed, or sex. As man's advocate he gave himself as a ransom for mankind. As God's ambassador he sought to establish the divine law of inheritance so as to replace materialistic and theocratic determinism by the dialectic of love. As man's advocate he heralded the New Order of the universal commonwealth sanctioned by God. As God's Ambassador he longed to reconcile man with God. As man's advocate he wanted to implement the promises of God in the affairs of day-to-day living. He became the Ideal personified so as to smash for ever the obnoxious distinction between ideals and practice.

This divine law of inheritance is the basic principle of the Covenant of Reconstruction. It implies that the concepts of man, of society, and of God are to be radically reconstructed. The law of inheritance is everywhere the key-stone of the socio-economic structure, and in its implications reveals the fundamental idea of God and morals accepted by

that society. Thus in his Manifesto, Jesus repudiates the gross, underlying injustice of the law whereby the poor inherit poverty, and the rich riches, and society inherits its divisive class-system from generation to generation. He repudiates the inequity of the law that gives the wealthy and powerful the right to exploit and dooms the poor and weak to misery and slavery. He vehemently repudiates the law that perpetuates the *status quo* of an immoral socio-economic system.

He turned the whole structure of society upside down by his startling reversal of the human law. He did not say imperialism would inherit the earth. He did not say capitalism would inherit the earth. He recognized no rights save those of the meek. For "the meek shall inherit the earth". So also with reference to the after-life, Jesus shattered the belief that earthly wealth or social rank or political power can secure reservations in heaven. The story of Lazarus and Dives must have rankled in the hearts of the upper ten in Jesus' time as much as it does today. It can never be repeated too often that the account says nothing about the morality of Dives. His economic condition only is stated. The scathing indictment brought against him by Abraham is not that he was sensual, or dishonest, or a murderer, or a heathen, but that he violated the divine law of

inheritance based on love. Lazarus suffered the pangs of poverty and the cruel ravages of disease at his very gates and Dives apparently did nothing to show that he was prompted by love. The inheritance of eternal life is determined by love, realistic love of God and love for man manifest in action. There is no hope for any elasticity of interpretation.

The divine law of inheritance emphasises economic justice and social equality as the inheritance of all human beings. Clearly, the good news of this divine law of inheritance is especially for the common people. They have been the neglected, exploited, bruised people. But in the Covenant of Reconstruction they are to be important. God consecrated His ambassador to proclaim the Gospel to the poor. Has the Christian movement after the glorious generation of the Acts of the Apostles preached the Gospel of economic justice and social equality? Has the Christian Church consistently met the challenge of the depersonalizing socio-economic order that makes crimes necessary for some so that others might be surfeited, that makes slavery necessary for some so that others might be free to indulge themselves, which make slums necessary for some so that others might have castles? It shows the chronic state of the disease of dualism within the Christian Church for congregation after congregation to sing the

Magnificat and not be disturbed by the socialist mother's cry,

"He hath filled the hungry with good things
and the rich He hath sent empty away."

It is not only unreasonable but unethical to argue that Jesus was interested not in the economic and social aspects of Reconstruction but only in moral and spiritual rebirth. Such compartmentalizing of life has been the curse of religion. Jesus was all too conscious of the virus of dualism within later Judaism. He called it hypocrisy. He denounced it without fail whenever he had a chance. He knew that the loftiest ethical ideal is a liability like a foreign cheque until it is realized in the currency of action; that the most exalted spiritual experience is worthless unless it finds expression in the idiom of life. There can be no spirituality divorced from the exigencies of the daily routine. It is to the everlasting honour of Jesus that he had enough of the steel of realism in his blood to face this grim fact that usually bends the best reformers and tempts the best evangelists.

The attempt to exalt the spiritual by emphasis soon runs into the quicksands of vain idealism unrelated to and worthless for the problems of real life. It is one thing to say that the spiritual has the mastery and that the material has meaning only as it serves spiritual ends. And it is quite a contradiction

to say that laws which operate in the spiritual realm have nothing to do with economic and social realities. There is a constant reciprocity between the material and the spiritual. This reciprocity redeems the material. But this reciprocity also redeems the spiritual. As the material comes more and more under the sway of the spiritual and contributes to spiritual growth, it is redeemed by motivation. But, then, as the spiritual enters more and more into the material and actualizes itself, it is redeemed by validation. A spiritual experience which does not affect all one's future economic and social relations is unreal.

This divine law of inheritance emphasises moral and spiritual release as the birthright of all. In a capitalistic order there is undeniable moral emasculation of hired labourers, educated or uneducated; those who do manual work or mental work or ecclesiastical work. They are forced in a thousand different ways to commit spiritual suicide. Economic pressure drains the moral energy of thousands of employees and makes them hollow echoes of the views of the employers, mere tools of the employers' plans. The class-system as it exists, as it has existed for over four thousand years, sets aside three-fifths of humanity, with callous disregard for their moral and spiritual nature, as

muscle-power. The most civilized countries have only recently begun to show a slight twinge of conscience for the 'labour' class that exists so that an enormous superstructure can be raised on its foundations of misery, starvation, unjust segregation, sub-human wages.

Many good Christians who are all but obsessed with the idea of sin show naive belief in a peculiar theory of original sin, believing with melancholy fondness that man is by nature sinful, addicted to sin. They resolutely shut their eyes to the economic and social causes for some of the most flagrant vices. Their minds are often quite made up that a man becomes a thief because he loves to steal, or a woman becomes a prostitute because she loves to sell her body. It does not occur to these protagonists of man's sinful nature that the vicious fangs of the socio-economic system might have a good deal to do in forcing countless good men and women into desperate ways of keeping their loved ones from misery and death. There are undoubtedly perverts who have themselves to blame for their immorality. But psychology has shown that perverts are the exception: and that sometimes society does much to make a person a pervert.

Jesus treated men and women as essentially good. He felt he was sent to proclaim release to

captives. He felt that most people are taken *into* moral captivity. They do not enjoy their immoral actions. Rather they are victims. They act not as free agents but as slaves. It is possible that after a time they get accustomed to vice, and their finer sensibilities are dulled by immorality. They are called 'sinners'. But Jesus always remembered that even sinners started as good people and are potential saints in bondage. Jesus did not make one-fourth of the fuss about personal sins that we find made in his name today. In utter compassion he reached out a hand of comradeship to sinners and forgave their sins and healed the physical effects of sin. And He had nothing but stern denunciation for play-actors. Hypocrisy is something Jesus never seemed to be able to tolerate. Play-acting is of two kinds. There is the conscious insincerity manifested by those who say what they do not mean, and do secretly what they condemn in public. This is the vulgar kind of hypocrisy. But there is the unwitting compromise between one's own convictions and the accepted conventions of the social group to which one belongs. This is the subtle kind of hypocrisy. This was the celebrated pharasaism that Jesus dared to fight and had to pay dearly for fighting. This is the sort of play-acting that attracts the rich and powerful financial magnates, the virtuous and respected upholders

of law and order. The Pharisees, past and present, hold thousands of intrinsically good people in bondage and are saluted by thousands for their piety!

Of course, there are the self-indulgent species of sinners who get bored of virtuous living and give themselves moral holidays. They have not been freed from the abject slavery of their passions by some purpose great and strong and attractive enough to save them from themselves. Having drained all the intoxicants of pleasure brewed with experimental patience and scientific thoroughness by modern civilization, they find their last solace in the most pathetically jaded neuresthenia. They have no taste for the keener joys of mind or heart or soul. With bodies that tell the tale of a flabby spirit they go through life depending on purchased blushes and the circulating sophistication of clubs. They are indeed captives, sorry captives to themselves and the pleasures that society devises to humour and mislead them. Jesus has a message for them also. They too are among the captives he would release. In the Covenant of Reconstruction slavery of every kind is to be prohibited.

The divine law of inheritance emphasises healthy vision, physical, moral and spiritual, as the inheritance of all. Healthy sight is the right of every man. Blindness is considered, especially in the East, as a

punishment for sin. The medical science has shown to-day that venereal diseases do affect the child's eyes at birth, and great precautionary measures are taken now. Jesus spent more time, if the hours were counted approximately, in his healing ministry than he did in preaching. He preached incessantly, but never, if at all, without first attending to the physical needs of those around him. He healed the hopelessly sick. He fed the hungry. He raised the dead. And he told them the good tidings of the Commonwealth of God. In fact one part of the four-fold Good News was restitution to the physically disinherited. He felt he was consecrated to proclaim recovery of sight to the blind, health to the diseased.

The social order in which Jesus did his work—and it has not changed substantially in these nineteen centuries—reserved the good things of life for the privileged few. The unprivileged masses were denied even the rudimentary privileges of health and healthy vision. The ravages of disease were treated as acts of God penalizing sinners for their misdeeds. It was a convenient fabrication of theology to enable priestly demagogues to enjoy themselves while they helped to safeguard the unmolested leisure of imperialist libertines. The Christian Movement has made admirable efforts to give medical relief to millions of the disinherited in all parts of the world. But not

enough has been done to attack the evils that shatter the health of a large part of the labour class, that shatter the nerves of thousands of employees in various departments of life, that rob countless men and women of their economic or political sight.

It should be remembered that often when Jesus healed the sick he also threw out a challenge to the guardians of the social system. Sometimes the very act of healing was a challenge to some of that party which oppressed the poor and disdained the diseased. Conditions have changed and priestly rulers are not encountered in the streets or market places or hospitals for the poor. But the fact should not be slurred over that Jesus did not merely do his utmost to banish disease but took every opportunity available of pointing out that health is the birthright of every human being. And therefore those who are directly or indirectly responsible for conditions which cause or are conducive to ill-health, as well as those who do not struggle to change these conditions are transgressors just as much as those who do nothing to relieve suffering. Is the Christian Movement true to the high traditions of the Master in challenging the socio-economic causes of disease and blindness and physical suffering? In the memorable words of Edwin Markham,—

"O Masters, lords and rulers of all lands,
 Is this the handiwork you give to God,
 This monstrous thing distorted and soul-quencht?
 How will you ever straighten up this shape;
 Touch it again with immortality;—
 Make right the immemorial infamies,
 Perfidious wrongs, immediable woes?"

And this divine law of inheritance emphasises political liberty as the racial inheritance of all peoples. Jesus felt that he was consecrated to set free the oppressed. It would be absurd to argue, as some do, that Jesus came so that men and women should get from him a key to the doors of heaven, and that he was not interested in political, economic, or social conditions. If we are to believe that Jesus meant every syllable he uttered and was not given to the soap-box orator's vice of tautology, then the fourfold release that he mentions in his Nazareth Manifesto cannot be forced into a spiritualized interpretation. The release is fourfold, from the iron grip of socio-economic oppression, from the cruel bondage of moral and spiritual evils, from the relentless tyranny of physical disease and suffering, and from the dehumanizing chains of political slavery. He could not have referred to the release from sin in all the four clauses of his historic and much-neglected Manifesto. This agrees with that other declaration

he made "I am come that ye may have life and have it more abundantly." There is no possibility of enjoying 'abundant life' if it is to mean spiritual life in the midst of burning political wrongs, miserable physical under-nourishment making men prone to disease, desperate economic maladjustment and social injustice. Life under such circumstances must necessarily be restricted. It cannot be abundant. Jesus, however, did bring 'abundant life' as his boon for humanity and showed the fourfold fullness of that abundant life.

It is true that Jesus is the Redeemer of man without rival and without compeer. But it is true because Jesus was the first, (and there have been none since) to draw the curtain and show the tragedy of the suffering love of God, which shares the pangs of every individual's political oppression, economic injustice, social and moral bondage. He showed by every deed and word that man transgresses against the Fatherhood of God every time that he transgresses against the rights and privileges of brother man. The way to personal morality could be found in any text-book on ethics. From Jesus we get the staggering truth that human life is personal. Any factors that depersonalize a human being are an affront to the Fatherhood of God. Apart from all doctrinal complications, Jesus is the peerless saviour.

of men because he revealed God's consummate love which ordains that all His children should inherit physical, economic, social, political, moral and spiritual freedom. He overthrew the tyranny of compartmentalism. He repudiated the nice air-tight compartments of religion, politics, science, art and life. He could not tolerate the spurious distinction between theory and practice, ideal and action. With a radical's inconvenient consistency he taught that every ideal, every law, every truth must be validated in action. Ideals are beautiful but unless those beautiful ideals are realized in action they are meaningless. It is not enough to talk about the laws of God. Man must fashion his relationships, political, moral, economic and spiritual fearlessly in accordance with those inexorable laws of justice, equality and freedom. Therein lies Jesus' superior claim to greatness. He established the community of man, a classless society based on the divine law of inheritance.

To deny the political aspect of Christ's programme on the excuse of misinterpretation is to deny that man is a social creature. Politics, as it is intended to be, is the body of principles regulating the life of the social organism as a whole. Jesus recognised the fact that man has relations as citizen of a state. But he went further. And His next step complicates things for so many Christians. He insisted that into

the political arena his followers should take the recognition of the brotherhood of man, that there also they should apply the divine law of inheritance. Sad as it is, it has to be acknowledged that at this point Christian imperialists and their ecclesiastical law-givers have played havoc with Christian interpretation. Of course, it is as clear as daylight that in the Commonwealth of God there is no place for 'subject people' or for 'empires.' According to Christ's divine law of inheritance no country has the right to hold another people in political bondage because it degrades human personality in the subjects and militates against the sovereign Fatherhood of God. Imperialistic oppression is sinful. But colonies are necessary in order to keep the people of the ruling race comfortable and happy. It costs much less to spiritualize Christ's teachings than to give up colonies.

So 'subject peoples' are told by reverend apologists of imperialism that Jesus religiously kept aloof from politics and showed a lofty disdain for political careers and therefore his followers should do likewise. By the same token most of these same reverend apologists should immediately cancel their citizenship of an imperialistic nation and become one of the subject peoples, because Jesus was not a Roman but a Jew, and they should also without losing time become celibates because Jesus was a celibate! Jesus

had very good reasons for giving a wide berth to politics. He had to retain his immediate following, and yet prevent the fiercely nationalistic messianic enthusiasm in them from violently crowning him their king, and to educate them to see the larger, international aspect of the messianic hope. He could do nothing to precipitate the tragedy of the Cross because he needed all the time he could get to complete his earthly task of educating his followers in the meaning and method and scope of the Messianic Revolution. Thus Dr. D. S. Cairns says "The silence of Jesus on the civic and national virtues is to be found in the singular circumstances in which he had to carry out his life-work." (D. S. Cairns: "Christianity in the Modern World." p. 191 ff.)

Then we are told that Jesus taught meek submission to the rulers quite regardless of despotism, oppression, exploitation, and national ruin. In support of such an interpretation which may be called humorous (to avoid unsavoury adjectives!) we have quoted for our edification the injunction of Jesus "Give unto Caesar what is Caesar's and give unto God what is God's." Now as far as alien subjects of an imperialistic power are concerned Jesus did not command submission to oppression or tyranny. Let us remind ourselves of the facts. Jesus was on the way to the temple. A large crowd was with him.

Presumably every Jew was on his way to the temple. Just near the temple the *agents provocateur* of the Sanhedrim approached with the historic question "Shall we pay tax unto Caesar or not?" To expose the utter treachery of these unpatriotic mercenaries Jesus asked them to show a coin. If they had been patriotic Jews they would have had the special temple coin, which Herod had struck to placate the religious sentiments of the Jews without the image and superscription of Caesar. But the coin they gave Jesus was the Roman coin. With unfaltering and unerring consistency Jesus rebuked them for being such traitors as to traffic in the foreign coin instead of using the temple coin. He rebuked them for their petty desire to profit by their alliance with the foreign power and their deceitful attempt to escape paying the dues for the profitable alliance. He rebuked them for their acceptance of foreign domination as expressed by their using the currency of the rulers, and for their neglect of their duty to free the nation. With the most scathing consistency Jesus condemned once and for all time the habit of unholy compromise. "If you have sold yourselves to Caesar render to him what you owe him," said Jesus in effect.

But . . . and this half of the injunction is usually forgotten. "But," he continued "render unto God what is God's." What did he mean? What

did they owe to God? They owed it to God that they acknowledged His Fatherhood and that they treated all men as brothers. Were they doing it? Obviously, they were only raising a temporal issue. Jesus rebuked them for divorcing the temporal from the spiritual issue. If they had been rendering to God the love and obedience they owed Him and the love they owed His children they would never have allied themselves with those who exploited and crushed their brethren. One cannot be a part of the imperialistic system for one's profit and prestige, forgetting one's solemn duty to God and one's moral obligations to one's people, and then dodge the question of paying for the advantages gained by crawling under the shelter of religious sanctions.

It is glaringly incompatible with the outlook of Jesus for him to countenance oppression or slavery. His whole emphasis was on freedom—freedom from all possible shackles. “Ye shall know the truth and the truth will make you free.” And, certainly, once we learn the truth about ourselves, that we are members of one vast joint-family of God; once we learn the truth about the divine law of inheritance, that all men have equal rights and equal worth bound together in one universal community of need; and once we learn the truth about God, that He is the Father of all peoples impartially yearning to bestow His good

gifts on all alike,—we shall be free in the divine commonwealth. All our relations, political, social, economic, moral, and spiritual must be regulated by the sovereign law of love. That is freedom. Thus only can freedom be maintained. To be free ourselves we must will that all others shall be free too.

“Men! whose boast it is that ye
 Come of fathers brave and free,
 If there breathe on earth one slave,
 Are ye truly free and brave?
 If you do not feel the chain,
 When it works a brother's pain,
 Are you not base slaves indeed,
 Slaves unworthy to be freed?”

This is, indeed, a heart-taking programme. Jesus initiates an unprecedented revolution of universal proportions, intended to upset time-honoured conventions, and right time-honoured wrongs in the very foundations of the socio-economic structure, and polarize the wills of men to higher purposes. It is the inexhaustible divine campaign of reconstruction. There have been, there are today, and probably will be to the end of time, partial revolutions seeking a transfer of political authority for economic readjustment and social justice.

They are partial because they are not divinely inspired. They are incomplete because they only

touch the periphery of life. They change the externals and leave the inner being more incapacitated than before by the very means of self-assertion adopted for the violent change.

Marxian Socialism is the most powerful and most widespread of modern revolutions. But it comes short of the majestic height, profound depths, and divine sweep of original Christianity. Communism is derived from a penetrating economic insight. It insists on the economic base of the pyramid of society. It exposes the inevitable class-conflict within a social order which accepts the standard of wealth for all its pronouncements. It shows that under the regime of materialistic determinism the masses have no hope unless they remove the classes having wealth. So the method of violence is adopted for a sudden removal, not only from power but from the face of the earth, of all those who belong to the capitalist class. Thus it is hoped that the instruments of production will be made the property of the masses: they will be the masters and enjoy the wealth that otherwise would be accumulated by a few. Growing out of an economic insight Socialism sanctions the method of violence to remodel the economic order. Of course, it has vast consequences. It reiterates the *raison d'être* for establishing a democracy of need in place of an oligarchy

of privilege. It puts into effect the equitable principles of *need* as regulating the distribution of material goods, and *ability* as governing the distribution of productive power. But is that enough ?

Original Christianity is derived from a moral insight. It insists on the moral purpose of the social organism. It exposes the immorality of violating the divine law of inheritance, of repudiating the universal community of man, of incorporating distinctions of race, class, sex, creed, and nation. It shows that there is no hope for the world unless the rich and the poor, the privileged and the unprivileged, men and women, find the moral dynamic of the Covenant of Reconstruction. So the method of violence is repudiated. The method of non-violent resistance, of suffering and self-sacrifice is adopted in order to demonstrate the sovereign claims of the law of love and by demonstration to 'release the energy of love'. Thus it is hoped that the sovereign Fatherhood of God will be revealed to men, and they shall will to make the Father's law operative among His children. Then not by external force but by inner compulsion will men of all classes and races desire to establish community. The exclusiveness of the family will be merged in the Joint Family of God, the segregation of the race will be dissolved in the Real Community, and the boundaries of the nation will be

lost in the Divine Commonwealth. Growing out of the Messianic insight, original Christianity sanctions the method of valiant self-denial, rather than of violent self-assertion, to redirect the wills of men from the centre of self to the centre of community. The demand for justice carries with it an obligation to be just. The demand for equality implies the necessity of living in community. Every privilege has its counterpart of obligation. Every opportunity to hurt becomes a duty to heal.

Marxian Socialism is deterministic. It deepens the gaping gulf between the classes. It kills to make restoration. Original Christianity is creative. It spans the gulf between privileged and unprivileged with the bridge of brotherhood. It suffers to save.

The centuries have quailed before the mighty onslaught of divine justice as revealed in Christ, and have slunk away to conspire with the Church against its consummation. The sorry results shout at us from the pages of the history of the Church. But we can see that it was very fitting for the Revolutionary Manifesto of Jesus to conclude with the proclamation of the Year of Jubilee. The Covenant of Reconstruction, in which universal redistribution would be accomplished and complete freedom established for all in the Divine Commonwealth, is celebrated in the Year of Jubilee. Again Jesus alluded

to the ancient law of the Jews which prescribed every fiftieth year to be a 'year of jubilee' when lands which had been lost through debt or illegal means were restored to the original owners, and Hebrew bond-servants were unconditionally released. It marked a general redistribution of land, a restoration of social status, and an opportunity for the nation to go to school. The 'jubilee' prevented the accumulation of land, then the chief source of income, by a rich aristocracy to the detriment of the masses. It provided for the raising of individuals and families at regular intervals from destitution to new possibilities. It tended to promote community-sense. It reminded the Jews that all their possessions were their's only by lease from God. Private owners were only stewards.

The 'jubilee' is the crowning of the Hebrew sabbatical system, a system which is by itself enough to give to the Hebrew people the right to be considered the specially chosen people, trained and disciplined to be the cradle of God's Ambassador. The Laws of Manu, the Laws of Confucius, and the Laws of Hammurabi, which mark three ancient civilizations superior at many points to the civilization of the Hebrews, have nothing to match the sure insight into social justice found in the Mosaic Law. The sabbatical system prescribed weekly and monthly

sabbaths to give rest for each spiritually, the sabbatical year secured rest for the land and every seventh sabbatical year secured remission of debts. The jubilee provided rest and restoration for the body politic. Nothing could be more effective for the maintenance of social equality and economic justice. Nothing could be more successful for the indoctrinating of the noble idea of God's love and justice seen in His regulating of human affairs. It was no glamorous idealism found in the eloquence of public speeches or in books of moral philosophy. It was the vigorous realism of a practical people who saw God working in and through human history to actualize His purpose, and who felt they were called to collaborate with Him, not in thought which was beyond their mental reach, but in action which was within their volitional grasp.

Using an allusion pregnant with happy meaning for the harassed masses, Jesus announced the Grand Jubilee of the Covenant of Reconstruction, extending the benefits associated with it to all oppressed people of the whole world. This stirring climax to the programme of revolutionary readjustment has been rendered innocuous by theological legerdemain, being lifted out of the here-and-now and left like the 'seven sages' (*Saptarshi*) who are supposed to be placed in the heavens as the seven stars of the Great

Bear. The key-pronouncements of Jesus have all suffered from the infection of idealization which spread along with Hellenic and Graeco-Roman culture throughout the early Church. The next fifty years will witness an irresistible advance under the banner of Kristagraha or Christian Realism, and the Nazareth Manifesto will assuredly become the Magna Charta of the splendid revolutionaries of God.

“ They have taken the tomb of our Comrade
Christ—

Infidel hordes that believe not in man;
Stable and stall for his birth sufficed,
But his tomb is built on a kingly plan.
They have hedged him round with pomp and
parade,
They have buried him deep under steel and
stone—;

But we come leading the great crusade,
To give our Comrade back to his own.”

And his own, by his own choice, are the despised and disinherited of the earth, those who suffer as we do the ravages of alien pride and greed. Shall we hearken unto the challenge ?

FLAG SONG.

To our Saffron-Green-White Banner be
All honour, power, and victory !
All honour, power, and victory
To our unconquered banner be !

From thee our hearts have deathless dower,
Unmoved to suffer, conquering power,
Light of the brave in darkest hour,
Our India's great consummate Pride !
Our hearts pulsating leap at sight
Of thee, in freedom's holy fight
Non-violence our armour bright,
Soul-triumph triumphs far and wide.

With thee to load all unafraid,
With songs of vict'ry undismayed,
We shall be free for we have made
Our vows for freedom, hark, O Fire !
Hark ! warrior-hearts, the clarion call !
Shout, sing in chorus, one and all,
So to a man our patriot's fall
Unarmed, unyielding, son and sire !

By thought and word and deed hold high,
O ! point our banner to the sky,
World-honoured it shall proudly fly—
Our vows shall thou fulfill'd be !
To our Saffron-Green-White Banner be
All honour, power, and victory !
All honour, power, and victory
To our unconquered banner be !

Cyril Modak.

The original Hindi song resounds on every side during the Civil Disobedience campaigns.

CHAPTER II

NATIONALISM

Nationalism is a two-edged sword in the hands of conceited barbarians, a flaming torch in the hands of suffering captives. Nazism is nationalism run amuck. Imperialism is nationalism turned pirate. Hebrew prophecy is nationalism turned God-ward. The history of nationalism is instructive though depressing. But that is because the history of man depresses while it instructs. What concept has man not alternately exalted and degraded during his sojourn on this planet? What emotion has he not allowed to become alternately a fierce passion and a sublime intention? Nationalism has nothing inherently evil. Men have abused it. They have done vile things in its name. But they have abused religion and science just as much. Can we say Christianity is evil because of the Crusades or the horrible Inquisition? An eminent American missionary wrote to me a few months ago: "We are fighting this supremacy of nationalism as one of the greatest dangers in the world today. You have left yourself open, however, (in the article "First Things First") to the suspicion that you put nationalism first." This

confusion that all nationalism is a menace to the world is peculiar to the missionary mind! Nationalism has also inspired men with Promethean courage to celebrated heroism. The question is what will India do with it? What will it do to us?

Nationality is a constant feeling of belonging to a particular nation. It is nourished by common historic traditions, deepened by achievements and suffering mutually shared, kept alive by the stimulus of a common national goal. Prof. Harold Laski says: "It is obvious that there is something exclusive about nationality, that the members of any given nation have a sense of separateness from other people which gives them a feeling of difference, of uniqueness, which makes domination by others so unpleasant as to involve profound discomfort to a point which may involve, even justly involve, resistance to that domination" (*Liberty in the Modern State*, p. 194.) While nationality is a constant feeling which becomes the foundation of effective citizenship, nationalism is an expression of outraged nationality or bellicose nationality. Outraged nationality finds expression in what we may call freedom-seeking nationalism, while bellicose nationality manifests itself in empire-hunting nationalism.

The West is familiar with empire-hunting nationalism inevitably leading to war and all its

horrors and destruction. Westerners coming to India, especially as missionaries, confused the empire-hunting brand of European nationalism with the freedom-seeking type of Indian nationalism; and the confusion led them in all earnestness to teach their converts that nationalism was out of focus with Christianity. We will not let ourselves be detained here by a consideration of this and other ways in which many foreign missionaries have proved to be pawns in the iron hand of imperialism. But this choice morsel from the pen of a missionary must be quoted. "There are far more missionaries who attend parties in Government Houses and other such functions than there are those who have close contacts with nationally-minded Indians, especially if they are Congressmen." (Leonard M. Schiff: *The Present Condition of India*. p. 158.) Is it unnatural that such conduct would have unfortunate effects on the thought and attitudes of Christian Indians in their employ? It must be said that the error, born of the confusion of the two types of nationalism, the one seeking the inalienable right of human beings to have independence, justice, and equality, and the other seeking to conquer and enslave other people, persists as a spectral visitant in the Christian community.

Assuredly, the brand of nationalism that turns into aggressive imperialism, and cannot do otherwise

in the very nature of its origin, is a crime against civilization, and cannot be supported on grounds of either common-sense or ethical principles. After a scrupulous and painstaking study of imperialism J. A. Hobson concludes, "Imperialism is a depraved choice of national life, imposed by self-seeking interests which appeal to the lusts of quantitative acquisitiveness and of forceful domination surviving in a nation from early centuries of animal struggle for existence" ("*Imperialism*".—p. 368.) But does it follow, as has often been supposed by our critics, that because one form of nationalism is wrong and immoral, there can be no form of nationalism which is right, and, not only moral, but morally imperative? Such reasoning would lead to absurd conclusions.

The perversion of nationalism is imperialism as the abuse of love is lust. Imperialism is as evil as lust. But nationalism is as true as love. True nationalism is the freedom-seeking type of nationalism which is a protest against racial persecution, national injustice, and all the hundred ills that a people must bear under foreign domination. It does not covet other people's territory. It does not wish to injure others. It is outraged nationality within the hearts of millions of honest men and women, as human as the English, Americans, or any other people, that expresses itself in freedom-seeking nationalism, that expresses itself

in considered deeds of self-sacrifice and heroism, and, in moments of agony and desperation, in deeds of mad violence. It seeks justice, liberty, equality for the people and a chance for the country to take its rightful part in the Commonwealth of nations.

But here we must pause to consider an issue which has apparently grown during these hundred years or more of the missionary movement in India. Simply and honestly stated the issue is this: can a Christian Indian not be a nationalist if he has good wishes for the country, although he may wear foreign cloth, tailored in foreign mode, know little of India's past, her hopes and fears, take part in no national activity, in fact do nothing except occasionally claim to be a nationalist when it is safe to do so?

This parlour nationalism has its antecedents in the 'safety-first' Christianity that has been emphasised so largely in India, and in the mistaken emphasis laid upon the evils of the Indian heritage and the glamour of the European tradition. Christianity as it was presented to us, up to twenty years ago, helped to deplete our nationality and make us hanker after the most stupid relations and kinship with the 'Whites' generally, and the rulers in particular. Freedom-seeking nationalism inspires countless men and women to struggle against entrenched wrongs, to defy power that has all the ruthless weapons of war, and to

demand liberty in the face of full-panoplied imperialism. This freedom-seeking nationalism is the expression of full-blooded nationality when that nationality is violated. Quite clearly, then, a parlour nationalism is evidence of depleted nationality.

And that is the grave problem we face in the Christian community. Perhaps about 8% or 10% of our Christian Indian brethren have a national consciousness. In the rest there is a strange and sorry absence of the feeling of nationality, that thrilling sense and that they are unique because they belong to the Indian nation; that the great heritage of the past belongs to them; that the future will be what they strive side by side with their countrymen and and countrywomen to make it. They lack the spirit of nationalism because they have no feeling of nationality. There are scores of evidences of this sad fact of the abdication of nationality among the majority of Christian Indians. They prefer to identify themselves with the foreigners in matters of dress, although the feminine part of the Christian community has bravely withstood this folly. They try to imitate the foreigner in mode of living, in language, in cultural tastes, and in political sympathies. The Indian point of view does not appeal to them. They want to escape being identified with Indians. Often outlandish names cap those embodiments of denationalization!

And when 'nationalism' is in vogue, some of the ambitious ones flaunt their parlour nationalism and expect, without paying even one-tenth of the price, to get the confidence of Indian nationalists.

I do not want to be misunderstood as over-emphasising the paraphernalia of nationalism. It is not the dress in itself that makes the difference but the intention that expresses itself in a particular paraphernalia. Is it with the rather cowardly intention of avoiding the European's "contempt," of appearing respectable by being different from the common people that we have adopted the outlandish costume of the West? If so, neither the act nor the motive can be commended.

Besides, I cannot see why the tight pyjama and achkan, or the dhoti, tied in Maharashtrian style, and kurta, or even the ordinary loose pyjama and kurta and "Jawahar" vest are not, for Indian conditions, more decent, serviceable, and convenient than European suits. Besides, they are more economical. Above all, they carry with them the dignity of moral victory. At least, those who feel proud to wear Indian dress, in spite of the liabilities imposed upon it, need never bow their heads in shame, for they have not capitulated to slavery in their hearts. This capitulation is the dangerous and disgraceful

thing that we must constantly fight—and save our people from.

It is not "one of the misfortunes of present-day politics that so much importance is attached to the style and material of one's clothes," as a well-known editor said; but that so many otherwise intelligent people are obsessed with the dualistic error that they can cherish nationalistic ideals divorced from practice and in their conduct dance to the Westerner's tune. Externals, like foreign dress, mode of living, cultural taste, etc., are symptoms of depleted nationality. It is this disease which is harmful and has proved to be very contagious in India. The tragedy in such cases lies in the fact that those concerned try in various ways to avoid being identified with their own countrymen.

This has vicious psychological and moral effects. Surely, if the style of clothes is the only passport to circles of respectability, we might just as well challenge the respectability of those circles and not betray ourselves and our people. Logically, the paraphernalia of nationalism must be national. For nothing else fits.

Mere imitation is always cheap and unlovely and, therefore, inelegant. Whether in social forms or cultural expressions, in personal tastes of art, music, literature, dress, food or anything else, mere imitation

is most obnoxious. When such imitation itself becomes a fine art of self-deception meant to induce ourselves and others to take us for what we are not, it is assuredly to be deprecated. India offers a very wide range for the play of originality, whether in matters of dress or food or music or ornaments. Why should we sell our birthright for a mess of pottage ?

The fact is that the day more of our worthy compatriots renounce the diversion of mimicry and decide to don the simple national dress so as to identify themselves with their down-trodden, disinherited countrymen and countrywomen, that day the defeat of trousers will be established ! Let me hasten to add, however, that just a change of dress and the paraphernalia will not automatically make one an Indian or a nationalist. It must be the expression of a relevant change of attitudes and outlook, a change of heart. Or the change will only be to a national mummy from an 'a-national' nondescript.

Indeed, I am proud of Indian women who have continued to remain more Indian than the majority of educated men. It is not only in the sphere of apparel, ornaments and mode of living but in their national enthusiasm and their passion for independence. I deplore the tendency that seems to be growing among certain sections of Indian women, towards the adoption of clumsy high-heels, and tawdry

rouge and lip-stick. But is it not largely because many denationalized Indian men admire and pay court to these fashions that they are being adopted? If we are natural, genuine, and fearless and have a cultivated taste for what is really beautiful, beautiful in intention and execution, beautiful in thought and expression and effect, we shall all, men and women, decide to be just ourselves, not unprogressive, but not imitative either. And we shall strive to improve our own forms and infuse them with new meaning and create for ourselves and our people a country rebuilt in Beauty, founded in Freedom.

India has no use to-day for carpet knights. India needs those who are tried fighters. India calls those whose hearts leap at the sound of her agonized voice, and who reply:

"Hail to Thee, Mother! thy proud sons greet
thee,
 Fair as the moon and as clear as the sun,
 Terrible fair as a bannered army;
 Patient and strong till the day be won;
 Calling thy sons to the high endeavour
 Sealing them true to the task begun."

But how many of such Christian nationalists are there in the whole peninsula?

The paucity of Christian nationalists in India is a phenomenon which can claim no parallel in any

other country of the East or the West. Not that we want bellicose nationalists, such as those of the West. But it is ironical that the religion of Jesus, the prince of freedom-seeking nationalists, should have been the cause of our losing our sense of nationality and the capacity for nationalism. In fact, up to a few years ago, our religious teachers from the West frowned on any sort of participation by Christian Indians in political life, although their own brothers and sisters in the "homeland" took part in politics and yet presumably remained good Christians. The assertion that Christianity is against non-violent revolution, that Christianity is meant to teach the slave to be a better slave, and subject people to be better subject people, and the rich to be better plutocrats, bears the royal seal of the Devil himself. It can find no sanction in the original Gospel of Christ. It will be acceptable only to imperialists and capitalists. The contention, nay, the conviction put forth here is that Christianity if it is true to the inspiration of its Founder's life, and to his teachings, must touch men and women with the fire of the noblest nationalism.

Turn for a moment to the life of Jesus. The records of the Baptism, the Temptation, the Conversation at Caesarea-Philippi, the entry into Jerusalem,

the trials before Caiaphas and Pilate make it clear that Jesus realized he was "Messiah" and that his followers regarded him as "Messiah." The Hebrew prophetic tradition and history impress upon us the fact that the "Messiah" was to be a national figure, a nationalist Hero who would save his people and restore their liberty to them. Jesus was consciously striving to fulfil his nationalist mission, not by the popular methods, not in the narrower sense, but on a larger plane and by a different strategy. There are evidences which go to show that at the beginning of his public service Jesus expected that his nationalistic, messianic plan for Israel would be successful. (Matthew XXIII: 37 ff; Luke XII: 34 ff; XIX:41 ff.) In moving words he lamented the fact that the Jews, his people, 'the Children' whose bread it was not meet to give to the dogs, had refused to accept his leadership because of his non-violent philosophy of life. "How often I would fain have gathered your children as a fowl gathers her brood under her wings! But you would not have it! See, your house is to be left to yourselves" (Luke XIII:34). No one but a true nationalist in the agony of disappointment and betrayal could have uttered those burning words that Jesus spoke on the way to the Crucifixion. "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me but weep for yourselves and for your children! For there are days coming

when the cry will be 'Blessed are the barren, the wombs that have never borne and the breasts that have never suckled!' Then will people say to the mountains 'Fall on us' and to the hills 'Cover us,'" (Luke XXIII:29 50).

His plan for the Jews seems to have been that under his leadership they should put aside all thoughts of vengeance, renounce the method of violence and by wholly non-violent resistance convert enemies into friends, and by his new strategy of religio-political action establish the great brotherhood, the Kingdom of God, the Divine Commonwealth in which love, liberty, and justice would prevail. It was a plan not of violent revolt but of revolutionary reconciliation. Would it be too much to say that this may also be his plan for India; and that through Mahatma Gandhi India has at length discovered it? Does it not impose a heavier nationalistic burden on Christian Indians?

But we can have no adequate conception of the *raison d'être* of the Christian nationalist unless we consider, at least briefly, the teachings of Jesus and the tone of the context. The revolutionary utterance of Mary at the earliest stage of the Messianic career is fraught with nationalism. Mary the mother of Jesus says, "He has done a deed of might with His arm, He has scattered the proud and their purposes,

princes He has dethroned, and the poor He has uplifted, He has satisfied the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty. He has succoured His servant Israel, mindful of His mercy, as He promised our fathers, Abraham and his offspring for ever." (Luke I. 46-55.) Mary is filled with the inspiration of nationality. Her people are unique. She is a Jewess. She can claim the past of her people, of Abraham and his offspring for ever. God has shown a special favour to her nation suffering under Roman domination and internal strife. The passionate cry of the young mother of Israel's Messiah rings down the centuries to animate true nationalists everywhere. Should it not find a response in the hearts of Christian Indians?

At the very outset of his revolutionary career Jesus proclaimed in his Nazareth Manifesto: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me : for He has consecrated me to preach the good news to the poor, He has sent me to proclaim release for captives and recovery of sight for the blind, to set free the oppressed, to proclaim the Lord's year of jubilee." (Luke IV. 18-19.) This proclamation with which he opened his public service was taken from the Jewish Scriptures, from the great prophet Isaiah (XI, 1-2). At once Jesus took his stand as a nationalistic leader who was going to fulfil the age-long aspirations of the Jewish

race. "Today, this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing" (Luke IV 22.) What can be clearer than the fact that Jesus did consider himself a freedom-seeking nationalist, consecrated by God to liberate the exploited, the injured, the oppressed, and the disinherited and show them the way to obtain their birth-right? To be sure, in his own mind he was conscious of the claims of humanity. But true nationalism is concentric internationalism, a love for one's own country large enough to encircle the world, a passion for justice and freedom exalted enough to reach beyond one's own people to all races who suffer captivity and exploitation. And Indian nationalism is precisely that, is undeniably concentric internationalism. There are several evidences of this fact in the resolutions of the All-India Congress Committee and the Working Committee. Although with our peculiar political handicap it is not easy to express our international consciousness in any substantial way. The Nazareth Manifesto gives a tremendous challenge to the Christian Indian to pattern his life on his Master's and feel consecrated by God to give himself unsparingly to the arduous task of the nationalist—yes even unto Calvary.

Strangely enough Jesus summed up his teachings in this great command: "Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy mind, with all

thy soul, and with all thy strength, and love thy neighbour as thyself " (Matthew XXII. 37-40.) This injunction is a perpetual thorn in the flesh of those who would find easy and cheap solace in a spiritualized religion. It would not have been so bad if they were told to love God, because they would have to do nothing about it save worship and perhaps some safe charities. But the second clause upsets their house of cards. As followers of Christ we are commanded to seek to establish the divine commonwealth on earth, which implies that we must struggle for the political, social, economic, and moral rights of the disinherited, so that they might have concrete evidence of the Fatherhood of God, believe in His love, and learn to serve Him, and with joy do His will. We must achieve right relations with God, mentally, spiritually, morally, and physically by using our physical, moral, mental and spiritual resources to establish justice on earth, so that our fellowmen are able to live the full and abundant life. And the vital, unquenchable inspiration must come from our contact with God. We cannot love God as positively and completely as Jesus commanded without realizing His universal Fatherhood. If God is the Father of all races He cannot be partial to one race ; but, rather, with the loving heart of a Father wills that all His children, regardless of accidents of complexion,

language, climate, geographical position, manners and customs, should enjoy the fruits of liberty, justice and brotherhood, working together, facing dangers together, and together achieving for the good of all. If this is God's will, what is our duty ?

We dare not exempt ourselves from fighting for the God-given rights of our countrymen and our fellowmen, to remove the causes of their poverty, malnutrition, and inequalities of opportunity, on the grounds that we love God and worship and serve Him by going about "preaching" the Gospel. We must remind ourselves that the Founder of Christianity proclaimed the Gospel of Reconstruction—"The Lord's year of jubilee," which was according to the old Jewish Law the sabbatical year, observed once in forty-nine, for redistribution of land, release of slaves, cancellation of debts and the beginning of a reconstructed life for the nation. And we must bear in mind how he proclaimed it, in what setting, with what accompaniments. It was done in the midst of untiring national service, healing, feeding, liberating. Jesus would have had to be a different sort of person to divorce action from theory, and to preach in an idealistic vacuum. We dare not exempt ourselves from action on behalf of the children of God. If we do so, we cease to love God, and love merely an idol of Him that we have made for our convenience and

set up in our hearts. We either love and serve God as the universal Father *and act accordingly*, or our actions betray that we love our own image of God, made to suit our prejudices and interests. And when we do this we certainly do not 'worship Him in Spirit and in truth,' but carnally and falsely.

Fr. J. C. Winslow rightly observes: "There is still too much tendency to regard religion as an affair of the individual soul, and to ignore the larger obligations which it imposes. I think it is true that Indian Christians still need to develop a keen social consciousness. What is required is something parallel to the movement of 'Christian Socialism' associated with the names of Frederick Denison Maurice, Charles Kingsley and Henry Scott Holland in England in the last century—a movement which will see the redemption of society to be no less the end of religion than the redemption of the individual." (*Dawn of Indian Freedom*—p. 201.) When Christian Indians determine to live by Christ's Gospel of Reconstruction they will develop a keen social and national consciousness. And when this happens on a large scale, then, indeed, we shall find the banner of Christian nationalism in the vanguard of our nation's sacred fight for justice and for liberty.

" We will conquer with God's own armour ;
We will slay with the Spirit's sword ;

Vanquish with love that can meekly suffer,
Die and arise in the name of the Lord."

Indian Christianity will lack both perception and genuineness if it fails to recognize its great opportunity for co-operation in the national campaign. If, as we believe, original Christianity has a contribution to make to India it must endeavour to begin making it in India's days of struggle and sorrow. Nothing but petty criticisms can be offered from outside. We need no gilt-edged invitations. We are Indians. Are we proud of our motherland with all her faults, not ignorant of the short-comings of our countrymen or of the social practices of the land, but resolved to give our lives to change frailty into strength, captivity into freedom, evils into forms of good? Christian nationalists must be forthcoming, not one by one, but in appreciable numbers, who will enter the struggle, take their places side by side with their non-Christian comrades, and instil the Christ-conscience into Indian politics, into Indian public life, into the ranks of those who espouse the national cause, and prove that they are, like the best of their non-Christian comrades, above the enticements of reward, office, or power. If we have the unflinching initiative, the sturdy tenacity of purpose and the integrity of the Christ-Life, let us offer this contribution to India's national regeneration.

SONG OF INDIA

Like priceless jewels flung in queenly sport
By Beauty, glowing that first memoried night
To snare Love's gaze and Love's attention court,
Our lavish Indian stars are gorgeous, bright;
The sari's clinging, flowing loveliness,
The bloom of youth on rounded limbs, black hair,
And bashful eyes that yearn to love's caress,
Our brides are sweet as joy, as pure as prayer;
And like a god's divine illuming dream
Enskied, too vast and beautiful for earth,
Our peerless moon bends from her throne to beam
And flood with visions our night-stricken dearth.

But lives in childhood doomed to widow's fate,
Like tunes unfinished snapp'd on snapping strings,
Wail, wail in secret, weep and wailing wait
For death to save them from their sufferings;
And like a stealthy reaper, scythe in hand,
Grim poverty by night mows down our youth;
The Tyrant's greed despoils our royal land,
Turns warrior's sons to flattering thieves, forsooth.
When, when O God! in our luxuriant clime.
Once of the free and brave, true, rich and glad,
Will fratricidal hate and darkling crime
Of slavery cease to vex and make Thee sad?

Cyril Madak.

CHAPTER III

THE NATIONAL GOAL

An Australian missionary of Tory enlightenment said to me once: "What is all this ado about Swarajya? You know you are happier under the British than you will be under Hindu rule." "And" he added "see how good the British are. In Nazi Germany many of you would not be alive at all." This little speech of my esteemed Tory friend almost took my breath away. Not more than a few days before a Christian Indian had said just that! I thought the lion and the lamb had verily met to drink from the same fount! I turned to him and asked "Is *Hindu* rule the national goal of India? And would you label the rule in your country as Hindu or Christian?" What foreign missionaries believe or do not believe about India is a matter of secondary importance. Most of them come with conventional prejudices and have some more inculcated upon them by their social group in India. And they are birds of passage. But what chiefly under their imposed tutelage, we, Christian Indians, accept is of first-class importance. The tragedy is that often we are so mistaken about the goal that our country is striving

against odds to reach that we can not correct errors even when they slap us in the face.

We have not been part of the national upheaval of the last half a century. We have been passive on-lookers. We have not let the national movement course through our pulses. We have stood aloof. It is, therefore, only natural that we are not even conscious of the nationalist goal: and how often that goal has meant gaol ! We hear rumours of the New India that is to be. We are half suspicious, half intrigued, half afraid of it.

What, then, is the New India to be ? Is it a phantasy in the minds of political cubists, or a chime-ra set up by clever revolutionaries, or a poet's dream ? Or is the New India something deducible from facts, from objective conditions, from the actual trend of events, from measurable needs ? The New India is to be a glorious reality as real as the Taj Mahal, built on the sure foundation of needs, with the stone and cement of facts. But it will not be a naked structure. It will be clothed in prophetic beauty. Reduced to its ground-plan, the New India is to be free, happy, and progressive. But, of course, that is baldly stated. A ground plan is never decorative. Let us use our creative imagination to project into the future the structure that must rise upon this ground-plan.

India's aspirations for freedom must be consummated. She must be free. But of late we have concentrated our attention on political freedom until many of us have come to believe in a very restricted meaning of freedom. It is necessary, therefore, to remind ourselves that India needs to be free from many yokes besides foreign rule. First of all India must be free from fear. Millions of Indian men and women live in constant fear—fear of starvation, of unemployment, of displeasing those in authority, of disease, of social or economic insecurity of various kinds, and fear of malignant powers. When fear clutches the heart there can be no hope of normal growth of body, mind and spirit or of wholesome self-expression. Fear makes men and women moral cowards, compels them to be deceitful and hypocritical. Fear drives them to dreadful lengths of physical and mental suffering and often to a line of action which destroys all self-respect, courage, and dignity. The New India must provide against those factors that paralyse millions of our people with fear. The Indian State must make provision for the employment of every citizen in a field best suited to individual aptitudes. Freedom of speech and of considered self-expression, of registering legitimate protests and of making valid demands must be assured to every citizen regardless of creed,

caste, or party labels. Definite measures will have to be adopted to free the people of the New India from the tyranny of fear. Jesus was definitely set on removing fear from the hearts of people. He always exorcised fear from the lives of those whom he met. As he said: "Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Realm" (Luke: XII. 32.) Why should we not act on this promise?

We cannot hope to liberate people from the fear of malignant powers unless we aim at liberating them from superstition. There is nothing particularly pagan about superstitions. Christians in the West have their own brand, just as we have ours. In fact, any belief seriously held which is not tested by reason is a superstition. Priestcraft has contrived very adroitly to multiply and perpetuate superstitious notions, especially in India.

Illiteracy and ignorance, chiefly due to lack of opportunity to learn, have afforded fertilized soil for our rich crop of superstitions. Illiteracy has kept thousands of men and women from acquainting themselves with facts and the propaganda of reformers. Ignorance has kept them credulous enough to believe without questioning what is handed down by tradition century after century. And they are willing to pin their faith to the most fantastic probabilities

The effect of all this is vicious. They are slaves to priest-craft and witchcraft. They often refuse progressive methods in agriculture and reject medical aid. They cannot appreciate the laws of hygiene and sanitation. † They prefer to keep themselves shut away from beneficent forces. The New India must be rescued by the State from the enervating darkness of superstition.

It has been possible for the caste-system with all its social inequalities to exist in this country chiefly because vast numbers of our people have been doomed to ignorance and superstition. If those of the various disinherited castes had been equipped with knowledge and the courage that comes with knowledge, the Indian social system would have been refashioned centuries ago. Social and economic and communal barriers dividing the nation into segregated camps have played more than enough havoc in India. Not only do these irrational distinctions breed resentment but disunity and horrid complexes. People brought up to believe themselves inferior, unwanted, dispossessed by divine fiat cannot contribute to national economy or play their rightful part in the life of the nation. No nation can expect to be strong and progressive which has tens of thousands of men and women who are outcastes, and therefore, non-contributing. Legislation must be planned to rid the

country of all caste or class or sectional compartments, so that the Indian nation can be a political unit, with all the advantages of socio-economic interdependence and cultural interpenetration. The New India must enjoy the democratic freedom of a classless society. "He that will be the greatest among you shall be the servant of all" (Matthew. XX. 27.) Are Christians sincerely trying to put this injunction into practice? Are we trained in Christliness enough to demonstrate the truth of these words? If the greatest of us is actually the servant of all, the distinctions of caste and class will not obtain in our midst, and we can co-operate with India towards the making of a classless society.

It is now as good as an axiom that only a classless society can liquidate poverty by placing the national wealth at the disposal of the community. We are now able, thanks to the self-sacrificing labours of intrepid pioneers, to understand that the true causes of poverty lie not in the decrees of providence but in capitalism and private property; and that the propertied class, vulgarly called the 'haves', fights from all kinds of ambushes, under all manner of disguises, to protect privileges. And we know that the dispossessed class, vulgarly called the 'have-nots' is allowed to go through infernal tortures of abject poverty so as to be deserving of rich reward here-

after. We are convinced of the unspeakable injustice of the present system. We know several cases of wealthy 'untouchables' who received honours from everybody and in whose favour the 'touchables' were quite willing to relax caste restrictions. Scarcity keeps men, women and children undernourished, sickly, dull, shut out from the satisfaction of common human needs. Indigence drives people to frantic immorality, to acts of desperation. Poverty must be gradually eradicated from the State of the New India. With planned economy every citizen of the nation should be free to enjoy the privileges of hard work, a square meal, opportunities for mental and moral improvement, and security for old age. India must find release from the despotism of poverty. If only the Christian ideal could be lived out we would probably reduce indigence by more than half. "But whoever possesses this world's goods, and notices his brother in need, and shuts his heart against him, how can love to God remain in him? Let us put our love not into words or into talk but into deeds and make it real" (I. John. III.17-18) Are we willing to pay the price to put out "Christian" love not into words or into talk but into deeds and make it vital?

India has not found freedom from fear, from superstition, from social inequalities, from economic

injustice under foreign rule, even when that rule was supposedly enlightened. It is quite evident, therefore, that the New India must have the right to decide its own affairs, pass its own laws, determine its own internal and foreign policy, develop its own economic system and allied industrial organization, and interpret the meaning of international reciprocity. As long as an arbitrary power fixes the salary of one Britisher at three-hundred times that of the average Indian graduate, and that of a thousand others in descending scales of flagrant disparity; as long as an arbitrary power exists in India for the express purpose of keeping Indians in subjection so that the White Empire might thrive at our expense; and as long as an arbitrary power keeps from Indians the right to direct the course of the nation for the best interests of the people themselves; so long will there be no hope of obtaining that liberty which alone is powerful enough to eradicate, root and branch, the pernicious sway of fear, ignorance, disunity, and beggary. Hence, the New India must be free to work out its own scheme of *svarajya*. It must be a self-determining partner in the international fraternity. India does not covet exclusive national sovereignty. It seeks the self-determination which will enable it to be an equal member of the community of nations.

The people of India have had more than their share of unhappiness. The New India must be happy. It will not suffice if she has gained political independence and does not use that independence to implement the happiness and well-being of the people. But India will be happy when her millions are emancipated from blood-consuming insecurity, when the thought-life of her millions is released from ignorance and superstition, when her social system is reconstructed on a pattern of equity and justice, when her millions participate in planing the national economy, administration, and legislation. India will then be happy not because of some mysterious wand that freedom waves over the people, but because India's happiness will be the direct result of the fact that the needs of the vast population are satisfied. Their economic requirements, their social demands, their intellectual hunger, and their moral urge must find satisfaction when India is free. Then only will a free India be happy. As Jesus said "I have come that ye may have life and have it more abundantly" (John X. 10.)

Nevertheless the happiness of the New India must not become a stagnant pool, and her freedom must not deteriorate into static reminiscence. The New India must be progressive. Her people must be constantly aware of the goal that has been set for the nation. They must be inspired to struggle together

as one man, suffer with joy, keep on co-operatively toiling towards the national goal. It is because Indians were content to rest on their oars that India lost her liberty and her wealth. When the fruits of their labour are for them and their children for ever, there will be a strong incentive for hard work and patient endurance of hardships. The New India must be vigorous in experimentation, fearless in trying out innovations. She must not sink into the conservatism of capricious senility and persecute experimenters, discoverers, prophets, and pioneers in any field of thought or activity, provided, of course, that such activity is not subversive to the highest interests of the nation as a whole. The New India must show signs of vital energy by sturdily forging ahead. She must witness to the integrity of freedom, the gospel of justice, and the reality of co-operating with God for the furtherance of His Plan.

“Here in our darkness now the powers of light,
 Stir us to change this land, that we have filled,
 With squalor and with nightmare and with night
 To Beauty’s self; they summon to rebuild,
 Rebuild in beauty on the burnt-out coals,
 Not to the heart’s desire but to the soul’s.”

In such moving words Masfield appeals to us to build the New India not with the passions and

prejudices of the heart but with the clear vision of the soul.

If this is what the New India is to be, what does the building of it demand ? Obviously we must move out of our scattered gipsy camps into the heart of the nation. We must adjust ourselves to see the Indian point of view, after decades of maladjustment in which most of us strove to see everything from the White man's perspective. Only then may we hope to understand the situation and take an intelligent part in the grim struggle for national reconstruction. A strong sense of nationality is needed which will bind us to our people and enable us in effect to annul sectional claims. The more we absorb the Indian spirit, the more we live and breathe in the cultural and national atmosphere of India, the better will we be able to appreciate the needs, aspirations, and hopes and fears of Indians, and feel the indignities and disabilities which Indians suffer. Otherwise we may look on as alien spectators, and, occasionally, as carping critics, but we shall never find our niche in the New India.

Men and women will be needed, in tens of thousands, who can merge their identity, individual and communal, in the nation as a whole, and make it the ruling passion of their lives to serve God in the concrete service of the motherland. This cannot be done by a niggardly patriotism that always keeps one

eye on returns. We must be willing to be swept away by a buoyant nationalism to the high seas of defiant creativity and daring service. An alertness to seize opportunities of service should characterize our community. We should be prepared to collaborate with the Congress in any constructive scheme, in any task that has to be undertaken, in any piece of work calculated to further the cause of the nation. It may be the unromantic work of liquidating illiteracy in a given area ; the arduous task of intercommunal reconciliation. It may be the drab routine of serving in a Congress Volunteer camp, or the exacting labours of rural or social reconstruction. Or it may be untiring inculcation of national ideals into the minds of students or workers or peasants. Or it may be the privilege of taking part in a *satyagraha* campaign. If we have the vision of the New India constantly before us, we shall find work enough that needs to be done. We should not fall into the trap of waiting for spectacular undertakings. We should begin the work that calls for attention, begin with things nearest at hand, and strive to put the stamp of excellence on the smallest tasks.

Tens of thousands of men and women will be needed who have vision to see the splendid possibilities of the great New India. Sightless pessimists will be less useful than stone pillars. Vision must

be coupled with courage. We must bid the world defiance by living up to our insight. Fear of odds and fear of consequences must remain marks of cowardice. We shall need prophets of indomitable courage to challenge those who swerve even a little from the vow of the builder; and to keep the fire burning in the heart of our people. We shall need heroic men and women who are not afraid to live dangerously and die gallantly for the sake of their vision of the New India.

If the New India is to become a reality we shall need cohorts of men and women who have the vital strength of character, who can dare to be honest when dishonesty pays; who can afford to be non-violent when violence seems to hold the field; who can be depended upon to stand by their posts of duty even if fire and brimstone drop from the skies and the earth throws up molten lava. For, as will be readily agreed, the New India, to which honoured patriots of two generations have dedicated their lives, the New India that alone can satisfy our ideals will not be fashioned except by sweating blood. It will cost suffering, endurance, faith, and honest toil. The legend of the wishing-tree—*kalpataru*—will not avail us. This gloriously free, happy, progressive India of our dreams must be wrought step by step, with patient constancy, and unyielding hope.

“God give us men! A time like this demands
Strong minds, great hearts, true faith and
ready hands;

Men whom the lust of office does not kill;
Men whom the spoils of office cannot buy;
Men who possess opinions and a will;
Men who have honour; men who will not lie;
Men who can stand before a demagogue
And damn his treacherous flatteries without
winking!

Tall men, sun-crowned, who live above the fog.
In public duty and in private thinking;
For while the rabble with their thumb-worn
creeds;

Their large professions and their little deeds,
Mingle in selfish strife, lo! Freedom weeps,
Wrong rules the land and waiting justice
sleeps.”

We need moral giants who will stand out among
their adversaries like Titans among the pygmies.

It means, therefore, that while we must become
more truly Indian so as to comprehend the plan of
the New India, we must at the same time become
more ardently Christian so as to execute the plan
faithfully according to the mind of God. The anaemic
Christianity looking with lack-lustre eyes for the deli-
verance of death must give place to a virile Christianity

which strives to bring deliverance for men and women here on earth, proclaiming the Lord's year of jubilee. We must undergo the discipline of concentration, even as Jesus did, in order that we might be transfigured from small, self-centred, timid creatures into stalwart warriors of God and His divine commonwealth. Our lives must be God-centred so that every act of ours is an affirmation of God's universal love.

"We are not here to play, to dream, to drift;
We have hard work to do and loads to lift;
Shun not the struggle—face it—'tis God's gift.
Be strong! Be strong!"

Indeed, such men and women, touched by the spirit of the living Christ into dauntless heroes and heroines will be needed in as large numbers as the Church can send them forth.

Finally, we must be aflame with the passion for justice, brotherhood, and liberty, even as Jesus was. Then only will we be as sensitive as the Master and feel in our flesh the wounds of injustice, hatred, and exploitation inflicted on our people. Then only will it be impossible for us to fold our hands and acquiesce while freezing wrongs are heaped like blocks of ice on our emaciated men, women and children. Then only will we break all chains that keep us safe in callous isolation, and leap beside our disinherited fellow citizens to share their misfortunes, their battle, their

trials, and their triumph. Then only will we give the Master a chance of saying to us: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Matthew. XXVI. 40). This is the plumbline which the Master will use to test our Christianity.

BROTHERHOOD

We are not men but actors on a stage,
With painted glow for patriot passion, screens
For setting, paper-swords wherewith to wage
Our epic fight for Freedom. Sickly scenes
For *Bharatvarsh*, where men like Pandus fought
The War of wars, and won a victory
'Gainst lustful Empire's gathering legions, wrought
A burning pattern in the tapestry
Of twilight, veiling age of gallant deeds
From this, this cancered age of morbid schemes
And ambushed fratricide. O that our creeds
Would show us God and man, turn prated dreams
Of godliness to action godlike strong,
Unflinched to hold the breach for Brotherhood,
Nearth Freedom's hallowed flag, and flout the throng
Of patrons preaching self-invested good !
O! Muslims, Hindus, Christians, Parsees, rise !
Rise! all ye children of this storied land !
Strike, strike the devil's bandage from your eyes!
And proudly for your Country's honour stand !

Cyril Modak.

CHAPTER IV

COMMUNALISM

In the welter of competing interests there is a strong temptation for every community to magnify its importance and its grievances. Every community feels excited to clamour for safeguards and general placation. This mood of assertive communalism is natural at a certain stage of political development. As India grows in self-determination and shapes its political machinery for the good of every citizen the communalist drive is bound to weaken and die out. But even at this stage it is necessary for the Christian Indian community to remind itself that Christ's mandate is a mandate of universal community in which there is no Jew nor Gentile, barbarian nor Scythian, bond nor free, male nor female. Our Christianity must be genuine enough to denounce communal, racial, religious, social, or national barriers which prevent us from realizing the free brotherhood of man.

The Christian section of the Indian nation has valiantly resisted communalism for centuries because it knows that communalism is unchristian. It is

disappointing to find the presumably Christian Editor of the "Statesman" waste more than half a column recently to wonder how and why the notorious Communal Award is unchristian. Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee commenting on this editorial says, "It (the Communal Award) may not be 'unchristian,' but in my humble opinion it is unjust, unrighteous, and machiavellian." (*Modern Review*, December 1939, p. 615.) He goes on to say, "The Anglo-Indian paper says that it was 'devised in a Christian country to meet a difficult situation resulting from the inability of unchristians to agree.' That the unchristians could not agree was not unexpected by their selectors. They were not elected by their countrymen but chosen by British imperialists with a particular object in view. The imperialists wanted men who would not be able to agree and got them. If they had wanted men who would agree, they could have got them." Surely, the Editor of the "Statesman," and those of his way of thinking, will hardly contend that something unjust, unrighteous, and satanic is Christian, nor that only an unchristian measure could meet the unchristian situation of disunity created by imperialistic politics. Surely, he will agree that there is a Christian method to solve the communal problem and that such a Christian method was not welcomed by the un-

unchristian statesman of the "Christian" country where the Communal Award was devised.

One has only to turn to the Great Command in his copy of the New Testament to find that a Christian must love his neighbour *as himself*. Surely, anything that makes a follower of Christ break Christ's Great Command is diabolically unchristian. Does the Communal Award, based as it is on communal suspicion, hatred, and bitterness, interfere with Christ's command of love or not? A communalist cannot function as a Christian because by virtue of his communalist outlook he shuts out the larger truth, the larger justice, the larger brotherhood. He thinks and feels and wills within the cramped cabin of his own group and fiercely protects the interests of that little unit. He violates the spirit of universal community which Jesus made so central in his teachings and ministry. He behaves as the high priest or the Levite in the parable of the good Samaritan, and comes under the Master's stern condemnation.

A Christian communalist is a sorry contradiction in terms just the same as a Christian villain: and there are many of both! A Christian cannot be a communalist because his creed is poles apart from the religious devilry of communalism. Where there is love there must be mutual trust. Mutual trust

spontaneously creates a stimulating atmosphere of brotherhood. In such an atmosphere of real brotherhood no demand will be made by any member or unit which infringes upon the rights of another member or unit. For brotherhood implies reciprocal justice. This is the Christian attitude.

A true follower of Christ stands for inter-related justice and freedom and universal community. How can he isolate himself and his religious group from the rest of his countrymen or fellowmen and stand revolver in hand to secure the well-being of his group by itself? How can he sanction or even tolerate the basic principles of communalism—suspicion, bitterness, hate and vanity? A true Christian is pledged to cleanse his own life and the lives of others of the poison of bitterness, hate, vanity, and suspicion. He is a reconciler, a peace-maker, which means that he believes in the redemptive power of suffering love. How can he justify his communalism?

The Beatitudes, it may safely be asserted, set up the model for a true follower of Christ. Every one of these Beatitudes is diametrically opposed to the spirit and creed of communalism. But, of course, the shrewd politician complains that all this is idealistic ethics which cannot stand the rough-and-tumble of practical life. That is where the politician is blinded by his shrewdness.

Often we label something idealism if we wish to eschew it and sometimes we call it idealism if we wish to take refuge in it. But the ethic of love, which is the corner-stone of Christianity, is not impracticable idealism. It is meant to be very realistic practice. We have turned practice into theory and left it on the lecterns of our churches. But the inescapable fact still haunts us, and will continue to madden us until we face it, that Christ's ethic of love demands from us the unequivocal intention of community, the uncompromising recognition of the universal Father-hood of God as a postulate for the inter-communal, inter-racial, international community of man, with equality, justice, and liberty as the common birthright of all. As Edwin Markham, that Apostle of Man, says:

“Clear the way, then, clear the way ;
 Blind creeds and kings have had their day.
 Break the dead branches from the path ;
 Our hope is in the aftermath—
 To this event the ages ran :
 Make way for BROTHERHOOD
 —make way for MAN.”

There is nothing romantic about such a recognition. On the contrary, anything else must prove self-frustrating. Trust begets trust. Love generates love. The intention of right relations elicits justice.

Only on such a basis can a new order be built. Only on such a basis can the world hope for a lasting peace, that furthers civilization and ensures progress. Thousands of years have proved that suspicion begets suspicion and hate generates hate and the intention of domination excites sullen vindictiveness. Surely it is sheer realism, rugged, open-eyed realism to adopt the ethic of love, the Christ-way, when that alone will give humanity the New Age for which millions toil and bleed and strive.

Like all selfishness communalism is self-negating, for in seeking the lesser good it sets up a reaction which thwarts its purposes. The aggressive communalism of the Muslim League provoked the Hindu Mahasabha into existence, and half a dozen other communal organizations sprang to their feet protesting against real or imaginary wrongs, demanding fantastic safeguards and scope for revenge in the form of rights. Individual or group selfishness must excite selfishness in other individuals or groups. In the conflict everybody stands to lose. So also with communalism. In the turmoil of communal conflict no community can hope to gain since each uses its best skill to hinder the other, and all together stupidly mortgage national progress and well-being. Is communalism not self-frustrating ?

The only way to look after one's own interests is to look after the interests of the group to which

one belongs. To be unselfish is the best way of being selfish! Even so the sure method of safeguarding the political rights, social privileges, and economic interests of a communal group is to merge those rights, privileges and interests in the larger, national group. Every community, every unit within the nation stands or falls with the nation. When national interests are subserved, communal interests are automatically subserved. In fact, a citizen can be efficient in his civic duties towards his own group only when he has freed himself from the clinging scales of suspicion against those of another creed, class, caste, or culture. Indian history particularly bears this out. Roman history offers many illustrations. Inter-communalism is the most effective communalism as it is the most enlightened also. Only unity produces collective security and collective security is the best guarantee for individual security.

“God, what a world, if men in street and mart
Felt that same kinship of the human heart
Which makes them, in the face of fire and flood,
Rise to the meaning of true Brotherhood.”

If inter-communalism is the most effective communalism, and communalism is crass and colossal folly, why are so many people misled? The answer is to be found in a relentless analysis of the causes and aims of communalism. The fundamental cause for

the communalistic drive is not cultural or religious but economic. Religion has had the misfortune to be used as a mantle of respectability for many an unholy venture. Communalism is only one of many such ventures. Religion everywhere, no matter who its founder, what its name, teaches the brotherhood of man and the all-wise providence of God. It is unthinkable that any religion would sanction the fratricidal orgies of communalism.

Culture gives breadth of vision and depth of tolerance. In the name of culture bargaining and intolerance could hardly be approved. But the economic issue is a different matter. The propertied class, not only in India but in the world, struggles desperately to safeguard its vested interests. In India the presence of different communities gave the propertied classes an excellent chance to entrench themselves in communalism with the false colours of religion and culture flying above their trenches. The unpropertied class has everything to lose and nothing to gain out of communal clashes.

But as the world over so in India the disinherited class is used either by deceitful promises and unscrupulous propaganda or outright bribes to do the unpleasant work of hooliganism and rioting so as to postpone the day of reckoning for the propertied class. Public attention in most cases is successfully

diverted to the communal issue. Whereas actually it is nothing more dignified or noble than capitalists of every community fighting each other and those agencies which seek liberation and justice for the dispossessed. The name of religion is used to intoxicate the masses to join the struggle. With skilled chicanery a communal issue is bolstered up for the public, while all the time it is an economic struggle, every bit of the nature of the class struggle in other parts of the world where it cannot find shelter in communal trenches.

This ugly fact is especially exposed in the opposition of communal organisation to the Indian National Congress. Although some Congressmen may harbour communal prejudices and antipathies, the Congress is avowedly inter-communal. From its inception to this day, through a period of fifty-three years, it has scrupulously kept its head above the poisonous waters of communalism. It respects an Indian as an Indian and discards communal labels as old rags. This is best seen in the fact that all its rolls of membership are kept, unlike the electoral rolls kept by the British Government, on a national not a communal basis.

Within the Congress are to be found representatives of every conceivable community or section of the nation. The membership fee is low enough so

that the poor can and do join and by virtue of this the Indian National Congress has become the common people's national organisation. There are capitalists and financiers in the Congress but they are there by virtue of their identification with the disinherited masses. And the day the Congress becomes a fascist organisation, like communal organisations to safeguard vested interests, that day its doom shall be sealed.

Naturally the Congress is a potent menace to vested interests as it demands a fair deal and human treatment for the common people, the dispossessed, and the oppressed. Such a demand goes against the grain of the propertied class, no matter under what religious or other classification it stands. And desperately the propertied Hindus, Muslims, Christians and others combine in a conclave of opposition to the Congress, completely burying the hatchet of religious differences. Vested interests must seek the patronage and protection of the imperialist power, because, as experience shows, imperialism tends to be amiable towards propertied classes and through their sinister instrumentality keeps the masses in captivity. The capitalist and the imperialist are hand in glove for mutual profits out of the common plunder. Frequently the religionist is intellectually and morally kidnapped to the plunderer's camp and seldom returns to his suffering people. On the

contrary, he often begins to preach the plunderer's doctrines invested with the impressiveness of religious lore. The communal issue is a camouflage to clothe the nakedness of the struggle of the propertied class to exploit the dispossessed without any religious scruples.

The Christian Indian has no place in a communalistic scheme of things. Our propertied class is extremely small, is negligible. At best our propertied men can join the babel of communal tongues that make confused demands for unreal things. It will not matter as long as the bulk of Christian Indian opinion throws its weight on the side of inter-communal nationalism. That is what matters, for that will effectively safeguard the best interests of the Christian Indian section of the nation by merging its interests with the national interests, and thus securing for it the right to suffer when the nation suffers and to enjoy the fruits of that suffering when the nation enjoys freedom, justice, happiness and progress.

What if the non-christian majority in the Congress uses us in its time of need and discards us in the heyday of its power and prosperity? Such a question must trouble timid minds. But it is needless. By keeping out of the national conflict we earn no rights. By obstructing the nationalist forces with our petty communalism we ensure no future privileges.

The only sane course is to act with uncalculating sincerity on the side of those who bravely struggle and suffer to secure freedom and justice for all and to banish brutish evils that molest all. It is impossible, then, that we have no part in the total triumph and the total reconstruction that must follow. Our action now will determine our position later. Our intercommunal nationalism now will ensure our national rights in future. Our loyalty to the nation now will make the nation morally obliged to be loyal to us when it celebrates its *Vijay-jayanti*—its festival of victory.

As K. T. Paul pointed out in his Round Table Conference speech: "Though our religion has come from outside and we derive from it our deepest and most powerful direction for our private and public life and relationship, it should be realized that we have been in India for 1,700 years.

"In all these seventeen centuries, though it will not be right to say that there were no difficulties, in the main it is a fact that we have had freedom and protection under Hindu and Muslim princes alike. Nor do we feel isolated in point of culture and tradition. We drink from the same founts of literature, art and music, and in fact the most modern tendency of even our religious thought and expression is to relate them, in all loyalty to its past history and

tradition, to the categories that are derived from what is characteristically Indian lore." (H. A. Popley : *K. T. Paul*—p. 193).

We have had, in the past, cordial relations with all our fellow citizens, Hindus, Muslims and others. It is indeed a religious obligation for us to continue to maintain these cordial relations. We must definitely dissociate ourselves from any political alliance except on the basis of freedom, justice and brotherhood.

The existence of communities in India is natural and in a free democratic State such communities, far from being a cause of conflict, should contribute towards a better enrichment of social life, if the economic order were based on justice. We feel that common human needs, economic, social and religious, determine the fundamental human rights everywhere and it is because the economic conditions in India are far from just that religion has been involved in the Communal issue. Statutory guarantees for these basic human rights will materially ease the communal tension.

The following formula should satisfy all Christian Indians :—

- (a) Statutory guarantees be provided for the right of free choice of religion and the protection of the religious rights of all Indian people

individually and corporately, including, specific provision for the right of worship and practice of religion without let or hindrance, subject to public order and morality :

- (b) Statutory provision for the economic security and social and intellectual freedom of individuals and groups, subject to public order and morality :
- (c) Statutory provision for freedom of speech, of discussion and association and assembly in accordance with the principle of non-violence.
- (d) All citizens must be deemed equal before the law, irrespective of caste, creed, sex, or membership in constitutionally formed political or religious groups.
- (e) All citizens must have equal rights and obligations in regard to wells, tanks, roads, educational institutions, places of public resort, etc. maintained by State or public funds or dedicated by private persons for public use.

Whatever the statutory safeguards provided, we urge upon our fellow-citizens the absolute necessity for tolerance and good-will which alone can help any machinery to work smoothly. It is painful

to record that in recent months there has been a general lack of this spirit of tolerance and goodwill in Indian public life.

The Christian Indian Community has persistently resisted the communalist drive as a matter of principle. We can demand nothing for ourselves which we are not willing to demand for everyone else. A planned programme ensuring for every citizen a reasonable satisfaction of common human needs should be set forth with effective machinery for implementing it. Obviously it is the Indian people alone and as a whole, who can prescribe and set this effective machinery into action because they are the best fitted to create a socio-economic order in which such needs can be justly met with due regard to all.

The Christian Indian section of the nation is perhaps best suited and certainly has the finest inspiration from the Master to show the way to creative reconciliation in inter-communal harmony. In a large majority of instances, Hindus, Muslims, Christians and those of other communities live side by side, especially in villages, and normally have cordial relations. By long habit inter-communal inter-dependence is accepted by all concerned. Religious and cultural differences cause no friction until they are made to obtrude. Christians everywhere should keep incubated rivalries, ill-will, and mistrust out of their

surroundings. Christians should be gallant peace-makers. This means that we must uncompromisingly attack the deep-lying causes of strife. We should implement vital good-will among the members of the various communities living around us. Having no political axe to grind, and being small enough not to threaten the interests of other groups, we should prove ourselves worthy of becoming golden links binding other communities. But to do this we must be pure gold cleansed from the dross of communalism in the sanctifying fire of Pentecost.

INDIA'S SUNRISE CHANT.

They came : they brought the sons of strife in hordes
To plunder all my jewelled shrines, onslave
My spirit with despair.....from their proud swords,
Sly shot and shell my sons I could not save.
Forgive them, Lord, they knew not what they did!
And oh ! the wars of hate and greed forbid !

They came : they brought their glass-eyed priests to teach
A Truth they could not see, a Beauty fair
Exalted far beyond their palsied reach,
A Love their shrunken hearts could never share.
Forgive them for they know not what they are,
Sachchidananda ! My Hope ! my Morning Star !

They came : O Christ ! Incarnate Love ! they brought
You in their fury-belching ships, but knew
Not when you slipped away from them and sought
My heart that from their wounds still bleeds anew.
Forgive them if they do not know you now
Among my children driving God's own Plough !

Cyril Modak.

CHAPTER V

SOME MISAPPREHENSIONS

It was a day depressed with dismal rain eleven years ago. A young Christian Indian stood in the verandah of a missionary's bungalow. In spite of his rain-coat he was wet. He stood on the verandah for twenty minutes before the bearer came with the customary message "*Sahib ne salaam diya hai.*" The missionary sahib had called him. The young Christian Indian walked in, his heart fluttering with excitement.

"I am very sorry to inform you," said the missionary, "that you have not been accepted as a candidate for the ministry because of your nationalistic views."

The young Christian Indian was dumb-founded. His eyes glistened with the joy of facing a crisis.

"Oh!" he said "the Church is against nationalism. I am so sorry I applied."

"Yes," explained the missionary, "the Church cannot have those who are against the British Government."

“So,” asked the young nationalist, “the Church is meant to help Imperialism to keep its grip on India’s throat ?”

And not waiting for a reply he left the bungalow. Incidentally, sixteen years ago, this young Christian had become a nationalist by reading a small brochure, *Indian Independence: The Immediate Need* by that staunch friend of India and of Christ, Charlie F. Andrews.

Somewhere in the ‘homeland’ before embarking for India the non-British foreign missionary signs a pledge “to do nothing contrary to or in diminution of the constituted authority of the land”, which is accepted to mean “of the omnipotent British authority.” When he arrives in India he soon learns that he must be *neutral against* India and he will be keeping the missionary pledge. Eventually all his Indian co-workers have, like him, to be *neutral against* India, because otherwise the international relations of missionary work will be upset. The average missionary feels more and more to be the regulating conscience of all concerned obviously because he regulates the purse-strings. Most of those neutral emissaries of religion from Great Britain, Canada, Australia, America, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, find it quite natural to insinuate all kinds of sugar-coated compliments for British imperialist policies and

insidiously make their Indian co-workers blind to the ravages of imperialism. And they have moral reasons to be *neutrally* silent about the sufferings, repression, humiliation, and the just demands of the peoples of India. They are quite free, in fact, they often feel it a moral duty to vent their righteous indignation on Congress activities, on nationalist aspirations, on the caste system, on communal friction, and have no righteous indignation left in their Christian bosoms for the criminally depersonalizing effects of imperialist domination. Mission agents are free to deal in half-truths, which are tantamount to falsehoods, but cannot, ostensibly because of the "missionary pledge," speak the truth on the side of India.

As long as the neutrality pledge continues to lend its shelter to foreign missionaries we must expect misrepresentation of India and her cause as a matter of course. When these missionaries talk (of course there are some exceptions) it is three-fourths of the time about an unreal India, an India which is the figment of their neutral imaginations. Much of what they say is so neutral as to be untrue and misleading! There are several such typical misapprehensions. Bishop Badley in an article in the *Zion's Herald*, published in America, in August 1939, seems to have selected the most important of these characteristically missionary misapprehensions for

re-iteration. In dealing with Bishop Badley's pontifical pronouncements we shall in fact answer the misunderstandings of a wide circle of foreign missionaries and Christian Indians with the missionary outlook.

To begin with a minor point, because it is raised in Bishop Badley's opening paragraph. "Her (India's) greatest resources have always been immaterial," says he. Does he imagine for a moment that British Imperialism is hankering after control of India's "immaterial resources"? India's natural resources are as great as her spiritual potentialities, and these resources are being exploited by British Imperialism with callous disregard for the poverty and suffering and hunger and misery of the millions who by God's decree should own and use these rich material resources of the country. It is misleading to emphasize India's greatness in the realm of religion, philosophy and speculative thought so as to give the impression that India has gained in the practical sphere by British imperialist aggression. India's flourishing handicrafts were deliberately killed, her cloth trade, gold and silver filigree work, brass work smothered to death in thousands of villages all over the country by imperialist aggression and its immoral policies of skilled exploitation. India's village economy, which had helped the vast millions to be happy

for centuries before the advent of the British, was dislodged and the result has been unmitigated poverty, unemployment, and starvation. India's true greatness lies in her incredible capacity to suffer and not injure, to stress plain living and high thinking, and to practise the joint-family system foreshadowing the divine joint-family of the New Age.

Bishop Badley's second paragraph opens thus, "Yet modern India, under the leadership of Great Britain, is rapidly being transformed from a simple agricultural land into one of the great industrial nations of the world." India is getting so rapidly industrialized that 96% of her population is still agrarian without even British-started cottage industries! The worthy Bishop forgets altogether that it is to the advantage of Great Britain to keep India an agricultural hinterland for the advanced manufacturers of the British Empire. It is not our manufactured goods that the British Empire wants. It is our raw material that is drained out dust-cheap and returned in various forms of expensive finished products. It is noteworthy that precisely at this point Indian leadership has met such grim opposition from the leadership of Great Britain. Through the Indian National Congress India demands the right to determine what use she shall make, for the best advantage of her people, of her own material

resources. The subtle ways in which India's industrial and commercial possibilities have been undermined is a sad chapter in the history of British Imperialism. The Village Industries Association of the Congress has made great progress under the Congress Ministries. One of the reasons for India's demand for self-government is that she wishes to develop industrially in accordance with her own genius and the needs of the vast population.

But the most astounding feature of the episcopal misrepresentations is his calling the Indian National Congress "The Hindu Congress" as opposed to the "All-India Moslem League." Perhaps, he does not know that the Indian National Congress is a "National" organization with more than 50,000 Muslim members, 20,000 Christians, hundreds of Parsees, Sikhs, depressed classes, and others. The Congress has refused to sanction any communal distinctions within itself. Its outlook is national, not "Hindu." Its policies are national and international, not communalist. The Congress President announced the 19th of Nov. 1938 as Kamal Atatürk Day and it was observed with fitting ceremony. The Congress has expressed sympathy with "Christian" Spain and "Non-Hindu" China. After the tragic earthquake in Turkey in January, 1940, the President of the Congress launched a Relief Fund for the

Turkish sufferers when the Muslim League President had thought of doing nothing more than sending a telegram of sympathy to his co-religionists. Surely, those of Bishop Badley's way of thinking will not hold that Turkey is populated by Hindus and not Muslims ! The largest majority-party in the world, the Indian National Congress can show a record of fifty-three years of unswerving *nationalism* as opposed to *communalism*, whether in its constitution, its resolutions on the minority-problem, its membership, or its activities. Fittingly enough, it has elected and welcomed Muslims, Parsees, and Christians no less than Hindus to the honoured office of President. What was expressed at the first meeting of the Indian National Congress on the 23th of December, 1885, has been consistently ratified year after year. Its intention was then expressed, as "the eradication, by direct friendly personal intercourse of all possible race, creed, or provincial prejudices amongst all lovers of our country and the fuller development and consolidation of sentiments of national unity" (Sitaramayya: *History of the Congress*—p. 27). At every step the Congress has had to fight against the Imperialist policy of communal vivisection of the nation. The notorious "Communal Award" in the India Act of 1935 which was the result of the Round Table Conferences, has been deeply resented and condemned

by the Indian National Congress. It should be remembered that the Indian National Congress is a democratic organization essentially of the poor, the downtrodden, the peasant, while communal organizations like the Muslim League are essentially of propertied capitalists who crave special privileges from the imperialist power. The so-called communal disunity in India is aggravated by capitalists who use religious differences as a camouflage.

The Methodist Bishop may be interested to learn that the so-called "All-India Muslim League" represents about one-third of the total Muslim population of India. There are the nationalist Muslims, the Jamiat-ul-Ulema, the Ahrars, the Shias and the Momins. Then, there are the Muslims of the Frontier Province and Sind. They have all repudiated the leadership of the League. These singly and together nullify the League's claim to represent the entire Muslim community solely and exclusively. If yet a refutation of their claim is needed, it is conclusively furnished by the following table, showing the result of the last Provincial Assembly elections under the 1935 Act:—

Provinces.	Muslim Seats.	Elected on League Ticket.
Madras	... 28	10
Bombay	... 29	20

Provinces.	Muslim Seats.	Elected on League Ticket
Bengal	... 117	39
United Province	... 64	27
Punjab	... 82	1
Bihar	... 39	...
Central Provinces	... 14	...
Assam	... 34	9
North-West	... 36	...
Orrissa	... 4	...
Sind	... 33	3
Total	... <u>482</u>	<u>109</u>

The remaining 373 Muslim seats were captured by Congress and other non-League candidates.

"Complete independence," in Bishop Badley's opinion is "out of the question, first because of India's inner divisions, which are deep and also based on rival religions and communities, and, secondly, because of her utter inability to defend herself from foreign attack." By blindly echoing the imperialists' stock arguments for withholding from India her inalienable right of complete freedom the neutral Bishop betrays his pro-British impartiality. He offers no evidence to show that he has really studied the communal issue or India's defence problem. So long

as the imperialist power continues in India it continues on the strength of the policy of "divide and rule." It is at pains not to encourage the minorities to come to terms with the majority party. On the contrary it sees to it that the majority-party—the Indian National Congress—is treated almost as a minority, and the minority-parties—the Muslim League, etc.—are treated as all but majority-parties. In any self governing country the minority-parties are expected to come to terms with the majority. But in India leaders of minority-parties are given separate interviews by the Viceroy and the majority-party is expected to come to terms with the minorities. Indeed, the time has come when minorities have become so vociferously aggressive that the majority-party, the Indian National Congress, needs protection. A writer signing his name "Carnaticus" remarked in the *Asiatic Journal* of 1821—"Divide et impera should be the motto for our Indian administration" and Lieutenant Coke likewise pronounced that "our endeavour should be to uphold in full force the (for us fortunate) separation which exists between the different religions and races, not to endeavour to amalgamate them." Both he and Elphinstone agree (in a Minute of May 14th, 1858) with the principle of "divide and rule." (Vide Leonard Schiff: *The Present Condition of India*—p. 165.) The unity of

India will be the *product* of freedom and democracy. It cannot be the pre-condition because of the disuniting effect of imperialist policy.

As for India's defence, does the Bishop hope that British Imperialism will ever be so short-sighted and stupid as to ensure that India can defend herself? As George Lansbury acknowledges with embarrassing candour, "Indians have been told by us time and again that they were not fit for responsible self-government because they were unable to defend themselves against foreign attack. Their reply to this was, of course, that if we really wanted them to govern themselves we would, as quickly as possible, train them for self-defence. In fact our policy has been, exactly the opposite" (*Labour's Way with the Commonwealth*—p. 71.) Only a free, self-governing India can look after its own defence and take steps to rid itself of helpless dependence. Only a free self-governing India can bring about a union of free men. There can be little unity among slaves under a regime of favouritism. Only a free, self-governing India can make her contribution to the world.

It may be said in passing that the Congress repudiates a federation scheme, such as the one offered to us, because it binds us in a sort of three-legged race to the ponderous and snail-paced Indian States: and is highly reactionary. And the

Congress feels the India Act is seriously inadequate because under a guise of reforms it keeps away from India the substance of self-determination and democracy. Hence India's demand for a Constituent Assembly to frame her own Constitution. We know ourselves better than British statesmen do. We can look after our own needs better than the best-intentioned aliens. And India demands her right to be an equal Partner in the Commonwealth, not of the British Empire, but of the Nations.

Let us turn to the diplomatic misapprehensions, promulgated by the imperialist clique in Britain, of which Lord Zetland gave us a sample in his statement in the *Sunday Times* early in February, 1940. Lord Zetland finds it necessary to parade the squat, smug idol of "trusteeship" before the eyes of the British people, believing that this idol still exerts a supernatural influence on their minds. What is "trusteeship"? Is it the right to meddle in other people's affairs so that you keep your own financing class—who happen to control the State—in good humour? Is it the right of a handful of demagogues to keep three hundred and sixty million inhabitants of a sub-continent in a perpetual state of depersonalized, defenceless, dependence? Is it the right of British Imperialism to impose upon Indians, who are racially, culturally and politically different from the British, a

form of government that has kept many of us admiring our shackles? Is trusteeship the right of immoral domination in opposition to the clearly expressed will of the majority?

If Lord Zetland is a Christian and is perchance in a realistic mood, as he advises the Congress to be, let us see what Christian trusteeship implies. Christian trusteeship clearly means holding the interests of others as sacred as one's own. It leaves no room whatever for exploiting a possible handicap of others. It enjoins that we consider nothing as belonging to us even if it is, according to this world's fashion, our very own. We are to consider God the supreme owner of everything. What He has allowed us to have as our share is given in trust to be used for His not our glory and for the working out of His not our purposes. Does Lord Zetland seriously expect any Indian or even any well-informed Englishman or Englishwoman to believe that the trusteeship whereof he speaks is such a trusteeship?

Surely, the Secretary of State for India would not hold that a man who has robbed another should turn round and claim trusteeship over the other man's goods and say, "I am the heaven-appointed trustee of your goods. I think it is bad for you to be rich. I shall decide when, how and how much I shall

return to you. Meanwhile, you must smile and thank God for my interest in your welfare!" This seems akin to what the British Government through its officials is doing with India. But for the few staunch British spokesmen of justice and liberty, who have always raised their voices on behalf of India, we would be driven to consider the English people very gullible indeed !

Or let us look at Lord Zetland's claim that Britain is India's trustee from the point of view of legal morality, By law no man can be appointed as trustee if his interests clash with those of the trust. It is accepted as a working principle that adverse interests are sufficient ground to disqualify a person from trusteeship. Do the financial interests of Britain's ruling class not clash violently with India's nationalist interests ?

India demands complete independence and the right to work out her own destiny. The British ruling class desires to keep Britain in such a position that they can respectably exploit India economically and politically regardless of the national deterioration, the cultural and moral emasculation that has been and must be the result of any foreign rule in India. India wishes to be free. British financiers wish to keep their grip on India's throat. India demands the freedom to make her own constitution. Britain

is made to believe by her astute financial magnates and their political puppets that it is her prerogative to be a political Lady Bountiful and dole out a meagre meaningless measure of verbal freedom to India. Is Britain not legally disqualified from trusteeship of India?

Why do British diplomats confuse their people by deliberately perverting the meanings of words? Can the word 'trusteeship' ever be applied to imperialistic domination? Is there enough *reciprocity* of material, moral, cultural or national gain to make the British connection with India mutually desired and mutually desirable? Imperialism implies that the balance sheet be in favour of the ruling race, that the ruled look on aghast at their share of the debits.

British Imperialism in relation to India has been a policy of control largely by capitalistic and political colonization. It has put its trust in superior diplomacy and superior armed strength. It has dominated, ruled, and exploited the Indian people in flagrant contradiction to the principles of Christianity expounded to British congregations. With skilled sophistry the notion has been made popular that as superiority enabled a race to survive, survival was a God-given proof of superiority. Thus ruling White nations were superior nations with a right to rule and exploit and if need be to annihilate the

inferior races who had proved their inferiority by not being madly aggressive. From such premises it was easy by a machiavellian logic to come to Kipling's theory of the "White man's burden," and Lord Zetland's pronouncement of "Britain's trusteeship." The preposterous audacity of it has made the "White man's burden" and "Britain's trusteeship" huge jokes throughout the world.

With the characteristic mental agility of a British diplomat, Lord Zetland says that India "has made a fetish of the word independence." Many of us took the word 'independence' from the shrine of British history and literature. Are we to be told now that we took a 'fetish'? Did Britain fight her invaders, conquerors, and despotic kings for the sake of a fetish? Or has the ideal of independence fossilized into a fetish during its passage from Britain to India? The Secretary of State for India should tell us how to discriminate between the fetish and the ideal. Would he suggest for instance that 'complete independence' is a fetish and 'dominion status' is an ideal? But by the same logic may it not be suggested to the British Secretary of State for India that he and his colleagues have made a veritable fetish of the term 'dominion status,' unwilling to see that the hearts of millions of Indian people are passionately demanding something bigger, more real, more worth-

while, more in keeping with their creed of non-violence ?

Lord Zetland makes an observation of universal significance when he advises Indians to free themselves from "the tyranny of phrases". Undoubtedly, the tyranny of phrases is most vicious. As political tyranny demoralizes those who suffer under it, so does the tyranny of phrases cramp the thinking of those who accept it. But has it occurred to Lord Zetland that he and his colleagues seem to be so completely under the tyranny of the phrases 'dominion status', 'progressive realization of responsible self-government,' 'communal harmony,' 'problem of the princes', etc., that their thinking is hopelessly cramped, making it virtually impossible for them to see, what is so clear to numerous Indians, Americans, Jews and even some Englishmen like C. F. Andrews, that India alone can determine her own future and fashion a workable and satisfactory constitution for her people? While the India Act of 1935 was still on the anvil, George Lansbury said, "Why should we not ask Indians themselves to frame a Constitution?" (*Labour's Way With the Commonwealth*—p. 79.)

The evil effects of the 'tyranny of phrases' are not limited to Indians. These evil effects are visible in the thought and speech and mental confusion of the British majority-party so much that we have

Lord Zetland advising others to overthrow a tyranny that he himself unconsciously accepts. And, what is more, Lord Zetland forgets that India does want to shake off the tyranny of British diplomatic phrases, a tyranny that has done much to keep India under the political and cultural domination of the British ruling class.

Finally, Lord Zetland speaks to Indian leaders to "descend from idealism to realism, from the abstract to the concrete." Again he betrays how unmistakably he is under the tyranny of phrases. Otherwise he would have known that India made that descent fifty years ago as an inevitable result of her connection with Britain. It was entirely because India turned from idealism to realism, from the abstract to the concrete, and demanded realistic freedom and democracy that the British ruling class, Lord Zetland's predecessors as much as he himself, have put up such a desperate opposition. India does not want merely the ideal of freedom, but its reality. Will Lord Zetland, with his old love for India, show us how we may achieve the concrete reality of liberty and democracy? Lord Zetland will do well to ponder over the prophetic words of that great and good Labourite, George Lansbury: "Remember," says he, "no government can survive without the consent of the governed, and that the wisest policy is to give freely

to reason what we may be obliged to yield to force" (*Labour's Way with the Commonwealth*—p. 81-82).

The picture of misapprehensions will not be complete without one more aspect so characteristically revealed in the Editorial note in the *Indian Witness* in October 1939 commenting on the Viceroy's reply to the Wardha War Manifesto. Quite innocently Dr. F. M. Perrill goes on to say "Doubtless there will be severe criticism of His Majesty's Government for failure to give some *spectacular* assurances of a *speedy realization of India's political aims.*" Either the Editor missed reading the Wardha War Manifesto of the Working Committee in which the Indian demand was expressed, or the construction he puts upon that statement is so far-fetched as to be positively misleading. "The Working Committee invite the British Government to declare in unequivocal terms what their war aims are in regard to democracy and imperialism and the new order that is envisaged, in particular, how these aims are going to apply to India and to be given effect to in the present. Do they include the elimination of imperialism and the treatment of India as a free nation whose policy should be guided in accordance with the wishes of her people?"

Does this demand ask for 'spectacular assurances of a speedy realization of India's political aims'? Is this demand confined to the interests of India alone?

Does imperialism not operate outside India? The Working Committee expressed the demand not only of the majority-party in India, not only of the hundreds of millions of the Indian sub-continent, but also of the vast multitudes of China, of Czechoslovakia, of Poland, of Abyssinia, of Austria, of the Dutch East Indies, of various parts of Africa, all equally tired of the outrages of imperialism or of its twin brother fascism, and of the horrors and destruction of war that must come in the wake of an imperialist policy. India asked Britain if she was honestly fighting to safeguard democracy and freedom which are the two pillars of the new order, and India asked Britain to show her credentials of her perennial claim to be a champion of democracy and freedom. These credentials were simply a realistic application to India of the principle of freedom and democracy, for which Britain and France claim to be fighting.

And we have Britain's reply. The Viceroy "is authorised by His Majesty's Government to say that at the end of the war they will be very willing to enter into consultation with representatives of several communities, parties, and interests in India and with the Indian Princes with a view to securing their aid and co-operation in framing such constitutional modifications as may be deemed desirable." And the Viceroy hastens to announce the immediate

establishment of a consultative group of all major political parties in India which will associate public opinion with the conduct of the war. And the flattering unctiousness that Indians must lay to their aching hearts is an ironical assurance that the pledge given in the preamble of the Act of 1919 still holds, as it has held chained to the mighty rock of eternity for these twenty years, a period in which the map of Europe has been completely changed. Can even the unimaginative not discern the note of sullen imperialism in this declaration? Is there the faintest hint of a desire for friendship and mutual understanding between India and Britain? Is there the least attempt to show consistency between the claim of fighting for freedom and democracy in relation to Poland and the practice of moral, spiritual, cultural, economic, and political exploitation and domination in relation to India?

The Editor of the *Witness*, and those of his class, whether Indians or foreigners, are quite unconscious of the stern fact that there can be no dualism in democracy. How can any nation consistently call itself democratic and in its relations with another nation justify glaringly undemocratic attitudes and subtly imperialistic methods of 'divide and rule'? No nation that is honestly democratic can cherish the undemocratic presumption that

freedom and democracy are intended by heaven for itself for the express purpose of draining the economic resources, the moral integrity and the international potentialities of another. The vicious dualism that is at the back of such a distinction peeps out every time the logic of democracy is used to rationalize imperialistic designs. A relative democracy, one which does not believe in itself enough to extend its privileges to all peoples, is self-negating.

Through her *panchayat* system, used to such excellent advantage by the Aundh State Constitution, and by the splendid work done by Congress administrations in eight provinces, India has shown her capacity for self-government. The Viceroy's reply betrays the fact that the democracy, Britain is fighting for is a self-negating kind of democratic imperialism. She is fighting to preserve her *status quo*.

Those who have the outlook of *Witness* show complete lack of thought on the fundamental issue: can there be any training in freedom and democracy under foreign tutelage and all but dictatorial authority? Can a form of government be defined as democratic or as progressive when the semblance of democracy is used to cover the machinery of autocracy, and that the autocracy of a foreign power? Is India being trained in freedom and democracy by the practice of ordinances issued in the

teeth of popular disapproval, of civil liberties curtailed in spite of the protests of the preponderating majority? And in the face of these grim facts the Editor says with that religious equanimity with which we can always comment on other people's sufferings: "But in any case India has every opportunity to determine her own political destiny." What opportunity does he refer to? Does he seriously think that India can do a hat-trick and bring freedom and democracy out of subjugation? It is precisely this opportunity to determine her own political, economic, social, and international destiny that India asked about. Britain has replied that India has the opportunity to continue politically on starvation diet for as long as she can endure it or commit political suicide. And the friendly Editor of the *Indian Witness* generously says, "We believe that much importance should be attached to the Viceroy's statement."

It is a matter of great importance that even Gandhiji who opposed the bulk of Congress opinion with regard to India's showing friendship and unstinted co-operation to Britain at this time of crisis, now feels that Britain's reply to India's demands is "profoundly disappointing" and that India cannot think of friendship and co-operation under these conditions. Every shade of nationalist opinion (of

course not communalist) is expressing disappointment at the inconsistency and short-sightedness of Britain's reply. But the Editor of the *Indian Witness* with presumably deeper insight into British policy and greater love for India, says, "And while we stand with all Indian nationalists in the demand for India's full political freedom, yet it is our deliberate judgment that the quicker and more satisfactory way to this freedom lies along the path of deliberation and mutual understanding rather than through the jungle of non-cooperation and obstruction." Apparently the Boston Tea-party was along the path of deliberation and mutual understanding and so also was the War of American Independence which secured for Dr. Perrill and his people the freedom and democracy of which they are so visibly proud! And, be it remembered America had not suffered one-tenth the national humiliation, economic exploitation, and cultural and moral emasculation that India has borne. Moreover, India clearly expressed the desire of its nationalistically minded millions to follow the path of mutual understanding and asked Britain for the favour of a road-map. Instead, Britain sent India a polite ultimatum. Mutual understanding demands sincerity, frankness and an unequivocal pledge to seek truth and justice. Does Britain's reply meet these demands?

“Meanwhile, we may have to go into the wilderness again, as we have so often done in the past. If the fates so will it we shall do so gladly, rejoicing that yet again we have been privileged to serve the cause that is dearer to us than everything else.” Such are the brave words of Jawaharlal Nehru, a man of calm deliberation and unflinching devotion to the cause of India’s emancipation. And our hearts respond with pulsating eagerness. For let misapprehension spile up and misrepresentations rise as high as skyscrapers, we shall dare to act and to suffer gladly for the land that is dearer to us than life and her cause that is our cause. Our final victory will wipe away misapprehensions and misrepresentations will crumble into ashes at the sight of our great achievement.

But a word to foreign missionaries at this critical juncture may prove to be well worthwhile. It is no use denying the vicious coils of the serpent when it strangles the Christian conscience and freedom of speech and action. Of course, one cannot maintain that the “missionary pledge” in its present form, which is only twenty years old, is the cause of the evils we have described, the evils of moral and political emasculation and equivocation. But it is undeniable that the “missionary pledge” becomes a convenient shelter from which the missionary system can exert a denationalizing and demoralizing influence.

And for this reason the Christian Indian community in particular should raise its voice in support of those brave American missionaries who have in the teeth of fraternal and administrative opposition repudiated the obnoxious pledge, and some others who would like to do the same. We must not forget that in so doing these noble Christians have only expressed the conviction of most of us that foreign missionaries should take shelter behind no pledges or the like in their attempt to keep up diplomatic relations with the imperialist authorities. We are painfully compelled to believe that most of those who are defending the pledge directly, or defending it by opposing those who denounce it, are eager to have the moral shelter that the pledge affords them for their ambiguous Christianity and their pro-British prejudices. Why else should so many missionaries show such hostility to the efforts that are being made to change the non-British missionary pledge? The Editorial note on the subject in the *Indian Witness* (of 1st February, 1940) is a good example of the resentment aroused in the average Christian missionary's soul by the mere controversy regarding the pledge. For years Dr. Perrill has schooled himself to be the mouthpiece of his constituency.

Let Christian missionaries take their stand with the wronged, exploited, impoverished people of India

whom they come to serve. Let them stand up boldly for the Christian principles of freedom, justice, and brotherhood and speak out fearlessly and unequivocally. Let them repudiate everything that prevents them from being loyal to Christ which means loyal to the disinherited and oppressed. Let them follow the fine example of the signatories of the Kristagraha Manifesto II whom India loves and respects for their transparent consistency. In so doing they would show their Christian credentials and gain the confidence of the Indian people, non-Christian as well as Christian. We cannot possibly have any confidence in Missions so long as their agents pursue a policy of pro-British *neutrality*, so long as their agents prefer the path of moral compromise for the sake of expediency. If Missions deliberately choose to buy the patronage of the imperialist power in India and mortgage the Christian conscience for this doubtful gain, India can have no respect or love for them. But if Missions boldly take their stand with Christ, the fearless champion of the oppressed, disinherited, wronged people of the earth, then assuredly India will welcome them. The future of the Christian Movement in India demands, as one can see with half an eye, that all connections between Foreign Missions and imperialism be severed, and foreign missionaries repudiate any pledge that lays an immoral constraint

on them to speak half-truths and oppose justice, and help to support even silently an order based on iniquitous exploitation and suppression.

I am sure that in this connection I am justified in appealing to the Indian National Congress, in the interests of justice to take this matter of the unjust "missionary pledge" in its hands. There should be the same pledge which all foreigners coming to India are required to sign. I would suggest the following as the text of this "Foreigner's Pledge":—*"I promise to ally myself with no lawlessly revolutionary parties in India, and to do nothing prejudicial to the prestige of the Indian nation, or subversive to law and order and public morality."* It seems to me that such a pledge would be infinitely more just and equitable than what obtains today. It would not muzzle Christian missionaries from speaking the whole truth and giving their true witness to the Gospel of the brotherhood of man derived from God's universal Fatherhood. And it would be a safeguard against any foreigner making a political or social nuisance of himself. I trust that all Foreign Missions will appreciate any step that the Congress may take in this direction. I strongly appeal to the Indian National Congress to take active measures to have the above-mentioned "Foreigner's Pledge" substituted as soon as possible for the present non-British missionary pledge.

Those missionaries who tend to discount what some of us Christian nationalists say might find it thought-provoking to hear the remarks of an impartial scholar. Moritz Julius Bonn in an article on "Imperialism" says: "As discovery and conquest were directed to lands usually inhabited by peoples considered heathen by the conquerors, the missionary idea in the widest sense of the word was not wanting. Not only did the invaders endeavour to convey to the natives the blessings of the Christian religion (an endeavour doubly important since the Reformation had added a competitive note to missionary activities), but they more or less consciously tried to foist upon the natives their own social and cultural system" (*Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences*, vol. VII, p. 607). Passing on to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Dr. Bonn makes a trenchant observation: "Missionary activity, long an integral part of imperialism, lost its soul." (Ibid-p. 610). It is an unpleasant fact. Such unpleasant facts have long been whispered in back-lanes far from the cross-roads. But those who have the interest of the Christian Movement at heart have a responsibility to speak out boldly at this time. The missionary enterprise will regain its soul only when it cuts away from imperialism and stands in prophetic aloofness uttering the challenge of God.

LIBERTY.

The agony of men in cramping chains,
Like beasts of burden driv'n,
Like beasts of burden giv'n
A stunted meal, the agony that stains
The heart like acid has for ages cried
To God for vengeance on the Tyrant's pride!

A trumpet calls! From some cloud-covered tower
There sounds the grand reveille!
Again it is the day
When God in anguish calls his men to scour
The world, and capture sons of Tyranny,
Restore to man Love, Justice, Liberty!

Awake! my comrades of the faith, awake!
Ye sons of Light, arise!
The crime of Empire cries
Like shrieking monster wild. Stand up and break
Your chains! With suffering love rout Tyranny!
Nor flinch, nor pause till India's glad and free!

Cyril Modak.

CHAPTER VI

INDEPENDENCE DAY

It was once the glory of Christianity that there were many men and women ready to follow the example of the dauntless Christ and accept cruel suffering and death for the sake of freedom. From the Apostles down through Christian history there have been martyrs who, for the sake of liberty, gladly drank the vials of the wrath of those in power whose power the Christian message threatened. But by an ironical set of circumstances Christianity has lost its soul. Today we must comb the country with a fine-tooth comb to find Christians, Indian or non-Indian, who will dare to suffer for the sacred cause of freedom, freedom of conscience, freedom of speech and action, freedom of self-government. We exhaust ourselves talking of how Christ suffered for us and have no energy left to suffer a little for him. We waste our courage arguing fearlessly of the divine origin of every pronouncement the Master made, and lack the courage to live by the principles of freedom, justice and brotherhood which for him were the structural principles of Reality. And yet we expect people to be inspired by the dynamic quality of Christianity as

it is seen in our feverishly egotistical lives. With cold embers we would kindle a fire—and are sincerely disappointed at our failure.

At a time like this when the whole world is in death-pangs, when India is on the verge of a desperate life-and-death struggle we cannot cherish our "Christian" smugness any longer. We cannot afford to look at things sentimentally. To be sentimental is an easy way of dodging the issue. If ever, today we have to face realities, grapple with realities, and gain the substance of that reality which will ensure justice for people who are being used as cattle or as tools. If ever, today the Christian conscience must be aroused from its torpor so that Christians, in India and elsewhere, will in a body storm the strongholds of injustice, selfishness, power-politics and the hundred evils that outrage personality in millions and millions of men and women. The truth, however unpleasant, must be spoken fearlessly. The battle, however long, must be fought to the finish. Some may lose their patrons. Some may forfeit their popularity. Some may be victimized in other ways. But the day is at hand when Christians must choose to suffer with Christ for truth, freedom, justice, and equality or stand by and let the Master suffer alone the scourge of a competitive system.

We in India, for the most part, have been taught by our religious teachers from Europe, Great Britain, America, Australia and Canada, that church-going, and hymn-singing, and street-preaching are more or less enough to exempt the Christian from doing anything towards the political and economic emancipation of people. The superstition that the Christian's duty lies in the spiritual realm has fettered our thinking. Left to ourselves, perhaps, many Christian Indians would have freed themselves from all such fettering superstitions. But under the magnetic appeal of foreign lucre, unfortunately personified by many of our religious teachers and bureaucrats from the West, it has been difficult for several to see that the Christian's duty lies in every realm because he is commissioned to make the world a better, happier, more beautiful abode in which God's children might have a chance to realize their divine potentialities. Why else have the majority of Christians in India shown such an insipid interest in the cause of a New India that shall enjoy freedom, democracy, and a juster social order? Why else have the majority of Christians in India kept away from the battle and the wounds, from the silent suffering of India's non-violent revolution? How many Christians in India take the Independence Pledge on the 26th of

January and feel their hearts tingle with an eager passion for India's regeneration?

Let us turn for a moment to the brave and wise words of that brave and wise Evangelical, Bishop Moule of Durham. In the course of his Commentary on Romans XIII, Bishop Moule says, "No wonder then, that in the course of history, Christianity (when it did not lose its soul) has been the invincible ally of personal conscience, and political liberty, the liberty which is the opposite alike of license and of tyranny. It is Christianity which has taught men calmly to die, in the face of a persecuting Empire, rather than to do wrong at its bidding. It is Christianity which has lifted innumerable souls to stand upright in solitary protest for truth and against falsehood when every form of governmental authority has been against them." Has Christianity measured up to this standard? We are to blame as much as the missionaries for not imbibing the sheer undaunted courage of Christ through constant conversation with his spirit.

Our motherland is sadly looking for the contribution of her Christian sons and daughters. Our non-Christian brothers and sisters are vaguely wishing that we would join hands with them in the momentous task of liberation and do our share. Some of us who have awakened from the spiritualistic trance

of previous generations, are fervently hoping for a speedy arrival of the red letter day when our fellow-Christians will be seen proudly marching in the forefront of India's heroic band of liberators.

Then Christians in all parts of India would celebrate the Independence Day with fitting solemnity and a significant programme. We might even help to infuse a glowing spirit into what is fast becoming a pale ritual. It should be a normal practice among Christians in India to hold an Independence Day service in every Church of the land. An appropriate "Order of Worship" should be prepared and used at such services at which Christians would dedicate themselves to be co-workers with God for the political, economic, social, moral, and spiritual regeneration of India and the world. The Independence Pledge of 1930 (without any reference to Britain) can very fittingly be incorporated in the "Order of Worship" itself. This has been tried and has proved exceedingly effective.

Those who object to the incorporation of the Independence Pledge in the "Order of Worship" betray their partial and biased understanding of the Pledge. What does it mean to us? The original Independence Pledge means nothing that the most conscientious Christian Indian cannot accept. On the contrary, it challenges us to be better, truer,

more active Christians than we are. One part of the Pledge is an affirmation of the very principle that Jesus enunciated: that freedom, justice, and equality are the birthright of every human being. We have been robbed of our birthright. We do not have the freedom of governing ourselves, of making our own laws, of establishing our own socio-economic relations, of rectifying the poverty, illiteracy, and subservience of the vast masses. Because we do not have this freedom we are held back from implementing just relations between man and man, between caste and caste, between class and class, between community and community. The lack of freedom forces upon us the painful necessity of swallowing injustices, indignities, and inequalities.

History teaches the bitter lesson that any nation which gives its assent to foreign domination and allows it to continue for a long time actually votes for its own deterioration. A nation that does not exert itself to the full to abbreviate the duration of foreign domination is committing suicide. The second part of the Independence Pledge states that those who take it earnestly are dedicated to fight, at any sacrifice, to save India from that complete and tragic deterioration which is inevitable under slavery. Surely it is the duty of every Christian to fight, to suffer, and if need be to lay down his life in a non-

violent struggle to save the soul of a nation from death.

After a meticulously detailed inquiry into Christian sources, that true and accomplished friend of India, Verrier Elwin comes to the conclusion that under certain conditions it becomes the duty of a Christian to join in the overthrow of a harmful government. I shall quote his conclusion in full, especially because this daring tract, '*Christ and Satyagraha*,' is now out of print.

"From this long enquiry we may draw the conclusion that a Christian has a perfect right in conscience to resist a Government under the following circumstances :—

(I) When a Government exists for its own advantage rather than that of the whole people ; if it is a foreign government, when it allows the economic exploitation of the country it rules by the country it represents.

(II) If a Government imposes burdensome laws, or resorts to unnecessary violence to maintain its own prestige.

(III) When a Government encourages discord among its subjects through the arrogance of its officials, a censorship of information which the public has a right to know, and provocative and repressive ordinances.

(IV) When a Government is clearly not for the common good : that is, if it spends more money on the army than on education ; if it draws great revenues from the liquor traffic ; if its administration is extravagant, and its officials overpaid, while it does little to relieve the poverty and distress of its poorer subjects.

(V) When a Government does not fulfil its purpose of 'sociable life and fellowship', where it allows—at least in practice—a social cleavage between rulers and ruled, or treats its subjects with any kind of superiority or contempt.

(VI) If the laws and ordinances of a Government do not have the approval of the whole people; if they fall more heavily on the poor than on the rich; and if they have to be maintained by force rather than by legal persuasion.

(VII) These considerations are, of course, greatly strengthened if the Government in question is a foreign one, especially if it has lost the good will of the people over whom it rules."

The Rev. J. H. Holmes gives three further conditions under which it is right and proper to disobey the law, which we may add to those given above :—

(I) 'When the law is a despotic law imposed upon the people by an alien ruler in

defiance of their will and in denial of their liberty.' The most familiar example of this is the civil disobedience offered by the American colonies who refused to pay the Stamp Tax or obey the Navigation Acts, and finally established the free and independent Republic that now exists.

(II) 'When the law violates some higher law of ethics or religion, as did the Fugitive Slave Law, which was so valiantly opposed by Theodore Parker.

(III) 'When the law-breaker, moved by either one of these former principles, is not only willing, but glad to pay the penalty of his act in witness of the truth which he would serve For, after all, there are two ways in which we may obey a law. On the one hand we may do what the law tells us to do. On the other hand, unwilling to do this for conscientious reasons, we may accept voluntarily the penalties of the law for disobedience. In the latter case as in the former we recognise the authority of government and pay reverence to its sovereignty.' This third point is of the utmost importance, for the great danger of breaking laws is that the respect for law as such is weakened. This third condition provides a counter-weight which restores the authority of law."

“I conclude, therefore,” says Verrier Elwin, “that there is nothing either in the teaching of Christ or in the dominant philosophical tradition of Christendom to prevent a conscientious Christian, if he feels the above conditions apply to India, from giving his whole-hearted support to the noblest ideals of Indian nationalism as expressed by Mahatma Gandhi. There are moreover definite and positive reasons why a Christian should regard the movement with enthusiasm. To the mind of many unbiased Christian observers, Mahatmaji has made one of the noblest attempts to apply Christian principles to a political situation that the world has ever seen. For example, he has made a deliberate attempt to find a substitute for war. It is a pathetic paradox that when there is a divorce of Christianity from politics as in the case of war, millions of Christians rally to the standards of Mars; yet when there is an alliance of Christian principles with politics as in the present campaign, so few Christians are found beneath the tri-coloured banner of *ahimsa*. The real conflict to-day is not between nations, but between principles; not between England and India, but between violence and non-violence. So surely it is the duty of Christians to throw their whole weight on the side of non-violence.”

Excellent as it will be for Christians in all parts of India to sanctify the Independence Day with a

special service of worship, it will not be enough to leave it at that. Of course we should not isolate ourselves. In large numbers we should participate in the national programme for the day. But we should go further than that. As Christians we occupy a peculiarly fortunate position, and thus it becomes our bounden duty to do our utmost to implement intercommunal goodwill and friendship. This cannot be done merely by platform oratory. We need to create an atmosphere of fellowship in which representatives of the various communities will meet and understand each other and learn to respect and love each other. To this end Christians could arrange banquets of brotherhood. Members of the several communities would come together, sit down together, and share a common meal. Such a meal, however simple, can indeed become a banquet of brotherhood. There are many sayings in India about the binding influence of a common meal. Separate banquets of sisterhood can be arranged for women so long as the All-India Women's Conference does not succeed in eradicating the separatism of the purdah-mentality! As Christians we must take the initiative in devising opportunities for such intercommunal fraternizing.

Something must be done to save the younger generation and the children from imbibing the poison of our hate, bitterness, suspicion, and selfishness. It

must be a double process. We must help to expel the poison from the present generation and help to prevent the disease from spreading among those of the coming generation. Gala-days and fetes can be arranged for children at which in a spirit of shared merriment and common fun Indian children will learn the rudimentary lessons of fraternal inter-communalism. Why by our neglect should we force these clean, fresh lives that have come from God into our midst to absorb our rank suspicions and jealous fears? Let us devise means whereby Indian boys and girls will learn team-work beyond the foolish lines of creed, caste, class, and community. Let us devise means whereby the younger generation will discover the thrilling excitement of co-operative achievement and co-operative endeavour. Let us do our utmost to instil the fine spirit of comradeship into Indian boys and girls.

A very important part of the programme could be the inauguration of intercommunal projects, offering worthwhile opportunities to members of various communities to work together for a common goal. Such projects must be carefully planned to be for the good of all concerned. Literacy and temperance campaigns can be projects in which members of different communities would join to work for the good of entire districts irrespective of caste or creed.

It would be excellent if in conjunction with other groups and progressive financiers Christians could help to inaugurate model intercommunal colonies. On every Independence Day if ten such colonies can be started in each province, India will be much nearer a settlement of some aspects of the communal problem than we shall ever be by pouring vituperation or meaningless compliments on each other. Each colony would be a co-operative community which would transcend the man-made limitations of credal or cultural fences. Each colony would be a model of intercommunal planning and labour, cooperative responsibility and administration and shared prosperity. From such colonies the rest of India would learn that individual and communal security depend on intercommunal co-operation. Or if a smaller beginning seems desirable, co-operative farming can be a project for representative intercommunal groups. Subsidiary cottage industries can be another attractive project. A large variety of such experimental projects can be worked out suited to particular areas.

But it is quite evident that some such practical measures must be adopted to give our Independence Day real significance again. Ten years ago it was enough to defy imperialist repression and assert our nationalism by publicly taking the Independence Pledge. Today, we must affirm with all earnestness

and vigour the national demand for freedom and democracy, but simultaneously we must launch campaigns to bring about national solidarity, so that our demand gains strength and definiteness in the light of our endeavours and achievements. Ten years ago it was profoundly inspiring to have nationalists welcome arrest and imprisonment in the act of asserting their birthright of freedom. Today, with the admirable accomplishments of a decade behind us, it would be pathetic were we to stand still repeating old *mantrams*. We must forge ahead. We must give concrete expression to our nationalism. We must clear the jungles of suspicion and rivalry. Especially on the Day of the Independence Pledge, we must lay foundations of new and lasting bridges to span our differences. The Independence Pledge came into being under threatening skies, with danger and adventure as its attendants. We must continue to keep alive in our hearts the spirit of the Pledge so that we too can defy new dangers while we adventure into fresh realms of creative nationalism to build that free self-governing India which will be the happy motherland of Muslims and Hindus and Christians and all her children alike, bestowing upon all with level hand the blessings of peace, prosperity and liberty.

DUALISM.

Thy ardent followers ardently maintain
It is irreverent to link Thy praise
With "Vande Mataram!" O Master! raise
Thy drooping head! Do they again, again
Upon the cross of dualism nail
Thy hands and feet? Ah! from their reverence,
That stands in bottled safe irrelevance
Before Thy altar, save me for a jail!

Forgive Thy rebel his rebel desire
To take the inspiration of Thy Name
Into the patriot's bivouac, a flame
To kindle dark'ning skies to dawning fire,
Illuming life, all life with sanctity,
Till in the texture of the nation's task
We see That Name enwove! I only ask
My Lord, say "Vande Mataram!" through me!

Cyril Modak.

CHAPTER VII

THE IMPERIALIST CRISIS

I am as a man in a group working in a garden. Suddenly our attention is arrested by an inexplicable spectacle. Just beyond our cosy nook a band of armed bandits intimidate the leading men of my village to use their influence and make the villagers give up their possessions and their homes, and send their able-bodied men to become bandits. The leading men of my village refuse to be frightened into obedience. I know what must follow—the nature of bandits being what it is. I ask my fellows: "What shall we do?" And I get a variety of answers. I find some of my fellows have turned away from this baffling scene, hoping, perhaps, that if they do not see it, somehow it will not exist. Or they can salve their conscience with the thought that they are busy with the immediate task of gardening.

The imperialist Crisis has been precipitated by a new conflict arising within the old inter-imperialist maelstrom. The rise of Soviet Union to power and the development of revolutionary movements in capitalist countries, some of the colonies and in the

East have produced a new conflict. Immediately after the Kaiserean War, British Imperialism mobilised all the forces of capitalism and reaction to crush the Soviet Union and the revolutions on the Continent. Today British Imperialism faces a mighty Soviet Union which is out of sympathy with facist and imperialist war-mongers. There is another revolutionary tide, which, if taken at the flood, will lead British imperialistic financiers to greater fortune. They have deliberately moulded British policy so as to aid the facists, to crush the forces of revolution, and to get the Soviet embroiled in a war. They allowed the 'popular front' in Spain and in France to be destroyed. They implemented the destruction of Czechoslovakian democracy and the Czech-Soviet Pact. Thus they removed the barrier against Nazi-Facist aggression. Their whole aim was to resolve the inter-imperialist conflict by achieving a European Four-Power Pact.

But Chamberlain failed pitifully. At Munich the last barrier to Hitler's expansion was removed. The inter-imperialist conflict could no more be solved within a Four-Power Pact. Chamberlain's next move to surmount the impasse into which imperialist diplomacy had brought him was to stage a Greater Munich. He wanted to use negotiations with the Soviet as a threat to bring pressure upon

Hitler. Perhaps Hitler would agree to a settlement of the Danzig issue, give up, at least temporarily, his south-eastern drive, turn his activities against Ukraine and attack the Soviet through the Baltic States. This would bring grand commercial opportunities to British financiers, give them further opportunities to exploit India, and the Sino-Japanese conflict. But failing in that, Chamberlain sought a one-sided pact with Soviet Russia. Britain astutely refused to stand by Russia against a German attack. But the Soviet was to fight Hitler and keep him from disturbing British imperialist and vested interests. Of course, the Soviet declined the invitation to become a cat's paw of British cunning. Russia proposed a straightforward Anti-aggression Pact which would have thwarted all Nazi aggression and perhaps strangled Nazism itself. Apparently this was not to Chamberlain's taste. And Hitler marched into Poland.

To clarify our own thinking let us remind ourselves that there are three basic considerations that determine our position as Christians in relation to the present imperialist crisis. What does God's Plan demand? What does India demand? Do we accept as did our Master, the Prince of freedom-seeking nationalists, that means are ends? The answers we give to these three simple questions will determine our attitude to the present world-crisis, and determine

too, at least for some of us, the direction in which we shall move during the coming months.

Perhaps, it will help in the process of definition if we consider what God's Plan is by first ruling out what it is not. We can hardly be so credulous as to believe that God's Plan envisages a class-society in which two-thirds of the entire human population is consigned to various degrees of purgatory, here on earth, just so that the remaining one-third may be able to live in an artificial paradise. There must be something crooked about any interpretation of God's will of love which tries to justify the concentration of capital in a coterie of commercialists, when that inevitably leads through subtle and devious ways to the grabbing of colonies for foreign markets, to tariff walls, to diabolical competition, to disagreement among states, since states depend on high-powered financiers, necessitating the final, barbaric and doubtful arbitrament of War. As that authority on Imperialism, J. A. Hobson, says, "Analysis of Imperialism, with its natural supports, militarism, oligarchy, bureaucracy, protection, concentration of capital and violent trade fluctuations, has marked it out as the supreme danger to modern national states." (*Imperialism*—p. 360.)

We cannot take a mental holiday to believe that in God's Plan there is some special proviso for the

safeguarding of the cupidity of one nation or another. There must be something crooked about any interpretation of God's will of justice which tries to justify the subjection of a people by a foreign power, when that subjection works out in the economic, cultural and moral emasculation of the subject-race, keeping the people perpetually too poor and underfed to make progress. It is unimaginable that so many earnest Christians could have held that God desires 'backward' countries to be ruled by certain western nations, when such foreign rule must, in the nature of the system, hurt the people of the country ruled, hurt them spiritually, hurt them culturally, hurt them economically, hurt them politically. Violation of human personality, violation of the sense of nationality, violation of justice and brotherhood, violation of the God-given rights of human beings to be free to further God's purpose are the four pillars of empire. Is it possible that imperialism is sanctioned in God's Plan, or any form of fascism or nazism? And imperialism is just the extension on an international scale of capitalism under the disguise of 'economic nationalism.' Prof. King Gordon observes, "It must be fully understood that war as it menaces the world to-day is but the most hectic and lurid symptom of the advanced stages in the disease of our economic world order. It is the failure of our economic

system which drives nations to seek security in economic nationalism, stampedes nations into the psychosis of fascism, urges foreign aggression against backward people to gain new sources of raw material or to gain or protect markets." (Scott & Vlastos: *Towards the Christian Revolution*, p. 197). By 'backward' he means perhaps 'non-violent' or backward in scientific discoveries of methods of destruction!

It is easier to find unanimity of opinion on the fact that immorality has no place in God's Plan. But unfortunately too many Christians, especially those who have the advantage of holding clerical *sinécures*, think exclusively of sexual sin when they talk of immorality. No normal person would deny that sensuality is a sin, is immoral, is undesirable because it is an outrage of human personality, because a human being is turned into a "thing," a means for the carnal gratification of some subnormal creature. By the same token race-segregation is a worse sin, is even more immoral, is social and cultural rape. Yet we find Christians, with a few exceptions to be sure, who accept the exploitation of one race by another as God-ordained. We are too prone to accept so many of those conditions, poverty, destitution, bad-housing, malnutrition, absence of medical service, cheap pastimes, over-work, and a score of such conditions which often lead to sexual aberrations

and vent our righteous indignation on the consequences. We cannot see that God's Plan for humanity does not sanction any of those conditions which afflict His children or lead them astray.

God's Plan for humanity is a plan that ensures life, fuller life, the abundant life. The Christ-way is life, that unification of all aspects of experience in life, economic, social, cultural, moral and spiritual, leading to the completely developed form of victorious living which alone can do justice to the divine Fatherhood. It is not a pietistic ethic imposed upon the disinherited by privileged Scribes and Pharisees. It is not confined to extolling the domestic virtues, or the salvation of the individual soul. God's Plan demands the force which unlocks the creative energy of man to establish universal community and to break down class-distinctions, imperialist sovereignty and race segregation, and to remove all the causes of immorality, personal, economic, social, and political. This alone can ensure the abundant life for humanity.

If we accept this premise, we should be willing to resist those forces which militate against God's Plan, those institutions which frustrate the divine Cause. We should be willing to range ourselves on the side of those who are seeking, perhaps not in full, perhaps not quite consciously, to implement God's Plan for the human race.

What Does India demand? India demands the right to be the mother of her children and give them the abundant life. She does not wish to build her case on ugly passions of race-hatred and narrow patriotism. The ethic of non-violence could not have been born from India's soul if her soul was not great enough to forgive her enemies. Hear her words:

“ They came : they brought the sons of
strife in hordes
To plunder all my jewelled shrines, enslave
My spirit with despair——from their proud
swords,
Sly shot and shell my sons I could not save :
Forgive them, Lord, they knew not what
they did !”

And oh ! the wars of hate and greed forbid !”

She does not want to get into a position from which she can wreak vengeance on those who have insulted her, exploited her, treated her with cruelty, injustice and disdain. But, be it understood, that India is by birth too royal, even if she is today in captivity, for her to beg or bargain at the gates of those who in the intoxication of power fondly believe they will hold her for ever. India will fight with God's own weapon until she wins the independence to provide for her vast millions the best government,

the best education, the best social usages, the best economic relationships, the best culture, the best way of living and spending leisure. India demands the right to make her contribution as an equal partner in the Commonwealth of Nations. India demands the privilege of establishing relations of mutual friendship with all races, which is possible only when she is a free self-governing member of the international fraternity.

It seems, therefore, that India's demands strangely concur with the demands of God's Plan. There is no conflict, and we should strive to keep out all conflict, between the requirements of the divine Plan and the demands of the Indian national cause. In fact, it becomes more and more evident at every step where our place is. It becomes more and more evident that the domination of one race by another, no matter in what altruistic verbiage such domination be garnished for public consumption, is definitely in conflict with God's Plan. Only some satanic logic, to which a few select statesmen of imperialist and fascist powers have the key, can justify the existence of imperialism and capitalism. India's cause is in harmony with what we know, through the eyes of God's Anointed One, to be the divine cause of the Great Community of mankind, in which freedom, justice, equality, and love shall take the place

of domination, oppression, class-tyranny, and competition. What is our duty, then ?

There is just one other question which must be considered before we decide irrevocably what our duty as followers of Christ must be. Do we accept as did our Master that means are ends ? Forty days in the wilderness Jesus wrestled with this problem. So engrossed was he that he forgot his physical needs of food and drink. And at the end when the temptation came to adopt unworthy means for the worthy cause of liberation, revolution, and the final triumph of God's Cause, Jesus unhesitatingly answered in effect that unworthy means spoil worthy ends. We are obliged, therefore, to repudiate unworthy means for the achievement of the national purpose. And we rejoice in the knowledge that our people, under the guidance of God, through the instrumentality of Mahatma Gandhi, repudiated the immoral method of violence and declared their set intention to use the strategy of non-violence in their campaign for national liberation and national regeneration.

We must, however, shake ourselves out of the habit of thinking of non-violence as a means to an end. It is much more than that. Much of the nonsense spoken against non-violence betrays this basic error of thought. Non-violence to the Indian (*Satyagraha*), non-violence to the Christian Indian

(*Kristagraha*), is a philosophy of life, is an outlook. It goes much deeper than merely a method of resistance. It includes the whole gamut of our attitudes, our emotions, our conduct. We begin to realize that violent temper, hatred, bitterness, desire for revenge, greed, lust are all forms of violence and must be redeemed before we can be prepared for non-violent resistance to evil. We realize that non-violence as an outlook constrains us to be international in our thinking, for all those who suffer injustice and wrongs are our brothers and sisters and have first claim on us. Non-violence as a philosophy of life restrains us from using human beings as tools for our purposes. Non-violence is the negative form of expression for what we would call love. Non-violence as a philosophy of life is positively based on love as the law of life. And we know we must be inwardly and outwardly pure, fully consecrated, unconditionally committed to the guidance of Him who is the source of love, justice and victory, if we are to keep fit for the non-violent struggle, which is only one aspect of the outlook of non-violence.

Shelley, an alien among his people, speaks a language that Indians understand.

“Stand ye calm and resolute
 Like a forest close and mute,
 With folded arms and looks that are

Weapons of an unvanquished War
 And if the tyrants dare,
 Let them ride among you there;
 Slash, and stab, and maim, and hew
 What they like that let them do
 Rise, like lions after slumber
 In unvanquishable number !
 Shake your chains to earth like dew
 Which in sleep had fallen on you :
 Ye are many—they are few !”

Perhaps, it will be said that this is not pertinent to the subject since it pays no attention to the world-crisis. It should be remembered that the world-crisis has brought our own nationalist movement to a crisis. It would be highly quixotic to rush off to help others when our own house is in disorder. It is not narrow nationalism but a matter of common sense that we should want to establish for our own nation first that liberty, democracy and right relations which will put us in a position to help others honourably and effectively. With a huge foreign Commonwealth saddled on her back, India cannot possibly stand up to help anybody. Besides, the whole question of help by participation in war raises several issues for India. Was India consulted before war was declared ? When for her own precious independence India refuses to use the weapons of war, should her moral sense be

outraged by an ordinance to participate in war on behalf of Britain ?

H. N. Brailsford says, "Two experiences on the eve of the outbreak of the War shook them (Indians) profoundly. In August, 1939, contingents of Indian troops were sent abroad, to Egypt, Aden and Singapore. Doubtless this was, in the military sense, a necessary measure, moreover, secrecy was desirable, though one may doubt whether it was attained. Several of the Indian party leaders were informed about this step in confidence. But there was no vote, no debate, no sanction by India's elected representatives of an act for which their British rulers were solely responsible. A white hand moved these Indian soldiers like pawns across the chess-board of world politics, in a quarrel not their own. At Westminster, meanwhile, in one hurried sitting, six hundred English gentlemen, with not a dark skin among them, passed an amending Act which, in the event of war, authorised the British rulers of India to restrict Indian liberties by the exercise of the most formidable emergency powers. Again, it may be argued that such a measure was necessary and that we have ourselves submitted to similar though much milder restrictions. There is this difference that with virtual unanimity our elected representatives endorsed the policy that requires these sacrifices ; we ration our own liberties

and we have a Sovereign Parliament to check any abuse of authority. That is not India's case. Finally, in response to a cablegram from London, a Scottish nobleman at Delhi proclaimed India a belligerent in this European struggle. Without their consent, asked or given, and without the sanction of their representatives, three hundred million Indians found themselves at war" (*Democracy for India*—Fabian Society Tract Series No. 248-p. 4-5). We congratulate Mr. Brailsford on his unshrinking honesty. As long as there are English statesmen like him and Lord Samuel and Mr. Wedgwood Benn and Sir Stafford Cripps and Mr. Greenwood and Major Graham Pole and Major Attlee and others of their spirit and outlook Great Britain will escape the fate of Dives !

The outbreak of the Hitlerean War is the inevitable result of self-frustrating imperialism. The imperialistic clique behind the British Premier did not want the sort of war that has begun. They wanted the Soviet to bear the brunt of Nazi aggression. But instead it looks as if the Soviet will directly or indirectly use Nazi co-operation to settle old scores with imperialism. And British Imperialism is impaled on the horns of a dilemma. It conceals its war-aims in noble language. It says that the Allies are fighting to defend freedom and democracy. But it refuses to show its moral credentials by applying the

principles of freedom and democracy to India. British Imperialism would like to have it both ways, but it cannot. Obviously, Britain is fighting to preserve its *status quo*, the vested interests of its high-powered financiers, its Empire. Indeed, Britain wants to destroy Hitlerism, but not Fascism. British imperialists would welcome a Fascist government in Germany which would be willing to join with Britain against the Socialist forces of revolution. So the War goes on. There are already new complications. Imperialist diplomacy has cruelly got Finland embroiled in a mad conflict. And in India the nationalist crisis is developing rapidly.

The Christian Indian nationalist cannot extricate the national crisis from the world crisis, however much he may feel the human side of the horrors of war in Europe and its terrific menace to all parts of the civilized globe. It would be unreal if he were to attempt it. It would be something akin to wishful thinking for him to talk in grandiloquent terms about helping Britain to defend liberty and democracy, when he has no experience of liberty and democracy in his own country's relation with Britain. Internationalism must remain nebulous and meaningless unless it is concentric internationalism beginning with the inmost circle of nationalism into which we have put humane content and significance.

But the the Indian crisis is not *ab extra*. It does not stand in aloof insignificance. It is a vital part of the world crisis. India will be the theatre of a solemn, silent, unapplauded struggle against the evils of exploitation, inequality, and an imposed rule, which has its counterparts in China, Abyssinia, Spain and Poland. The world today witnesses the greatest revolt of the spirit of liberty demanding utter and unequivocal justice, and the powers which have kept Liberty under strict surveillance lest she should visit other countries are making a desperate attempt to postpone the day of God's judgment. The forces behind this world revolution are not national but international, and Imperialism and Fascism and Nazism cannot check the spirit of Liberty. The world must be built on a new basis. The world is sick of the old order and the hypocrisy at the heart of it. God has waited for His people to stir—and they have stirred in sleep several times. But at last they are aroused. They will flinch from nothing, in India, in Africa, in China, in the East Indies, in every part of the civilized world, in their determined effort to build the City of God.

“Give us, O God, the strength to build
 The city that hath stood
 Too long a dream.....
 Already in the mind of God,

That city riseth fair,
 Lo, how its splendour challenges
 The souls that greatly dare,
 Yea, bids us seize the whole of life
 And build its glory there !"

The Christian Indian nationalist must dedicate himself to this great task for his people—come what come may.

I have abundant faith in my fellow Christians. For instance, if they realize that they are expected to offer India's head on a Christian platter to the courtesan of Imperialism, I feel sure they will begin to ask questions. They will not deliberately shrink from doing the right thing if they can see it. Must someone not try at least to point out what should be carefully avoided as being tantamount to obstructionism and disloyalty to God and India? Often so many people known to be zealous to serve God become unconscious obstructionists. Roughly, there are three ways in which the individual or an institution may help to frustrate God's Plan.

First of all we may become obstacles because we lack insight. The Plan may be misunderstood through partial understanding. An individual's comprehension of a new fact or set of facts often is unavoidably modified by his previous judgments, attitudes, and scheme of things. The new set of facts will be

accepted or rejected as they fit into his scheme or do not fit in. When a new fact threatens to disrupt an individual's nicely fashioned world-view the tendency is not to face the new situation boldly but to discount the challenging fact. The mind plays many tricks on one at such a crisis, and one of those impish tricks is to suggest that the new fact can be interpreted so as to fit, can be twisted into the warp and woof of one's preconceived scheme of things. This is especially true with the new facts brought out most challengingly in any realistic experience of the vision of God's Plan as the divine Commonwealth. A quick way out of the discomfiture of the new situation is to relate religion to the spiritual needs of the individual. Conversion is simply the turning of the individual from the sins and evils of the world to God. The Christian Enterprise is simply the methodology employed to bring about this conversion.

If, however, the original meaning of the true community be accepted, religion becomes, what it evidently was to Jesus, a matter of establishing right relations between man and man and between man and God. Conversion then implies the adoption of an outlook which finds God working in and through society, unfolding His purpose in history, in the process of men's struggles on this planet for a better order. The Christian Movement then means

the mighty sweep of assessing society and the historical process to reveal God's Plan of the divine Commonwealth thwarted and checked by the blindness of men, and also to reveal in action how men may further that Plan of the New Order of right relations, love and freedom. Since we can obstruct God's Plan by our well-intentioned misunderstanding of that Plan, it is the duty of every Christian individual, group and institution relentlessly to examine the position held in relation to the developing Indian crisis and see what Christ would have us do. A facile repetition of specious arguments for or against will not help to clarify our thinking. On the contrary it will only confuse. The fundamentals must be understood and evaluated. The Indian struggle must be judged by the sanctions of the divine Commonwealth no less than the meaning and effects of British domination in India, and by the same sanctions the demands and methods of redemptive nationalism must be evaluated no less than those of exploiting imperialism.

Nor can the issue we face be dramatically waived aside by rhetorical flourishes or on grounds of temperamental differences. It cannot be said that some are radicals or fanatics who will see nothing in a balanced way, while some are sober moderates who will balance everything, even inconsistencies.

There are these temperamental differences, thank heavens, but a fundamental moral issue cannot be decided temperamentally. If 'fanaticism' is standing with Christ on the side of freedom, justice, love and equality because he did so, and is thus what the Fatherhood of God expects of those who call Him Father, then obviously there is no room for anything else. If a balanced moderatism means dodging the larger issue while holding to a lesser issue for personal or institutional reasons, then surely it cannot have the approval of any right-minded follower of Christ. In the presence of the divine extremism of the Incarnation, of the *via Dolorosa*, how can we dare to stand if our souls are shrunk into calculating moderation? How can we send out our well groomed inconsistencies, no matter how well liveried, to serve and worship God? Indeed, how can we claim to be extending the "Kingdom of God" if our very notion of that "Kingdom" is perverted or in-complete?

Secondly, we may obstruct God's Plan by a lack of faith. If in the first instance our interference is caused by a lack of insight, in the second it may be caused by the absence of full and adequate confidence in God and His purpose. The moment an individual (and what is true of the individual is true of a group or an institution) wavers from the path of strict and fearless obedience to the divine will, as clearly manifest

in the life and teachings of Jesus, from that moment his confidence in God begins to suffer diminution. If we take it into our own hands to see that we ourselves or our institutions function as we feel would be safest and best for continued service, we thereby take ourselves or our institutions out of God's hand. He can use us or our institutions only if we decide to follow wherever truth and conscience lead regardless of consequences. By allowing a consideration of personal or institutional consequences to mould our course of action, despite the dictates of truth and justice and love, we allow the temporal to over-rule the Eternal, we allow the voice of our *alter egos* to over-rule the voice of the Spirit. Do not the Master's words ring in our ears: "Whosoever saveth his life shall lose it, and whosoever loseth his life for my sake shall save it."? An individual or an institution may continue to function under the necessity of compromise. But surely such conditional functioning must be an obstruction to God's Plan because we ally ourselves with His adversaries when we accept their terms.

The will to exist often proves to be so powerful with reference to individuals as well as institutions, that moral issues appear not in challenging black and white but in a dull grey. We ask ourselves and others, "What is the use of challenging

one evil, one wrong, one fraud when by doing so the work you are doing will perhaps come to an end? Besides there are many evils, many wrongs, many frauds all of which you will not have the chance to challenge." And the more we entertain such immoral considerations the weaker we are to face issues squarely. Our moral insight gets blurred. We cannot perceive that any piece of humanitarian, evangelical, or other good work that we may be doing loses considerably in integrity and effectiveness when it is infected with moral inconsistency. Our work is the expression of our convictions. We cannot believe one thing and refrain from doing what is dictated by sheer consistency without developing moral psychosis. If we want to interfere with God's Plan all we need to do is to encourage the will to exist that holds our attention!

Thirdly, we may become obstructionists by a deficiency in our love. We can have a love for God which fights shy of coming out of its sacred segregation into the heat of the fray to fight for the just cause of God's down-trodden and disinherited children. Such a love is obviously deficient. We are wrapped up in our subjective love for God. We preach about God's great love and feel inwardly moved and move others. We worship God and sing His praise with great animation. And we sedulously avoid

doing anything which might upset our opportunities for making known the redemptive love and saving grace of God. But that love of ours is deficient because it does not drive us with an irresistible passion to identify ourselves with those who suffer wrongs around us and to make their hunger, their battles, their agonies our hunger, our battle, and our agony. God's love was perfect. It did not shrink from the Cross. Is our love patterned on His? Or does it retreat from danger and death, individual or institutional, to the safety of rationalizations and avoid a crisis? Only in the lives of those who are inspired by a Christ-like love to take the risk of challenging the powerful perpetrators of injustice, or of braving other dangers, can God's love be made manifest to men. All our protestations of piety, all our good intentions, all our architectural balance of impartiality, all our devout enthusiasm about the ideal of the New Society are so much chaff unless we act in every crisis that confronts us in the spirit of unflinching honesty. True devotion to God cannot exist in the vacuum of religiosity. It exists amid the thousand relationships of man and man and influences those relationships. It cannot connive at iniquitous relationships, nor feel that a mere verbal recognition of injustice does away with the obligation for direct

action, for it sees God's love bleeding on the Cross for the rights of every man. True devotion to God lives and grows by defying all the fury, power and cruel opposition of a world which seeks to sanctify unrighteousness and crush the poor and the weak, since it would redeem the world from the grip of capitalism, imperialism, and sensuality. And in this battle the consequences to oneself or one's institution necessarily become matters of secondary importance. The primary question is always a question of translating the divine will of righteousness in ampler terms of man's relation with man and man's relation to God. The primary question must always be a question of greater loyalty in action to the structural principles of reality, to freedom, justice, and brotherhood.

In the face of the developing crisis in India today, which is only an aspect of the tragic world-crisis, what does the Christian conscience have to say? Does it give the counsel of despair, or the counsel of expediency, or the counsel of resistance? Does it ask for the crutches of compromise or does it stand erect in the power of prophetic vision to act and to speak against political, economic, and moral wrongs? Through Ralph and Lila Templin and J. Holmes Smith and Paul Keene the Christian conscience has uttered a challenging word in "The

Kristagraha Manifestos which were sent to the Viceroy. All honour to them. But do they express the convictions and the resolutions of the bulk of Christian missionaries and Christian Indians in India? Shall we betray such brave comrades, betray our gallant Pioneer, betray the divine purpose by our lack of insight, lack of faith, or lack of love?

For the realistic consciousness every crisis in history is the stirring of an agonized God to realize His purpose of the New Society in which all men and women shall reap the rich harvest of the abundant life unhampered by the greed of powerful rulers or the hypocrisy of selfish law-givers. We face one such crisis, a momentous one. Shall we scuttle away into our little rat-holes and bravely declare that we are at our posts of duty and cannot heed the imperious summons of God's agony for action in the interests of His purpose? Shall we let others, our friends and comrades beyond the hedge (who are fanatical!) face God's adversaries, and fight the good fight, and bear the wounds, while we disown them with whispered misgivings or phrases of disapproval and busy ourselves with the absorbing intricacies of weeding and gardening? This crisis will be what we make it. God will succeed and bring His New Order out of the chaotic world-conflagration if we do His will with a keen sense of proportion, timing and consistency.

In the stirring words of Angela Morgan :

“ They will tower as tall as the tallest skies

Up to the level of my eyes,

When they dare to rise,

Yea, all my people everywhere !

Not in one land of black despair

But over the flaming earth and sea

Wherever wrong and oppression be

The shout of my people must come to me.

Not till their spirit break the curse

May I claim my own in the universe,

If the people rise, if the people rise,

I will answer them from the swarming skies.”

TO MAHATMA GANDHI.

From pomp-embellished galleries of time
The notions like so many Neros stare
Wild-eyed, as with Greed's pardlike wiles you dare
To battle in our endless noonday-clime.

World-honoured son of an imperial line,
Whose ancient annals sing the echoing names
Of Harishchandra, Dhruva, Buddha, flames
Of live soul-culture burning in Truth's shrine
Undimmed, unspent, unvanquished, unafraid !

O fate-defying Gladiator brave !
It is your turn to wrestle and to save
Your land from claws of tyranny, nor blade
Be drawn nor clash of steel contaminate
A people's soul pulsating to be free,
To win for thorn-crowned Love a victory
That conquers foreign greed and native hate.

From star-fringed galleries of heaven, lo ! thrice
Thrice happy, Freedom's martyrs shout the praise
Of one who flaunts at death and Christ-like pays
His life-blood as his people's ransom price.

Cyril Modak.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CHALLENGE

The Tripuri Session of the Indian National Congress, held in February, 1939, had a deep fascination for me. Fifty-two majestic elephants regally caparisoned drew the chariot of the President, aptly symbolizing the pageant of these fifty-two years of the life of the Congress. In 1885, the Congress met for the first time in Bombay under the Presidentship of W. C. Bonnerjee. Since then what a galaxy of Presidents it has had, Muslims, Christians, Parsees, Hindus, even Englishmen! Since then how much it has developed, beyond, far, far beyond the expectations of Allen Octavian Hume, the Englishman, who first conceived the idea of the Congress as a national organization for social reform, and the Marquess of Dalhousie, the Governor-General, who unofficially suggested that instead of restricting its activities to social reform it should become His Majesty's Opposition in India! The Congress then was a small body of picked Indian patriots who felt it their responsibility to articulate the moderate national aspirations of the Indian intelligentsia. What marvellous strides

the Congress has taken in half a century ! Today, it articulates with indomitable determination the passion for freedom, justice and brotherhood of the vast masses of the Indian nation. Today it is the national organization through which the *Kisan*, the *bhumiyan* and the *Harijan* no less than the educated, workers no less than capitalists, women no less than men carry on the sacred fight for freedom.

Congress-nagar, that miracle city of mats that had suddenly risen in a deserted rural area along the river Nerbudda, was a symbol of the miracle of new birth that is soon to happen to India, our Motherland. In what country can a make-shift city rise, within a few weeks, with its post and telegraph office, its restaurants, motor car and bus stands, its stalls of an endless variety of Indian-manufactured goods, policed excellently by men and women volunteers, giving shelter and stimulus to countless multitudes ? Within Congress-nagar, by the side of the meeting-place of the Working Committee was a large map of India, outlined with bricks. Each province was marked. And there were provincial monuments erected for the patriots who had given their lives in India's historic battle for justice and for liberty. Ineed, few countries have had such a luminous succession of nationalist leaders as India has had since 1885. If India has not yet achieved *purna-swarajya*, complete

independence, it is not because of any dearth of high-calibre leadership but rather because of a fatal conspiracy between illiteracy and poverty. If only our leaders had the full following they command and deserve we should have surprised the world long ere this. But India is on the march. Reactionary forces are doomed. They may threaten for a while. They may play tricks for a while. But the slumber of the past is broken. We will that India shall forge ahead. We will that India shall make her contribution to the world.

Harold J. Laski, Professor of Politics at the London University, said in a message to the Tripuri Congress :

" The fight in which the Indian National Congress is engaged is of vital importance beyond the frontiers of India. Imperialism is the common foe of all who seek a world in which men and women have an equal claim to the gain as well as to the toil of living. Many of the main problems of India are insoluble save by Indians themselves. They require self-government not merely as a right which no democratic state can deny to them. They require it even more because without self-government the vital economic problems of India will be disregarded...I hope the Congress will continue to struggle for the right to determine its own relationship to the British

Commonwealth. But I hope it will realize also that the attainment of self-government is the beginning and not the end of its effort. I stand with those who, like Pandit Nehru and Mr. Bose see that without socialism there is no way of freeing the masses of India from their economic slavery. I hope that the new generation of the Congress particularly will give all their mind and energy to assisting Nehru and Bose in the great fight for an India socially and economically as well as politically free."

The younger generation of the Congress seems to have anticipated such a message. They are definitely socialistically minded. And for this reason they have definite kinship with Christians.

It is wrong to believe that even the most extreme among the Leftists minimize the extent of the progress made so far or the value of the Gandhian philosophy. They rejoice in the wonderful progress made. But they are not sentimental enough to interpret any standstill as progress. They honour Gandhiji and his heroic efforts. But they are not blind to the fact that, great as its achievements have been in the past, Gandhianism needs to be tempered in the fire of socialism if it is to be an effective instrument for the next phase of the battle for freedom. On the other hand one could not return from Tripuri without feeling that

some of the Rightists have been using the magic of Gandhiji's name for small ends. Do the highest interests of the country inspire the obduracy that most of the Rightists manifest? Did the best welfare of the nation dictate the Tripuri resolution apparently expressing confidence in Gandhiji and in the ex-Working Committee? Is it really for the sake of Indian Independence that many Rightists give resolute battle to the Leftists? It would be extremely difficult to find satisfactory answers to these questions. It is evident, however, that what used to be the progressive phalanx of the nationalist movement is now the conservative, for a new and moral radical phalanx has arisen and is striving to make its influence felt. The Radicals (or Leftists) are using no magical *mantram* to gain mastery. They are arousing mass-consciousness on the one hand and implementing consolidation, and on the other hand loosening the props from under the imperialist and capitalist structure. They are convinced and make no secret of their conviction, that cultural, social and economic reconstruction must accompany political emancipation if that emancipation is to be permanent and worthwhile. Should the Rightists not share this conviction?

The national situation today has a tremendous challenge for the Christian community. We have

long kept aloof under various pretexts from the fighting line. We have long deluded ourselves with all kinds of sophistry. Of course, there have been exceptions, but few and far between. The time has come when Christian Indians must get free from the inhibitions of a century and take their stand alongside of their non-Christian brothers and sisters, and fight shoulder to shoulder for the freedom and honour of the Motherland. Especially all Kristagrahis, all those whose hearts beat fast at the challenge of Christian realism, must not lose this opportunity of ranging themselves against the exploitation of the weak, against the perpetuation of un-Christian distinctions, against pharasaism of all kinds, against cowardly compromise. In Jesus Christ, whom we profess to follow, we have the champion of the economically disinherited, of the physically disinherited, of the politically and socially disinherited, and of the morally and spiritually disinherited. Will we be true to him and bravely accept the Cross for the sake of liberating the oppressed, setting free the captives, ensuring that the poor have the same rights as the rich? Or, will we shrink and justify by chicanery our disloyalty to Christ?

It is sometimes said that Christianity has nothing to do with politics—a very convenient doctrine for

the politician. When the early Christians threatened to revolutionize society on the principles of Jesus, they were beheaded; now they are simply told that they are being un-Christian. The exploitation of that tremendous, explosive, revolutionary thing, the Gospel, in the interests of the *status quo* reminds one of Kingsley's remark that the Bible was being turned by the opponents of social reform in his day into 'a mere special constable's hand-book—an opium-dose for keeping beasts of burden patient while they were being over-loaded.'

The Christian Socialist, Canon Raven, says: "In a period of revolution, religious institutions, however full of genuine vitality, will always be expected to provide a stronghold for lovers of the past, and their most zealous champions will find it hard to accept and respond to the motion of the time. So long as men look upon religion as something essentially static and comforting and grandmotherly, 'our balm in sorrow and our stay in strife,' a shelter from the storm and adventure of secular affairs, the churches will naturally be tempted to follow the principle of supply and demand. Christian soldiers, who were surely meant to be God's "storm-troopers" in the forward movement of mankind, will find themselves employed rather in the task of ministering to the wounded and providing recreation for the war-worn.

Too often they have deliberately enrolled themselves among the forces of reaction, as conscientious objectors to age—long struggle for the betterment of the race." (Raven: *Christian Socialism*, p. 6).

We realize today, as never before in the history of the Church, that Christianity covers the whole of life, and every aspect of existence must come beneath its sway. All life is sacred: the division of secular and religious is purely artificial. At all costs, we must stand up for the right, indeed the duty, of Christians to play their part in public affairs, and to apply the principles of the Gospel to every branch of economic, civic, and national life.

Said Jesus to His followers: "Ye are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a lamp, and put it under a bushel, but on the stand; and it shineth unto all that are in the house—even so let your light shine before men, that they may see your good *works*, and glorify your Father which is in heaven".

To make the mind a pigeon-hole and set politics in one compartment, religion in another, science in a third, and life in quite another is to fall into the dualistic error of the European tradition. India has insisted through the centuries, in weal and in woe, that life cannot be compartmentalized. And India shall help the West to understand the essential truth

of Christ's message because of her spiritual kinship with his outlook.

The dualism of the European tradition has its roots in ancient Greece and Rome. Christianity could not escape from this dualistic mode of thought which is responsible for many antics of interpretation. These antics were a direct reaction to the demands of power, either political or economic. Slaves had to be converted and yet soothed and kept from rebelling against their brutal masters and the brutal system which blessed slavery. Subject-peoples had to be converted and yet mollified and kept from openly revolting against the tyranny of their rulers and the insane system of imperialism. European Christianity achieved the impossible by its antics of interpretation. At every revolutionary point of Christ's teachings an other-worldly construction served to silence the dispossessed, absolve the rich and powerful, and put the seal of divine approval on the *status quo*.

Thus all the inequalities between man and man, the gross inequalities of social status and economic advantages, of opportunities for training and advancement and choice of vocation, cunning inequalities proposed by the selfishness of man, were exalted as the dictates of the will of God. And the dazzling consolation offered was that man's earthly life was a

brief probation for eternal life where earthly suffering would be rewarded by shining joy, where earthly poverty would be rewarded by flashing crowns, where earthly frustrations and disappointments would find delectable satisfaction. Riches were sneered at in the presence of the poor. All the privileges and advantages that animate men to strive against odds were treated with scorn in the presence of the unprivileged. This world's goods were theatrically derided. All the time the rich grabbed at riches and the privileged safeguarded their privileges. The tide of discontentment was stemmed by a wall built by priests, with many texts, the key-stone of which probably was, "Get treasure in heaven that never fails, that no thief can get at, no moth destroy. For where your treasure lies, your heart will lie there too," (Luke. XII. 33-34).

Does the "heaven" of this verse refer to the Hereafter, some bright and happy abode beyond the clouds filled with refulgent seraphims and dulcet harps? Is it only beyond the grave that moths do not destroy nor thieves break in and steal? It is amazing and a little perplexing that so many sermons can be found on this verse with an other-worldly interpretation. The context of the verse, which is not questioned by the most authoritative scholars, makes a "heavenly" explanation quite exotic and

somewhat quixotic! The preceding verse ends by saying, "fear not little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom." Surely, few progressive men and women today seriously doubt that the "Kingdom of God" implies God's divine order here and now, on this planet of ours convulsed with war and hate and misery, for it is here that it is needed. It is here that Jesus came to establish the New Order based on co-operation, love, and mutual sharing. The Hebrew prophetic tradition had never visualised a "Kingdom of God" somewhere beyond the grave, but realistically on this earth. Those to whom Jesus addressed his message of "the Kingdom of God" were trained by Hebraic prophecy to understand nothing 'but the New Israel on earth,' God's New Covenant with the Jews here on earth. The Jewish prophetic consciousness hardly ever thought of "immortality," but did envisage the "Kingdom of heaven", here and now, in a thoroughly "this-worldly" sense. As that keen thinker, Prof. John Macmurray, says: "It is the absence of contrast between this world and another world, between the spiritual and the material, between the ideal and the actual, which is characteristic of the Hebrew religious culture." (*Clue To History*, p. 31).

Having thus assured his hearers of God's will and desire to bestow His New Order upon men here

and now, would Jesus in the next verse take a sportive sommersault, for no reason save perverse self-gratification, and tell the same hearers that they should turn their gaze towards the land of shades? Would it not have been like carrying on secret propaganda against God? It would have amounted to this: "God desires that the present world order be replaced by His New Order; but, look here, you must not do anything about it. You must have an other-worldly hope and put your faith in heaven. That is how you can defeat God's designs of bringing His Kingdom on earth." Does this seem reasonable? And yet this is in effect what other-worldly constructions come to mean. Many ardent Christians, commended for their piety and evangelical fervour, have nevertheless spent their lives ardently promulgating just such a spurious interpretation. And it has borne undesirable fruit.

Let us turn to the succeeding verse. Jesus urges his hearers, "Keep your loins girt and your lamps lit and be like men who are waiting for their lord and master to return from a wedding banquet."

Granting for the moment that Jesus was in an escapist mood, and had just previously admonished his audience to lay up treasures in "heaven," because on this wretched earth thieves break in and steal, would it not be wildly incoherent, then, for

him to urge the same audience to keep themselves in constant readiness, to be ever on the *qui vive* for the arrival of their Lord and Master? Or did he mean that they should gird their loins and keep their lamps lit in the dim, distant, romantic Hereafter? This is what he should logically have meant if he had used "heaven" to denote the Hereafter. Surely, Jesus was not in an escapist and a playful mood to confuse his eager, unsophisticated hearers, many of whom hung on every word of his. He was not playing ducks and drakes with this paramount issue. He was appealing to his audience not to relax the morale of the New Order, here and now. He wanted them to keep themselves in readiness for the divine Commonwealth not in "heaven" but on this self-same earth which would become as good as heaven, being radically transformed.

The only reasonable view, therefore, which does justice to the sanity and consistency of Jesus, seems to be to take the verse we have been considering not by itself but in its context. It is of a piece with the other verses, deeply dyed in realism. "Heaven" implies "Kingdom of heaven" upon earth; the projection into the structure of this world's systems of the divine plan for the community of man. "Heaven" implies this world full of evil and suffering and ugliness transformed by the motivating power

of the divine Commonwealth into "heaven"—where God's will is done *en masse*.

From this point of view, what did Jesus mean by saying, "Get yourselves treasure in heaven that never fails, that no thief can get at no moth destroy, for where your treasure lies, your heart will lie there also"?

This is perhaps the strongest direct appeal that Jesus made to men and women to invest their hopes and aspirations, their energy and time, their possessions and attainments in the divine Commonwealth, for the common good. He tells them not to be afraid or nervous, because God has willed the Commonwealth for mankind by putting the principle of community into the very foundation of life, by making freedom, justice, and equality, the structural principles of Reality. He urges them to recognize their part in this great drama of realizing God's Plan, and to throw themselves heart and soul into playing their part well. With a fine sense of humour he adds that the common purse does not wear out as purses of private ownership do; and that the dangers that beset the old order, the Kingdom of Mammon, have no power against man's investments in the true Community.

If we hold dear the things that pertain to self, if the most precious things in the world for us are

our position, wealth, fame, power, and gratification, we shall quite naturally strain every muscle to achieve our purpose. If our treasure lies in the scientific realm we shall invest our best in that realm and find our greatest happiness in working on scientific problems. If our treasure lies in the field of literature or art, we shall spare ourselves no sacrifice, no effort, no expense to get our object. But if our treasure lies in the divine Commonwealth, we shall spontaneously give our best time and energy, our all to the actualizing of this New Order for humanity. Our interests, our attention, our effort are enlisted by the persuasive force of our emotions. Where your treasure lies, your heart will lie there also.

This is simple enough. But there are complications, simple and complex. A simple complication arises from the fact that our treasure lies in two or more conflicting realms. Naturally we are divided. Our interests, our attention, and our effort cannot fuse into a single flame. There are contradictions in our lives. These contradictions are not antitheses held consciously at a point of tension impelling us to higher and larger syntheses. They are contradictions which sap our energy and make us weak-willed, wavering between the two realms in which our treasure is buried. There are many

people, for example, who have part of their treasure in the realm of brotherhood and part of it in the realm of racialism. It leads to a very fantastic contradiction. They are deeply interested in brotherhood which implies love; which in turn implies equality; which again implies liberty. They speak about brotherhood, and even work for it. But they are also deeply interested in their race. The moment this brotherhood demands that they give up some racial convention, myth or privilege, there is sudden conflict. And often racialism claims their heart. The few who have all their treasure in the realm of brotherhood serve to offer a telling contrast.

On the other hand, a complex complication arises because some of us have part of our treasure in "heaven" and the other part on "earth." We profess to hold dear the spiritual needs of people as well as their physical needs. We claim that we want individuals to have a change of heart and be saved and we also want society to be re-made and redeemed. So far so good. But the vicious dualism that compels us to use conjunctions like "as well as" and "also" leads us astray the moment people claim economic justice, social equality, and political emancipation. The conflict that sets in expresses itself, in many instances, in a facile em-

phasis on the "spiritual," the "other-worldly" to the gradual exclusion of the "material." We escape from this contradiction by turning Jesus, Gospel of the Commonwealth into our Gospel of the individual. We distract the attention of those who demand social and economic and political justice by drawing all kinds of red herrings across the path of their vision. We succeed in postponing the coming of the New Age; and pat ourselves on the back for serving the cause so ably, and incidentally in keeping safe and well-preserved.

Thus Jesus made a strong unequivocal appeal to men and women to commit themselves unconditionally to the revolutionizing of the present order, which so often lays a premium on duplicity, and by riding rough-shod over human values destroys spiritual values. He wanted us to invest our *all* in the true community of man, the divine Commonwealth, in which men and women would find the brotherhood that is the logical and moral derivative of the Fatherhood of God; in which men and women would find love the law of life, and therefore right relations become the normal habit; in which war would become obsolete, and murderous competition would be outlawed; in which men and women would discover the indivisible wholeness and sanctity of life and know that *the integrity of*

communion with God is determined by the integration of the community of man. But that way lies opposition, persecution, betrayal, and the Cross. That way also goes the Master still yearning for man's emancipation, still carrying the Cross we shrink to bear. Will we dare to follow him or choose the seductive by-paths of compromise ?

Are we so deaf that we cannot hear Jesus calling his followers in India to honour him by joining with the progressive forces of the country for the emancipation of the millions held in intellectual thralldom, held in social bondage, held in economic fetters, held in political chains? Are we so blind that we cannot see Jesus pointing to the miserable outcasts, to the poverty-stricken peasants, to the thousands of despondent unemployed, to the unacknowledged heroes of the land in prison and in exile, and saying, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren ye have done it unto Me" ? The basic position of Christian realism should drive us to co-operate whole-heartedly in the reconstruction that the progressive forces are undertaking in order to establish a classless society in India, in which every man shall be free to share the fruits of his labour and the responsibility of his citizenship, in which every man shall have equal rights and equal worth, in which, indeed, every man

shall be able to love God with all his being and his neighbour as himself. Writing to the Christians of Galatia, Paul appeals, "Brothers, you were called to be free; only do not make your freedom an opening for the flesh, but serve one another in love. For the entire law is summed up in one word, 'you must love your neighbour as yourself', whereas if you snap at each other and prey upon each other, take care lest you destroy one another." (Gal: V. 13-15) Have we too not to counteract the insidious influence of disunity which brings disintegration?

We have a more powerful incentive than mere Socialists. We have Christ. Surely, we will not waste the power of that indomitable incentive. Surely we shall prove the sovereignty of Christ's matchless power by manifesting His courage and co-operating more consistently, more creatively, more unflinchingly in the work of emancipation that non-Christians have been attempting to do for the nation with undying faith.

Loyalty to Christ demands that we get out of our narrow communal trenches and come up on the vast plains of the national struggle, unafraid of hazards, happy to prove the greatness of Him who inspires us. The trenches have restricted our vision long enough. Our comrades of the trenches, Indian and foreign, have held us back all too long. We

must take them along with us to see a larger horizon, fight a bigger battle, serve a nobler cause. We do our Lord grave injustice by behaving in such a fashion as to give people cause to misunderstand Him. Our courageous dedication to liberty, our unfaltering stand for justice and truth, our heroic suffering and sacrifice for establishing the Commonwealth of God within our own borders will convince our brethren of the supremacy of Christ's claims much more effectively than all the wordy windiness of apologists. All the cleverest rationalization in the world cannot absolve us from the stigma of disloyalty both to Christ and the Motherland if we persist in burrowing little holes for ourselves and call it Christian service.

Tripuri declared to the world that a tremendous national revolution is in process. Millions of men and women are passionately interested in the struggle for freedom. They are intensely desirous of participating in that struggle. The slumber of ages is broken. Men and women, young and old, rich and poor, high-caste and low-caste, are in person registering strong protests against the iniquities of exploitation. The unhesitant resignations of the Congress Ministries have only ratified the national declaration of independence. Nor are we insensible to the grim opposition that British imperialists will offer under

the worn-out and tattered disguise of friendly solicitude. Sir Samuel Hoare, speaking at the India Debate in October 1939, said, "Non-co-operation would put the clock back for years. Whether its promoters desire it or not Non-co-operation leads to civil disobedience, to breaches of law and order and the vicious circle of riot and repression from which we had hoped to have escaped for ever. I shall continue to believe that the non-co-operation of any large section of the community would be a calamity and a futility of the first magnitude." (*Official Report, Parliamentary Debates—Vol. 352, No. 188, Col. 1640*) We are familiar with this euphemistic jargon of imperialism. To avoid being unpleasant I shall take a leap over the back of a British knight. Sir Stafford Cripps in his reply to Sir Samuel Hoare says, "I regret very much the final passages of the Lord Privy Seal's speech, the unveiled threat to use force and suppression if the Indian people should dare not to come to heel." Sir Stafford goes on to point out that "the new developments in the world situation and the avowed objectives of the British Government in declaring war, have made the treatment of India a test question in the eyes of the world, as well as of many people in this country, and the people of India itself. It raises, indeed, the whole question of our future intentions as regards British Imperialism."

(Op. cit. Col. 1655.) It reminds one of Mr. H. N. Brailsford's remarkable words: "In India we may lose this war or win it, for by our conduct there men will decide whether this is in truth a war for the liberation of Europe or a struggle for *Lebensraum* between rival Empires". (*Democracy for India*, Fabian Society Tract Series No. 248—p. 15.)

While these differences of opinion exist among English statesmen, Christian Indians must recognize that it will be an immeasurable tragedy if many of us lack the courage and insight to be at least of the same opinion as some Englishmen like Sir Stafford Cripps, Mr. Wedgwood Benn and Mr. Brailsford, and cherish at least an equally strong desire for India's freedom.

Sir Stafford Cripps said in the same speech: "The hoardings of this country (England) at the present time bear a poster in these words: '*Freedom is in peril—Defend it with all your might.*' I should like to see that poster displayed in every village in India, but I am afraid that if the Indian Congress were to take such a step, it would be instantly suppressed by the Government of India, for the Indians would rightly read the word 'freedom' as meaning Indian freedom, as in Great Britain we read it as meaning British freedom, and not as meaning the freedom of the Polish landed gentry or the Czecho-Slovak

manufacturers. If, indeed, they were to start to *defend freedom with all their might* in the real literal sense of the words, I am afraid it would mean the speedy and undignified end to British Imperialism in India—a most unfortunate and disastrous way of bringing about a change of affairs." (*Official Report, Parliamentary Debates, Vol: 352, No. 188—Col. 1658*)

When are we going to march forth, armed with the will to suffer and redeem, to liberate our Motherland? Shall we sit timidly asking, "What turn will the Indian revolution take?" Or shall we plunge into it and help to strengthen and direct this historic and unprecedented revolution?

Is the Christian community in India too small to throw its weight into the balances in favour of a spiritually motivated revolution? Certainly not. It is not too small. But is it too hesitant? No arguments can justify timidity. Hesitation at moments of crisis is timidity. A policy of safety-first is landing us into grave dangers. Whereas a policy of *Christovert* action, even if it costs one generation dearly, will extend the Commonwealth of God and win glory for the Martyr-Messiah, Jesus, the divine Revolutionary. Shall we fall in line with the progressive forces of the country and transmit the influence of Christ to the national movement? Shall we reclaim what has been lost? Let our hesitancy not

drive men away in disgust from the dauntless Christ. Let our Christian comrades in Britain dare to act on their Christian convictions. Let them save their country and their people from the reproach of hypocrisy.

This is India's challenge to Christians of every race and denomination: with hearts cleansed of all taint of selfishness, with minds purified of the rosy haze of dualism let us go forth to do God's bidding. Under the tri-coloured banner of freedom, justice, and brotherhood shall we not build a New World in which all nations and races shall be able to stand erect in the full dignity of free men and women and raise glad anthems of Brotherhood? And God shall rejoice in this worship.

But will those who respond to the challenge suffer? Will they be thrown into prison, put in chains, crushed by the might and fury of those whose interests they threaten? Lovers of liberty know not fear.

"Eternal Spirit of the chainless mind!
 Brightest in dungeons, Liberty! thou art,
 For there thy habitation is the heart—
 The heart that love of thee alone can bind;
 And when thy sons to fetters are consign'd—
 To fetters and the damp vault's dayless gloom,
 Their country conquers with their martyrdom,
 And freedom's fame finds wings on every wind."

ABOUT THE AUTHOR.

SRI CYRIL MODAK, the author of this book, was born in Lucknow in 1906. He was the first Indian to be admitted to Christ Church Boys' High School in Jubbulpore. There he began to exhibit unusual ability in writing. After successfully completing his Senior Cambridge course, he spent a year at the Lucknow Christian College studying Commerce. While there he distinguished himself in debating, carrying off the first prize gold medal at the All-India Debate Contest at Benares in 1922.

Finding himself ill-suited to be a captain of finance, he turned to teaching. At this time he developed a keen interest in philosophy and mysticism and did a great deal of independent study in these fields. His articles and poems began to appear frequently in leading Indian journals from as early as 1925. In 1931, he went to the United States to attend Drew University where he received the degrees of B. A. and M. A., in two years, with highest honours in philosophy. In America, he made many friends for India. In 1933, he returned to India. As Headmaster of the Mission High School in Jubbulpore he introduced many departures in the sphere of education. In 1938, he joined the Ashram at Lucknow, where he is chiefly occupied in literary activities.

From an early age he has been an ardent Indian Nationalist and a member of the National Congress. The cause of freedom presents a burning challenge to him. One of his missions in life is to convey this challenge to the Christian community in India. Another of his chief interests is to relate Christian Realism to the Indian situation, thus working out an Indian interpretation of Christianity. His dauntless spirit and fine intelligence as well as his ability as a writer give him splendid equipment for carrying out these ambitions and serving the Motherland.

"India's Challenge to Christians"

is a shocking and explosive book, as upsetting to the conventional ideas of Church and Mission compound as would be the arrival of an actual Christian from the first century. I would like to be present when some people I know first turn its pages. I would like to watch their faces: A remarkably fine bit of work, of which the Christian Indian community should be proud.'

—VERRIER ELWIN.



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